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# Visual Representations of Roma People: Moving beyond Stereotypes

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## Abstract

Stereotypical portrayals of minorities have resurfaced in a Europe struggling to deal with new migration flows, divisive politics and an increase in racism. The attitudes towards Roma (sometimes referred to as ‘Gypsy’) minorities are a prime example: the recent surges of negative media images have impacted on both public perception and policy initiatives. Negative visual representations are also an inherent part of a discriminatory culture. However, whilst we know the effects of negative images, there is no clarity as to what ‘non-stereotypical’ images might look like. Moving away from stereotypes is not an oppositional process. As Paul Gilroy says, anti-racist movements often fail as they use “narrow categories” that mirror the reductionist categories used by racist ideologies themselves (Gilroy 2002: 249). Research shows that a focus on the ‘everyday’ can produce alternative images. The co-presenters in this paper have collectively over 2,000 images produced during everyday research with Roma people. Combining their data and knowledge provides a unique opportunity to create a deeper understanding of alternative ‘non-stereotypical’ images in order to challenge misrepresentation and racism. The findings will serve as a resource for researchers of minority groups and a range of publics including journalists, policy-makers and charities.

**Keywords:** Roma, Gypsy, stereotypes, anti, stereotype, everyday, photographs, racism, anti, racism

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