



annual report 2020



annual
report
2020



contents

Celebrating 10 years of Phiren Amenca.....	6
Introduction.....	8
Voluntary service with Phiren Amenca.....	10
Promoting Volunteering to Young People with Fewer Opportunities.....	11
Capacity-building for Roma and Voluntary Service Organizations.....	12
Lois Brookes-Jones , volunteer hosted at the Phiren Amenca Coordination Office.....	14
Marina Csikós , intern hosted at the Phiren Amenca Coordination Office.....	16
Mariya Atanasova , Young European of the Year 2020.....	20
Education and Training	
Grassroots Activism Challenging Antigypsyism - International Seminar.....	23
European Youth Event (EYE) and Yo!Fest 2020.....	24
Roma Youth Advocacy Training.....	25
Terno Glaso – Voices of Roma Youth, Conference in Budapest.....	28
Terno Glaso – Voices of Roma Youth, Conference in Pécs.....	30
Create your own story! Advocate against prejudice!.....	31
DO YOU STEP IN? – Manual for combating hate speech and antigypsyism online and offline.....	32
Best European Roma Youth Project Award 2020.....	33
“Roma youth participation in Europe: Challenges, needs and opportunities” Research.....	36
Advocacy and Partnerships	
EU Roma Week 2020.....	37
Roma Youth Statement on the renewed EU Roma Framework up to 2030.....	40

Digital high-level conference ‘EU Roma strategic framework for equality, inclusion and participation’ 2020-2030.....	44
The Role and Power of Roma Youth in Mainstream Structures.....	46
Roma & Politics Talk Series.....	50
Civil society consultations.....	52
Council of Europe's Task Force on Roma Youth Participation.....	52
Roma and Health Inequities: Online Discussion.....	54
Membership in Mainstream Structures	
Advisory Council on Youth of the Council of Europe.....	55
European Youth Forum Membership.....	56
National Roma Youth Platforms.....	57
International Online campaigns	
#ActForRomaLives.....	60
August 2 - Roma Holocaust Memorial Day.....	61
May 16 - Romani Resistance Day.....	62
Roma Holocaust Remembrance	
24-hour Name Reading and Commemoration in Budapest.....	64
#RomaRemember Campaign.....	68
Alliance Building	
“Ideas and their Consequences: Genocide and International Justice after 1919”.....	70
Promoting Religious Freedom and Combating Anti-Semitism.....	71
Structures.....	72
Funding Programs.....	75

Cover Photo: 24-Hour Name Reading and Commemoration. © Józsefváros



Dear readers,

November 10. 2020 marked a very special day, the 10th anniversary of Phiren Amenca. On this occasion we want to thank you all for supporting our work throughout these years and engaging with our mission of challenging antigypsyism, creating space for dialogue and cooperation amongst Roma and non-Roma and developing life-changing opportunities for thousands of young people.

Today, Phiren Amenca has become a recognized international network with a strong voice in Europe.

The achievements of our network and its recognition are the results of the efforts and hard work of all of you. Celebrating our ten-year anniversary is a milestone achievement and this wonderful journey would not have been possible without the dedicated commitment and support of all our volunteers, colleagues and partners.

We thank you for all your dedicated work and we hope the next few decades will be another amazing journey for all of us together.

Phiren Amenca team, 2020



The year of 2020 started with great plans and ambitions, but by March it became clear that we will not be able to implement most of them as we planned because of the Covid-19 pandemic. We had to postpone, cancel or redesign several activities for the year, which was quite challenging in the beginning. We realized that the only way we can still continue our work is to move our activities to the online sphere, or to postpone some events and activities to August-September, with the hope that by that time the situation will be better in Europe, and people can gather again.

We were lucky enough that we could use those months for personal meetings on national and international levels. Besides that, we kept connections with partners and young people through online tools and used social media to keep our network and volunteers active.

In 2020 we have planned several high-level events and an Award for the best European Roma youth project with great European visibility such as part of the EU Roma Week in the European Parliament in Brussels in March, at the European Youth Event 2020 in May in Strasbourg or around the launch of the new 'EU Roma strategic framework for equality, inclusion and participation' 2020-2030 by the German EU Presidency together with the European Commission in October. We have planned an international seminar and training on combating antigypsyism and on advocacy as well as national Roma youth platforms to provide space for young Roma people and for Roma youth organizations to meet with their National Roma Contact Points and decision-makers and share their feedback and suggestions to the upcoming national Roma strategies. Despite the difficult circumstances, we were able to implement these plans, with modifications and adoptions, and we successfully achieved our goals. In fact, we run big international campaigns on social media around May 16 - Romani Resistance Day and August 2 - Roma Holocaust Memorial Day, reaching out to tens of thousands of people.

In 2019 we have kicked-off a research entitled "Roma youth participation in Europe: Challenges, needs and opportunities" and throughout 2020 we conducted 290 surveys with young Roma individuals, with almost 40 NGOs from EU member states and conducted several focus group interviews with young people from Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Kosovo, North-Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain and Ukraine.

The Phiren Amenca Team has been successful in developing handbooks, toolkits and booklets such as on hate speech, resistance, advocacy, project management or about good practices working with young Roma and each of them will be available by the beginning of 2021, if they are not published yet.

The year of 2020 was a special year, not just because of the pandemic, but because on behalf of Phiren Amenca, Georgina Laboda, director of our board became a member of the Advisory Council on Youth of the Council of Europe and she was elected as the Rapporteur on Roma Issues of the Joint Council on Youth between the 2020-2021 mandate. On top of that, in December, Phiren Amenca became the 1st Roma network member of the European Youth Forum (YFJ) and even before our membership, Phiren Amenca together with the European Union of Jewish Students, initiated a "Resolution on Combating Antigypsyism and the Inclusion and Equal Participation of Roma Youth", which was adopted in parallel with our membership. We believe these are crucially important milestones for the representation of Roma youth in mainstream structures and we do our best to be the voice of Roma youth there.

Despite the difficulties caused by the pandemic, Phiren Amenca became a recognized actor by European institutions, mainstream and Roma structures, especially through advocating to include Roma youth as a specific target of the new EU Roma strategic framework. 2020 showed us that we have strong partnerships, a committed board, and volunteers and with our dedicated work, we can overcome many challenges. ■

Voluntary service with Phiren Amenca

Our voluntary service program is built on our mission to challenge stereotypes, racism and antigypsyism. To reach that goal we aim to involve more and more young Roma in short and long-term European mobility programs, such as Erasmus Plus and the European Solidarity Corps (ESC). Our member and partner organizations represent a diverse range of locations and profiles. Most of them host Roma and non-Roma volunteers to serve together in social justice projects. We, at Phiren Amenca, find it important to support our partners in becoming active hosting organizations and developing the quality of their voluntary service programs. We also assist organizations to open new placement sites and to become our partners. Many volunteers remain active in the fight against discrimination and antigypsyism after their service concludes. We invest time and capacities, together with our member and partner organizations, to provide them with opportunities to remain active and engaged in our mission as leaders, trainers, educators and members of our project teams.

The pandemic affected the voluntary service programs as well, there were several volunteers who had to return back to their home countries or suspended their service. Still, the Phiren Amenca coordination office was able to host a volunteer, Lois Brookes-Jones, from the United Kingdom from August 2020, and two interns, Maria Dumitru and Marina Csikós from the Central European University in Budapest. ■

Promoting Volunteering to Young People with Fewer Opportunities

Between July 27-31, 2020, Phiren Amenca held a local seminar in the picturesque Orfű, Hungary together with the Roma Self-Government of Buják for young people with fewer opportunities in order to introduce them to the concept of volunteering and encourage them to become volunteers. We believe that volunteering is a step and tool towards active citizenship and participation, as volunteers for a shorter or longer period get actively engaged in specific communities and contribute their knowledge, talents, skills and energies to an important cause. The seminar hosted 38 participants from Pécs, Buják and Tállya, localities in Hungary with a high Roma population.

As Roma have been excluded from all spheres of society by the mechanisms of antigypsyism for centuries, not only the majority population has to start seeing them as active agents, but they also have to internalize this narrative. That is why engagement in social issues while building dialogue with the majority population is of crucial importance in the process of social integration. One of the best starting points for this engagement is volunteering.

As among the participants there were children younger than 18 and people older than 30, besides international volunteering opportunities, such as the European Solidarity Corps Programme, we also focused on local volunteering opportunities. Throughout the days of the activity, participants were led through sessions starting from getting to know each other and team-building; to planning their own learning process, to conflict- management. By the end of the three days, they had a clear picture of what volunteering means and where they can look for opportunities. They could plan what knowledge they would like to acquire, figure out ways for doing it and how to evaluate their results. Participants also had the chance to exchange their insights about their local realities and figure out ways they could contribute to the development of issues affecting their lives. On a more theoretical level, they had the opportunity to observe the mechanisms of stereotyping, prejudice and racism based on

their own experiences and perceptions of “others”. With the help of two former volunteers who facilitated some of the sessions, the interested participants could get first-hand accounts about volunteering both locally and abroad and about the support-systems which are in place for volunteers during their journey.

At the end, a short presentation was held about the practicalities of local and international volunteering: about the European Solidarity Corps Programme, the Civil Service and local opportunities as well. Participants acquired knowledge, skills and competences through non-formal educational methods led by the trainers, facilitators of Phiren Amenca and former volunteers who are colleagues of the Diverse Youth Network. ■

Capacity-building for Roma and Voluntary Service Organizations

The Phiren Amenca coordination office constantly works on enabling Roma and non-Roma organizations to participate in volunteering projects and involve more and more young people in Phiren Amenca's mission through volunteering. Therefore, we reach out to organizations which work with young people on a local, regional or international level and help them set up volunteering programs; and provide assistance in managing quality programs for organizations with established voluntary service programs as well.

2020 did not allow us to hold the regular networking meetings that we organize every year to bring old and new partners together physically, Roma and non-Roma organizations to exchange experiences, knowledge and tools amongst each other. However, the Phiren Amenca coordination team have been in regular contact with partners and supported them during their national advocacy work especially regarding the new EU Roma framework, how to increase the involvement of Roma and youth organizations, and how to place Roma youth as direct targets of national Roma and youth strategies. The coordination team also followed how

the pandemic affected the work of its partners, especially the work of grassroots Roma organizations, and advocated on an EU level for support to these organizations and Roma communities during the time of pandemic.

