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REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

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Contents

INTRODUCTION 1
I. PARTNERSHIPS AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY 2
II. EU OBJECTIVES 4
II.I Fight and prevent antigypsyism and discrimination 4
II.II Reduce poverty and social exclusion 7
II.III Promote participation through empowerment, cooperation and trust 9
II.IV Increase effective equal access to quality inclusive mainstream education 11
II.V Increase effective equal access to quality and sustainable employment 12
II.VI Improve Roma health and increase effective equal access to quality healthcare and social services 14
II.VII Increase effective equal access to adequate desegregated housing and essential services 16
III. ROMA IN THE ENLARGEMENT REGION 18
IV. EU ACTION 19
CONCLUSION 24

INTRODUCTION

The European Union (EU) is founded on the principle that all its citizens should be able to participate fully in society. Equality, inclusion and respect for fundamental rights are core EU values guiding EU legislation, policies and actions. These values are essential for social cohesion, economic resilience and long-term competitiveness. In this context and in line with its Union of Equality agenda, the Commission has made non-discrimination and inclusion a key priority. Promoting Roma equality, inclusion and participation is an integral part of this commitment and helps implement the rights and principles enshrined in the Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Roma[1] are Europe's largest ethnic minority with an estimated population of 10 to 12 million people across the continent, of whom more than 6 million live in the EU[2]. This number is expected to increase significantly with the accession of Western Balkan countries. Despite ongoing national and EU efforts, many Roma continue to face discrimination, antigypsyism and socio-economic exclusion. To address these persistent inequalities, the strengthened EU Roma strategic framework for equality, inclusion and participation for 2020-2030 was adopted on 7 October 2020. It introduced seven EU-level objectives[3], and proposed for the first time EU headline quantitative targets for 2030. It promotes a 'common but differentiated approach' under which all Member States work towards achieving shared EU-level objectives and implementing minimum commitments while adapting their measures to national circumstances and the size of their Roma populations. Member States with significant Roma populations are expected to adopt more ambitious commitments. The framework was reinforced by the Council Recommendation of 12 March 2021, in which Member States committed themselves to adopting and implementing their national Roma strategic frameworks (NRSFs). The implementation of these EU instruments is supported by national Roma contact points (NRCPs), EU funding, monitoring mechanisms and mutual learning, which together provide a shared framework for action, accountability and coordination, turning common goals into a collective European commitment.

As part of the EU Roma strategic framework's biennial monitoring cycle, all Member States[4] submit progress reports on their NRSFs to the European Commission. On this basis, the Commission publishes a consolidated assessment of progress across the EU. This third Commission implementation report covers developments between 1 June 2023 and 31 March 2025[5].

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[1] The reference to 'Roma', as an umbrella term, encompasses a wide range of different people of Romani origin such as: Roma, Sinti, Kale, Romanichels and Boyash/Rudari. It also encompasses groups such as Ashkali, Egyptians, Yenish, Dom, Lom, Rom and Abdal, as well as traveller populations, including ethnic Travellers or those designated under the administrative term *Gens du voyage* and people who identify as Gypsies, Tsiganes or Tziganes, without denying the specific characteristics of these groups.

[2] Council of Europe, Commissioner for Human Rights (2025), The Unheard 12 Million – Council of Europe Commissioner issues urgent wake-up call to act for Roma and Traveller rights, 1 October 2025.

[3] i) Fight and prevent antigypsyism and discrimination; ii) Reduce poverty and social exclusion to close the socio-economic gap between Roma and the general population; iii) Promote participation through empowerment, cooperation and trust; iv) Increase effective equal access to quality inclusive mainstream education; v) Increase effective equal access to quality and sustainable employment; vi) Improve health and increase effective equal access to quality healthcare and social services; and vii) Increase effective equal access to adequate desegregated housing and essential services.

[4] With the exception of Malta.

[5] The measures implemented after the reporting period are only included in this report if the NRCPs declare them to the Commission.

In addition to national reports, this assessment draws on two further sources of evidence. First, the Roma Survey 2024, conducted by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights, which provides comparable data on the situation of Roma[6]. Second, contributions from Roma and pro-Roma civil society organisations and other stakeholders (hereinafter 'stakeholders'), which were gathered through three key initiatives: the Roma Civil Monitoring initiative (RCM), a dedicated Implementation Dialogue with Commissioner Lahbib and a Call for Evidence. These inputs provide valuable insights into the challenges stakeholders face in implementing the EU Roma strategic framework and into ways of improving its implementation.

Member States have taken measures to strengthen governance and monitoring, combat antigypsyism and discrimination, and improve Roma access to education, employment, healthcare and housing, including through EU-funded initiatives. Findings from the Roma Survey 2024 show improvements since 2016, including reductions in severe material deprivation and the proportion of young Roma not in employment, education or training (NEET), an increase in the proportion of Roma in paid work, increased participation in early childhood education and care, and improved housing conditions. Nevertheless, progress remains uneven across Member States and policy areas, and significant challenges remain in translating policy commitments into tangible improvements for Roma.

This report assesses the implementation of national Roma strategic frameworks and progress towards the objectives and targets set out in the EU Roma strategic framework. It also covers developments in the enlargement region and relevant EU-level actions. It is complemented by a staff working document containing country factsheets prepared by the Commission and an overview of national quantitative targets and reported progress prepared by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (see Appendix).

I. PARTNERSHIPS AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

Effective governance is essential for implementing the NRSFs. While all Member States have set up governance structures centred on NRCPs, significant differences remain in institutional capacity, coordination, stakeholder participation and local implementation. These arrangements must be strengthened to turn national strategies into effective action. In this context, stakeholders highlighted persistent challenges in translating NRSFs into effective local action, in particular: fragmented governance, limited municipal capacity, and political sensitivities affecting the prioritisation and implementation of Roma inclusion measures. This underlines the need for stronger support through capacity-building and technical assistance.

Main achievements

All reporting Member States have designated NRCPs responsible for coordinating the implementation of their NRSFs. In several countries, steps have been taken to strengthen the functioning of NRCPs by increasing the number of staff, improving institutional arrangements, or providing more budgetary resources[7]. In several cases, NRCPs are directly involved in programme monitoring and coordination mechanisms[8]. This helps to better integrate Roma inclusion priorities into broader social and cohesion policies. For example, in Slovakia, the NRCP is a full member of the Monitoring Committee for Programme Slovakia 2021-2027, a cohesion policy programme co-funded by the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) and the

[6] The survey covers 10 Member States (BG, CZ, FR, EL, HU, IE, IT, PT, RO, ES) and three candidate countries (AL, MK, RS).
[7] BE, BG, CZ, DE, EL, ES, FR, HU, HR, IE, IT, LT, LV, RO, SI, SK.
[8] BG, CZ, EL, ES, FR, HR, HU, LV, IT, RO, SK.

