

## An Interfaith Challenge to Racism

Leaders of faith communities, academics and faith-activists from across the UK have come together to challenge racism and discrimination against one of the most marginalised ethnic minority communities in the world: Gypsies, Travellers and Roma. Many faith groups, throughout their communal histories, have experienced some form of discrimination, marginalisation or racism and as such we understand clearly the ways in which experiences of stereotyping and chronic exclusion from society can damage lives.

Although they have their own unique cultures and histories, Gypsies, Roma and Travellers are united by ongoing, endemic discrimination in the UK and across Europe today. It is the kind of discrimination that permeates the deepest levels of society, such that it is often not even recognised for what it is. This is why the involvement of faith groups in combating this insidious situation is so important.

As representatives from and leaders within faith and wider communities, we are in a unique position to change hearts and minds. We have gathered together because the racism that plagues Gypsies, Travellers and Roma runs contra to morality as well as legality. We have come together to learn more about the problems faced by Gypsies, Travellers and Roma, to find out about the on-going work of our colleagues who are already working hard to campaign against discrimination and to develop ways of working together to combat this shameful legacy of misunderstanding and rejection.

We commit to erasing what has been described as the 'last form of acceptable racism' from our society through working together and to bring about lasting change and equality for Gypsies, Travellers and Roma.

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