As the Erasmus+ Programme is renewed for 2021-2027, Andrei Popescu on behalf of the EACEA - Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency was invited to the Phiren Amenca online General Assembly on November 23. This was intended to inform members regarding the new European Solidarity Corps Programme and the new Quality Label, as well as to answer member's questions about the new programme and requirements. In December 2020 Phiren Amenca's voluntary service coordinator, Anna Daróczi started to reach out to members and partners to coordinate the transition between the new programmes and to support them with their quality labels in order to be able to provide volunteer activities inside and outside of the network. ■



Lois Brookes- Jones

volunteer

hosted at the
**Phiren Amenca
Coordination Office**
in Budapest through the
European Solidarity
Corps (ESC) Program

My name is Lois and I'm a young Romany activist from the West Midlands in the UK. I'm a co-founder of The Dikhlo Collective which provides free cultural packages to Romani people globally, and a co-founder of Traveller Pride which is an LGBT+ GRT (Gypsy Roma Traveller) campaign group which brought the first GRT representation to London Pride in 2019.

My voluntary service placement was based in Budapest in an office environment, moving towards equality for Romani people and fighting antigypsyism through policy-based meetings, developing sessions surrounding Roma rights, building solidarity with wider marginalised communities, and creating content surrounding Roma identity and issues.

Something that's been very important to me is proofreading documents and reports. This may seem trivial, but learning about the language used in annual reports, session outlines, etc, is very important for me to learn in terms of youth work, and being able to read through what is currently going on in terms of civil society and Roma NGO actions.

Phiren Amenca's mission to challenge stereotypes and racism is important for me because I am a Romany woman, and because I have an invested interest in Human Rights. Contributing to the pursuit of equity for Roma people is close to my heart, and I also think it's important for me to learn about wider Roma communities than my own in the UK, and engage with their specific human rights issues outside of UK-centric dialogue.

It's been a lot more isolated during COVID-19 which has been a big issue for me. I wasn't even able to properly meet with the other ESC volunteers in Hungary, and with venues being rightfully closed during these times, it became easy to feel alone and without friends to connect or go out with. To cope with this I continued with my own collective work, and have engaged with people I've developed friendships within Hungary to plan days out. I've also just been focusing on being happy in my own company, and learning how to be alone and enjoy my own free time.

I am already pursuing a degree in politics and international relations, and plan to work within youth and community grassroots action. This experience allows me to further understand the inner mechanisms of an NGO, and gives me a solid foundation for further pursuing Human Rights for Romani people. ■

Marina Csikós

intern

hosted at the
Phiren Amenca
Coordination Office

My name is Marina Csikós. I am a Hungarian Roma woman. I grew up both in Budapest and in Szabolcs county. I finished my bachelor at the University of Nyíregyháza in Social pedagogy, but because I always wanted to learn in English I applied to the Roma English Language Program at CEU. I really enjoyed studying in a multicultural environment and then I decided that I would like to get admission to an international university. Therefore, I had to finish another preparatory program, namely the Roma Graduate Preparation Program, where I further developed my academic, speaking, and writing skills.

Since my first day at CEU I was very interested in the Gender Studies Department and fortunately in 2018 I got accepted to the master program. I had a really nice time at my master studies where I learnt many things about gender equality. Beside my studies, I have been involved in the Roma movement for 10 years, and I participated at many Roma related events, worked with Roma NGOs (including Phiren Amenca), and tried to stay an integral part of the European Roma activism.

My stay at Phiren Amenca was both “refreshing” and useful. After 4 years of intensive academic work I really enjoyed working on the ground and working together with fellow activists. It was important for me to talk about current issues of young Roma and organizing a remembrance for the Roma Holocaust on the 2nd of August, which I think was one of the most important events of the 2020 year when it comes to Roma related events and celebrations. Due to the Covid-19 situation there was almost no event organized in 2020, and many Roma related events had to be cancelled which were very important not only for the Hungarian young Roma but also internationally. Moreover, I had the chance to develop my organizing, researching, and administrative skills, which I am benefitting from at my current workplace.

As I mentioned earlier, one of the most important Roma related events of the 2020 year was commemorating the Roma Holocaust on the 2nd of August. One of the main learning experiences was for me to be part of the organizing process, and see how a quality, well-contextualized, professional event was being organized. It

“ *Phiren Amenca is a great CSO that uses community-power to fight against inequalities.* ”

of technicalities are needed to livestream a 24h-event. Therefore, for me the whole organizing process was very interesting and useful for my future work.

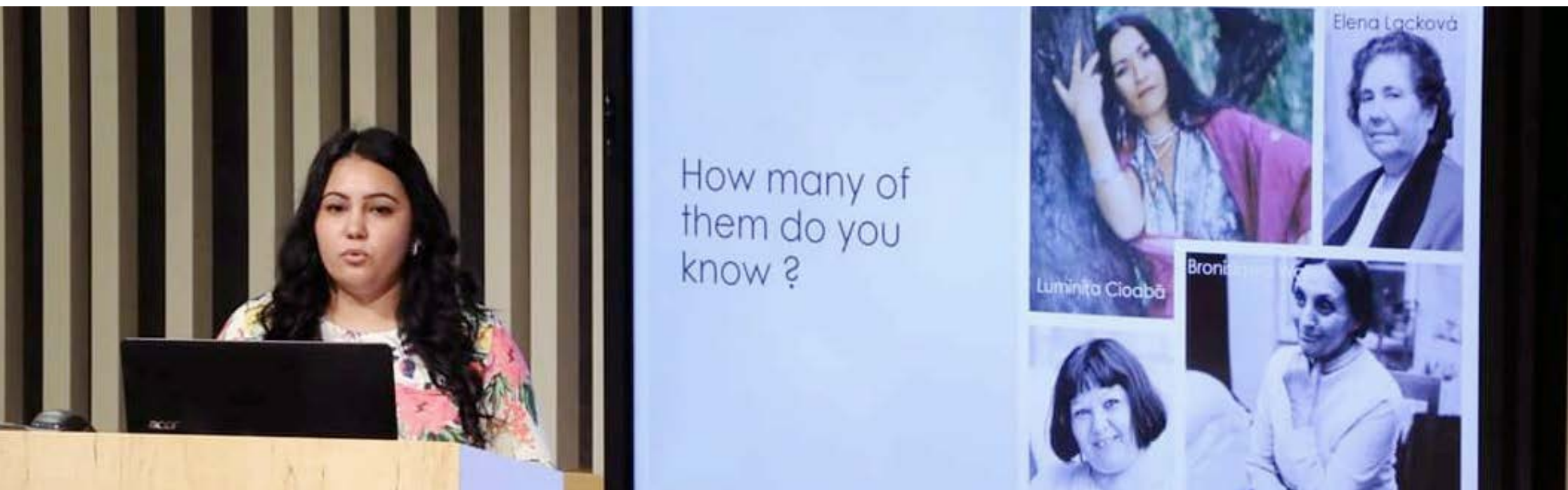
For me, challenging stereotypes and tackling racism are very important because since my childhood I knew and felt that I cannot identify with those images that I saw in the history, media, or elsewhere about Roma women. Being a Roma woman who is educated, unmarried, without children, believing in gender equality is already stereotypes-breaking for most of the non-Roma people (and I would say also for heterosexual Roma men). In the mainstream discourses, the image of “the Roma woman” is distorted and does not fit to the living experiences of the Roma women. Of course I needed to understand more how these kinds of things work, and Gender Studies certainly was an eye-opening point in my life when I realized that all the discomfort, anxiety and

was very useful for me being aware of the possible difficulties, practicalities of the tasks, the networking skills that are needed to set up a national event, and seeing what kind

confusion that I felt as a child regarding my Roma and woman identity, was because of racism and sexism. People can fight against racism and stereotypes in individual levels of course, but I think community has an enormous power, and Phiren Amenca is a great CSO that uses community-power to fight against inequalities.

When people ask me what my dreams are, I always answer the same, but very simple answer. I would like to open my own NGO or start my own initiative and work with Roma girls and women. I have interests in many fields, such as academia, art, and activism and I do not want to choose between them. During my future work with Roma girls and women, I would like to combine all these fields and create our own spaces and methodologies which we could use in order to tackle antigypsyism, and other kinds of oppressions as well. I do think there are so many creative ways to empower young girls and there should be spaces where they can show their qualities, express their opinions, create and help in their communities. When I talk about working with Roma girls and women, I do think that it should be an inclusive initiative, where trans girls and transwomen would be as much welcomed as their heterosexual peers.

We are all in this fight together. Wish me luck! ■





Young
European
of the Year
2020

Maria
Atanasova

I am from Bulgaria. I graduated from the Medical University. I graduated as a midwife. Over the years I have been active in various Roma and non-Roma organizations.

I have been involved in volunteering in the Roma community and the Social Teahouse in Varna - with children deprived of parental care. I define myself as a Roma activist. I grew up in a small village - Gabar, near Bourgas and the sea. I am one child in the family - I have no siblings. I am also the first person to complete higher education in my whole family.

I finished my primary education in a neighboring village, which I traveled to every day, because we do not have a school in my village. Then I moved to Burgas, when I was 16, so I could study in high school. I lived alone. After graduating from high school in Burgas, I moved to Varna to study at the Medical University and here I am: now in Budapest.

I met with Phiren Amencia in 2017 at "So Keres, Europa?!" organized in Varna with over 200 young people: Roma and non-Roma from all over Europe. By the way, I must mention that this was the first event where I overcame my fear and spoke in English. Before that I had studied English, rather on my own. I knew some words, but I had not found myself in an international environment. And when I came across "So Keres ?!" I had no other choice and had to communicate with people in some language. By the end of that week, I was changed. Before "So Keres", I really wanted to go to Erasmus on an international exchange, but because I could not speak English, I did not go. During So keres, I gathered the courage to go to Erasmus.



I believe Roma youth must be bolder, more active and know that they also have a place out there [...]

youth organizations since high school. During my student years at the medical university, I became even more active there. I was in the Mentoring Program of the Arete Youth Foundation for 3-4 years, both formally and informally. The young people began to recognize me and if they needed something - they wrote to me and I helped them.

After I received the award, there was a lot of media interest in me because I am Bulgarian, as well as a Roma. I had the opportunity to say much more about who we are, what we do. There were many non-governmental organizations (European and national level) that contacted me. I took part in a number of webinars, discussions, and panels online. I also took part in a working group for monitoring hate speech in the Bulgarian media. I even wrote letters to Bulgarian MEPs to condemn the hate speech of the Bulgarian MEP Angel Dzhambazki and to ask them to distance themselves from him. Unfortunately, no response from them followed.

I am currently a student at the Roma Graduate Preparation Program in Budapest. From here I look at Vienna and a master's degree in political science.

I believe Roma youth must be bolder, more active and know that they also have a place out there, not someone else. Their place is where they want to be. ■

In 2020 Phiren Amenca nominated Maria, a young ambitious Roma woman for Young European of the Year, who became the winner. She inspires with her profession and with a number of volunteer initiatives, in which she participates to support other Roma youth. Every year, the Schwarzkopf Foundation Young Europe, together with the European Youth Forum, awards the prize "Young European of the Year" to a young person who has shown a particularly strong commitment to a Europe of solidarity.