European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), and coordinates a specific commission dedicated to marginalised Roma communities. Cyprus established a monitoring committee for its NRSF, bringing together ministries and Roma representatives to strengthen coordination and participation in policymaking.

Implementation of Roma inclusion measures also relies on cooperation with regional and local authorities. Municipalities play an important role in implementing measures in key areas such as education, housing and social services. For instance, Greece has implemented a framework under which 85 municipalities have already submitted local action plans for Roma inclusion to ensure alignment with national priorities.

A total of 20 Member States[9] regularly monitor the implementation of their NRSFs and have defined at least one quantitative or qualitative target. Encouragingly, almost all countries with significant Roma populations have established quantitative targets and indicators for at least five objectives. Czechia, Slovakia and Spain have developed robust monitoring frameworks aligned with the EU Roma strategic framework indicators, while Bulgaria's framework is more limited but broadly aligned with these indicators. Monitoring frameworks in the remaining Member States with significant Roma populations are at different stages of development, with some indicator or target values still to be defined or to be completed at the time of reporting (see Appendix), affecting the assessment of progress towards national targets.

Where national targets under national Roma strategic frameworks have been established (target years vary), available information shows differing progress towards achieving them: Bulgaria reports having reached its 2030 targets in pre-primary education participation and upper secondary education attainment and some progress in other areas; Slovakia is on track with its 2030 targets related to Roma housing and participation; Spain has reached some of its 2026 targets related to antigypsyism but lags behind in other areas, particularly education; Czechia shows limited or no progress towards its 2030 targets. The information provided by Hungary, Greece and Romania does not allow for an assessment of progress towards their national targets (2030 for Hungary and Greece, and 2027 for Romania; see Appendix). The analysis by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights shows improvements in 10 of the 16 indicators since 2016. However, progress remains insufficient to achieve most of the EU Roma strategic framework's objectives and targets by 2030, while the employment objective is currently on track.

Assessment and remaining challenges

Member States have continued to strengthen governance structures supporting Roma inclusion. Ensuring that NRCPs have sufficient institutional capacity and resources remains essential for effective cross-sectoral coordination. Roma inclusion is increasingly integrated into mainstream policies but these often lack Roma-specific safeguards and outreach measures to ensure that Roma can access and benefit from them.

Weak coordination between national and local authorities remains a major bottleneck, making it more difficult to turn national strategies into effective local action. In decentralised systems, implementation often remains discretionary, with municipalities avoiding implementing measures perceived as politically sensitive, such as desegregation, in favour of short-term, low-conflict measures.

Obtaining consistent results requires more robust governance arrangements, including clearer responsibilities, effective monitoring and increased accountability. Boosting coordination and

[9] BE, BG, CY, CZ, EE, EL, ES, FI, HR, HU, IE, IT, LV, LT, NL, PL, RO, SE, SI, SK.

administrative capacity, especially through targeted capacity-building and appropriate incentives at municipal level, can improve the implementation of Roma inclusion measures and increase the effective absorption of EU funds. Strengthening the link between governance structures and the implementation of EU-funded programmes remains essential.

Further efforts are needed to bolster monitoring frameworks across Member States. In some cases, targets and indicators have not yet been defined or remain incomplete, while monitoring relies predominantly on output rather than outcome indicators. These shortcomings reflect broader limitations in data availability and comparability across the EU. In several Member States, official statistics do not adequately capture Roma populations, making it difficult to assess inequalities and progress over time. More comparable methodologies, together with disaggregated and proxy data[10] where appropriate and legally permissible, would strengthen evidence-based policymaking and improve the completeness and comparability of reporting. Where sample sizes permit, monitoring could also capture disparities within the Roma population, alongside comparisons with the general population.

Guidance for further improvement

To accelerate progress towards the achievement of EU-level objectives in line with the 'common but differentiated approach', the Commission calls on Member States, particularly those with significant Roma populations, to:

- **strengthen the mandate, staffing and funding of NRCPs,** ensure their effective involvement in the coordination and monitoring of mainstream and targeted policies as well as EU-funded programmes, and empower them to track progress against the EU Roma strategic framework;
- **strengthen monitoring of the national Roma strategic frameworks to track progress against clear targets and outcome indicators** aligned with the EU Roma strategic framework, using disaggregated and proxy data where appropriate and legally permissible;
- **step up coordination across governance levels**, particularly by **strengthening local implementation** through clearer responsibilities, greater stakeholder participation, increased municipal administrative capacity and improved accountability mechanisms.

II. EU OBJECTIVES

This section reviews progress made in achieving the seven objectives of the EU Roma strategic framework. For each objective, the relevant EU Roma strategic framework headline targets for 2030 are presented, providing the benchmarks against which progress is assessed.

II.I Fight and prevent antigypsyism and discrimination

2030 EU Roma strategic framework headline targets:

- cut by at least half the proportion of Roma who have experienced discrimination
- decrease by at least one third the proportion of the general population who feel uncomfortable having Roma as neighbours

[10] Available at: https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2020-10/portfolio_of_indicators_en.pdf.

Antigypsyism is recognised as a form of racism against Roma people[11] that continues to drive social exclusion and discrimination across the EU, undermining access to education, employment, healthcare, housing and other essential services. As it heavily influences overall progress on Roma equality, inclusion and participation, combating antigypsyism is both a standalone objective and a cross-cutting priority of the EU Roma strategic framework.

Findings from the Roma Survey 2024 indicate that nearly one in three Roma (31%) experienced discrimination based on ethnic background. Levels of institutional trust also remain relatively low: only around half of Roma respondents (49%) report trusting the police in their country, while just two in five (40%) express trust in the national legal system. Based on the results of the 2023 Eurobarometer, only 67% of respondents from the Member States would feel comfortable having daily contact with a Roma colleague at work[12]. Stakeholders highlighted that, despite growing recognition in policy frameworks, efforts to address antigypsyism remain fragmented and often short-term, underscoring the need for more systematic and mainstreamed action.

