

Romanype Canada

When discussing issues affecting marginalized groups, we often have a tendency to speak of the need to give a voice to the voiceless. As a young Romani woman, whose voice has often been silenced, I ask you to refrain from doing so. Because I do have a voice. So, I would rather ask you, rather than speaking on behalf of those who seem to not have a voice, to pass them on the microphone. So today, I thank you for passing me the microphone. Roma communities have been part of every single issue, and yet remain excluded from every single conversation when speaking about human rights. Numerous policies as well as bodies, have been enacted by various countries. Yet, the number of Roma youth, Roma representatives within those bodies, and with part of these conversations which concern them, is very limited until this day. The history of Roma is unfortunately one that's been characterized by slavery, anti-gypsy laws, genocide, a genocide which unfortunately until this very day remains unrecognized by a large number of countries, including my own Canada. The fact that the history of Roma remains unrecognized is, in fact, one of the main reasons that today the hatred against Roma communities remains one of the most normalized forms of racism until this very day. Roma are often doubly affected by contexts of extreme violence. For example, in Syria, the Domari communities, whose history is closely related to that of Roma, remain excluded from refugee camps, as the UNHCR reported. In the situation of Ukraine recently, Roma were doubly affected by the situation where violence has been committed against Roma, who have sought asylum in Canada for these very reasons. So, as I see, I have seven seconds left. One of my recommendations is to include, to make concrete efforts to rightfully include Roma in conversations that concern them. Thank you.