The Young European of the Year award was given to me because I am an active young person of Roma origin and because as I said, I have been a volunteer in various

Education and Training

Grassroots Activism Challenging Antigypsyism – International Seminar

This 5-day international seminar was held in Chiclana, Spain involving 20 young Roma and non-Roma youth workers, activists, local coordinators and multipliers offline and 10 online between August 9-16, 2020. Participants learnt about the concept of antigypsyism, shared their knowledge, experience and expertise related to the field they are coming from, and collected ideas for an international and national campaign.

The seminar was implemented together with our partner organization, FAGIC – Federation of Roma Associations in Catalonia. The main objectives of the seminar were: to involve and build connections amongst young Roma and non-Roma leaders, youth workers and activists internationally in order to: explore and learn about the concept of and raise awareness about antigypsyism through critically analysing its manifestations today; identify, share, develop and train participants to respond to antigypsyism through education and innovative, creative campaigns, through media and art; develop the capacities of participants in organising public national and international

Grassroots Activism Challenging Antigypsyism – International Seminar, Spain



campaigns to make Roma youth issues visible, promote the importance of Roma youth participation and make the activism and self-organization of Roma and non-Roma youth visible.

The program of the seminar was starting from understanding the concept of antigypsyism, sharing participants' work and experiences, developing tools to challenge antigypsyism to concrete work on the international and national campaigns, including specific workshops on media and art. By the end of the seminar, participants developed ideas for a possible online campaign, which ideas were taken further to activities, such as to our advocacy training in September, in Budapest. The seminar was funded by the European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe as part of the 2020 Work Plan of Phiren Amenca. ■

European Youth Event (EYE) and Yo!Fest 2020

Phiren Amenca became a Yo!Fest partner as part of the European Youth Event 2020, which were both planned to run in Strasbourg, France, on 29 and 30 May. Phiren Amenca planned to organize a training around the EYE and an activity as part of the Yo!Fest!, called "Fighting for human rights", outside of the European Parliament. Unfortunately, the EYE and Yo!Fest were postponed and the training Phiren Amenca planned to run had to be cancelled.

The aims of the activity that Phiren Amenca planned on May 29, at the Yo!Fest were to raise awareness about (young) Roma people in Europe; to discuss antigypsyism with young people; and to develop possible actions to combat antigypsyism. Participants would have the possibility to learn about the largest European ethnic minority, the Roma people, discussing ways to fight discrimination, bring equality, and promote peace in the region.

The Yo!Fest is organised by the European Youth Forum since 2009 to support the mobilisation of young people to make change in Europe, and to provide annually a platform through which individuals, self-organising movements, grass-roots organisations and established networks come together to tackle youth issues, create solutions and take action for the world young people want to live in. In 2020 the Youth Forum teamed up with the European Parliament to bring Yo!Fest to the EYE2020 in Strasbourg, France,

and invite more than 10,000 young people to make the next move. If the pandemic had not interfered, Phiren Amenca would have participated at the EYE for the fourth time, as the network joins the event every second year (2014, 2016, 2018, 2020). ■

Roma Youth Advocacy Training

The Roma Youth Advocacy training took place between September 2-6, at the CEU (Central European University) in Budapest. Due to the extraordinary circumstances of this year during COVID-19, the Phiren Amenca team had to adapt, allowing for both in-person and online participation from advocates across Europe in terms of facilitators, speakers, and participants themselves.

The purpose of the training was to engage with Roma youth advocacy aims and methods, to further break down advocacy and educate on the tools needed to further campaigns on an institutional level. This included asking participants to pinpoint specifics surrounding their individual work, reflecting on successes and barriers during this process of pursuing Human Rights.

The participants shared their methods of advocacy and also about what they feel passionate about in their line of work and the targeted groups within this scope for initiating change. Further education was applied regarding the inner mechanisms of EU (European Union) policy-making by Phiren Amenca, supplying knowledge around the different institutions that make up the European Union and their individual powers in soliciting policy changes. This further included important information about the powers of the states within the context of EU powers, and sanctions that can be applied in response to Human Rights violations. Aims and outcomes from this session included the creation of recommendations to the EU Commission surrounding the needs of Roma Youth.

In order to gain a solid understanding about the needs and challenges of Roma youth in the EU, Simona Torocstoi presented her research to help substantiate recommendations and wider understanding regarding the situation of Roma Youth and to highlight gaps in formal research into this topic. Simona's research concluded that barriers for Roma Youth included lack of space for Roma Youth in mainstream structures, a lack of trust between

Roma Youth and institutions, negative attitudes towards young people in general, insufficient resources, and the minimal power given to young people to initiate change. To prepare participants for creating recommendations to the European Commission, participants were split to reflect on subject areas around Roma youth and intersectionality.

To ensure equal participation, topics surrounding intersectionality were discussed to establish the differing experiences of Roma youth regarding multiple-discrimination. Participants discussed within pairs and the wider group regarding their experiences of intersectionality in the context of Roma Rights, and developed recommendations to the EU Commission based on the dialogue. This was the same for the online group who developed recommendations based on Roma youth needs.

The recommendations created by both groups were presented amongst all participants, and a vote was made about which recommendations were going to be selected to pursue further in recordings for the European Commission.

A video of the recommendations was filmed during the training and was shared in October online with Romani, Spanish, Romanian, German, Bulgarian, Slovak and Hungarian subtitles.

The training was co-funded by the Roma Youth Voices project funded by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Commission and by the European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe as part of the 2020 Work Plan of Phiren Amenca. ■

Roma Youth Advocacy Training, Budapest



Terno Glaso – Voices of Roma Youth, Conference in Budapest

The conference was organized on June 27, 2020 to build strategies in cooperation with Roma youth against antigypsyism, and to speak about important topics such as the constraints of Roma youth participation in politics and public life; and the tasks and possible roles of the decision-makers and Roma youth in combating antigypsyism in political rhetoric.

The idea of a series of Roma Youth Conferences was created after the First National Roma Congress, which was organized by Phiren Amenca in 2019 September. The first Roma Congress was so successful that many people did reach out to our organization with the request to continue with the political meetings and organize them in the future too.

More than 30, 18-30 years old Roma young people participated in the conference, many of them have not been involved in any of the events of Phiren Amenca before. The conference gave the opportunity for participants to get to know each other with the help of non-formal educational methods. As an icebreaker, facilitators lead a game through which the participants were able to speak about important questions such as: do we need ethnic based politics, and National Roma self-governments? What would you do as the first Roma Prime Minister? But there was a serious question as well if we need to collectively apologize in the name of Roma communities if we know about a crime where the suspect is Roma.

A presentation about the system of the self-governments followed, introducing the history of the local municipalities and its forms and the steps of the election in the municipalities after the regime change.

As the presentation continued, Lajos Balogh, representative of a local municipality, shared his knowledge about the daily work in a municipality and different roles within it, besides the decision-making processes. Lajos was open to share his good

and bad experiences working in a municipality as the only Roma. Participants could discuss the society's responsibility besides the role of the individuals related to the issue that the Roma representatives are underrepresented in the decision-making bodies and processes. The colleagues of Phiren Amenca found it important to answer every question and listen carefully.

The afternoon started with a presentation about the terminology of antigypsyism, mentioning the different views among intellectuals, activists and in civilian circles and Phiren Amenca gave an explanation about why the network uses the term antigypsyism instead of anti-Romanyism or anti-Roma racism.

At the end of the day, we concluded the topic of antigypsyism with Vivien Brassói who is the lawyer of the European Roma Rights Center, and with a journalist Dóra Ónody-Molnár. At the closing, every participant had the chance to speak about their feelings about the conference, and it turned out that for many of them this was the first occasion when they could speak openly about Roma issues with young Roma with the help of Roma professionals. The young Roma stated that they need more conferences like this, and they want to work on specific issues in order to stand up against antigypsyism collectively in public life. ■

Terno Glaso – Voices of Roma Youth, Conference, Budapest



Terno Glaso – Voices of Roma Youth, Conference in Pécs

This conference was organized in Pécs, Hungary on September 18, and brought together young Roma and non-Roma people from Baranya county and to discuss possible tools to challenge antigypsyism and to think about possible strategies in the field of advocacy. Our primary goal is to create dialogue between the young participants in the long run, and to build alliances between them in order to have an effect on the decision-making processes. Participants were university students and youth workers, but there were some others from the local municipalities or as social workers.

After an interactive round of introductions, Phiren Amenca presented the first findings from the research, entitled “Roma Youth Participation in Europe: Challenges, Needs and Opportunities”.

After discussing the research itself and the main barriers for Roma youth participation followed Attila Hidvégi Balogh, journalist and the editor of the RomNetwebpage, which is the only news portal nowadays sharing all relevant information about Roma issues in Hungary. The topic of his presentation was about the media representation of Roma including some historical backgrounds and the effects of Roma representation in the media nowadays on our advocacy.

As part of the second part of the meeting, participants could have an open discussion with Szilvia Lakatos and Norbert Hegedűs. Szilvia is a senior lecturer in the University of Pécs, leader of the Kethanipe Association and she is active in the political life of Baranya county as a representative of the National Roma Self-Government. She shared her knowledge and experiences about the system of the self-governments and its decision-making processes, furthermore she encouraged the young Roma and non-Roma participants to enter the political sphere. She did not hide the failures of political life, mentioning how hard it is to get attention in politics as being young, especially if you are a young Roma woman.

Norbert Hegedűs shared his experiences as a young Roma man



Terno Glaso – Voices of Roma Youth, Conference, Pécs

active in local politics in Komló. During the discussion it turned out that the young Roma and non-Roma participants find it important to have space and time to talk openly about Roma issues, however they do not have the chance to brainstorm together about politics and public issues regarding Roma. They shared their wish to learn from professionals and from each other, since they think that being well-informed is the basis of the credible political and public life representation of Roma. ■

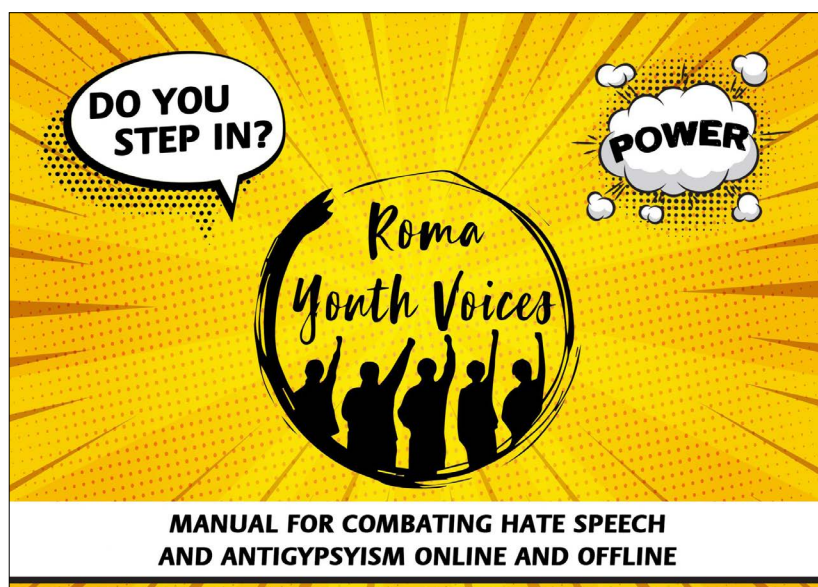
Create your own story! Advocate against prejudice!

