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Dear All

Today is Gypsy Roma Traveller Holocaust Memorial Day.

This is a time of reflection, when we pause to remember the thousands of Gypsy Roma Travellers who were subject to unimaginable hardship, discrimination and murder during the Third Reich in places such as Auschwitz-Birkenau.

The experiences of this community during the Holocaust are too frequently overlooked, and the community today still face a great deal of discrimination.

This has got to stop.

We, in the Scottish Government believe everyone has the right to live with respect, and free from persecution, discrimination and bullying – and we are working hard to improve the lives of Scotland's Gypsy/Traveller community with this in mind.

We have extended our Gypsy/Traveller Action Plan by 18 months and we are working closely with our Gypsy Roma Traveller stakeholders such as MECOPP, Article 12, STEP, COSLA and others to ensure real and positive change.

You can read our most recent update to the Plan here: [Gypsy Traveller Action Plan: letter from Scottish Government and COSLA - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/documents/2021/08/Gypsy_Traveller_Action_Plan_letter_from_Scottish_Government_and_COSLA.pdf)

This work would not be possible without the vital input of Gypsy/Travellers themselves – and I would encourage anyone who is interested to join our Community Conversation, happening online on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> of August; when there will be an opportunity for community members to speak with me and others both on existing work and on what they would like to see in the future. If you would like to come along, please email: [info@mecopp.org.uk](mailto:info@mecopp.org.uk)

**CHRISTINA MCKELVIE**