

ONS Consultations Team
Post Room
Office for National Statistics
Segensworth Road
Fareham PO15 5RR

By email: 2023consultation@ons.gov.uk

25 October 2023

Dear Professor Sir Ian Diamond,

Re: The ONS consultation on the future of population and migration statistics in England and Wales.

We are concerned that the ambition that censuses after 2021 will be conducted using other sources of administrative data will mean that information about Romany Gypsies, Irish Travellers and Roma will not be captured.

Most administrative data does not record the ethnic categories of Romany Gypsy, Irish Traveller and Roma. Therefore, the proposal to move to published information from administrative data means that Gypsies, Roma and Travellers will become virtually invisible in data sets, with a risk that already marginalised groups will not have their situations and needs understood and addressed.

Only schools consistently record the ethnicity of Gypsies, Travellers and Roma, however even these do not give a true picture as, whilst there is an ethnicity category for Irish Travellers, the data published by the Department for Education aggregates two separate and distinct groups together under 'Romany Gypsy/Roma'. The data for these three ethnic groups needs to be recorded and published as 'Romany Gypsy', 'Irish Traveller' and 'Roma', across all administrative data sets, so the true picture for these three different groups can be understood.

Other organisations, such as the NHS, do not ethnically monitor Roma, Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers. Without such baseline information it is difficult to address their health inequalities. Information from the 2021 Census shows that those who identified as Gypsy or Irish Traveller were more than twice as likely to report bad or very bad health (12.5%) compared with the England and Wales Population (5.2%). Also, a lower percentage reported as being in good or very good health (72.3%) compared to 82% for the England and Wales population as a whole.

Most police forces do not ethnically monitor Roma, Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers. The lack of data capturing in this area means there is a lack of awareness and understanding of the extent to which Gypsies, Travellers and Roma are victims of crime, including race hate crimes.

We have given the example of schools, police forces and the NHS, but there are many other institutions and administrative data sets which completely fail to record any data by ethnicity for Gypsy, Traveller and Roma people. Whilst we understand there is a Data Harmonisation work plan, there is no clear indication on whether or when the consistent disaggregated ethnicity data collection for Gypsy, Traveller and Roma people will happen.

The ONS Census information from the last two Censuses is one of the most comprehensive data sources that exists on Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers and Roma. There is a real risk that the needs of marginalised Gypsy, Traveller and Roma communities will become increasingly invisible, and attempts to assess and address disparities, and provide services for these groups, will fail. If these proposals are to go forward, the ethnic monitoring of Romany Gypsies, Irish Travellers and Roma must be included in all administrative data. Can you assure us that the key data about these minority ethnic groups will be captured in your analyses and tables?

Yours sincerely,



Baroness Janet Whitaker and Mary Foy MP

Co-Chairs of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Gypsies, Roma and Travellers.