Phiren Amenca, together with the Political Capital and Budapest Center, in December organized online trainings for young Roma from Hungary to combat extremist narratives against Roma. During the training, participants learned about how these narratives are structured, what are counter- and alternative narratives, and how they can be used in practice. Moreover, at the second phase of the training, participants developed their own mini-campaigns: participants developed their own messages about “what it means to be brave for them” and they will create a short video with their slogans in the beginning of 2021. ■

DO YOU STEP IN? – Manual for combating hate speech and antigypsyism online and offline

Phiren Amenca published a manual for combating hate speech in December 2020. The specific topic for this publication, hate speech, was chosen because of its significant effect especially on the lives of young Roma. In the European context, Roma and LGBTQIA+ communities are primary targets of hate speech, not only on racist websites, but also in mainstream and social media and in political communication. With this publication, we would like to support Roma and non-Roma organizations and activists to better understand, recognize and effectively react when they encounter hate speech. This publication includes background information on the concept, non-formal educational methods, tips and tricks to use with young Roma and non-Roma people on how to be active against hate speech. At the end of the publication a glossary helps readers to understand the different concepts and terms which could support building discourses and activism against hate speech. The publication was created as part of the Roma Youth Voices project, coordinated by Phiren Amenca and funded by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014-2020) of the DG Justice, European Commission.

The publication can be found [here](#). ■



Best European Roma Youth Project Award 2020

The competition for the "Best European Roma Youth Project Award 2020" was run by Phiren Amenca and ternYpe International Network and was open to projects and initiatives of Roma and non-Roma NGOs and informal groups which ran between January 1, 2018, and December 31, 2019, in the EU, the Western Balkans, Turkey, Ukraine, and Moldova.

As international networks, it is important for us to promote and support projects and initiatives which empower Roma youth all around Europe. Because of that, and to raise the visibility and recognition of Roma youth work, we launched a competition in November 2019 for the "most empowering Roma youth projects

and initiatives". We have received inspiring applications from 19 countries, by 33 NGOs and several informal groups supporting the integration of young Roma concerning employment, social services, education and training, encouraging and supporting young Roma to become active members of social and political life. Many projects took an intersectional approach working with the ones suffering multiple discrimination, others engaged with different forms of media and art in order to raise awareness about issues concerning Roma youth. In April 2020, around the International Roma Day, we introduced each applicant through our social media channels and on April 8, we launched the Best Five Projects on our website. [Applicants can be found here](#).

"Youth for Youth" Project

The "Youth for Youth" project, run by Phiren Amenca - Walk with us from Montenegro, was selected unanimously by the four members of the International Award Committee. The award ceremony was planned to be organized in March in the European Parliament, as part of the EU Roma Week, but because of the pandemic it had to be postponed. The award ceremony was held online on December 10, 2020 as part of "The Role and Power of Roma Youth in Mainstream Structures" conference and the Award was presented by Helena Dalli, European Commissioner for Equality. Commissioners' video message for the applicants and the announcement of the winner can be found [here](#). Video of the winner Walk with us – Phiren Amenca about their winner project "Youth for Youth" can be found [here](#).

"Develop Yourself to Help Others Develop"

The Award Committee gave a Special Prize to Ani Kovaceva and for her project „Develop Yourself to Help Others Develop“, appreciating her initiative as a young individual. Ani is a 16-year old Roma girl from Kyustendil, Bulgaria. Her passion for education and success, as well as her ambition to help others made her start her own initiative. For three years Ani has been teaching English to children aged 7-13 from her community.



Best European Roma Youth Projects 2020 Booklet

Phiren Amenca has created a booklet which contains some unique and empowering European Roma youth projects selected from the Best European Roma Youth Project 2020 Award applications. The booklet can be found [here](#). With the Award and the publication, we want to give visibility and recognition to organizations, NGOs, and initiatives of Roma and non-Roma young people, which contribute their efforts for the inclusion of Roma youth and for equality in our societies. ■

“Roma youth participation in Europe: Challenges, needs and opportunities” Research

The research entitled “Roma youth participation in Europe: Challenges, needs and opportunities” is run by RGDTS-Phiren Amenca and ternType as part of their Roma Youth Voices Project and was kicked off in spring 2019.

The aim of the research is to better understand: the impact of antigypsyism on Roma youth participation (volunteering, politics, civil society work), the concerns and needs faced by young Roma people and the opportunities for participation for young Roma. In addition, this research explores the preferences of Roma youth when it comes to civic and political participation. Finally, this research looks into the real and perceived obstacles specific to Roma youth and their needs for effective participation.

The research is based on an online questionnaire for young Roma, with NGOs and on focus group interviews. Between November 2019 and April 2020, 290 individual and almost 40 NGO responses were collected through our surveys from EU member states and focus group interviews targeting young Roma were conducted in partner countries in Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Kosovo, North-Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain and Ukraine.

The research will be published in four different sections: the perspectives of Roma youth, the youth and (pro)Roma NGOs perspectives, outcomes of the focus groups and a synthesis report and each of them will include specific recommendations based on the outcomes of the surveys and interviews to relevant stakeholders. The final research will be published by March 2021. The research is led by Simona Torotcoi, professional researcher, and part of the Roma Youth Voices Project, funded by Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Commission.



Advocacy and Partnerships

EU Roma Week 2020

Policymakers, experts, activists and organisations concerned with persistent antigypsyism in Europe collaborating for five years to organise the Roma Week in the European Parliament in Brussels ahead of the International Roma Day. Phiren Amenca, as an official partner of the Roma Week, planned to organize a breakfast with MEPs and young Roma, a round table discussion and Award ceremony as part of the official program between March 23-26 2020.

Due to coronavirus precautions taken by the European Parliament in February, the Roma Week was postponed but unfortunately it could not be held in 2020.

Events planned to run by Phiren Amenca in cooperation with partners and with the European Parliament Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup (ARDI) as part of the Roma Week Program:

Breakfast with MEPs and Young Roma: MEPs and Commission officials would have sat together with a small group of young Roma advocates to discuss the challenges for Europe's young Roma in an informal but stimulating setting. Topics that would have been discussed are strategic investments into the empowerment and participation of Roma youth in the post-2020 European Framework for National Inclusion Strategies period, strengthening of Roma youth political participation, and fight against antigypsyism.

The Roma Young Generation: So Keres Europa!?: The round table titled “So Keres Europa!?” (in Romanes “What’s up, Europe!?”) aims would have been to present the challenges that European Young Roma face in their everyday lives, based on a Europe-wide ongoing research among Roma youth organisations, but also to seek for new opportunities for young Roma people. The event would have given space to discuss the role of Roma Youth in the post-2020 implementation of the European Framework for National Inclusion Strategies of the European Commission as well as to present what's next after the end of the Roma Youth Action Plan of the Council of Europe.

Best Roma Youth Project Award: Phiren Amenca International Network and ternYpe International Roma Youth Network would have awarded for the very first time the "Best Roma Youth Project Award 2020" as part of the EU Romani Week in order to promote Roma Youth Participation in Europe. Representatives of the best five project ideas have been invited to take part in the EU Romani Week and the seminar organized by the Roma Youth Networks in Brussels between 22-27 March 2020 but both the award and the seminar had to be cancelled. The Award ceremony, as previously mentioned, then was held online on December 10. 2020 and the best Roma Youth Project and the Award was presented by Helena Dalli, European Commissioner for Equality. ■






Hrvatsko predsjedanje
Croatian Presidency of the
Vijeće Europe unijski
Council of the European Union

AGENDA

Monday 23 March

18:30 RomnoPower: Opening Ceremony
Bavarian Permanent Representation to the EU, Rue Wiertz 77, Brussels

Tuesday 24 March

08:00 Breakfast with MEPs and Young Roma
Members restaurant, European Parliament

09:00 Post-2020 EU Framework on Roma Equality and Inclusion
ASP 3E2, European Parliament

13:00 Antigypsyism - Combating negative attitudes towards people with Romani background in Europe
ASP 3E2, European Parliament

17:00 The Roma Young Generation: So Keres Europa!?
ASP 5G1, European Parliament

19:00 Best Roma Youth Project Award
MEP Salon, European Parliament

Wednesday 25 March

09:00 Making EU funds and financial instruments work for Roma: smart investments for better outcomes
ASP 5E2, European Parliament

13:30 Roma inclusion in the Western Balkans, 2020 challenges and opportunities
ASP 5E2, European Parliament

17:00 Job opportunities for Roma people - New challenges related to Roma employment
ASP 5E2, European Parliament

19:00 Movie screening - "Gipsy Queen"
Room tbc

Thursday 26 March

09:00 Roma Environmental justice - lack of environmental services, exposure to pollution and health impacts
ASP 5E2, European Parliament

12:30 Reproductive rights of Roma Women and Girls
ASP 5E2, European Parliament

15:00 Exchange of views in LIBE Committee about the implementation report on National Roma Integration Strategies – Combating negative attitudes towards people with Romani background in Europe.
Room tbc

17:00 Documentary film and Closing of the Romani Week 2020
ASP 1E2, European Parliament

2020 EU ROMANI WEEK

ROMNO KURKO

23 – 26 March, Brussels

Romeo Franz | Peter Pollák | Terry Reintke
Cornelia Ernst | Rareș Bogdan | Livia Járóka
Pierrette Herzberger-Fofana | Tomáš Zdechovský
Evin Incir | Rasmus Andresen | Samira Rafaela
Anna Júlia Donáth | Malin Björk | Dragoș Pișlaru
Sergey Lagodinsky | Lucia Ďuriš Nicholsonová

European Parliament Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup
European Commission
European Economic and Social Committee
Council of Europe
European Roma Grassroots Organizations Network
Roma Entrepreneurship Development Initiative
Open Society European Policy Institute
Centre of Resources for Social Inclusion CRIS
International Roma Youth Network ternYpe
European Public Health Alliance
Fundación Secretariado Gitano
Hildegard Lagrenne Foundation
European Environmental Bureau
Phiren Amenca
RomnoKher
Center for Reproductive Rights
Roma Active Albania
European Roma Information Office
E-Romnja
Plataforma Khetane del Movimiento Asociativo
Gitano del Estado Español

An exhibition market will be organized from 23rd to 26th March in the Yehudi Menuhin Mezzanine, European Parliament

























Roma Youth Statement on the renewed EU Roma Framework up to 2030

On October 7 2020, the European Commission published the long-awaited renewed EU Roma strategic framework for equality, inclusion and participation for 2020-2030. Phiren Amenca has advocated for years that young Roma are clearly included in the new strategic document and we welcome the efforts of the European Commission in this direction.

