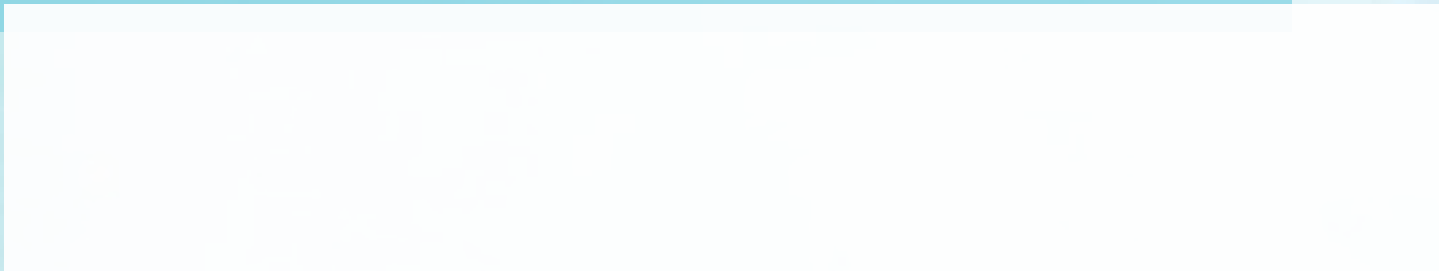




# Roma Pupils, Travelling Community



[www.idecide-project.eu](http://www.idecide-project.eu)



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## Classroom-based tips (focus on instructional methods)

1. **Develop and implement an antiracist/anti-bullying policy**, which addresses incidents of racism or bullying towards pupils because of any aspect of their identities, such as socioeconomic or cultural background, ethnicity, accent, language, appearance, legal status in the country of arrival, sexual orientation, gender identity or religion.
2. **Support Roma pupils to become integrated in your class by showing interest in their culture and language**, without putting them under the spotlight and emphasising their differences. Try to find out as much as possible about the individual pupil's strengths, interests and linguistic capabilities; always keep in mind that individuals within groups have differences in all these aspects of their identities ([www.natt.org.uk](http://www.natt.org.uk)). Give new pupils any helpful induction information about the class to help them feel as comfortable as possible in the new classroom environment.
3. **Build a working relationship with the families of the Roma pupils** in your class by talking openly to parents about your class expectations in a way that demonstrates the shared concern for the welfare and progress of each pupil. An induction DVD and/or welcome packs in the appropriate language will help explain things to families who don't understand your country's language and who may have literacy issues.  
[Reference: [www.natt.org.uk](http://www.natt.org.uk)]
4. **Find the new pupil in your class a 'buddy'** and if possible a same language speaker to help them with the daily tasks and communication within the classroom.  
[Reference: [www.natt.org.uk](http://www.natt.org.uk)]
5. **Maximise beneficial interracial contact** by mixing Roma pupils together in diverse groups in daily activities and tasks, in and out of the classroom.  
[Reference: [https://www.unicef.org/ceecis/ROMA\\_PAPER\\_FINAL\\_LAST.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/ceecis/ROMA_PAPER_FINAL_LAST.pdf)]
6. **Sit new Roma pupils joining your class close to you** and provide basic classroom material as a motivation to participate in the lesson.
7. **Prepare some PowerPoint presentations or other type of visual prompts**, about school regulations or social norms, that will give additional support as needed to Roma pupils when they are faced with difficult social situations.  
[Reference: [www.natt.org.uk](http://www.natt.org.uk)]
8. **Organise regular targeted interventions in small groups** (ideally 30 minutes every day) for focussed language work. This can improve the language skills of Roma pupils and strengthen their confidence by feeling cared for and appreciated by the teacher.  
[Reference: [www.natt.org.uk](http://www.natt.org.uk)]
9. **Differentiate the lesson to suit the pace of the Roma pupils based on their language skills.** For example, you might provide appropriate conditions for homework during school hours

(e.g. during religious class), which can be very helpful if it is not possible for the pupil to complete work at home due to limited space or ICT access.