Main achievements

Over the reporting period, a significant number of Member States took steps to boost the recognition and visibility of antigypsyism. Some Member States[13] increased institutional capacity to combat antigypsyism; in particular, Germany established the independent Antigypsyism Reporting and Information Centre (MIA), Spain set in motion the drafting of the State Pact against Antigypsyism and Lithuania launched consultations on a specialised Expert Commission to Combat Antigypsyism. Policy and institutional frameworks were strengthened through the formal adoption of the definition of antigypsyism in Czechia and Slovakia. Public awareness was further promoted through media and awareness-raising campaigns, including Latvia's documentary series[14] produced under the EU-funded Latvian Roma Platform.

Several Member States[15] strengthened support services for victims of discrimination and hate offences through improved complaint mechanisms, legal aid and outreach services. Bulgaria, for instance, provided thousands of legal consultations through mobile teams mainly in remote locations[16] and introduced a mobile application to facilitate access to justice[17].

Awareness-raising initiatives and commemorative events – such as Roma Holocaust Memorial Day and International Roma Day – gained wider recognition in many Member States[18], contributing to greater public awareness of Roma history and culture. For instance, in France the Montreuil-Bellay Memorial Project recognises the persecution of around 1 850 Roma during the Second World War and raises awareness through a memorial site and a planned museum. In October 2025, the Dutch House of Representatives adopted the Tseggai motion,

[11] Antigypsyism (a form of racism against Roma) is a historically rooted structural phenomenon that appears at institutional, social and interpersonal levels. It has its origins in how the majority views and treats those considered 'gypsies'. It is rooted in a process of 'othering' that builds on negative as well as positive, exoticising stereotypes.
[12] New data concerning the Roma neighbour indicator will be available in the upcoming 2026 Eurobarometer.
[13] AT, BE, BG, CZ, DE, EL, ES, FR, IE, IT, LV, LT, NL, RO, SK, SE.
[14] Available at: https://www.youtube.com/@KulturasMinistrija/videos.
[15] AT, BG, CZ, DE, EL, ES, FI, HR, IE, IT, LT, LV, SK.
[16] Available at: https://www.justice.government.bg/home/index/1201f1c6-798b-41b6-a874-052e228ac8a1?top=1
[17] Available at: https://apps.apple.com/bg/app/%D0%BF%D0%BE%D0%BC%D0%BE%D0%B3%D0%BD%D0%B8-%D0%BC%D0%B8/id6471497775.
[18] AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, EE, EL, ES, FR, HR, HU, IT, LU, LV, LT, NL, PT, RO, SK.

formally recognising Dutch Roma, Sinti, and Travellers as a national minority under the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

Assessment and remaining challenges

Despite the growing policy attention being paid to antigypsyism, the implementation and enforcement of measures to combat antigypsyism and Roma discrimination remain uneven and fragmented across Member States, reflecting persistent gaps in political commitment and weak enforcement mechanisms. As a result, institutions are often not held sufficiently accountable for practices such as segregated education and forced evictions.

Underreporting of discrimination and hate incidents remains widespread, driven by low trust in institutions, the fear of reprisals and limited awareness of complaint mechanisms. There is therefore a shortage of reliable data, making it difficult to design and evaluate effective policy responses. At the same time, concerns about policing practices – including ethnic profiling and the disproportionate use of force – continue to be reported as major barriers to trust and inclusion.

Persistent gaps, at national and subnational levels, in ethnicity-disaggregated data on discrimination against Roma populations and on multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, combined with uneven monitoring practices, continue to hamper the assessment of trends and outcomes. Equality bodies in many Member States have limited resources, powers or independence, reducing their ability to provide effective redress and engage in strategic litigation. Member States were required to transpose the new EU Directives on equality bodies[19] by June 2026. Correct implementation and full compliance will be essential for strengthening the independence, resources and effectiveness of equality bodies and addressing these shortcomings.

Guidance for further improvement

To accelerate progress towards the achievement of EU-level objectives, in line with the 'common but differentiated approach', the Commission calls on Member States to:

- **strengthen the implementation and enforcement of EU anti-discrimination and hate crime legislation** by: (i) ensuring adequate sanctions; (ii) improving access to complaint mechanisms; (iii) systematically recording incidents of antigypsyism; and (iv) addressing underreporting through measures that build trust in public institutions and monitor changes in institutional trust;
- **promote public awareness, remembrance and education initiatives addressing Roma history, culture and antigypsyism**, including through school curricula, teacher training, media engagement and commemorative activities to counter stereotypes and prejudice in society;
- **systematically address antigypsyism across sectoral policies** – particularly in education, employment, healthcare and housing – by tackling discrimination, strengthening institutional practices, and promoting awareness-raising and training for key professionals.

[19] Council Directive (EU) 2024/1499 of 7 May 2024 and Directive (EU) 2024/1500 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 establishing standards for equality bodies. Available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/1499/oj and https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/1500/oj.

II.II Reduce poverty and social exclusion

2030 EU Roma strategic framework headline targets:

- cut by at least half the poverty gap between Roma and the general population
- cut by at least half the poverty gap between Roma children and other children

Persistent poverty among Roma remains a serious concern across the EU. Children are disproportionately affected, as they face cumulative disadvantages from an early age that increase the risk of intergenerational exclusion and significantly limit social mobility.

Findings from the Roma Survey 2024 confirm that poverty and economic hardship remain widespread among Roma communities. Overall, 77% of Roma children are at risk of poverty – around four times higher than the rate for the general population. In addition, 40% live in households experiencing severe material deprivation[20]. This has improved substantially since 2016 (66%), but levels remain significantly higher than for the general population (7%[21]). Stakeholders emphasised the multidimensional and intergenerational nature of Roma poverty and the need for integrated policy responses across sectoral areas (education, employment, healthcare, housing). They also noted that while several Member States have strengthened social protection systems, increased financial benefits or improved access to them, Roma-targeted measures addressing poverty and social exclusion remain limited, particularly those aimed at overcoming barriers to accessing mainstream support, such as administrative obstacles, limited access to information and low levels of trust in public institutions.

Main achievements

Many Member States[22] reported measures aimed at improving access to social protection, in particular through outreach mechanisms such as Belgium's Bridging Figures (Flanders), which reached thousands of vulnerable families including many Roma and provided practical support in accessing local schools and public services. This approach helped to build mutual trust between local Roma and public institutions while strengthening the self-reliance of local Roma people.

A limited number of Member States[23] reported the implementation of Roma-targeted measures addressing poverty and social exclusion, while some Member States[24] address these challenges as a cross-cutting issue in other sectoral objectives. For instance, Italy's Accedere and Salute projects, co-funded by the ESF+ and targeting Roma as one of the disadvantaged groups, put in place an integrated, cross-sectoral approach that contributed to a significant reduction in residents living in segregated settlements.

