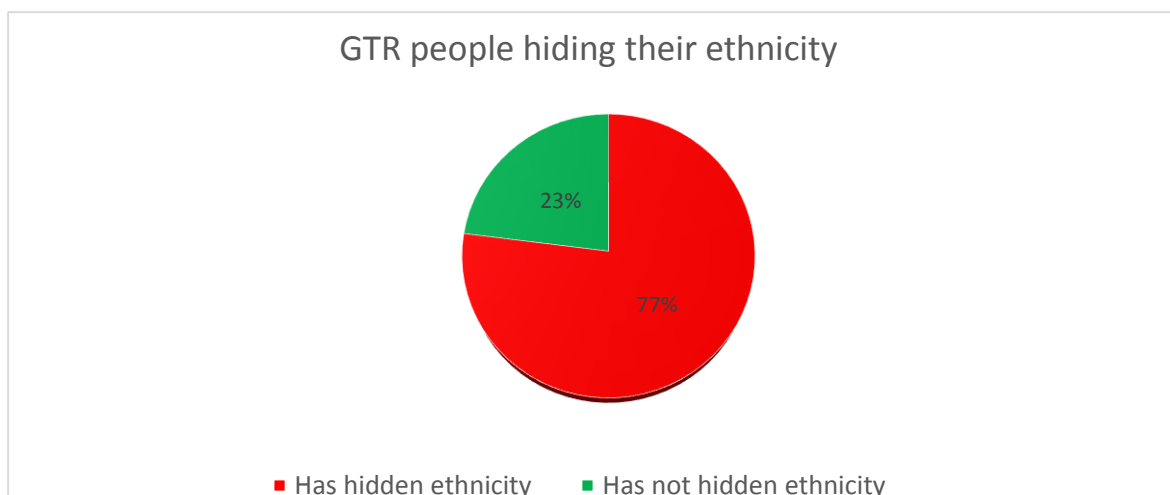
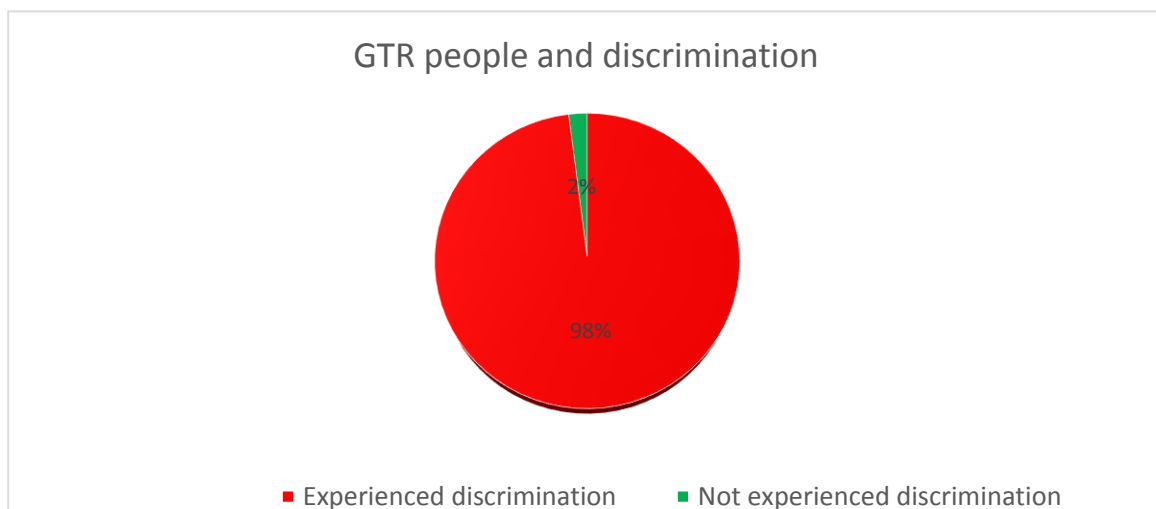


**Discrimination experienced by Gypsies, Travellers and Roma:  
results from 2016 survey.**



**About TM:** The Traveller Movement (TM) was established in 1999 and is a leading national policy and voice charity, working to raise the capacity and social inclusion of the Traveller, Gypsy and Roma communities in Britain. TM act as a bridge builder bringing the communities, service providers and policy makers together, stimulating debate and promoting forward-looking strategies to promote increased race equality, civic engagement, inclusion, service provision and community cohesion. For further information about TM visit [www.travellermovement.org.uk](http://www.travellermovement.org.uk)

## **Introduction**

The Traveller Movement (TM) is conducting an online survey about discrimination in order to determine those areas of life which Gypsies, Travellers and Roma (GTR) think TM's new Equality and Social Justice Unit should target in its work.