## School-based practical tips (focus on instructional methods)

### Community

1. **Organise an induction meeting with all the parents at the beginning of the school year**, to highlight the expectations of the school. Many Roma children and families may be unfamiliar with the National Curriculum requirements, or with the subjects taught, and unclear as to what is expected of them. Setting out the school's expectations and regulations (school uniform, regular attendance, homework) from the outset establishes a good relationship between the school and all the families, including newcomers and Roma families.

[Reference: [www.natt.org.uk](http://www.natt.org.uk)]

2. **Employ Roma mediators in schools** to act as support for Roma pupils and as liaisons between the Roma community and the school administration and teachers.

[Reference: [https://www.unicef.org/ceecis/ROMA\\_PAPER\\_FINAL\\_LAST.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/ceecis/ROMA_PAPER_FINAL_LAST.pdf)]

3. **Arrange regular school meetings with specialists from the Educational Psychology Service and the Social Welfare Services** ([www.moec.gov.cy](http://www.moec.gov.cy)) who will provide special support and attention not only to Roma pupils, but to their teachers as well. This will help to bridge any differences between the local community and the new Roma population joining the community or the school.

4. **Arrange home visits to Roma families to establish trusting relationships.** Contact parents directly or with the help of a relevant local authority/social service. Build these relationships by demonstrating a commitment to collaboration, and co-operatively working with colleagues and parents.

[Reference: [www.natt.org.uk](http://www.natt.org.uk)]

### Curricular Adaptations

1. **Employ bilingual teachers who will act as mediators/interpreters** facilitating and supporting the communication between teachers, pupils and parents (Symeou *et al*, 2009). These teachers can be also trained to act as Roma Teaching Assistants in the classroom (RTAs) . The pedagogical approach in these classes should be modified to be 'child-centred' and multi-lingual.

[Reference: [https://www.unicef.org/ceecis/ROMA\\_PAPER\\_FINAL\\_LAST.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/ceecis/ROMA_PAPER_FINAL_LAST.pdf)]

2. **Organise extra support lessons or extra-curricular activities to be offered to Roma pupils in the afternoon.** Dance and theatre programmes can improve pupils' behaviour and self-discipline.

[Reference: [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/roma/eu-framework/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/roma/eu-framework/index_en.htm)]

3. **Organise summer schools for Roma teachers that will include training in Romani language, history and culture.** These summer schools raise teachers' level of competency and modify their pedagogy to be culturally sensitive and adapted to the specific needs of Roma pupils.

[Reference: [https://www.unicef.org/ceecis/ROMA\\_PAPER\\_FINAL\\_LAST.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/ceecis/ROMA_PAPER_FINAL_LAST.pdf)]

5. **Dispense funding for the purchase of books and materials to help with language teaching,** depending on the country and context, in order to support the inclusion of Roma children ([www.moec.gov.cy](http://www.moec.gov.cy)).

## Discipline

1. **Develop and implement an antiracist/antibullying policy,** which addresses incidents of racism or bullying towards pupils because of any aspect of their identities, such as socioeconomic or cultural background, ethnicity, accent, language, appearance, legal status in the country of arrival, sexual orientation, gender identity or religion.
2. **Organise extra support lessons or extra-curricular activities to be offered to Roma pupils in the afternoon.** Dance and theatre programmes can improve pupils' behaviour and self-discipline.

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## Educational Visits / Field Trips / Camps / School Exchanges / Trips Abroad

1. **Celebrate the International Romani Day by organising age-appropriate and playful activities during school hours,** for all the pupils in your school to participate. Arrange cultural visits where Roma pupils can act as guides for the rest of the children, or host guest speakers or performers who can present Romani culture to the whole school community. Avoid, however, putting under the spotlight pupils or their families if they do not wish to be involved, as such events, despite the best of intentions, may often exacerbate stereotypes and prejudices.

