



## Irish Travellers / An Lucht Siúil / Pavees / Minceir

Irish Travellers are traditionally a nomadic people who originated in Ireland. There are now significant communities of Irish Travellers in the UK, across Europe and in the United States.

Irish Travellers possess a distinctive way of life, value system, culture and traditions. Their language is variously known as Shelta, Gamin or Cant. Irish Travellers refer to themselves as 'Pavees' or 'Minceir.'

Some historians claim that Irish Travellers are descended from the native Irish population, dispossessed as a result of social and political upheavals such as Oliver Cromwell's military campaign in Ireland (1649–53) or the Great Famine in Ireland (1840s).

Others propose much earlier origins based on evidence of nomadic groups in Ireland as early as the 5th Century AD.

Irish Travellers have excelled in particular in highly-skilled crafts, music and sports. More recently, the contribution of Irish Travellers has gained recognition in the spheres of education, business and politics.

In the 21st Century, many members of Irish Traveller communities continue to prefer a nomadic, self-employed way of life within a cohesive extended family structure.