The survey was placed on SurveyMonkey at the beginning of February 2016, distributed via TM Facebook and Twitter accounts, and emailed to all the known contacts. After two months, the survey had received 59 replies<sup>1</sup>. This report introduces the interim results of this on-going survey.<sup>2</sup>

TM decided to leave the survey active online, in order to conduct a long-term discrimination research in the future. The survey can be found [here](#).

## **Equality and Social Justice Unit (ESJU)**

TM is establishing an Equality and Social Justice Unit (ESJU) to advance the human rights of Gypsy, Traveller and Roma (GTR) communities through advocacy, strategic litigation and training.

The ESJU aims to challenge discrimination and inequalities experienced by the GTR communities using a rights based approach which will both empower and inspire confidence among members of the GTR communities, challenge public authority duty holders to fulfil their national and international human rights obligations, and re-educate policy makers, service providers and others in their communication with, and service provision to, GTR communities.

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<sup>1</sup> Since only Question 7 was compulsory to answer, questions 1-6 may have less than 59 replies.

<sup>2</sup> Since it is an open access survey, we have taken into consideration that 'internet trolls' might take part. However, so far, with our best judgement, we have considered all replies to have been legitimate.

## The survey (Appendix 1)

Through decades of experience working with issues relating to GTR communities' lives, TM has identified the following categories as the areas these communities experience most discrimination:

- Education
- Employment
- Hate speech / crime
- Health care
- Planning / accommodation.

The survey is designed in order to identify in which of these five categories GTR communities feel they are in most unequal position and in need of legal and other assistance, when compared to other communities. Open ended questions guarantee that respondents are able to suggest additional categories.

It is important to acknowledge that Hate speech/crime overlap with all the other four categories and this has been taken into consideration when analysing the results.

In addition to finding out the most serious areas of discrimination, TM wanted to gather information about how often respondents have looked for legal and/or other advice when they have been discriminated against, and of the reasons for why they have not searched for any help, if that has been the case.

## The Results

When asked whether they have ever been discriminated against because they are GTR community members (**Question 1**, Appendix 1), 56 out of 57 respondents (98%) said **yes**. When asked to write down in what situations they have been discriminated against, the following places/situations were mentioned (the number in brackets indicates how many times it was mentioned; respondents were able to mention more than one situation):

'Everywhere' (15), at work (14), at school (14), in bars/pubs/restaurants (10), by the police (10), in shops (9), by the council/local authority (5), by neighbours (5), at the GP

(5), in social media (3), at own site/plot/house (2), at the gym (2), at university (2), by an insurance company (2), at events (2), in hospital (1), at the dentist (1), by social workers (1), by lawyer/barrister (1), by the prison system (1), in public transport (1), by a taxi driver (1), at the cinema (1), in motels/hotels (1), in church (1), by travel companies (1), in media (1) and by landowners (1).

Table 1 shows how respondent answered when they were asked whether they have experienced discrimination in the five identified areas 'never', 'sometimes' or 'often' (**Question 2**, Appendix 1).

	Total answers <sup>1</sup>	'Never' (no) %	'Sometimes' (yes) %	'Often' (yes) %	no/yes %
Education	51	14 28%	15 29%	22 43%	14/37 28% / <b>77%</b>
Employment	51	31 61%	13 25%	7 14%	31/20 61% / 39%
Hate speech/crime	52	10 19%	16 31%	26 50%	10/42 19% / <b>81%</b>
Health care	48	30 62%	10 21%	8 17%	30/18 62% / 38%
Planning/accommodation	49	30 61%	8 16%	11 23%	30/19 61% / 39%

<sup>1</sup>Since only Question 7 was compulsory to answer, questions 1-6 may have less than 59 replies.

**Table 1.** How often GTR respondents say they experience discrimination in the five identified areas (education, employment, hate speech/crime, health care, planning/accommodation).