“Phiren Amenca welcomes the European Commission’s efforts to include Roma youth and achieve equality for them in the areas of employment, education, training and participation. We remind Member States that it is not enough to involve young Roma: Roma youth’s place is at the forefront of these processes. At the end of the day, all these policies concern young Roma the most.”

- Marietta Herfort, Director, Phiren Amenca International Network

“The new Framework recognizes the importance to invest into the empowerment and participation especially of Roma youth and Roma women. Voluntary and civic activism is an important contribution to combat stereotypes and antigypsyism in our societies. Therefore, the European Commission and Member States need to strengthen and fund the work of civil society, especially of Roma youth organizations.”

- Vivian Isberg, TernYpe International Roma Youth Network

The new Roma Strategic Framework clearly addresses Roma youth, in particular in the context of Roma youth with regards to NEETs, employment, education and participation. As Roma youth organizations we will advocate to strengthen even more the priority for investing into the empowerment and capacity-building

of Roma youth and Roma youth civil society; strengthening the role of Roma youth in decision-making as well as in Roma and youth policies and structures. It is now in the hands of the Member States to implement this document through clear, targeted, adequate, accessible and measurable policies, programs and projects at national and local levels.

In this regard:



We call on the Member States to adopt ambitious and binding Council Recommendations and to show the necessary political will to combat antigypsyism and to promote Roma youth empowerment and participation in all fields.



We call on the Member States to explicitly address young Roma in the renewed national Roma strategies and to invite Roma youth organizations to fully participate in their development.



We call on the Member States to address young Roma as active agents of change. Together with national authorities we can better formulate policies that adequately address the needs of young Roma through a mainstream set of measures with focus on young Roma and not only under the national Roma Strategies but also in mainstream policies and programs.



We call on the national governments and national Roma contact points and structures to involve young Roma as experts. Roma youth organizations have to be involved in the National Roma Platforms and in important consultation mechanisms concerning Roma and youth issues.



We call on the national governments and national Roma contact points and structures to seek an active dialogue with Roma youth organisations and to seek ways not only to decrease the number of Roma youth in NEETs but to ensure lasting mechanisms of empowerment and participation of young Roma. We call on national governments to allocate national and European funding to invest into Roma youth organisations as engines of change.



Beyond the European Commission, Member States and National Roma Contact Points, we call upon the European Youth Forum, international youth organizations and the National Youth Councils to support the successful implementation of the new EU Roma Framework, especially when it comes to the empowerment and participation of Roma youth. These structures have a responsibility to ensure the meaningful participation of Roma youth individuals and organizations in their mainstream structures.



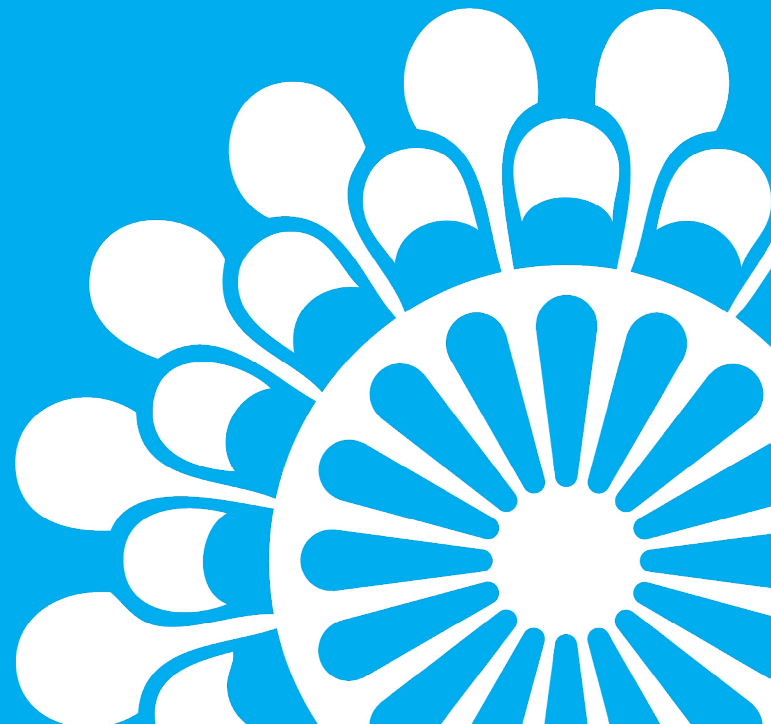
We call on the European Youth Forum to initiate a Resolution with its Member organizations to engage its work on challenging antigypsyism and discrimination against young Roma people and to support the development and implementation of youth policies in line with the needs of Roma youth. There are no targeted or mainstream youth policies or structures that involve or represent Roma youth issues and the voice of Roma young people. Therefore, there is an immediate need for a double mainstreaming approach in which both targeted and mainstream youth policies target and involve Roma youth.



We call on the EU to ensure a coordination mechanism on Roma Youth involving other international organisations such as Council of Europe, ODIHR/OSCE and the United Nations, but also a number of European networks and national organisations working on Roma Youth.

We believe that in order for young Roma to have equal opportunities, these actors must be equally committed for the empowerment and participation of Roma youth.

This declaration was initiated on October 12, 2020 on the occasion of the Digital high-level conference 'EU Roma strategic framework for equality, inclusion and participation' 2020-2030 organized by the German EU Presidency and the European Commission to present and discuss the new initiative. ■



Digital high-level conference 'EU Roma strategic framework for equality, inclusion and participation' 2020-2030

On October 7, 2020 the European Commission announced its renewed strategic policy on Roma up to 2030: The EU Strategic Framework for equality, participation and inclusion then the German EU Presidency and the Commission launched the 'EU Roma strategic framework for equality, inclusion and participation' 2020-2030 through an online high-level conference on October 12, 2020.



At the kick off of the conference our video, [Change is coming! Roma Youth Voices!](#), was presented where we demanded that the voice of Roma youth is heard.

Then the presentation and discussion of the new initiative was organised around four panels, which aimed to convey different perspectives on the topics through short statements. On behalf of Phiren Amenca, Marietta Herfort was invited as a speaker of Panel 2, 'Promoting participation by empowerment and trust'. The aim of the panel was to give a voice to different stakeholders, in particular European and national civil society organisations, to discuss best practices and key challenges related to equal participation of Roma, another main target of the new initiative. Our network representative said the following at the online conference: "As we can all experience, not only Europe but the whole world has changed. Serious political and social changes are taking place and this is affecting all our societies. The route, which we followed with the EU leadership's GPS', now has its new signal and we are in a period of redesigning. We have experienced that unexpected situations can transform the world and we need to adapt to new challenges. But there are situations that we need to consciously plan and there are directions we must follow. The equal participation of Roma and Roma youth must be in that direction.

One of the main reasons of the failure of the previous strategies is the deep-rooted antigypsyism and the fact that European Roma communities have never had, or have had very little, advocacy power. The practical experience is that strategies appear only and exclusively in state-level political communication or in media statements, which are voiced by politicians as colorful slogans.

Despite the fact that good ideas may be born, no results can be seen in the practical implementation outside of one or two micro-level sample programs, and they do not and cannot have a serious or stimulating social effect. Roma communities do not experience a noticeable improvement in their living conditions, social status and participation. The billions of euros are distributed in the Member States on the basis of good relations with government actors or political commitment and loyalty. In several countries, programs are not planned, implemented and monitored with the involvement of Roma, Roma youth and civil society. This must be completely changed.

Programs need to be developed on the basis of needs assessments with local communities, including Roma youth and Roma people from diverse backgrounds. The European Commission and the Member States must guarantee that Roma youth have a major say in the design and implementation of the National Roma Integration Strategies. Member States should include "Roma youth" as a specific target group under their Roma and mainstream strategies and develop specific measures targeting the needs of young Roma people. Topics, such as education, employment, healthcare, housing, and equal treatment have to be a discussion involving young Roma.

Real participation and social inclusion will only be achieved if Roma youth are given a role at all levels of society and can play a role in decision-making. We always hear that Roma youth are the future of Europe, but now we want to see that Roma youth have a voice in the European future." ■

"Change is Coming! Roma Youth Voices!" video presented at the conference





The Role and Power of Roma Youth in Mainstream Structures

How to include Roma youth in policy making and mainstream structures of power? This and other similar questions were discussed on December 10, 2020 during the Roma Youth Voices online event "The role and power of Roma Youth in mainstream structures". The live discussion began after the Best Roma Youth Project 2020 Awarding, announced by Helena Dallí, European Commissioner on Equality. More than 20 representatives of Roma civil society from all over Europe were present online at the meeting, while participants in the discussion were representatives of the European Commission, the Council of Europe and the European Youth Forum. The event was live streamed at the Roma Youth Voices Facebook page, to make it accessible also for the wider public.

Anna Daróczy from Phiren Amenca International Network kicked off the discussion by making a point on the importance of Roma Youth participation: "Young Roma need to be involved in creating mainstream European and national youth policies and programs, because they are part of the youth of Europe. And they have to be at the table when decisions about Roma are made at all levels, not only as beneficiaries, but also as full members with decision-making power, because they are the future of Roma communities.

This involvement does not come naturally as our survey on Roma youth challenges and perspectives from 2020 shows it". Anna Daróczy stated that the Roma youth participation is blocked at the very beginning due to the lack of information about opportunities. 70% of the young Roma respondents from the survey, mentioned above, that there are no Roma youth civil society organizations to turn to when needed.

The information and the structures have to become more accessible, and young Roma should be enabled to make use of them.

- Anna Daróczy,
Phiren Amenca

"Many young Roma have not even heard about programs which are in place for their benefit, such as the Youth Guarantee, the EU Youth Dialogue, or the European Solidarity Corps. The calls do not reach them, they are hard to find, the opportunities are not „advertised", and their policy language is inaccessible for many of them. International and intergovernmental actors should do a better job at reaching out to young Roma, because at this point, the lowest level of participation, which is access to information, is not being fulfilled. The information and the structures have to become more accessible, and young Roma should be enabled to make use of them" – Anna stated.

