

CONTINUOUS POLICE CHECKS

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From the 1890s, European Roma and Sinti increasingly faced police attention and checks. Authorities introduced regulations affecting their daily lives and work. There were penalties for Roma and Sinti who worked without a permit, while “vagrancy” and “begging” were made punishable offences.

Did you know

... that, for many police officers, dealing with “Gypsies” offered attractive career prospects, as they could use modern techniques like photography and fingerprinting and work with colleagues from other countries?

For you to do

Describe the impression created in the photo. Find out whether begging is allowed or illegal in your community and your country. Discuss the reasons given for making begging illegal and imposing penalties.

The photo

Police checking a man’s identification papers during a raid on the Roma settlement in Allhau in the province of Burgenland in the interwar period. Burgenland Regional Archives, Eisenstadt, Austria.