Sinti-Roma Ministries in Germany
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The "Working Group Between the Sinti/Roma and the Churches in Baden-Wuerttemberg" has just celebrated its 10th anniversary, and we are thankful to the Buraku Liberation of the Church of Christ in Japan, for having given us the motivation to establish this group in 1999!

Within the network of partner churches in the EMS (Association of churches and missions in South Western Germany), contacts between minority groups like Dalit in India and Buraku in Japan have a long history. In a Church consultation between Japanese and German churches in 1993, a question was raised by Japan concerning cooperation of German churches with the minority of Sinti and Roma in this country. The Buraku Liberation Center invited church authorities and representatives of the Sinti and Roma to introduce their longstanding liberation work. The first journey took place in 1996, and was followed by a second in 1998, with synod members of the Wuerttemberg Church among the participants.

They decided to establish an ecumenical working group, which included members from both of Catholic and Protestant churches and representatives of Sinti and Roma organisations. The "Association of German Sinti and Roma in Baden-Wuerttemberg" was one of our founding member organisations.

The main focus of the working group is to become more aware of discrimination and how to overcome it. Activities are mainly concentrated in public events, seminars, activities in schools and for school teachers, and in congregations and confirmation classes. Publications are also part of our anti-discrimination efforts. We also foster international networking of Sinti and Roma groups with organisations of Dalit in India and Buraku in Japan.

On July 1st, we had a 10th anniversary celebration for these activities, and we are thankful that two delegates of the Buraku Liberation Center in Japan, Mr. Kataoka and Rev. Mizutani, were able to participate with us and so remember the very beginning of our working group and the importance of international solidarity in anti-discrimination activities.

Members of the German delegation, including several members of the "working group" visit Omi Heian Church, which is pastored by Rev. Kazuhiro Tanimoto, head of the BLC activities committee, in May 2005.

Members of the "Working Group" during a study trip to Strasbourg, France in 2007.

Grave-like monuments to the Sinti and Roma people murdered by the Nazis at the Buchenwald death camp. More than 500,000 Sinti and Roma from Germany and other European countries were murdered in the Nazi-era genocide.