She concluded that at this point Roma youth are rarely represented within the European Commission structures, in intergovernmental bodies, National Youth Councils and student/youth parliaments but also within Roma-policy making structures such as the National Roma Platforms and Roma Civil Society Monitors.

Lavinia Banu from the Roma Team of the European Commission began her intervention by saying that the 2018 Monitor of the implementation of the National Roma integration strategies revealed that for Roma youth there was very little progress in access to the labour market, little progress when it comes to education, but still large percentage of school segregation and that the issue of Roma youth representation within decision-making processes and structures has not yet been properly tackled. 69% of the respondents of an online consultation of the European Commission highlighted that there is not enough done in the area of Roma youth participation and removing the structural barriers hindering it. The Commission's Anti-Racism Action Plan up to 2025

is a very important tool that is relevant to Roma inclusion within structures, Lavinia Banu said.

Moreover, the European Commission intends to increase the diversity of its own staff as part of the modernization of its forthcoming human resources strategy. A Diversity and Inclusion Office will be created within the DG Human Resources and Security, and for the first time ever there will be conducted a survey (voluntarily and anonymous) among the European Commission staff including questions on race and ethnicity. Related to this, together with Member States, the European Commission is working on the development of a new Equality and Monitoring Tool which might expose barriers for applicants who wish to work at the Commission. Lavinia Banu mentioned that the Commission is also making steps to increase the diversity within its Blue Book Internship Programme and this might lead to more Roma youth taking advantage of it.

Florencia van Houdt, Head of the Youth, Volunteer Solidarity and Traineeships Office at DG Education, European Commission, stated that indeed everything starts with information. For this purpose, the Commission has developed the European Youth Portal which aims to be the single access point for opportunities for young people. There young people can find information about EU youth programmes such as the European Solidarity Corps, Discover EU and more relevant information.

When it comes to the EU Youth strategy, Florencia van Houdt stated that it is built around 'Engage, Connect and Empower' and that it is for everyone, and yet there should be a thought for those who cannot access it. "The involvement of Roma Youth within the European Youth Forum is a big step for the mobilization and involvement of Roma Youth in the EU Youth Dialogue, yet we need to see how do we include organizations so that we make this dialogue more inclusive using different consultation channels and also be part of the national working groups" the representative of DG EAC said. Florencia van Houdt announced that the EU has set aside more than 24 billion euros for the Erasmus Plus and a billion for the ESC up to 2027 and this will become a reality by the end of 2020 when the negotiations on the new EU budget are concluded. This is a nearly doubling of the Erasmus program funds making it a significant source of opportunities for young people to learn, travel, engage in multicultural informal learning and also for civil society cooperation.

'Inclusion, digital and green' are the three words best describing the priorities of the new Erasmus. Florencia van Houdt mentioned that EC invests in knowledge and expertise – the Salto Inclusion and Diversity team advises national agencies on how to reach out to different target groups, how to support activities, what are the criteria for assessment of activities, what kind of different costs different groups are facing that should be reimbursed. "I am sure the colleagues from Salto will be interested to listen to you and your reports and to take them in their day-to-day work" added van Houdt.

Georgina Laboda, Rapporteur on Roma issues at the Advisory Council on Youth and at the Joint Council on Youth at the Council of Europe, added to the conversation that after the end of the Roma Youth Action Plan in 2019, this year the Council of Europe established a Task Force Meeting on Roma Youth participation with the involvement of Roma NGOs and Roma experts. "We are at the level of preparing a Ministerial Recommendation on Roma Youth. We have a big hope for this policy, especially because it was prepared with the involvement of young Roma and Roma Youth organizations" Georgina said. She continued by saying that youth organizations can apply for funding at the European Youth Foundation.

A welcome video address by **Benjamin Gunther**, a Board Member of the European Youth Forum, was part of the discussion. Benjamin congratulated Phiren Amenca for becoming the 106th member of the European Youth Forum in November 2020. "We want to understand how youth organizations can appropriately respond to the increasingly diverse social context of young people, especially to Roma youth. We continuously reflect on how to improve the accessibility of our events and structures. We have recently started a study on Equal opportunities that is helping us to understand what the key challenges for different groups to accessing our events and our organization as such are". The representative of the European Youth Forum added that in November 2020 the General Assembly adopted a Resolution on Combating Antigypsyism and Roma Youth Participation which makes the European Youth Forum an ally at the fight against antigypsyism.



The full discussion can be watched [here](#). ■



university. Only 34% of the Roma Youth have benefited from Erasmus Plus while merely 14% have been part of the European Volunteer Service/Solidarity Corps. These and other striking numbers are part of the preliminary findings of the 'Roma Youth: Challenges and Perspectives' survey conducted by Phiren Amencia Network and partners presented at a special zoom talk on July 2, 2020 as part of the 'Roma and Politics Talk Series'. The live discussion was attended by Dr. Simona Torotcoi, author of the research on Roma youth, MEP Romeo Franz, Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup (ARDI) and Member of the CULT Committee of the European Parliament, and Mr Rui Gomes, Head of the Education and Training division at the Youth Department of the Council of Europe. ■

Roma Youth: Challenges and Perspectives live talk with Helena Dallí, European Commissioner for Equality

"My advice to you is to keep active and lead the way. Your activism is very important for us, and we want you to be on board, we want you to be around the table when we are drafting our policies in this area" said Helena Dallí, European Commissioner on Equality at the online conversation 'Roma Youth Empowerment and Participation: Key Towards Effective Roma Inclusion' organised by the Phiren Amencia Network and streamed online on July 20, 2020. The discussion was around the importance of inclusion of Roma Youth in the new 2030 EU Roma Framework and in other mainstream policies and programmes. ■

Roma & Politics Talk Series

Online conversation with Ismael Cortes, Member of the Spanish Parliament

As an opening event of the Roma & Politics talk series, Phiren Amencia organized a live conversation on April 29, 2020 with Ismael Cortés, Member of the Spanish Parliament to gain a better insight to the work of a Roma Congressman and to discuss about the participation of Roma (youth) in Spain and in Europe. You will also have an online space to address your questions. The moderator, Anna Carballo from FAGiC (Federation of Roma Associations in Catalonia) asked him about his work as a Roma politician in a world where there are only few Roma representatives in politics and decision-making. ■

Roma Youth: Challenges and Perspectives Live Talk with MEP Romeo Franz

95% of the respondents have observed and encountered discriminatory words, behaviours and gestures directed at Roma, while 68 % have encountered racism while attending schools/



Civil Society Consultations

In 2020 Phiren Amenca became an equal partner at the coalition of civil society organizations working for Roma equality and inclusion in Europe: Alliance against Antigypsyism. Together with our partners from ERGO Network, FSG Spain, EPHA, OSEPI Brussels, German Central Council for Sinti and Roma, ENAR and other organizations, we have contributed to a number of civil society consultations with the Roma Team of the European Commission and the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA). These consultations reflected the new EU Framework for Roma equality, participation and inclusion up to 2030 and its Indicators Framework elaborated by FRA. The Position of the Phiren Amenca with regards to the inclusion of Roma youth at the EU Roma Framework up to 2030 can be found [here](#). ■

Council of Europe's Task Force on Roma Youth Participation

The Joint Council on Youth (CMJ) set up a Task Force in 2020, as a follow-up on the results of the Roma Youth Action Plan, to prepare proposals for the continuation of the work on Roma youth participation in the 2020-2021 biennium and within the 2030 Youth Strategy of the Council of Europe. There were two online meetings held in 2020, the first meeting between June 18-19 then between September 15-16, with the participation of Roma youth representatives and youth policy experts. The final meeting was held in January 2021.

The main role of the task force was the preparation of a Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers on Roma youth



participation, by identifying the possible substance of the recommendations and their relevance for youth (and Roma) policy stakeholders in the Council of Europe Member states. To support this process experts from Roma youth organisations and networks, from the European Youth Forum, from the Advisory Council on Youth, from the European Steering Committee on Youth, from the Committee of Experts on Roma and Traveller Issues (ADI-ROM), from the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities and from the Education Department of the Council of Europe had thematic working groups to reflect on the gaps for Roma youth participation.

In parallel with that, the Youth Department of the Council of Europe run a research project by Margareta Matache, entitled "Roma Youth Participation and Inclusion in Standards, Policies, and Programmes in Europe" to serve the Youth Department and the Task Force to formulate arguments and suggestions to the CMJ in view of preparing the Recommendation.

Besides the existing Council of Europe's Roma youth-related standards, policy, and projects, the work of other intergovernmental organisations, the author conducted interviews with representatives of Roma and pro-Roma international youth organisations and relied on the data collected and analysed by Phiren Amenca in the study "Roma youth participation in Europe: Challenges, needs and opportunities". Additionally Phiren Amenca, for this report, collected data through focus groups with Roma young people in Albania, Kosovo, North Macedonia, and Serbia.

The conclusions and proposals of the task force were finalized in early January 2021 which will be sent to the Joint Council on Youth in March-April 2021 then the CMJ can decide to adopt the conclusions and make decisions for the further work on the Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers on Roma youth participation. ■

Roma and Health Inequities: Online Discussion

The European Youth Parliament organized an online panel discussion about how youth activism can play a part in reducing discrimination and achieving greater inclusion of young Roma on November 24, afternoon.

Speakers were the Young European of the Year Maria Atanasova, and Anna Darózci from Phiren Amenca, moderated by Andrea Orza, member of the European Youth Parliament. The discussion was focusing on Roma youth health inequities, and the conversation about social determinants of health, and how health issues are often a manifestation of societal and structural disadvantages that affect individuals' and the population's quality of life.

Moreover, the aim of the panel discussion was to explore the link between discrimination and the barriers to health faced by Roma communities and specific strategies to ensure equitable access for Roma, and will try to further understand how youth activism can play a part in reducing stigmatisation and discrimination and achieving greater inclusion of young Roma.

The European Youth Parliament's mission is to inspire and empower young Europeans to become open-minded, tolerant and active citizens. The European Youth Parliament (EYP) is one of the largest European platforms for intercultural encounters, political educational work and the exchange of ideas among young people. The EYP is a unique educational programme which brings together young people from all over Europe to discuss current topics in a parliamentary setting. As a network of independent associations, EYP is present in 40 European countries and organises almost 600 events every year. ■



Membership in Mainstream Structures

Advisory Council on Youth of the Council of Europe

Georgina Laboda, director of the Phiren Amenca board, became a member of the Advisory Council on Youth (AC) 2020-2021 of the Council of Europe, responsible for Roma and other autochthonous minorities, together with Pia Slogar from the Youth of European Nationalities (YEN). On top of that, Georgina was elected at the Joint Council on Youth (CMJ) as Rapporteur on Roma Issues. Through her mandates, as a young Roma woman, she keeps Roma and Traveller youth issues high on the agenda of the Council of Europe.

