

# MANIFESTO



ROMANI  
EARLY YEARS  
NETWORK

## We are:

- A network of practitioners from Romani, Traveller and other backgrounds working with Romani and Traveller children, families and communities, active in eighteen countries and growing;
- An open and inclusive learning community of early years professionals and paraprofessionals, pedagogues, children's nurses and midwives, health visitors and pediatricians, child rights and Romani rights advocates;
- Dedicated to promoting and delivering quality, inclusive, inter-cultural early childhood development provision and services in preschools, nursery schools, kindergartens, primary schools, community centres, family centres, social and child protection services, health centres and homevisiting programs;
- Committed to promoting anti-discrimination, respect for diversity, differences, tolerance and equality throughout our professional practices;
- Striving to ensure equity for Romani and Traveller families and children in accessing high quality early childhood development services;
- Working to develop services and provision for Romani and Traveller children and families that encourage freedom of choice, non-violence and community solidarity.

## We believe that:

- We are stronger when we work together. Together, we can create better opportunities for Romani and Traveller children and their families to access quality early years services;
- Early childhood is a period of life where there is huge potential to improve the current situation and the future of young Romani and Traveller girls and boys;
- Children flourish and grow when their human capability and capacity are supported and stimulated through quality, inclusive early years provision, regardless of their ethnic origin;
- No child should have to face the challenges imposed as a result of social inequality, economic exclusion, racial prejudice and cultural marginalization which young Romani and Traveller girls and boys go through in the majority of the countries they live in;
- We are all, as early childhood development practitioners, agents of change towards a just and equitable society for all, where all members are valued and respected;
- As early childhood development practitioners, we have the power and the responsibility to make a difference for Romani and Traveller children and their families;
- Romani and Traveller girls and boys should have high self-esteem and self-confidence: they should be proud of the beauty in the Romani and Traveller cultures and of their Romani and Traveller identities.

## We are committed to:

- Building professionalism and a sense of belonging amongst all early years practitioners working with Romani and Traveller communities;
- Promoting the best interests of every child and family, through developing inclusive practice and promoting anti-bias approaches in the early years;
- Creating, developing, exploring and sharing innovative practice, critical solutions and constructive approaches to demonstrate that health, social and educational services and provisions (including community-based care for institutionalized children) that serve Romani and Traveller children and families, can be child-friendly and welcoming to families;
- Challenging and transforming the existing professional practices in early childhood development services that too often lead to exclusion and discrimination (including segregation), on the basis of difference, and promoting respect for diversity, equality and inclusion for all;
- Supporting the voices of Romani and Traveller families and children to be heard by professionals, policy makers and politicians;
- Celebrating the successes of our members and developing support for each other over the course of our professional lives.

## In our network we will:

- Build bridges and develop partnerships amongst practitioners that share these and similar beliefs;
- Promote best practices in working with Romani and Traveller families and communities;
- Advocate for initiatives which support and empower Romani and Traveller parents;
- Share our experience of challenges and opportunities in order to learn from each other;
- Support the professional development of practitioners, promoting life-long learning;
- Foster advocacy skills amongst practitioners working with Romani and Traveller communities in order for them to be able to speak out;
- Empower members to make their voices heard nationally and internationally.

# No more lost Romani and Traveller generations!

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15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
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