



International Traveller & Roma Day 2022

Wednesday 6th April
Maynooth University North Campus
10:00am - 5:30pm





International Traveller & Roma Day 2022



International Traveller and Roma Day is celebrated every year on the 8th of April and marks the opening day of the first world Roma Congress in London in 1971. Across Europe the day celebrates Romani Culture and raise awareness of the situation of Traveller and Roma and human rights issues they face.

On Wednesday, 6th April 2022, Maynooth University Access Programme, Department of Applied Social Studies and College Connect will mark International Traveller and Roma Day 2022 honouring our connections with the Traveller and Roma community. This is a daylong celebration and reflection and one that pays tribute to Traveller and Roma culture. Paying particular tribute to the late Michael McDonagh (Meath Travellers Workshop) the day will share in his memory through living history activities, music, song, poetry and storytelling.

All the events are happening on the North Campus of Maynooth University. Forming the centre piece for the day, Meath Traveller Workshop will feature its interactive Traveller Living History Exhibition of which Michael McDonagh was a stalworth and key figure. This exhibition recreates a real-life picture and atmosphere of Traveller life in the 1950s, including a restored traditional barrel top wagon a tent with a campfire with some tin-smithing and storytelling. Singer Sharyn Ward will treat you to some Traveller songs alongside Traveller poet Elizabeth Connors. There will be an opportunity to learn about the Whidden Workshops – It's Kushti to Rokker, (talk workshops) at the Whidden stand, and to browse through the Maynooth University collection of Traveller and Roma literature.

Maynooth University's President, Professor Eeva Leinonen will open the afternoon proceedings in John and Pat Hume Lecture Room 3, which will acknowledge the absence of the late Michael McDonagh in a tribute by Dr. Marianne O'Shea, followed by a keynote address from Anastasia Crickley (Pavee Point & Former Senior Lecturer at MU). Two panel discussions will follow the keynote with leading Traveller students, academics, activists and allies that explore, in a variety of ways, the question 'How open are universities to Travellers and Roma?'

The first panel will discuss the topic of 'Supporting Traveller and Roma students to and through higher education' with Megan Berry (MU), David Joyce (MU) and Venessa Paszkowsha (MU), chaired by Declan Markey, Maynooth Access Programme. The second will explore 'Traveller and Roma participation, research and policy in higher education' with Maria Joyce (NTWF), Dr Seamus Taylor (MU), Dr Sindy Joyce (UL), Thomas McCann (Traveller Counselling Service), Owen Ward (NUIG) and Professor Amanda Haynes (UL), chaired by Dr Sarah Sartori, College Connect. Dr. Rose Ryan will give closing remarks.

The event will close at 6PM



International Traveller & Roma Day 2022

10:00

Maynooth University raises the Traveller & Roma flag
Vanessa Paszkowska, sings the Roma National Anthem "Gelem, Gelem"

10:00-17:00

Traveller Living History Exhibition:
Meath Travellers Workshop
- Arts Building Car Park on North Campus

14:00 – 15.00

Performance programme:
Singer Sharyn Ward, and Poet Elizabeth Connors
- Arts Building Car Park on North Campus

15:00 – 15:10

Professor Eeva Leinonen, President Maynooth University:
Welcomes panellists and guests to Maynooth University
- John Hume Lecture Room 3 JH3

15:10 – 15:20

**Reflection on the passing & contribution of Michael McDonagh,
Traveller leader, community worker, and community historian**
Dr Marianne O'Shea, Department of Applied Social Studies
- John Hume Lecture Room 3 JH3

15:20 - 15:30

Keynote Address: How open are universities to Travellers and Roma?
Anastasia Crickley, former Senior Lecturer MU & Chairperson Pavee Point
- John Hume Lecture Room 3 JH3

15:35 – 16:10

Panel one:
Supporting Traveller and Roma students to and through higher education
Megan Berry (MU), Vanessa Paszkowska (MU) and David Joyce (MU)
Chair: Declan Markey, Maynooth Access Programme
- John Hume Lecture Room 3 JH3

