

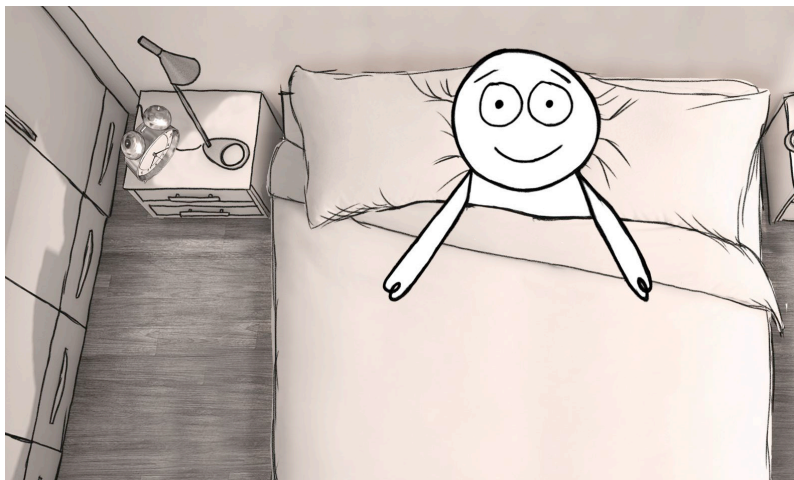


Every morning, in the moment just before we wake, we are all the same...

Then, like the clothes we wear, our identities begin to fill in:

Boy, girl, man, woman, child, teen, adult, senior. Doctor, painter, driver, accountant, manager, teacher, student.

French, American, Czech, Latino, British, African, Roma, European.



In September 2015, our first waking moment stayed the same — but what came next began to change.

People seeking refuge from war and poverty are on the move, Europe is shaken by terrorist attacks, the people and their leaders react...

Imagine waking up one day and that moment of sameness does not fade. Unaware of divisions, you start out on your way...

Everyone you meet is concerned with identity — “Who are we? Who are they?”

Europe: Which Children Matter? explores a question that should not exist.

“Are you going to send your six-year-old to be the guinea pig...?”



If the health and success of a society can be measured by the wellbeing of its most vulnerable minority, how are we doing?

"You have only two options.

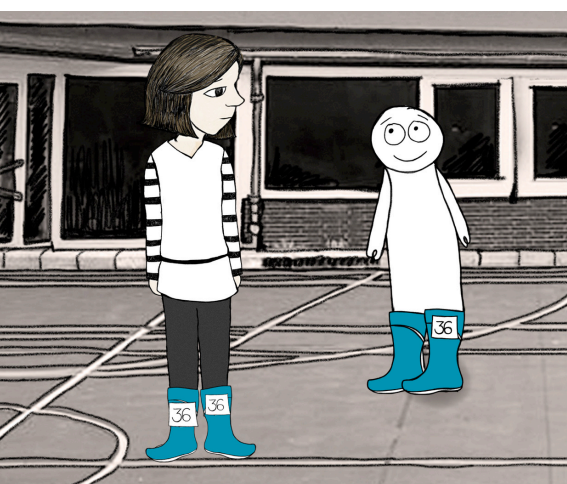
One is, just hang in there....watch your child suffer and be ashamed...or give in...

Five-year-olds, six-year-olds, being instructed by their Mommies and Daddies 'Stay away from that person. Don't play with that person.'"

Is education the driving force behind maintaining democracy?

"We ask who we are, so that we can become better..."

**Who are we?
Where are we going?**



Walk a year in the shoes of Romani children who have been systematically blocked out of education and seek to escape the marginalization that relegates them to a subclass within their own societies.

This film explores the surprising systematic discrimination some children in Europe face, as well as the successes of multi-ethnic, multicultural learning environments in which all children, regardless of background, thrive.

BACKGROUND/ ISSUE

Begun in early October 2015, the film's reflection on the underlying conditions that lead to discrimination of "the other" continues to become more and more relevant given the great influx of asylum-seekers entering Europe.

After the Paris attacks in November 2015, the unprecedented election victories by anti-immigration platforms such as Poland's nationalist party win, and rising anti-foreigner and anti-EU sentiment across Europe, multiculturalism as a societal goal in Europe is facing its greatest challenge since the 1920s. The refugee crisis is exposing how recalcitrant some EU-28 states are when it comes to solidarity, and the UK has voted by referendum to leave the EU.

In the Czech Republic, Roma children have been disproportionately placed in de facto segregated or special schools for the mentally disabled for generations. In November 2007, the European Court of Human Rights found the Czech Republic had unlawfully, indirectly discriminated against such children in violation of the European Convention on Human Rights. Because little has changed since then, the European Commission has also recently begun infringement proceedings against the Czech Republic (and Slovakia) over discrimination against Romani children in education.

Judgments against these states will not only be costly, but may also provide political ammunition to advocates of leaving the EU. Such a turn of events would close these societies off, be disastrous for Romani people and other marginalized groups, and harm the EU and the larger project of a peaceful, democratic Europe.

*"I am Roma, so I can't do it. That's what they think."
- "But you did do it, and in another language."
"Yes I did."*

Witness Czech Romani immigrant children, several of whom were incorrectly diagnosed as mentally disabled in their home country, thrive at a new school, in a new language, in an equitable school environment in the UK. Though in the Czech school system children are often kept segregated from one another and never guided toward mutual understanding, we become immersed in the culture of a group of Czech children and their extraordinary school community who are breaking through biases and redefining the possible.

*"Where are the teachers who are capable
of seeing, awakening and supporting children
who would otherwise be forgotten?"*

Who are you? Who are we? Which Children Matter?



TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Title: Europe: Which Children Matter?

Country: Czech Republic/UK

Length: 75 min

Production year: 2016

Original language: English, Czech & Slovak

Subtitles: English/Czech

Original format: HD

Screenings format: ProRes/H264

Producer/ Director: Jenne Magno

Camera/ Editor/ Animation: Audun Nedrelid

Illustration/ Animation: Petra Lapveteläinen

Sound mix: Michael Pajdak

Sound post-production: Little M Records Studio

Second camera: Ben Suri

Editorial consultant: Liz Barnes

Concept Consultants: Gwendolyn Albert, Lucie Fremlová

Translation: Klara Meissnerová, Gwendolyn Albert

Titles: Luboš Pavel, Tereza Sošiková

Music: Premiumbeat.coma

Web Studio: Suzanne's LivingRoom

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

The students, parents, educators and communities who shared their stories with us and made this film possible.

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Roma Education Support Trust (REST)

Romani community of Ostrava

Romani community of Leicester

CONTRIBUTORS:

Mark Penfold

Marie Gottfriedová

Edita Stejskalová

Tanweer Ali

Klára Laurenčíková

Petr Torák

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Pravaha films, a project of Pramení ops



CONTACT:

Jenne Magno, Producer/ Director

+420 777 822 953, jenne@prameni.org