Several Member States[25] also reported a focus on child poverty among Roma supported by EU funding instruments. For example, Bulgaria introduced an ESF+-co-funded scheme providing

[20] Severe material deprivation is defined as a household's inability to afford at least four out of nine essential items or expenses, including adequate heating, regular nutritious meals and unexpected expenses (Roma Survey 2024, p. 32).
[21] Available at: Eurostat 2020, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ilc_mddd11__custom_22313195/default/table.
[22] AT, BE, BG, FI, FR, DE, EL, HU, IT, NL, RO, SK, ES.
[23] FI, HR, ES, PL, RO, SK.
[24] AT, CZ, IT, RO, SK.
[25] BG, HR, ES, IT, SI, LU.

meal vouchers and accompanying support to children from disadvantaged families and Croatia deployed mobile outreach teams to support families in isolated settlements[26].

Assessment and remaining challenges

Despite ongoing efforts, poverty among Roma communities remains widespread and continues to represent one of the most persistent forms of socio-economic exclusion in the EU. Some progress has been reported, particularly through measures improving access to social protection and social services. However, progress remains limited and uneven, with most measures focusing on access to benefits rather than addressing the structural drivers of poverty.

The COVID-19 crisis made matters worse, widening existing gaps and reversing some of the progress achieved before 2020, with effects that continued to be felt throughout the reporting period. Territorial disparities and the uneven distribution of services further hinder inclusion, particularly in remote areas. Authorities should proactively address 'invisible barriers' such as digital exclusion and a lack of identity documentation or property deeds, which prevent the most marginalised households and homeless Roma from accessing social protection.

Roma poverty and social exclusion are driven by interlinked, deep-rooted disadvantages that persist across generations. Addressing these challenges requires integrated policy responses combining social protection with measures in education, employment, housing and health.

Guidance for further improvement

To accelerate progress towards the achievement of EU-level objectives, in line with the 'common but differentiated approach', the Commission calls on Member States to:

- **align Roma inclusion measures with mainstream anti-poverty and children's rights policies,** including through Roma-specific safeguards and indicators to ensure equal access for Roma families and children;
- **improve access to social protection and public services**, including by simplifying administrative procedures and addressing 'invisible barriers' such as digital exclusion, lack of identity documentation or property deeds and limited outreach to the most marginalised Roma;
- **develop integrated, long-term responses to Roma poverty and social exclusion**, combining social protection with measures in education, employment, housing and healthcare to address structural and intergenerational disadvantages.

The Principles for effective anti-poverty policies, published alongside the Anti-Poverty Strategy, aim to guide effective anti-poverty strategies at national, regional and local level. They include the following points, which are of particular relevance in the context of this Report:

- **financial resources are aligned with policy objectives by using EU funds,** including funding linked to the implementation of the national and regional partnership plans, to support and complement the efforts of national, regional and local authorities in **fighting poverty and social exclusion**;

[26] Available at: https://www.centar-medjimurje.hr/.

- **targeted measures** are developed to support **groups at higher risk of poverty or social exclusion**, including Roma;
- **targeted programmes** are in place to improve the level and **quality of learning opportunities** for pupils and students from low-income households (additional funding for schools, professional development of teachers, mentoring, scholarships and financial aid, access to facilities and materials, desegregation measures, including for Roma, etc.);
- **systematic mapping of segregated Roma settlements** with the consent of the communities and assessment to identify levels of poverty risk, severe material deprivation, and gaps in access to essential services, while ensuring their inclusion in urban planning processes.

II.III Promote participation through empowerment, cooperation and trust

2030 EU Roma strategic framework headline targets:

- capacitate and engage at least 90 NGOs in EU-wide coordinated Roma civil society monitoring
- ensure participation of Roma NGOs as full members in monitoring committees for all programmes addressing the needs of Roma communities
- double the proportion of Roma who report discrimination when it occurs
- promote participation of Roma in political life at local, regional, national and EU level, in Member States with significant Roma populations

The meaningful participation of Roma is essential for addressing long-standing inequalities, strengthening democratic governance and building trust in public institutions. Awareness of institutional support structures has increased, with 46% of Roma respondents having heard of at least one equality body or similar institution, compared with 29% in 2016. Stakeholders stressed that, despite the expansion of formal participation structures, Roma participation often remains limited or tokenistic. Unstable funding and, in some contexts, restrictions on civic space continue to limit meaningful participation.

Main achievements

Member States reported gradual progress in Roma political participation at both local and national levels. Roma representatives are increasingly present in local councils[27], mayoral positions[28] and national parliaments[29]. While these are positive developments, Roma participation in political decision-making remains limited overall, and Roma representatives continue to be significantly underrepresented in elected and senior public office positions across most Member States.

Several Member States[30] reported having set up or strengthened consultative bodies linked to the implementation of NRSFs or related policy processes, involving Roma civil society. For example, Austria's Roma Dialogue Platform, funded by the EU, has firmly established itself as a stable instrument facilitating dialogue between Roma civil society and the public administration. Germany's Participatory Data Dialogue, led by the Federal Anti-

[27] AT, BG, CZ, IT, ES.
[28] BG, EL, SK.
[29] RO, SK, IE, HR and most recently also in HU.
[30] AT, BE, BG, CZ, EL, ES, FR, IT, IE, LV, NL, SK.

Discrimination Agency, brings together public authorities and civil society to develop community-approved methods for collecting data on discrimination.

At grassroots level, several Member States[31] reported Roma involvement in bottom-up initiatives. A key example is Slovakia's EU-funded participatory local planning Development Teams project, which organised over 120 community forums to support local planning, while Estonia focused on strengthening local dialogue by opening the Roma Youth Centre in Valga and the Roma Cultural Centre in Tallinn.

Assessment and remaining challenges

While the establishment of consultative bodies reflects growing institutional recognition of Roma participation, involvement often remains confined to formal consultation with limited influence on agenda-setting and policy outcomes. A key challenge remains ensuring that participation mechanisms have a tangible impact on policies and outcomes.

Participatory monitoring of fundamental rights is gradually developing across the EU, with several Member States setting up specialised bodies to oversee the implementation of legislation on hate offences and anti-discrimination[32]. However, practices remain inconsistent, and administrative, legal and financial constraints continue to limit the operational and advocacy capacity of many Roma and pro-Roma organisations, particularly at local level. This affects the ability of such organisations to engage in monitoring, support communities and participate in policy processes. Low levels of trust in institutions, experiences of discrimination and, in some contexts, restrictions on civic space continue to undermine participation and engagement.