16:10 -17:00

Panel two:
Traveller and Roma participation, research and policy in higher education
Maria Joyce (NTWF), Dr Seamus Taylor (MU), Dr Sindy Joyce (UL) Thomas McCann
(Traveller Counselling Service) Owen Ward (NUIG) and Professor Amanda Haynes (UL)
Chair: Dr Sarah Sartori, College Connect
- John Hume Lecture Room 3 JH3

17:00 -17:20

Questions & Answers:
Moderated by Dr Sarah Sartori and Declan, the
audience are invited to take part in a Q&A
- John Hume Lecture Room 3 JH3

17:20-17:30

Closing remarks:
Dr Rose Ryan Director of Maynooth Access
Programme
- John Hume Lecture Room 3 JH3



Professor Eeva Leinonen
- President of Maynooth University

Professor Eeva Leinonen joined Maynooth University as the first female President in MU in October 2021. On Wednesday April 6th at 3PM, Professor Eeva Leinonen will join us on Maynooth University's North Campus to celebrate this MU event for International Traveller and Roma Day.

Meath Traveller Workshops & The Living Traveller Exhibition

Meath Travellers' Workshops is a voluntary Community Development Organisation, which is a partnership of Travellers and Settled people working together. The Programmes include Traveller Heritage and Culture Awareness, Childcare, Youth and Community Development and addressing Traveller issues such as Education, Accommodation and Employment also providing family supports and citizen information.



The Living Traveller Exhibition is a re-created real-life picture of Traveller life in the 1950's. The scene includes a fully restored Barrel Top Wagon, a traditional tent, a flat cart, working tinsmith, storytelling Traveller woman and of course, a campfire. This has been created by Meath Traveller Workshops (MTW) Ltd who recognise the importance of Traveller culture, history and identity. They also believe in sharing this unique part of Irish life with the wider community. By literally setting this scene, visitors can visit the camp and spend time learning about what Traveller life was like fifty years ago.



Sharyn Ward

Sharyn Ward is a proud Traveller woman and Irish singer. In 2019, Sharyn was a finalist in Irelands Got Talent. Today she continues to perform across Ireland while juggling motherhood and life in the music studio.

Elizabeth Connors

Traveller Poet Elizabeth Connors is a recipient of a National Traveller Pride award and has been widely broadcast and regularly takes part in literary events and national days such as National Traveller Mental Health Day and International Women's Day. As a member of the Carlow Traveller Forum, she is very involved in working with Traveller issues as they arise in her local community.



Whidden Workshops - It Kushti to Rokker

Stand Outside JH3

Whidden Workshops- It's Kushti to Rokker means Chatting Workshop; its Good to Talk in Cant and Roma dialects. Come and visit the WWKR stand outside John & Pat Hume Lecture Room 3 (JH3) to learn more about this collaboration that brings together current and alumni Traveller and Roma students to discuss and chat about going to and getting through college.



Keynote – Anastasia Crickley (Pavee Point & Former Senior Lecturer MU) – “How open are universities to Traveller and Roma?”

John Hume Building Room 3 JH3
Maynooth University



Anastasia Crickley was chairperson of the UN Committee for Elimination of Racial Discrimination from 2016 to 2018. She was the first chair of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), a member of the Advisory Committee for the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and was Personal Representative of the OSCE Chair in Office on Racism. Anastasia was a former Senior Lecturer and until 2015 she was Head of Department of Applied Social Studies at Maynooth University. She is a founder of the European Network Against Racism, Pavee Point Traveller & Roma Centre and the Migrants Rights Centre, Ireland. She is also a member of the Government's recently established Anti-Racism Committee, currently finalising Ireland's second National Action Plan versus Racism.



Panel One:

Supporting Traveller and Roma students to and through higher education

Megan Berry (MU)

Megan Berry holds a B.A in Social Care and a Masters in Community & Youth Work from Maynooth University. She currently works part time as a Traveller Outreach Officer on the Maynooth University Access Programme where her role includes reaching out to prospective Traveller students, their families and the community. Megan also works as a community development worker on the violence against women programme in Pavee Point. She has worked at promoting a model of Traveller participation in the prevention of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence in a national pilot project to promote best practice to create better access to DV services for Traveller women. Megan was featured in the Irish Times as one to watch in 2022.



Vanessa Paskowska

Vanessa Paszkowska is part of the Polish Roma community. She is a final year law and criminology student at Maynooth University. Vanessa has got a particular interest in the Human rights of minority groups, including her own community. From early stages she has been promoting the Roma rights and culture on the internet and in her university. Currently she is a peer researcher at Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre.