[Reference: ([http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/roma/eu-framework/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/roma/eu-framework/index_en.htm))]

## Food: Canteen / Visits / Camps / Trips

**Organise school fairs, music and food festivals in order for the school community to come closer together.** Ensure that in such fairs, all pupils and families are involved, avoiding focusing on one cuisine or one cultural group, as such approaches might lead to essentialist stereotyping of specific groups or individuals within the school, especially the Roma. Promote multi-cultural and inclusive values in your programming of school cultural events.

## Homework

1. **Organise an induction meeting with all the parents at the beginning of the school year**, to highlight the expectations of the school. Many Roma children and families may be unfamiliar with the National Curriculum requirements, or with the subjects taught, and unclear as to what is expected of them. Setting out the school's expectations and regulations (school uniform, regular attendance, homework) from the outset establishes a good relationship between the school and all the families, including newcomers and Roma families.

[Reference: [www.natt.org.uk](http://www.natt.org.uk)]

2. Organise after-school programmes that will help Roma pupils with homework and other issues.

[Reference: [https://www.unicef.org/ceecis/ROMA\\_PAPER\\_FINAL\\_LAST.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/ceecis/ROMA_PAPER_FINAL_LAST.pdf)]

## Parents/Parent Associations

1. **Organise an induction meeting with all the parents at the beginning of the school year**, to highlight the expectations of the school. Many Roma children and families may be unfamiliar with the National Curriculum requirements, or with the subjects taught, and unclear as to what is expected of them. Setting out the school's expectations and regulations (school uniform, regular attendance, homework) from the outset establishes a good relationship between the school and all the families, including newcomers and Roma families.

[Reference: [www.natt.org.uk](http://www.natt.org.uk)]

2. **Arrange home visits to Roma families to establish trusting relationships.** Contact parents directly or with the help of a relevant local authority/social service. Build these relationships by demonstrating a commitment to collaboration, and co-operatively working with colleagues and parents.

[Reference: [www.natt.org.uk](http://www.natt.org.uk)]

## Safety

**Develop and implement an antiracist/antibullying policy**, which addresses incidents of racism or bullying towards pupils because of any aspect of their identities, such as socioeconomic or cultural background, ethnicity, accent, language, appearance, legal status in the country of arrival, sexual orientation, gender identity or religion.

## Scheduling Events

**Celebrate the International Romani Day by organising age-appropriate and playful activities during school hours**, for all the pupils in your school to participate. Arrange cultural visits where Roma pupils can act as guides for the rest of the children, or host guest speakers or performers who can present Romani culture to the whole school community. Avoid, however, putting under the spotlight pupils or their families if they do not

wish to be involved, as such events, despite the best of intentions, may often exacerbate stereotypes and prejudices.

[Reference: ([http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/roma/eu-framework/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/roma/eu-framework/index_en.htm))]

## School Celebrations / Events / Activities

**Organise school fairs, music and food festivals in order for the school community to come closer together.** Ensure that in such fairs, all pupils and families are involved, avoiding focusing on one cuisine or one cultural group, as such approaches might lead to essentialist stereotyping of specific groups or individuals within the school, especially the Roma. Promote multi-cultural and inclusive values in your programming of school cultural events.

## School Projects

1. **Organise extra support lessons or extra-curricular activities to be offered to Roma pupils in the afternoon.** Dance and theatre programmes can improve pupils' behaviour and self-discipline.

[Reference: [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/roma/eu-framework/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/roma/eu-framework/index_en.htm)]

2. **Organise after-school programmes** that will help Roma pupils with homework and other issues.

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## School Purchases

**Dispense funding for the purchase of books and materials to help with language teaching,** depending on the country and context, in order to support the inclusion of Roma children ([www.moec.gov.cy](http://www.moec.gov.cy)).