Guidance for further improvement

To accelerate progress towards the achievement of EU-level objectives, in line with the 'common but differentiated approach', the Commission calls on Member States to:

- **strengthen institutional frameworks for Roma participation and promote Roma political representation**, ensuring that Roma representatives and Roma and pro-Roma organisations have meaningful and diverse representation and influence on national, regional and local agenda-setting, policymaking, implementation and monitoring;
- **increase participatory monitoring and accountability**, through the systematic involvement of Roma and pro-Roma civil society in data collection, oversight and monitoring of anti-discrimination and Roma inclusion measures, including as full members of relevant monitoring committees;
- **provide sustainable support for Roma and pro-Roma organisations through** simplified administrative procedures, multiannual funding and capacity-building, while protecting civic space, addressing discrimination and strengthening trust in public institutions.

[31] BE, BG, CZ, FR, EL, HU, IT, RO, SK.
[32] AT, IE, DE, HU, HR.

II.IV Increase effective equal access to quality inclusive mainstream education

2030 EU Roma strategic framework headline targets:

- cut by at least half the gap in participation in early childhood education and care
- cut by at least half the proportion of Roma children attending segregated primary schools
- reduce by at least one third the gap in upper secondary education completion

Education is a key prerequisite for equal opportunities, social mobility and active participation in society, and the right to quality and inclusive education is enshrined in the first principle of the European Pillar of Social Rights. For many Roma, however, equal access to quality and inclusive mainstream education remains out of reach, although it is essential for overcoming exclusion and enabling their full participation in society and the economy.

Findings from the Roma Survey 2024 show some progress in this area but disparities persist. Participation in early childhood education and care[33] increased from 42% in 2016 to 53% in 2024 but remains far below the EU average of 95%[34]. Only around one third of young Roma complete upper secondary education, compared with more than four in five in the general population. Segregation also persists, with nearly half of Roma children attending schools where most or all classmates are Roma. Stakeholders noted some progress, particularly in early childhood education and care and efforts to reduce early school leaving. At the same time, they emphasised that sustained progress in inclusive education requires stronger desegregation measures, long-term funding and improved monitoring.

Main achievements

Over the reporting period, almost all reporting Member States[35] took steps to make their education systems more inclusive and improve Roma children's access to quality learning. Participation in early childhood education and care increased significantly, particularly in Bulgaria, Hungary, Slovenia and Slovakia, where governments expanded affordable or mandatory pre-school attendance and strengthened engagement with Roma parents. More support was also made available to Roma students in secondary and tertiary education, with several countries increasing access to scholarships, mentoring, and affirmative action measures[36]. This was the case, for example, in Romania, where over 72 000 Roma students received social scholarships. Hungary's network of 180 Tanodas supports primarily Roma pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds through extracurricular activities to prevent school drop-outs.

In some Member States[37], EU-funded pilot projects – particularly under the ESF+ and the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) – have been scaled up and integrated into national education systems. For example, Bulgaria has successfully transitioned more than 1300 educational mediators from project-based support to permanent state-funded positions. Some Member States[38] also took steps to address segregation more directly, including transport support, adjustments to enrolment procedures and additional teaching staff. In Slovakia, legally

[33] Children between 3 years old and the starting age for compulsory primary education.
[34] Available at: Eurostat 2023, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/educ_uoe_enra21/default/table?lang=en.
[35] AT, BE, BG, HR, CY, CZ, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, LV, LT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK.
[36] HR, HU, PL, PT, RO.
[37] BG, CZ, SK.
[38] BG, CZ, HR, HU, RO, SK.

binding standards prohibiting segregation in education were introduced, supported by a methodological handbook for schools[39].

Assessment and remaining challenges

Building on recent progress, further efforts are needed to close persistent gaps in educational outcomes between Roma and the general population. In particular, increasing participation in early childhood education and care and improving completion rates in upper secondary education remain essential. Advancing systemic approaches to desegregation[40] across all levels of education is critical for ensuring equal access to quality learning and breaking cycles of disadvantage. At the same time, ensuring that inclusive mainstream settings provide comprehensive support – including social, emotional, psychological and language support – can further improve outcomes for Roma students.

Many inclusive education measures continue to rely on short-term project funding, while monitoring of desegregation outcomes remains uneven, limiting their sustainability and effectiveness. Existing initiatives – such as mediators, tutoring and pilot programmes – provide a strong foundation that can be expanded and incorporated into sustainable, system-wide approaches.

Guidance for further improvement

To accelerate progress towards the achievement of EU-level objectives, in line with the 'common but differentiated approach', the Commission calls on Member States to:

- **strengthen systemic desegregation across all levels of education** by preventing and addressing segregation and effectively enforcing anti-discrimination legislation, while ensuring adequate educational, psychological and language support and improving coordination between education, social and family services, and monitoring progress towards quality inclusive mainstream education, particularly in Member States with significant Roma populations;
- **move from short-term project funding to sustainable, flexible and responsive financing frameworks for inclusive education**, enabling schools and municipalities to effectively allocate resources according to needs, maintain support staff and keep long-term inclusion measures in place;
- **strengthen access to early childhood education and care and support Roma pupils' transition to and completion of upper secondary education**, through affordable and accessible provision, targeted outreach and parental engagement, mentoring and measures to prevent early school leaving.

II.V Increase effective equal access to quality and sustainable employment

2030 EU Roma strategic framework headline targets:

- cut by at least half the employment gap between Roma and the general population
- cut by at least half the gender employment gap among Roma
- cut by at least half the gap in the share of young Roma not in employment, education or training (Roma NEETs)

[39] Available at: https://www.minedu.sk/standardy-dodrziavania-zakazu-segregacie/.

[40] Systemic approaches to desegregation refer to coordinated structural and policy measures aimed at eliminating segregation and ensuring equal access to inclusive quality education for all learners, including Roma children.

Labour market inclusion is a key driver of poverty reduction, social cohesion and active participation in society. As the EU faces demographic change and growing labour and skills shortages, making full use of available human potential is becoming increasingly important. As one of Europe's youngest population groups, Roma represent a growing share of future labour market entrants in several Member States. Yet many still face discrimination, limited access to education and training, and precarious employment. Advancing Roma equality and inclusion would therefore contribute to social cohesion and economic growth.