David Joyce

David Joyce is a graduate of Maynooth University. As an Irish Traveller, who came through the Maynooth Access route, third level education played a pivotal role in his being able to name and analyse how his ethnicity and socio-economic standing influenced the world which he inhabits. In later years David returned to Maynooth University to complete a Professional Master of Education, which he completed in the summer of 2021. David is now currently employed as a post-primary teacher of History and Politics and Society.





Panel Two:

“How open are universities to Traveller and Roma?” - Traveller and Roma participation, research and policy in higher education.

John Hume Building Room 3 JH3
Maynooth University



Maria Joyce

Maria Joyce is the Coordinator of the National Traveller Women's Forum and a long time Traveller activist who has worked to bring about Traveller equality and human rights over the past 25 years. Maria has been part of a number of campaigns most notably the campaign for recognition of Traveller ethnic status and continues to work to create the conditions to achieve Traveller women's equality both within the community and in the wider gender movement. Maria also continues to be involved in the development of government policy to advance issues on education, accommodation and health in particular. She is also an MU graduate with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Applied Social Studies.

Dr Seamus Taylor (Head of Applied Social Studies MU)



Seamus Taylor is head of DAPPSS and has lectured in Social Policy at Maynooth University since 2009. Prior to this he was Director of Equality and Diversity at the Public Prosecution Service in London where he led on hate crime policy. He was previously Director of Strategy at the UK Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), where he led on the public sector race equality duty following the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry. He had earlier worked as Head of Policy: Equality and Diversity at Haringey Council. Seamus served as a Commissioner on the Commission on the future of Multi-ethnic Britain and as a trustee of the Runnymede Trust. He recently served as a member of the Independent Advisory Group to the Windrush Lessons Learned Review. Seamus also serves as chair of the Irish Penal Reform Trust. Seamus was awarded a CBE in 2010 in recognition of his work on equality.



Panel Two: Traveller and Roma participation, research and policy in higher education

John Hume Building Room 3 JH4
Maynooth University

Dr. Sindy Joyce (UL)



Sindy Joyce is a Mincéir/Traveller from Newcastle West, County Limerick. She is a Human Rights Defender (HRD), a sociologist and a member of President Michael D Higgins Council of State. Her research focuses on Human Rights, racism, hate crime, ethnicity/identity, and social/political constructions of Irish Travellers. Her PhD thesis 'Mincéirs Siúladh: An ethnographic study of young Travellers' experiences of racism in an Irish city' addressed the original and important question of how anti-Traveller racism shapes young people's use of and movement through public space. Sindy is on the anti-racism committee for the National Action Plan Against Racism. In 2019, Sindy was part of the Irish delegation to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on the treatment of Travellers in Ireland. Dr. Sindy Joyce has recently been appointed as the Traveller Studies lecturer in UL.

Thomas McCann (Traveller Counselling Service & MU DAPPSS)



Thomas McCann is a member of the Traveller community and a long time Traveller activist. He is a founder member of the Irish Traveller Movement where he was also employed as the Equality worker and as a director among many other roles. He was active in the early days of Minceir Misli and was instrumental in campaigning for the Equal Status Act and the Traveller Accommodation Act. Thomas holds a Diploma in Community Development from MU and at the time of his degree was known as the first Traveller man to be in higher education. Thomas is a counsellor and holds a BSc in Psychotherapy and a masters in counselling supervision. He is currently a council member of Minceirs Whidden, a Traveller only organisation and is also a member of the National Traveller Monitoring Advisory Committee. Thomas established and currently manages the Traveller Counselling Service which was launched in 2008.



Owen Ward (NUIG)



Owen is a native of Galway City and a member of the Irish Travelling community. Despite being an early school leaver, with no Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate, upon successful completion of the NUI Galway Access Programme, he has graduated with a B.A. (Hons) and Masters in Post Primary education (PME). He is a Programme Coordinator at the Access Centre, NUI Galway, and was a committee member of Údarás na hOllscoile (NUI Galway Governing Authority), the first Irish Traveller to be elected to a university governing authority. Owen played a key role in the establishment of the University of Sanctuary scholarships at NUIG which are open to International Protection Applicants, refugees, vulnerable immigrant groups, and Irish Travellers. He is committed to widening participation in HE for students from diverse and socio-economic disadvantaged backgrounds.

