

Words

- **act** = perform
- **although** = while
- **caravan** = group of people who travel together for safety
- **care for** = take care of
- **carve** = cut
- **consider** = think, believe
- **discriminating** = here: to make something bad
- **forbid-forbade** = stop someone from doing something
- **force** = make someone do something
- **fortune teller** = person who can tell you what is going to happen in the future
- **government** = the people who rule a country
- **greet** = welcome, meet
- **horse dealer** = a person who buys and sells horses
- **household items** = things you use at home every day
- **invade** = to enter a country in an army and take control of it
- **nomadic** = to travel from one place to another ; you do not stay in one place for long
- **originally** = at first
- **outsider** = someone who is not accepted by other people
- **pass laws** = here: make rules
- **settle** = to start living in a place for a longer time
- **spread** = move to
- **status** = position
- **suspicious** = to think that someone might do something wrong
- **tent** = place to sleep; made up of poles and sheets of cloth

The Romani are a group of people who travel around and lead a **nomadic** life. **Although** most of them live in Central and Eastern Europe they can be found on every continent. About 12 million Romani live in our world today.

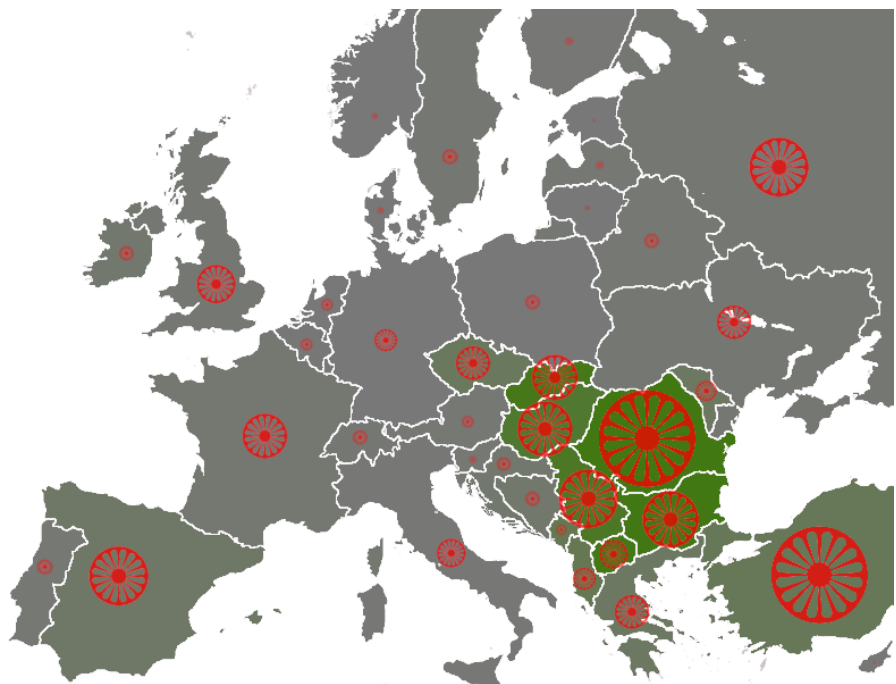
The Romani **originally** lived in India. They left their homeland about a thousand years ago because Muslims **invaded** India and **forced** them to move away. After wandering across Persia and Turkey, the Romani **reached** Europe by about 1300. By 1500 they **settled** in the Balkans and from there **spread** to Western Europe.

Romani people are often called gypsies because people thought they came from Egypt. Most of them, however, think that this term is **discriminating** and don't like being called that way.

Romani families are usually very big. More children mean a high **status** among Romani. Young and old often live and work together in the same family. Romani men and women marry at a very young age. After that they stay with their family.

The Romani traditionally travelled in **caravans**. Wherever they stopped they set up **tents** and stayed there for some time. **Although** Europeans, at first, **greeted** the Romani in a friendly way they later became **suspicious** because they thought that the Romani were thieves who stole things and did not work. They were **considered outsiders** and many **governments** did not care about them. Some countries even **passed laws** that **forbade** them to stop.

Romani people made a living by doing things they were good at. They were **horse dealers**, repaired **household items** and **carved** objects out of wood. Many Romani were good singers, played instruments and **acted** well. Women were **fortune tellers** and **cared for** the animals they took with them.



The Romani in Europe

Words

- **although** = while
- **cart** = a wagon that is pulled by horses and used to carry heavy things
- **concentration camp** = prison where people are kept during a war; they have to work there
- **destroy** = here: kill
- **discriminate against** = to treat a person or a group of people in an unfair way
- **emigrate** = to go to another country to live and work there
- **free** = not to control anymore
- **freedom** = liberty
- **gas chamber** = room where Jews and other people were killed by the Nazis in World War II
- **government** = people who rule a country
- **grant** = give
- **inferior** = not as good as
- **keep up** = go on with, continue
- **lawyer** = a person who tells people about the law or who defends people in court
- **nomadic** = to travel from one place to another ; you do not stay in one place for long
- **race** = group of people who have the same skin color and other features
- **regard** = look upon, think of someone as
- **replace** = use instead of ; change
- **represent** = speak for
- **right** = something that you are officially allowed to do
- **settle down** = to live in a place and not to wander around
- **slave** = someone who is owned by another person and works for them for little or no money
- **society** = people in general
- **torture** = to hurt someone and make them give you information
- **trade** = here: job
- **unemployed** = out of work

SLAVERY

The Romani became **slaves** in some countries. They were not allowed to follow their traditions and speak their language. Spain and Portugal sent many Romani to the New World as slaves. In the 19th century **governments** in Europe **freed** the Romani and allowed them to speak their own language again.

After being freed from slavery some Romani **emigrated** to America. Some governments **granted** Romani people **freedom** as long as they didn't wander around and **settled down**.

In World War II the Nazis **regarded** the Romani as an **inferior race** that had to be **destroyed**. They were sent to **concentration camps**, **tortured** and killed in **gas chambers**.

THE ROMANI TODAY

Today about 7 to 10 million Romani live in Europe. **Although** they are **represented** in some parliaments they are **discriminated against** in most parts of the world. Because their work is not needed in modern **society** they are often **unemployed**. Some still lead a **nomadic** life but others have **settled down** in towns and become a part of society.

Although most Romani have **kept up** their traditions, they have become more modern. Cars have **replaced carts** or wagons. Many Romani men work as car mechanics or in other **trades**. Some have even reached high positions in society or become doctors and **lawyers**.

Since the second half of the 20th century many organizations have tried to help the Romani fight for more **rights**.



Romani musicians