According to the Roma Survey 2024, 54% of Roma are in paid work, compared with 43% in 2016, yet this remains well below the employment rate of the general population (75%[41]). The proportion of young Roma not in employment, education or training (NEET) also decreased from 62% in 2016 to 47% in 2024, although it remains substantially above the rate for the general population (9%[42]). Employment inequalities are particularly pronounced for women: only 38% of Roma women are in paid work, compared with 69% of Roma men, highlighting a persistent gender gap. Nevertheless, the survey indicates that almost all EU Roma strategic framework employment targets can be reached by 2030, with significant improvements having been made in Bulgaria, Hungary, Italy and Spain. Stakeholders highlighted persistent barriers to labour market inclusion, including discrimination, gender inequalities and fragmented support systems. They pointed to approaches such as mentoring and mediation, second-chance education, and targeted support for Roma women as effective measures, and noted the potential of Roma entrepreneurship to support local socio-economic developments.

Main achievements

Most reporting Member States[43] implemented measures to improve Roma access to quality and sustainable employment, including work placements, apprenticeships and vocational training programmes. A notable development in Italy and Spain is the emphasis on digital inclusion and future-oriented skills, aiming to improve Roma access to service and digital sectors[44].

Local and regional initiatives are also emerging that target Roma NEETs[45] and Roma women[46]. For instance, Finland set up a dedicated employer pool to recruit Roma interns across various sectors[47], while Sweden developed outreach tools in Romani languages to engage young jobseekers. The social economy also offers a pathway to labour market integration[48]. Slovakia now employs over 10 100 Roma in social enterprises, Greece set up 14 Roma social cooperative enterprises, and Czechia submitted an Act on Integrative Social Entrepreneurship.

In addition to established mediator roles across different sectors[49], Roma increasingly occupy higher-level administrative positions. Ireland's Department of Justice launched a pilot Civil Service Traveller and Roma Internship Programme. Several Member States[50] reported combining employment support with social inclusion measures such as mentoring, often through ESF+ funding. A notable example is Belgium's Rom Werkt project, which uses ESF+

[41] Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/lfsi_emp_a__custom_22319809/default/table.
[42] Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/edat_lfse_20/default/table.
[43] AT, BE, BG, HR, CY, CZ, DK, EE, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, LV, LT, PL, RO, SK, EL, ES, SE.
[44] Accedere|Invitalia is implemented in IT, while Acceder is implemented in ES Gabinete de Comunicación.
[45] BG, EE, HR, LV, RO, SK.
[46] HU, IE, LT, PT, FI, SE, AT, CZ, ES, SI.
[47] Available at: https://romako.diak.fi/romako-askeleet-huomiseen/.
[48] CZ, EL, SK, HU, IE.
[49] BG, ES, FR, HR, PL, PT, RO, SK.
[50] AT, BE, EL, ES, FR, IT, SK.

funds to offer culturally sensitive support in employment and participation that is tailored to Roma needs.

Assessment and remaining challenges

Despite gradual improvement since 2016, Roma participation in the labour market continues to lag significantly behind that of the general population. A major structural challenge remains the transition from informal or low-skilled employment to more stable and higher-quality jobs, which is often hindered by skills gaps and occupational segmentation. To address gaps and break the cycle of intergenerational poverty, Member States should prioritise adult and lifelong learning, providing second-chance pathways and literacy support that enable early school leavers and adults to transition into stable, quality employment.

Many Member States continue to rely primarily on mainstream employment measures, which often lack Roma-specific outreach and safeguards. Targeted outreach, particularly to Roma NEETs and women, remains limited, reducing the effectiveness of employment support.

While the expansion of the social economy provides new opportunities for labour market integration, its role remains limited in scale and does not yet offer a comprehensive pathway to sustainable employment for most Roma jobseekers. Persistent labour market discrimination and gender employment gap remain the major barriers, while many initiatives are still short-term, limiting their sustainability and the transition to stable employment.

Guidance for further improvement

To accelerate progress towards the achievement of EU-level objectives, in line with the 'common but differentiated approach', the Commission calls on Member States to:

- **strengthen targeted employment support for Roma**, particularly for young people and women, through outreach, guidance and activation, in cooperation with employers, public employment services and social partners, including through social economy initiatives where appropriate;
- **combine targeted employment support for Roma** with accessible pathways to vocational training, adult and lifelong learning or second-chance education while ensuring that mainstream employment measures effectively reach Roma and improve access to quality and sustainable employment;
- **step up action against labour market discrimination and antigypsyism,** including through awareness-raising and stronger enforcement of equal treatment legislation in cooperation with equality bodies and Roma civil society.

II.VI Improve Roma health and increase effective equal access to quality healthcare and social services

2030 EU Roma strategic framework headline targets:

- cut by at least half the gap in life expectancy between Roma and the general population

Access to healthcare is a fundamental right and a cornerstone of social inclusion. However, many Roma communities continue to live in conditions that negatively affect their health, including poor housing and sanitation, environmental exposure to risks and limited access to essential services. Barriers such as lack of health insurance, administrative obstacles, distance

from healthcare facilities and discrimination in healthcare settings further limit access, with consequences for both individuals and society.

Findings from the Roma Survey 2024 confirm that health inequalities remain significant. Roma men live on average 8 years fewer, and women 7.4 years fewer, than the general population. These gaps reflect persistent inequalities in access to health and healthcare and broader socio-economic disadvantages. Stakeholders reported that Roma health outcomes are strongly influenced by social determinants such as housing, employment, poverty and discrimination, and called for integrated responses combining healthcare with social support and community outreach. Roma women were identified as facing particularly high health risks, especially when accessing maternal and reproductive healthcare, highlighting the need for targeted and culturally sensitive services.

Main achievements

A significant number of Member States[51] implemented measures to improve Roma health and access to healthcare and social services. Several Member States[52] further institutionalised the role of intercultural mediators, with established networks to help Roma navigate health systems, improve communication with providers, and support treatment adherence. For instance, Romania employs a stable network of health mediators and community nurses, while Portugal delivers training for health professionals on structural inequalities and barriers contributing to lower life expectancy among Roma.

Greece and Bulgaria expanded access to essential healthcare services for uninsured Roma, including guaranteed newborn screening regardless of insurance status. Others[53] have invested in knowledge-building on Roma health, including through dedicated surveys, targeted data collection with safeguards, and improved monitoring tools. In Czechia, the deadline for applications under the compensation scheme for unlawfully sterilised Roma women has been extended to allow more victims to apply.