The Council of Europe Youth Department's work is based on the co-management system, which is a partnership between non-governmental youth organisations and governments. The co-management system allows the Youth Department to have representatives from non-governmental youth organisations working together with government officials to establish the work priorities of the youth sector and make recommendations for future budgets and programmes. Such proposals are then adopted by the Committee of Ministers, the Council of Europe's decision-making body. In this context, the Advisory Council on Youth, the non-governmental partner in the co-management

system, also has the task of formulating opinions and proposals regarding youth issues within the Council of Europe.

The Advisory Council is composed of 30 members: 13 representatives of international non-governmental youth organisations (INGYOs); 7 representatives of national youth councils (NYCs) designated by the Committee of Ministers on the proposal of the European Youth Forum and 10 representatives of non-governmental youth organisations or networks not members of the European Youth Forum, designated by the Committee of Ministers on the proposal of the Council of Europe's Secretary General. Phiren Amenca was able to nominate Georgina as a member of the Advisory Council on Youth as a representative of a non-governmental organization and network. ■

European Youth Forum Membership

The General Assembly 2019 of the Phiren Amenca International Network in Brussels took the decision that the Network will apply for membership at the European Youth Forum. A presentation



by the Membership officer of the European Youth Forum as part of the assembly program was provided, then the board and members agreed that since, so far, there have not been Roma youth organizations involved as members of the European Youth Forum, this will be beneficial for mainstreaming the Roma youth issues, better inclusion and participation. The coordination office and the members of Phiren Amenca undertook several steps to fulfill the application process requirements of the European Youth Forum. The application process took more than a year, documentation of all kinds and several interviews with the secretariat of the Phiren Amenca Network, the Board and the Members. As a result, during the online General Assembly of the European Youth Forum in December 2020, the membership

application of the Phiren Amenca International Network was accepted and the organization became the first ever Roma Youth NGO among more than 100 members. Besides becoming a member with a candidate-status, Phiren Amenca, together with the European Union of Jewish Students, succeeded in putting forward a ["Resolution on combating antigypsyism and the inclusion and equal participation of Roma youth"](#) that was adopted by the European Youth Forum. As a result all national youth councils and international organizations - members of the Forum - became familiarised with the struggles and challenges of Roma youth.

The European Youth Forum (YFJ) is an international non-profit association and serves as a platform and advocacy group of the national youth councils and international non-governmental youth organisations in Europe. It strives for youth rights in international institutions such as the European Union, the Council of Europe, and the United Nations. The YFJ works in the fields of youth policy and youth work development and represents the views and opinions of youth organizations in all relevant policy areas and promotes the cross-sectoral nature of youth policy towards a variety of institutional actors. ■

National Roma Youth Platforms

The series of online National Roma Youth Platforms in 2020 aimed at bringing together young Roma, civil society organizations, policy makers and politicians to discuss together the most burning issues young Roma have, challenges they face and to work on solutions together. After several offline platforms in 2019, in 2020 the Romanian, Spanish, Slovak and Bulgarian events had to be online but still with a great number of young participants and thousands of viewers on social media.

The Romanian Roma Youth Platform took place on November 24, being organized together with our Romanian partner E-Romnja. Participants in the discussion were young Roma and representatives of a number of Roma youth organizations from Romania, the president of the National Roma Agency, a representative of the

European Commission, a representative of the Romanian Youth Council and of the Romanian National Agency coordinating the Erasmus+ Programme. As a result, Roma Youth organizations addressed the National Roma Contact Point with suggestions how the newly developed Romanian Roma Strategy can better reflect and include Roma youth.

The Slovak Roma Youth Platform took place on November 26 and it was organized together with our Slovak member Association of Young Roma, and involved the National Roma Contact Point, representative of the European Commission, the Slovak Youth Council and the Slovak National Agency coordinating the Erasmus+ Programme as well as young Roma people. As a main outcome of the meeting, an agreement that a young Roma should be hired at the National Roma Contact Point was achieved.

The Spanish Roma Youth Platform took place on November 28, organized together with our Spanish member FAGiC. The platform involved young Roma people from different areas of Spain, including the Canary Islands, who discussed issues affecting Roma youth generally and how they can become united and stronger as a force for change.

The Bulgarian Roma Youth Platform had to be moved to 2021

and it was organized together with Centre Amalipe, Arete Youth Foundation and the Standing Roma Conference on January 29, online. The platform involved the National Roma Contact Point and 70 young Roma people and representatives of Roma organizations; it had a number of interventions from the perspective of young Roma. As a result detailed recommendations for inclusion of young Roma to the National Strategy were provided.

The main aim of the national Roma youth platforms was, as its name says, to create a platform for dialogue amongst Roma youth and decision-makers. In the case of Spanish event, it was more a preparatory phase where mainly Roma young people came together and agreed on issues that affected them, while in the other countries the primary target group was the national Roma contact point, as we considered it important to raise awareness of Roma youth challenges, which need to be addressed by the national Roma strategies.

The challenges and needs of young Roma have been confirmed not just by young Roma who have been participating in the meetings but also by a research, conducted by Phiren Amencia and partners between 2019-2020, entitled "Roma youth participation in Europe: Challenges, needs and opportunities". ■

Romanian Roma Youth Platform, 2020

Slovak Roma Youth Platform, 2020

PLATFORMA NAȚIONALĂ DE TINERI ROMI ȘI TINERE ROME

24 NOIEMBRIE, 2020. 14:00 - 15:30

 /ROMA YOUTH VOICES

ÎȘI AU LOC ORGANIZAȚIILE DE
TINERET ROME ÎN DEZVOLTAREA
DE STRATEGII ROME
LA NIVEL NAȚIONAL?

CUM POT CONTRIBUI TINERII
ROMI ȘI TINERELE ROME LA
POLITICI PUBLICE?



NÁRODNÁ PLATFORMA RÓMSKEJ MLÁDEŽE

26. NOVEMBRA 2020, 16:00 - 17:30

 /ROMA YOUTH VOICES

MAJÚ MLADÍ RÓMOVIA A RÓMSKE
MLÁDEŽNÍCKE ORGANIZÁCIE
MIESTO V ROZVOJI NÁRODNÝCH
RÓMSKYCH STRATÉGIÍ?

AKO BY MOHLI MLADÍ RÓMOVIA
PRISPIEŤ K POLITIKE A
SPOLOČENSKÝM ZMENÁM
A ČO SI TO VYŽADUJE?



International Online Campaigns

#ActForRomaLives

Jewish Rights are Roma Rights and Roma Rights are Jewish Rights!

In a joint call in June 2020, initiated by the European Union of Jewish Students (EUJS) and Phiren Amenca as well as with members of ARDI – The Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup and WGAS – The European Parliament Working Group on Antisemitism, we were declaring our solidarity with the Roma community and call on the EU and national authorities to intervene in the face of dangerous discrimination. As part of the campaign an [open letter](#) was published addressed to President von der Leyen, President of the European Commission; President Sassoli, President of the European Parliament and to Commissioner Dalli, European Commissioner for Equality.

The campaign was initiated because already in the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, the situation of many Romani communities across Central and Eastern Europe has deteriorated drastically. The campaign raised the awareness that most of the estimated 12 million Roma people in Europe live in precarious situations without access to clean water, adequate housing, health services, or the financial means for good nutrition, which means, Roma people are especially exposed to the severe consequences of a COVID-19 infection and precarious Romani settlements risk becoming hot spots of the pandemic.

Besides the open letter, the organizations asked people to share a picture of themselves, holding the poster created for this campaign on social media using the hashtag “#Act4RomaLives”. Besides the followers on our social media channels, the campaign was supported by US Ambassador to Slovakia, MEP Romeo Franz, Co-President of ARDI, MEP Sergey Lagodinsky, Vice-Chair of WGAS, MEP Brando Benifei, Board Member of WGAS and by MEP Anna Donáth, Renew Europe. ■

August 2 - Roma Holocaust Memorial Day

On the occasion of August 2, Roma Holocaust Memorial Day 2020, young Roma and non-Roma people shared their messages about the importance of remembrance, challenging antigypsyism and youth activism. Phiren Amenca, ternYpe and its partners, as part of their Roma Youth Voices project, ran an online campaign around August 2, Roma Holocaust Memorial Day and 30 young Roma and non-Roma people from Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Spain spread their messages and shared their thoughts about the importance of Holocaust remembrance, Roma History and remembrance education.

*Today, on the 2nd of August,
I'm commemorating and I'm
remembering, because I want a
better and more equal society
in which racism has no place
and cannot rule.* ”

- Aaron Cortes, Spain

Besides the videos, the partnership develop information sheets in English, Bulgarian, Romanian, Slovak, Hungarian, Spanish, German, French and in Romani to provide short information about the Roma Holocaust; what happened on August 2, 1944; where do we stand with the official recognition of August 2 in Europe; introduced the Dikh he na Bister youth initiative on its 10th anniversary and emphasized the importance and need to keep the memory of the Roma Holocaust survivors alive. Tens of thousands of viewers have been reached and engaged through the social media channels of the „Roma Youth Voices” and partners.

The campaign ran together with RGDTs, e-Romnja, FAGIC, Diverse Youth Network, Association of Young Roma, Opre Heroes Collective and Amalipe and was funded by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme of the DG Justice, European Commission. ■



MARIA
ROMANIA



"...TO THOSE PEOPLE WHO HAVE SAID TO ME THAT I CANNOT SUCCEED, THAT I CANNOT STUDY, THAT I CANNOT BE SOMETHING MORE THAN A STEREOTYPE, TODAY, I AM PROUDLY SAYING THAT I DID IT!"

May 16 - Romani Resistance Day

Phiren Amenca and its partners ran a successful online campaign during May 2020 and shared 40 stories of young Roma in which they did testify how they resist the stereotypes by pursuing their studies and professional careers, how they resist systemic discrimination by demanding space in mainstream society, how did they stand against bullying during their school years or why May 16 – Romani Resistance day is personally important for them.

Tens of thousands of viewers have been reached through the social media channels of the „Roma Youth Voices" and Phiren Amenca and many young people have been inspired to share their own stories and to reflect on what 'resistance' means for them. A day before May 16 Phiren Amenca held a „Roma youth online conversation", which is among all videos available on our Facebook pages and website.

