



Romani Realities in the US: *Breaking the Silence. Challenging the Stereotype.*

About the Study:

The FXB Center for Health and Human Rights at Harvard University and Voice of Roma are collaborating on a study of Romani (i.e., Roma/Romani/Romanichal/ “Gypsy”) lives in the United States. The research team will collect data to help improve the understanding of the social, economic, cultural, and health status of Romani people and the discrimination Romani people face in the United States. Currently, there is little information about the lived realities and challenges faced by the American Romani population. Romani people in the US are spread widely, and census data does not include information on Romani identity. This study will collect quantitative and qualitative data via short answers plus open-ended questions. The findings in this study will hopefully inspire and encourage more research on Romani populations across the Americas, counter stereotypes, and begin to address the problems that Romani people face.

Those taking part in the study will be Roma/Romani/Romanichals who are 18 years or older. Participants will be asked for their opinion on how Roma/Romani/Romanichals/ “Gypsies” are depicted in the United States. Most of the questions are about Romani identity, culture, and participants’ feelings on some of the challenges facing their communities. The interview will take about 1 hour to complete and will be done through face-to-face interviews or via online video calling platforms. The researcher will not ask participants’ last names or any identifying personal data, such as indication of housing location. All responses to interview questions are private. Additionally, any participant can skip a question or discontinue the interview at any time. **If you have questions about participating or feedback, please contact our team.**

Research Team:

Jacqueline Bhabha, JD, MSc. serves as the Principal Investigator of the project. She is Director of Research at the FXB Center at Harvard; Jeremiah Smith Jr. Lecturer at Harvard Law School; Adjunct Lecturer on Public Policy at Harvard Kennedy School; and Harvard University Adviser on Human Rights Education. Professor Bhabha has longstanding research experience with Roma in Italy, Serbia, Kosovo, and Romania.

George Eli serves as a field researcher in the project. He is an American Romani activist and award-winning filmmaker. He is the founder of The Romani Media Initiative (RMI), a non-profit organization dedicated to challenging negative stereotypes about Romani people through educational films and other media.

Margareta (Magda) Matache, Ph.D. serves as the project's research coordinator and manages the overall implementation of the project. Magda is a Romani rights activist from Romania, director of the Roma Program at the Harvard FXB Center, and also a Harvard instructor. In 2012, she was awarded a Hauser postdoctoral fellowship at the Harvard FXB Center and founded the Roma Program at that time. From 2005 to 2012 Matache was the executive director of Romani CRISS, a leading NGO that defends and promotes the rights of Roma.

Kristin Raeesi serves as a coordinator for the project and a board member of Voice of Roma. She is an American Romani researcher and activist who has been involved in advocacy on behalf of the American Romani community for over a decade. Raeesi has been a panelist for several national Romani Studies conferences, and has given media interviews/written op-eds for national news outlets in the US on the topic of Romani rights and representation.

Melina R. Salifoski serves as a field researcher in the project. She is a Turkish Macedonian American Roma born and raised in New York City. She is currently building an organization that focuses on Roma education and community and hopes to educate the public about who the Roma truly are.

Amanda Schreiber serves as a field researcher in the project. She is an American Romani activist and co-founder of the American Romanichal group "Organization of United Romanichals (OUR)." She works to create awareness of the unique culture and history of American Romanichal communities.

Carol Silverman serves as a project coordinator for this study. She is a Professor of Cultural Anthropology and Folklore at the University of Oregon and has done research with Roma for over 30 years in Bulgaria, Macedonia, Western Europe, and the US. Her 2012 book, *Romani Routes: Cultural Politics and Balkan Music in Diaspora*, won the Merriam Prize from the Society for Ethnomusicology.

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Learn more about Voice of Roma by visiting <http://www.voiceofroma.com/>.