## School Uniform

**Organise an induction meeting with all the parents at the beginning of the school year,** to highlight the expectations of the school. Many Roma children and families may be unfamiliar with the National Curriculum requirements, or with the subjects taught, and unclear as to what is expected of them. Setting out the school's expectations and regulations (school uniform, regular attendance, homework) from the outset establishes a good relationship between the school and all the families, including newcomers and Roma families.

[Reference: [www.natt.org.uk](http://www.natt.org.uk)]

## Pupil Support

1. **Employ bilingual teachers who will act as mediators/interpreters** facilitating and supporting the communication between teachers, pupils and parents (Symeou *et al*, 2009).

These teachers can be also trained to act as Roma Teaching Assistants in the classroom (RTAs) . The pedagogical approach in these classes should be modified to be ‘child-centred’ and multi-lingual.

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## Teacher Professional Development

1. **Organise in-service training programmes** to empower teachers with methodologies that address classes with pupils from different language groups ([www.moec.gov.cy](http://www.moec.gov.cy)).
2. **Organise training for teachers already in the school system** to enhance cultural sensitivity and increase pedagogical skills and approaches geared to the needs of Roma pupils, so as to eliminate professional and personal prejudice that may exist.

[Reference: [https://www.unicef.org/ceecis/ROMA\\_PAPER\\_FINAL\\_LAST.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/ceecis/ROMA_PAPER_FINAL_LAST.pdf)]

## Timetabling

**Organise an induction meeting with all the parents at the beginning of the school year**, to highlight the expectations of the school. Many Roma children and families may be unfamiliar with the National Curriculum requirements, or with the subjects taught, and unclear as to what is expected of them. Setting out the school’s expectations and regulations (school uniform, regular attendance, homework) from the outset establishes a good relationship between the school and all the families, including newcomers and Roma families.

[Reference: [www.natt.org.uk](http://www.natt.org.uk)]

## Supportive literature

The term 'Roma' is often used to refer to people of Romani origin; this term has been adopted by many organisations including within the EU and the UK government. It is believed all Romani people originate from Northern India and started to migrate between 500 and 1,000 AD.

[Reference: [www.natt.org.uk](http://www.natt.org.uk)]

The Council of Europe uses 'Roma' as an umbrella term. It refers to Roma, Sinti, Kale and related groups in Europe, including Travellers and Eastern groups (Dom and Lom), and covers the wide diversity of the groups concerned, including persons who identify themselves as Gypsies (FRA, 2016, p. 7).

Many Roma live in overwhelmingly poor conditions on the margins of society, and face extreme levels of racism, discrimination and social exclusion, even in their daily lives. Such discrimination is incompatible with the values upon which the EU is founded (FRA, 2012).

## Websites and EU reports

National Association of Teachers of Travellers and Other Professionals: [www.natt.org.uk](http://www.natt.org.uk)

Ministry of Education and Culture of Cyprus: [www.moec.gov.cy](http://www.moec.gov.cy)

The EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies:

[http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/roma/eu-framework/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/roma/eu-framework/index_en.htm)

## References

Administrative Commissioner (2003). *Research of Administrative Commissioner with No AYT/E 3/2003 concerning the circumstances under which Gypsy people who were settled in Makounta live*. Nicosia.

iDecide project (2016). State of the art for inclusive decision making.

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) (2016). *Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey. Roma – Selected Findings*, EU-MIDIS II, Luxembourg.

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) (2012). *The situation of Roma in 11 EU Member States - Survey results at a glance*, Luxembourg.

Symeou, L. Karagiorgi, Y., Roussounidou, E. & Kaloyirou, C. (2009) *Roma and their education in Cyprus: reflections on INSETRom teacher training for Roma inclusion*, *Intercultural Education*, 20:6, 511-521.

Towards Roma Inclusion: A Review of Roma Education Initiatives in Central and South-Eastern Europe, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2010: [https://www.unicef.org/ceecis/ROMA\\_PAPER\\_FINAL\\_LAST.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/ceecis/ROMA_PAPER_FINAL_LAST.pdf)