The campaign ran together with e-Romnja, FAGIC, Diverse Youth Network, Association of Young Roma, Opre Heroes Collective, Roma Active Albania and with our friends from France, Anina Ciuciu and Pierre Chopinaud as part of the Roma Youth Voices Project coordinated by Phiren Amenca and funded by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme of the DG Justice, European Commission. ■

"Romani Resistance Day means to me cooperation. The cooperation between us Roma, to step up together against prejudice and racism. I encourage every Roma to be brave and stand up and fight for equal rights!"

- Lilla Laboda, Hungary







#RomaRemember Campaign

The #RomaRememberInternationalCampaign for Roma Holocaust Remembrance 2020 aim was to reinforce the spirit of solidarity and unity, to provide visibility to Roma Holocaust Remembrance activities taking place around the world and to mobilize Roma and non-Roma around the same political message.

Joint statement and video messages of civil society organizations on the occasion of 2 August 2020 – International Holocaust Memorial Day for Sinti and Roma was issued and shared widely, stating that:

"Until today the Holocaust of Sinti and Roma still does not form part of the canon of European history and remains largely unknown. Most countries have no dedicated monuments to Roma victims, research on the Roma Holocaust is still rudimentary, much data is still unknown and the time will soon come when there will no longer be Roma Holocaust survivors, who will be able to share their testimonies for posterity. Exactly five years ago in 2015 the European Parliament passed a resolution to declare 2 August as the European Holocaust Memorial Day in memory of the 500,000 Sinti and Roma murdered in Nazi-occupied Europe. Despite this, many governments have not officially recognized the historical facts and a common historical responsibility.

Most countries have no dedicated monuments to Romani victims. There are few museums, fewer research centers and educational institutions, while at the same time the sites of the Holocaust of Sinti and Roma remain largely unpreserved. Acknowledging Roma history is crucial not only for justice and dignity of those who died during the Holocaust but also to confront widespread antigypsyism. Romani history is part of European history, and it deserves to be told. Roma are an integral part of European and national histories and cultures."

On the occasion of the commemoration of the International Roma Holocaust Memorial Day, we were calling on governments and the international community to:

- Recognize formally the 2nd August as the official Holocaust Memorial Day for Sinti and Roma;
- Build, honor and preserve monuments and memorial sites dedicated to the Sinti and Roma victims of the Holocaust;
- Invest into museums, research centers and other institutions dedicated to Roma Holocaust, Roma History and Roma Culture;
- Make Roma history and culture part of educational curricula and textbooks;
- Acknowledge antigypsyism as a specific form of racism targeting Roma communities and adapt diverse preventive and reactive tools to fight it. ■

#RomaRemember

2 August - International Roma Holocaust Memorial Day

Alliance building

“Ideas and their Consequences: Genocide and International Justice after 1919”

Phiren Amenca – RGDTs is a partner of the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU), in their project on European Remembrance funded under the Europe for Citizens Programme. The project entitled “Ideas and their Consequences: Genocide and International Justice after 1919” and it was kicked-off in early 2020. Other project partners are Lepsius Haus in Potsdam and the European Union of Jewish Students (EUJS).

The project aims to explore and educate a wider public in Europe about the growth of two opposing movements of ideas which developed after the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919. On the one hand, the movement for international justice and for the rescue of the victims emerged, as the allies established tribunals to try the perpetrators of atrocities and established the first High Commission for Refugees. On the other hand, the war atrocities in Europe and ethnic violence against the Armenians and other Christians in the declining Ottoman Empire inspired “population politics” and encouraged the movement towards radical nationalism in Germany, setting the ideological foundations of the worst atrocities the century was yet to experience.

The project will feature an academic conference in Berlin, entitled “Ideas and their Consequences: Genocide and International Justice after 1919”. The conference will bring together key academics in the field, mostly historians, from different countries and will aim to pool the latest knowledge on the subject. It will aim to provide new, insightful information on how events can make toxic ideas – or their antidote- grow. How, for instance, Germany’s humiliation in Versailles contrasted with Turkey’s simultaneous resurgence to inspire nationalists in Germany. The conference’s output will be used to produce an information pack summarizing the conference’s findings. The project will also include the

production of online video interviews of key speakers, the creation of a website presenting the results of the project, as well as a traveling exhibition and discussion events in five European cities following the conference in Berlin. The project will continue its implementation in 2021 as many of the project activities were postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. ■

Promoting Religious Freedom and Combating Anti-Semitism

Phiren Amenca is a partner with other faith-based organizations to promote and protect religious freedom and to combat antisemitism and antigypsyism, coordinated by National Democratic Institute between 2019-2021. The initiative is engaging faith-based organizations, together with human rights, multicultural and community groups supporting religious freedom, in three sets of integrated, capacity-building activities: interfaith coalitions, issue advocacy, and public dialogue in Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia through:

- Coalition building: Organized groups representing Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and other faith-based communities will explore shared values and belief systems that can form the basis of structured collaboration on initiatives promoting religious freedom and anti-Semitism.
- Issue advocacy: Coalition groups will undertake concrete efforts at national and local levels, in dialogue with elected representatives and government officials, to promote concrete changes in social policy, cultural legislation, and/or other forms of public engagement that enhance religious freedom and protect against religious discrimination, including anti-Semitism.
- Public dialogue: Coalition groups will engage the broader public in discourse on religious freedom, tolerance, and peaceful co-existence through media, public meetings, and educational/academic forums. ■

Structures

Members:

Amaro Drom, Germany
CSD Diaconia Valdese, Italy
Evangelische Freiwilligendienste (Protestant Voluntary Service), Germany
FAGIC – Federació de Associacions Gitanas de Catalunya (Federation of Roma Associations in Catalonia), Spain
Nevo Parudimos, Romania
Roma Active Albania, Albania
Roma-Gadje Dialogue Through Service, Hungary
Romano Centro, Austria
TOUCH Project Charitable Foundation, Ukraine
VISA (L'Année diaconale), France

Allied members and partners:

ERGO Network, Belgium/Netherlands
EUJS – European Union of Jewish Students, Belgium
ERAC – European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture, Germany
AGBU – Armenian General Benevolent Union, Belgium
YEN – Youth of European Nationalities
Diocesan Caritas Ostrava-Opava, Czech Republic
Center for Community Development Vrastiri, Bulgaria
Finnish Roma Association, Finland
Asociación Juvenil Intercambia, Spain
Arete Youth Foundation, Bulgaria
Young Adults on Global Mission, Hungary
SCMI India
Residencia El Sol – Asoc. Sumando Voluntades, Argentina
Fundación Marijn, Nicaragua
Asociación Chinantlan, Nicaragua
Obra Ecumenica Barrio Borro, Uruguay

Phiren Amenca's offices:

Attila út 39. IV/5.	Rue de Fiennes 86
1013 Budapest	1070 Brussels
Hungary	Belgium

Board members:

Georgina Laboda, Ana Carballo Mesa, Juraj Vozár
Coordination office: Marietta Herfort (managing director), Anna Daróczi (voluntary service coordinator), Ildikó Csanya (educational coordinator), Atanas Stoyanov (project assistant)
Volunteers, interns: Lois Brookes-Jones, Maria Dumitru, Marina Csikós

General Assembly:

Statutory meeting for member organizations, that follows the statutory responsibilities, election of the board, financial report, approval of budget, membership questions, and strategic decisions. In 2020 the General Assembly was held on November 23. online.

Networking Meeting:

Each spring Phiren Amenca hosts a three-day "Phiren Amenca Networking Meeting" bringing together member organizations, former volunteers and partner organizations in order to share experiences and practices, and to address annual thematic priorities and quality questions of our work.

Board:

The board has five members representing the equal partnership between Roma and non-Roma and striving for gender balance and participation of former volunteers. The Board is entitled to set up a coordination office in order to carry out the ongoing business of the association. The Board is responsible for all matters of the association not specifically assigned by law or the statutes of the association to the General Assembly.

Coordination Office

Phiren Amenca maintains a coordination office and resource center for the volunteers and member organizations in Budapest (which is currently the home of RGDTS Nonprofit Kft.).

Platform of former volunteers

The volunteers are encouraged to continue their engagement even after the service in the platform of volunteers. The self-organized platform of volunteers and former volunteers creates further opportunities for non-formal education, dialogue, and engagement, and strengthens the role of the volunteers as multipliers and promoters of voluntary service. Phiren Amenca builds the capacity of young Roma and non-Roma former volunteers to become trainers of human rights education in its structures. Phiren Amenca gives a high priority to youth participation and the rights of volunteers within its own structures and work. The platform will meet in the framework of the annual meeting, including the General Assembly.

Funded Programs



Roma Youth Voices Project

The general aim of the project is to develop the capacities of Roma youth organizations at the local and national level through participation at international and European processes, mobilisation and participation of Roma youth at relevant policy related process, as well as through strengthening the role of young people and organizations in the context of

National Roma Integration Strategies.

The project, among other, aims to raise awareness about antigypsyism and develop specific actions. These actions might include: campaigning and local activities in order to challenge the harmful manifestations of this specific form of racism against Roma communities. Antigypsyism has negative impact on Roma children and youth development. Roma young people's access to social rights and, in particular, to education and labour markets is hindered by the widespread antigypsyism across European societies. Moreover, their advocacy capacity and level of political participation are largely suppressed due to the deeply rooted systemic racism and structural discrimination with which they are confronted.

The Roma Youth Voices project is a multi-year project (between 2019-2020) carried out by Phiren Amenca International Network, ternYpe International Roma Youth Network and RGDTs in cooperation with national partner organizations from France, Spain, Slovakia, Austria, Hungary and Romania. The project is supported under the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme of the DG Justice, European Commission. ■



Funded by the European Union's
Rights, Equality and Citizenship
Programme (2014-2020)

Raise Your Voice for Roma

This project aimed to involve young Roma and non-Roma leaders, youth workers and local partners from around Europe to develop their critical thinking about antigypsyism and to strengthen their capacity to develop and implement national and European campaigns against antigypsyism. This project was supported by the European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe under Work Plan 2020. ■



Donors

Current donors and supporters of Phiren Amenca include:

Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme of the DG Justice,
European Commission

Erasmus+ Program, European Commission

European Youth Foundation, Council of Europe (*including an
Annual Work Plan and a Structural Grant 2020-2021*)

Tempus Közalapítvány

US Embassy Budapest, Hungary

Otto per Mille

and private donors

Audit

Phiren Amenca uses the services of a registered accounting service in Belgium, the company called Comfisgest conducts the AISBL professional audit. The auditor's report is submitted in September of each year.

In Hungary Flexcont BT, Kovács Imre, keeps the accountancy and conducts a professional audit, what is submitted in May of each year.



phirenamenca.eu