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## **Council of Europe: Pejcinovic Buric, “Roma and Traveller women and girls encounter critical barriers while being pillars of their families and communities”**

“News headlines across Europe indicate persistent antigypsyism and discrimination against Roma and Travellers. One of Europe’s largest ethnic minorities, they face multifaceted challenges: from prejudiced reporting in the media and limited access to quality education and the labour market, to social exclusion and segregation”. This was stated by Secretary General Marija Pejčinović Burić in the run-up to International Roma Day (April 8<sup>th</sup>), as she drew attention “to the special needs of Roma and Traveller women and girls, who encounter critical barriers while being pillars of their families and communities”. “Policies against nomadism and poor housing and accommodation disproportionately affect them. Far too often, their access to education, employment, and healthcare also is curtailed”. “Indeed, reports from Council of Europe monitoring bodies attest to gender-specific disadvantages regarding school attendance records, literacy and employment of Roma and Traveller women and girls as compared to their male counterparts”. “Despite such obstacles, it gives me hope to learn of Roma and Traveller women who have been at the forefront of change, who challenge stereotypes, advocate for justice, and demand equal rights. Their courage fuels our collective journey toward equality – and it deserves our support”. She adds: “The adoption today of the Committee of Ministers’ [Recommendation](#) on equality of Roma and Traveller women and girls recognises their contribution to society, while calling on member States to take specific steps to improve their status.”

Valentina Bombelli