Assessment and remaining challenges

Effective and equitable access to healthcare and social services remains a key challenge, particularly for Roma living in marginalised, rural or remote areas and those without stable administrative status. Healthcare provision is primarily delivered through mainstream systems. While measures such as mediators have improved outreach, their impact often remains localised and dependent on short-term funding. Uninsured Roma – including some mobile EU citizens and undocumented non-EU nationals – remain at risk of exclusion in several Member States.

Discrimination and antigypsyism in healthcare settings continue to undermine trust and timely health-seeking behaviour, while limited monitoring of Roma health outcomes constrains evidence-based policymaking. Without integrated action to address the broader social determinants of health and coordinated action across policy areas, improvements in healthcare access alone are unlikely to significantly reduce inequalities. This should include better mental health and emotional support to tackle the long-term stress and trauma caused by persistent discrimination and social exclusion.

[51] BE, BG, CZ, FI, FR, DE, EL, HU, IT, NL, RO, SK, ES.
[52] BE, BG, ES, LV, LT, PL, RO, SK.
[53] SK, SI, FR, ES, IE.

Guidance for further improvement

To accelerate progress towards the achievement of EU-level objectives, in line with the 'common but differentiated approach', the Commission calls on Member States to:

- **ensure equal and effective access to quality healthcare** by reducing administrative, financial and other barriers affecting Roma communities, including barriers linked to insurance coverage, documentation, poverty or residence status, while strengthening preventive, maternal, reproductive and mental healthcare;
- **institutionalise and sustainably fund the role of Roma health mediators and community outreach services**, particularly in marginalised and remote areas, while promoting culturally sensitive healthcare, health literacy and cooperation between healthcare, social services and Roma communities;
- **address the social determinants of health** through integrated policies linking healthcare to housing, sanitation, education, employment and poverty reduction, supported by stronger monitoring, Roma participation and sustainable funding, particularly in Member States with significant Roma populations.

II.VII Increase effective equal access to adequate desegregated housing and essential services

2030 EU Roma strategic framework headline targets:

- reduce by at least one third the gap in housing deprivation
- ensure that at least 95% of Roma have access to tap water
- cut by at least half the gap in overcrowding

Adequate, desegregated housing is essential for dignity, health and access to basic services and rights. It has a direct impact on outcomes in education, health and well-being, and also supports family-based care, preventing unnecessary separation. However, many Roma households continue to face poor housing conditions and residential segregation across the EU.

The Roma Survey 2024 shows that 47% of Roma live in damp or dark homes or in housing without proper sanitation (i.e. in housing deprivation). Although this represents an improvement compared with 2016 (61%), it remains far above the EU average (18%[54]). Overcrowding also persists, with 83% of Roma living in households without sufficient living space. During the consultations, stakeholders noted that housing policies continue to focus largely on improving living conditions in segregated environments and emphasised the need to complement mainstream housing policies with targeted measures for marginalised Roma communities and stronger monitoring of desegregation outcomes.

Main achievements

Approximately half of the Member States reported measures to improve Roma access to adequate desegregated housing and essential services, using a mix of targeted interventions[55] and mainstream systems with safeguards for Roma[56]. Progress is visible in housing transitions. In Italy, the number of people living in segregated settlements decreased significantly, while

[54] Available at: Eurostat 2023, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tessi291/default/table?lang=en.
[55] BE, BG, CZ, ES, IT, LT, RO, SK.
[56] DE, FI, FR, IE, SI.

France uses the Resorption-Bidonvilles digital platform to move families out of temporary slums and into permanent homes. In Slovenia, local authorities integrate segregated settlements into municipal urban plans, while Romania used the Technical Support Instrument to strengthen the national and local capacity for integrated interventions in informal settlements.

Legislative developments further anchored these efforts, including the adoption of the Affordable Housing Law in Luxembourg and the Housing Support Act in Czechia. The Czech model combines local housing support, anti-discrimination measures and 'Housing First' programmes to help Roma families move into stable, integrated homes, while prohibiting social housing investments in segregated areas. At the same time, some countries focused on improving infrastructure in existing settlements. Greece and Croatia invested in utilities such as water, electricity and sewage, while in Poland, housing renovation projects and the purchase of properties on the secondary market helped Roma families to improve their housing situation[57].

Assessment and remaining challenges

Residential segregation remains the key structural challenge in several Member States, limiting Roma families' access to adequate housing and compounding exclusion across education, employment and healthcare. Forced evictions remain a serious concern, especially when they occur without sufficient safeguards or access to adequate accommodation.

Pressures in housing markets continue to constrain progress and highlight the need for stronger measures to expand access to affordable and non-segregated housing. Rising housing costs, particularly in urban areas, limited social housing supply and restrictive administrative requirements, as well as a lack of identity documentation or bureaucratic obstacles to registering an address, reduce access to stable housing solutions for many Roma households. Discrimination in access to housing, including on the private rental market, further limits opportunities for families to secure adequate and non-segregated housing.

While several Member States reported measures to improve infrastructure in settlements, expand access to social housing and support relocation to mainstream housing, their impact remains uneven. Many initiatives remain limited in scale or are implemented on a project basis, and monitoring of desegregation outcomes remains weak. In particular, a continued focus on improving conditions in segregated settlements does not necessarily lead to sustainable desegregation.

Guidance for further improvement

To accelerate progress towards the achievement of EU-level objectives, in line with the 'common but differentiated approach', the Commission calls on Member States to:

- in line with the Council Conclusions on Measures to ensure equal access for Roma to adequate and desegregated housing, and to address segregated settlements, **address territorial and residential segregation** by promoting integrated, long-term and sustainable pathways from segregated settlements to adequate housing in mainstream communities, ensuring access to essential services and infrastructure and systematically monitoring desegregation outcomes, particularly in Member States with significant Roma populations;

[57] Available at: https://www.gov.pl/web/mniejszosci-narodowe-i-etniczne/programy-integracji-spolecznosci-romskiej.

- in line with the Council Conclusions on access to services by people at risk of poverty or social exclusion, including Roma, **expand access to affordable, adequate and non-segregated housing through increased social housing provision**, targeted support for people at risk of poverty or social exclusion, simplified administrative requirements and stronger action against discrimination on the private rental market;
- make use of the Operational Toolkit on the use of EU funds for investments in social housing and associated services, published by the Commission, with the aim to promote desegregated and inclusive neighbourhoods, addressing the needs of marginalised communities;
- **prevent forced evictions and housing insecurity** by ensuring secure tenure, early warning and protection mechanisms, access to adequate alternative accommodation, and continuity of access to education, employment and healthcare.