Hate speech/crime and Education are overwhelmingly considered by the respondents as the two areas where they experience most discrimination. 42 respondents out of 52 (**81%**) say they experience hate speech/crime either often (50%) or sometimes

(31%), and 37/51 (77%) respondents say they have experienced discrimination within education often (43%) or sometimes (29%). These figures are extremely worrying and should prompt action in all levels of the society. Furthermore, as over third of the respondents have been discriminated against within Planning/accommodation (39%), Health care (38%) and Employment (39%), it is safe to argue that GTR communities are not receiving the same chances and opportunities in life as most other communities in the UK.

Table 2 introduces the most common answers when respondents were asked to specify the discrimination they had experienced in the five identified areas.

<p>1. Hate speech/crime</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Verbal abuse everywhere in society</li> <li>-Physical abuse/bullying everywhere in society</li> <li>-Rocks thrown at trailer / car burnt / car vandalised with graffiti</li> <li>-Threatened that people will come and burn their caravan</li> <li>-Refused entry to a pub/thrown out</li> <li>-Restaurants with signs stating “no Gypsies/Travellers”</li> <li>-Refused service by charities.</li> </ul>
<p>2. Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Teachers bully, have negative stereotypes, call names, threaten with social services</li> <li>-Children excluded from school</li> <li>-Bullied by other pupils</li> <li>-GTR children being placed in special needs classes/ segregated schools</li> </ul>
<p>3. Planning/accommodation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Planning permissions refused</li> <li>-Council ignores requests</li> <li>-Constant evictions with no alternative offered/not allowed to stop anywhere</li> <li>-Planning applications denied for trailer but ok for house</li> <li>-Locals put up petitions against Gypsies and Travellers.</li> </ul>

4. Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Other employees refuse to work with GTR</li> <li>-Can't get work if no fixed address</li> <li>-Getting fired when employer finds out ethnicity</li> <li>-Victimised by bosses at a big supermarket chain / given difficult rotas</li> <li>-Racial abuse at work.</li> </ul>
5. Healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Unable to register with a GP (e.g. no address)</li> <li>-Disrespectful receptionists at GP &amp; hospitals</li> <li>-Inadequate treatment at GP &amp; hospitals</li> <li>-Having to go ask advice from pharmacists as refused service at hospitals</li> <li>-GTR transgender issues ignored by GPs and hospitals</li> </ul>

**Table 2.** Specific discrimination experienced within the five identified categories (education, employment, hate speech/crime, health care, planning/accommodation).

With **Question 3** (Appendix 1) TM wanted to find out whether the respondents have looked for help when they have been discriminated against and what kind of help that has been. 42 out of 57 (**74%**) respondents said they have **not** looked for help. Those 15 respondents (26%), who had looked for help, mentioned charitable organisations such as Friends, Families and Travellers and Universities as the places they have gone for help, and who have actually helped them. Three respondents mention they have received help from the police and from government agencies, whereas three say the police, lawyers/barristers or the European court of human rights had refused to help them.

In **Question 4** (Appendix 1) we asked if the respondents have ever considered getting legal advice or legal advocacy when they were discriminated against. 40 respondents out of 56 (**71%**) said they have **not** considered any legal advice or advocacy because of the following reasons:

*“I didn't know what to do.”*

*“It's a too long process/expensive.”*

*“Incidents happen too often.”*

*“I don't trust cops.”*

*“There’s no point it wouldn’t help / too much trouble.”*

*“It would make things worse (draw more attention).”*

*“No one cares.”*

Over half of the respondents (29/53) stated they have been refused service because they are Gypsies, Travellers or Roma (**Question 5**, Appendix 1). Places that were mentioned included:

*motels/hotels, shops, hospitals, GPs, dentists, churches, petrol stations/garages, pubs/restaurants, public toilets, government schemes, schools, parks, sport centers, holiday camps, insurance companies, libraries, cinema and amusement parks.*

Respondents mentioned that some restaurants or clubs allow only one Traveller family in at a time as they think more would cause trouble; or that sometimes even if they are allowed in to a hospital or a GP practice, the staff’s hostile behavior makes them feel uncomfortable.

**Question 6** (Appendix 1) was included in order to highlight the already existing evidence about Gypsies, Travellers and Roma hiding their ethnicity as a tactic to avoid racism and discrimination<sup>3</sup>. 43 respondents out of 56 (**77%**) said they have hidden their ethnicity in order to avoid being discriminated against. As was demonstrated with **Questions 1 and 5** (Appendix 1), GTR people experience discrimination in all areas of life, and therefore try to avoid it by hiding their ethnicity.

