



The Traveller Movement

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The Traveller Movement response to DfE proposals to amend the School Census Ethnicity data collection regarding the Gypsy/Roma category

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The Traveller Movement welcome the proposals to amend the current ethnic category of Gypsy/Roma in the schools pupil census. As members of the GRT DfE Stakeholder Group we have raised this issue a number of times, highlighting how the conflation of Gypsy/Roma (two separate and distinct minority groups) results in the production of inaccurate data on these groups and prevents policy makers and schools better understanding their outcomes and educational needs.

1. Do you think that the way we have described the distinction between Gypsy and Roma is accurate? Do you think there would still be a significant number of people considering themselves as both Gypsy and Roma?

TM believe that the distinction between Gypsy and Roma is accurate, however we wouldn't have enough detailed knowledge to comment on the distinction made between the languages spoken by these groups. We would suggest you contact Stakeholder Group member Damian Le Bas, if he hasn't commented already as he is an expert in this area.

There are a few minor amendments we would propose in the draft proposal:

- Page 2, para 4 & 5: change wording from 'ethnic group' to 'ethnic groups' reflecting the distinction made earlier in the document
- Page 3 under heading 'cross category ethnicities': Insert 'be' in highlighted section 'who consider themselves **to the** both Gypsy and Roma'

Was slightly confused about the paragraph dealing with the burden of reclassification; does this mean that there won't be an onus on schools to reclassify existing pupils who have already completed the most recent pupil census, however when the next census comes around they will have the option to tick the separated Gypsy or Roma box?



2. Do you think this proposal is likely to succeed in its aim (i.e. increasing ascription)?

Yes. It will most likely encourage more Roma to self-ascribe as they will identify more with the category 'Roma' than with the current group 'Gypsy/Roma for reasons outlined in the proposal. We believe it may also increase ascription by Gypsies, however possibly not to the same extent as Roma.

3. Are there any benefits to the proposal that I have not included in the paper?

TM believe that the proposals represent the opportunity for schools to better recognize and celebrate the diverse range of cultures, languages and traditions of Gypsies, Irish Travellers and Roma.

4. Can you think of any potential negatives to the proposal that I haven't addressed in the paper?

There is the possibility that Gypsy and Roma pupils and parents are confused by the selection of categories represented to them (e.g. Gypsy, Roma, Gypsy/Roma). In this context it would be beneficial (however logistically this may not be possible) to make a clear distinction between Roma of European origin and English Romany Gypsies.