Dr. Amanda Haynes (UL)

Dr. Amanda Haynes is an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Limerick. Amanda's research interests centre on minority communities' access to justice and the treatment of hate crime in the criminal justice system. Amanda's current research projects include Irish Travellers Access to Justice which is funded by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission and the Irish Research Council under the COALESCE program. The project examines the relationship between Irish Travellers and the police and courts in Ireland. She has previously conducted European Union funded research on the treatment of hate crime across the criminal justice systems of five European states, and on general population attitudes to LGBT people. She has conducted Irish Research Council research on the relationship between Ireland's trans community and the police, and on third party hate crime monitoring systems. She is currently engaged in two further Irish Research Council funded projects on general population attitudes to and awareness of hate crime, and on LGBT+ legal activism.



Closing Remarks – Dr. Rose Ryan (Director of Access at MU)



Dr Rose Ryan leads the Maynooth University Access Programme (MAP) which works across the university and alongside under-represented learners, schools, and communities to increase equity of access and support student success. Dr Ryan is currently leading a number of strategic initiatives with a range of partners, aimed at addressing system-level objectives identified through the Higher Education System Performance Framework and supported by the HEA through the Programme for Access to Higher Education. Dr Ryan is Chair of the College Connect Regional Steering Group, a partnership with Dublin City University, Dundalk Institute of Technology and Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest, which aims to support access to higher education for marginalised groups in the Midlands, East, North Dublin (MEND) region.



Reflection on the passing & contribution of Michael McDonagh:

**Traveller leader, community worker, and community historian
- with Dr. Marianne O'Shea (MU)**

Michael's untimely death on September 18th remains a huge loss for his wife Nell, their children, grandchildren, and larger family network. It is also a major loss for Travellers and Traveller organisations and for all who stand in solidarity with their struggles for recognition and rights realisation in Irish society. Michael McDonagh was one of the Traveller leaders who led the negotiations with the state which culminated in the public acknowledgment of Traveller ethnicity by then Taoiseach Enda Kenny in Dáil Éireann on March 1st, 2017. He was long-time director of Navan Travellers Workshop. In addition, over the past number of years,



Michael made a very significant contribution to enhancing Traveller pride in culture and identity, while building awareness and understanding among non-Travellers, through Traveller history workshops and associated presentations at festivals, fairs and museums up and down the country.

In 1989, Michael was one of the first of many Travellers to graduate from DAPPSS with a professional qualification in Community and Youth Work. He remained a close and much valued friend to the Department and the University - supervising student placements, contributing to classes and making keynote inputs to university events, including the public lecture 'Travellers in Irish Society, Past and Present' hosted by the MU Access Office in 2019.

What Michael stood for, and what the other Traveller graduates of MU continue to stand for, in promoting rights realisation and equality needs to continue to be reflected throughout all the University's programmes, as well as in its governance, students and staff and the research, teaching and all the other activities of the academy.

We are all indebted to him and the wiser for having had the chance to engage with him.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a h-anam.

Dr. Marianne O'Shea – (MU DAPPSS)

Marianne is currently coordinator of the Master in Community & Youth Work programme and lectures across DAPPSS programmes, from Certificate to CPD level focusing on equality, human rights and international development. She is a member of Maynooth University Equality Working Group and part of the DFAT Consultative Committee on Women Peace & Security which developed Ireland's most recent NAP. Marianne is an active member of number of organisations including Community Work Ireland, Liberia Solidarity Group and Offaly Traveller Movement.





International Traveller & Roma Day 2022

Production Team International Traveller and Roma Day 2022

Maynooth Access Programme:

Martha Brandes - Head of Access Operations
Gemma Lynch - Outreach Officer
Declan Markey - Outreach Officer (Community)
Megan Berry - Traveller Outreach Officer
Gemma Middleton - Senior Executive Assistant

College Connect:

Ayoma Bowe - Project Manager
Sarah Meaney Sartori - Research Manager
Karen Fenlon - Research Support
Karen Brady - Executive Administrator
Tyran Lovett - Design