In addition to experiencing discrimination in everyday life situations, the respondents also write that they *try to hide how they talk; wear plain black clothes; give friends’ settled addresses when asked, and that sometimes they have pretended to be Mediterranean.*

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<sup>3</sup> E.g. Wallengren, S. & Mellgren, C. (2015): 'The role of visibility for a minority's exposure to (hate) crime and worry about crime -a study of the Traveller community'. International Review of Criminology, 21(3); [Berlin, 2015](#)

The fact that **77%** of the respondents feel they need to hide their ethnicity in order to avoid racism and being discriminated against is overly disturbing and TM hopes these results will raise more awareness about the scale of anti-Gypsyism in the UK.

Finally, with an open **Question 7** (the only compulsory question to answer), TM asked what area(s) the respondents thought ESJU should target in its work. As can be seen from Table 3, Hate speech/crime (20) and Education (19) received again the most mentions. Planning/accommodation was mentioned 11 and Employment 4 times whereas Healthcare only by one respondent. In addition to these, Councils/Government were mentioned eleven times, especially relating to new Government proposed planning legislation trying to restrict Romany Gypsy and Irish Traveller ethnic status for only those individuals who travel for work purposes. The need for positive imaginary and Gypsy, Traveller and Roma role models were mentioned by two respondents.

Area ESJU should target	Mentions
Hate speech / crime	21
Education	19
Councils/government	11
Planning accommodation	11
Employment	4
Positive imaginary / role models	3
Healthcare	1

**Table 3.** The areas Gypsies, Travellers and Roma think ESJU should target in its work.

## Conclusion

It has not come as a surprise to TM that Gypsies, Travellers and Roma experience extensive discrimination in the UK. What these results highlight is the fact that GTR people cannot escape discrimination anywhere in their lives, even in places like the church, the gym, insurance companies and in their own backyards, just to mention a few. Most alarmingly this survey adds to the evidence that an overwhelming majority of Gypsies, Travellers and Roma in the UK hide their ethnicity every day in order to be able to live their lives without being racially harassed and discriminated against.



The results confirmed that GTR communities feel they need most legal advice and/or legal advocacy in situations relating to Hate speech/crime and Education, and therefore these are the areas Traveller Movement's new Equality and Social Justice Unit will firstly target in its work.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1

### Gypsies, Travellers, Roma and discrimination –survey

We at the Traveller Movement are trying to find out what are the most common situations Gypsies, Travellers and Roma experience discrimination in their everyday life. We would like to hear your opinion and experiences about this issue. This information will be used to help us inform best practice and targeted service for our new Equality and Social Justice project.

Thank you for participating in our survey. Your comments are important!

#### 1. Have you ever been discriminated against because you are a Gypsy, Traveller or Roma?

YES / NO

In what situation?

#### 2. Have you ever been discriminated against in the following areas?

**Education** (For example: Unfair exclusion, teachers ignoring parents' illiteracy, teachers making racist comments, blocked access to adult training ...)

Never

Sometimes

Often

Please Specify:

**Employment** (For example: refused a job, got fired ...)

**Never**

**Sometimes**

**Often**

Please Specify:

**Hate speech/crime** (For example: refused to enter a restaurant, verbal or physical violence ...)

**Never**

**Sometimes**

**Often**

Please Specify:

**Health Care** (For example: GP refused to register ...)

**Never**

**Sometimes**

**Often**

Please Specify:

**Planning & Accommodation** (For example: refused a planning permission, refused a house ...)

**Never**

Sometimes

Often

Please Specify:

**3. Did you look for any help if you were discriminated against?**

**YES / NO**

If yes, what kind of help?

**4. Have you ever considered getting legal advice or legal advocacy if you have been discriminated against?**

**YES / NO**

If not, why?

**5. Have you ever been refused services because you are a Gypsy, Traveller or Roma?**

**YES / NO**

In what situations?

**6. Have you ever hidden your ethnicity to avoid discrimination?**

**YES / NO**

If yes, in what situations?

**\*7. In your experience, what area should Traveller Movement's Equality and Social Justice Team target in their work?**