



NEWSLETTER

1st Panhellenic Conference of the Roma Forum

The 1st Panhellenic Conference of the Roma Forum was held on Wednesday, April 30, 2025, at the "Antonis Tritsis" Cultural Center of the City of Athens with broad participation from Roma organizations and stakeholders. The event took place within the framework of the European project "*Development of the National Platform for Consultation and Dialogue on Roma Issues*" (RomaPlatformEL – National Platform "For Roma With Roma" 2023–2025, CERV-2022-NRCP/ GA NO:101095343) and the *OPRE Roma Month* initiative of the Council of Europe.

The conference aimed to strengthen the participation of Roma in public dialogue and in shaping policies that affect their communities. Attendees included representatives of Roma organizations and stakeholders, civil society, local government, as well as regional and central administration.

A welcome address was delivered by the Deputy Minister for Social Cohesion and Family Affairs, Ms. Elena Rapti, who emphasized the importance of dialogue and active involvement of Roma—particularly Roma women—in all policy-making processes that concern their communities. Additional addresses were given by Mr. Prodromos Pyrros, Secretary General for Social Solidarity and Fight Against Poverty, who is responsible for coordinating the National Strategy for Roma Social Inclusion, as well as the Secretary General for Demographic and Housing Policy, Mr. Konstantinos Gloumis; the Secretary General for Equality and Human Rights, Ms. Katerina Patsogianni; the Secretary General for Vocational Education, Training, and Lifelong Learning, Ms. Olga Kafetzopoulou; the Head of the Roma and Travellers Division of the Council of Europe, Ms. Eleni Tsetsekou; the President of the KEDE Committee on Roma Social Inclusion Policy, Mr. Dimitrios Kofos; and the Member of Parliament (at-large) for New Democracy and member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Mr. Georgios Stamatis.

The conference served as an open and substantive forum for dialogue, where policies and initiatives related to Roma social inclusion were presented, aligned with the priorities of the *National Roma Inclusion Strategy (NRIS 2021–2030)*. More importantly, the conference offered a crucial opportunity for Roma voices to be heard. Community representatives and mediators participated actively, shared their views and experiences, and contributed to propose policies and targeted measures. This first open conference of the Roma Forum reaffirmed the importance of empowering Roma themselves as equal partners in the design and implementation of policies that affect them.

The event strengthened the collaboration between institutional stakeholders, civil society organizations, and the Roma community itself—promoting a participatory, cross-sectoral, and effective approach to social inclusion.

The conference concluded with the session of the Roma Forum, where the Forum's proposals were presented, and Roma community representatives had the opportunity to express their opinions and priorities. The session underscored the importance of continuous consultation and institutional empowerment of Roma voices.



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