III. ROMA IN THE ENLARGEMENT REGION[58]

The situation of Roma in the enlargement partners[59] has been assessed through dedicated Roma surveys carried out by the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank and financed by the Commission. The survey for Eastern Neighbourhood countries (Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia) was completed in the spring of 2026, while the new one for the Western Balkans is ongoing.

In most candidate countries and potential candidates, Roma remain the most disadvantaged group due to stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination and antigypsyism, leading to social exclusion. Discrimination in employment remains widespread, and unemployment is high. Roma women also face multiple forms of discrimination and are at increased risk of gender-based and domestic violence, while Roma children could be exposed to labour exploitation or forced early marriages. Although enrolment in compulsory education is improving, participation in early childhood education and care remains below national averages, early school leaving remains high and participation in upper secondary and higher education remains limited. Access to healthcare remains limited, particularly for children outside formal education and older people. In addition, housing conditions remain inadequate in many settlements. In the Eastern Neighbourhood the situation of Roma is further exacerbated by displacement as a result of the Russian aggression against Ukraine.

All Western Balkans partners, as well as Ukraine, Moldova and Türkiye, have adopted or are finalising updated Roma strategies in line with the EU Roma strategic framework and the Poznań commitments[60] for the Western Balkans. However, several national action plans implementing these strategies came to an end in 2025, and some partners are still developing new plans for the next 3-5 years.

While there is a clear effort to strengthen existing monitoring mechanisms or set up new ones, progress remains difficult to measure where targets are too general. NRCPs are recognised as

[58] The 'enlargement region' refers to candidate countries and potential candidates currently engaged in the EU accession process. Full list of countries available at: https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/countries_en.
[59] Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo* (*designation without prejudice to positions on status and in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ opinion on Kosovo Declaration of Independence),* Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Türkiye, Ukraine.
[60] Declaration of Western Balkans Partners on Roma Integration within the EU Enlargement Process, Poznań, 5 July 2019.

key actors in Roma inclusion but their administrative positioning, institutional capacities and financial resources require more attention. The Council of Europe continues to support the administrative capacity of NRCPs co-financed by the EU.

Antigypsyism is included in national Roma frameworks, but measures to tackle it remain limited. While most equality bodies deal with cases of discrimination against Roma in the Western Balkans, Ukraine and Moldova, antigypsyism is still not included as a distinct category in anti-discrimination reports and surveys.

National strategies try to address the problem of segregation in education and housing, but desegregation measures remain insufficient, with limited or no dedicated funding. The EU co-funded 'Roma Action for Roma Integration' project implemented by the Roma Education Fund supports access to education for Roma children and young people, but further national action is needed to improve educational outcomes and ensure equal access to quality mainstream education at all levels. The labour market, skills and education reforms under the Western Balkans Growth Plan are expected to benefit Roma once implemented. The ongoing Western Balkans Roma survey will also help further identify gaps to be tackled in the enlargement negotiations and the annual ministerial meetings dedicated to Roma equality and inclusion.

Guidance for further improvement

To accelerate progress on Roma equality, inclusion and participation, the Commission calls on governments in the enlargement region to:

- where missing or expired, **adopt national Roma strategies and national action plans beyond 2025** aligned with the EU Roma strategic framework and **allocate funding** for their sustainable implementation and **strengthen the institutional mandate, staffing and financial resources of the NRCPs** and ensure their involvement in the programming, implementation and monitoring of national and EU-funded programmes;
- **step up measures to increase Roma participation in the labour market**, including in public sector employment; **effectively combat antigypsyism and discrimination**, including by enforcing anti-discrimination legislation, ensuring access to justice and tackling hate speech and hate crime;
- **implement the recommendations** of the Ukraine and Moldova Roma surveys and the ongoing Western Balkans Roma survey.

IV. EU ACTION

Member States bear primary responsibility for implementing the EU Roma strategic framework and the 2021 Council Recommendation. However, the Commission's role is to support these efforts by enforcing legislation, coordinating policies, mobilising funding instruments and facilitating stakeholder engagement.

Enforcing EU legislation

The Commission continued monitoring the enforcement and application of: (i) the Racial Equality Directive[61]; (ii) the revised Victims' Rights Directive; and (iii) the Council Framework Decision on combating racism and xenophobia. There are three ongoing infringement proceedings against Czechia, Slovakia and Hungary for Roma segregation in education. An

[61] See also the Commission's 2026 report on the application of the Racial Equality Directive and the Employment Equality Directive, available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52026DC0364.

additional letter of formal notice was sent to Czechia in October 2024. The case against Slovakia was referred to the Court of Justice of the European Union[62].

Furthermore, the adoption of Directives (EU) 2024/1499 and 2024/1500 strengthens the minimum standards for equality bodies across all Member States so that they can effectively address discrimination and help victims access justice. The Commission will continue to support Member States through dedicated expert group meetings. It will monitor Member States' timely and correct transposition[63] of the directives into national legislation using all the tools at its disposal, including informal dialogues and formal infringement procedures.

Mainstreaming Roma equality in EU policy initiatives

The EU Anti-Racism Strategy clearly recognises antigypsyism as a specific, distinct and deeply rooted form of racism. In line with the Strategy, the Commission also continues to promote greater staff diversity and access to career opportunities for underrepresented groups, including Roma, through targeted outreach in recruitment and traineeships, anti-bias training for HR professionals and equality data collection. In parallel, the Gender Equality Strategy 2026-2030 and LGBTIQ+ Equality Strategy 2026-2030 highlight the compounded and intersectional disadvantages faced by Roma women and LGBTIQ+ people. The Commission continued to promote diversity and inclusion in the workplace, including Roma equality and inclusion, through the EU Platform of Diversity Charters. The platform facilitates dialogue and provides guidance, for instance on inclusive hiring practices.

Over the reporting period, the Commission has continued to mainstream Roma equality, inclusion and participation in relevant EU policies, legislation and funding programmes, including through its internal Task Force on Equality.

In the areas of housing and poverty, three complementary initiatives adopted in 2025 and 2026 have stepped up EU action to advance Roma inclusion. The European Affordable Housing Plan includes actions to support people in vulnerable situations, including Roma, and will improve access to decent housing through investment and social housing measures. This is complemented by the Council Recommendation on fighting housing exclusion, including homelessness, which promotes integrated, personalised and housing-led approaches combining housing, social services and prevention to address homelessness and exclusion. The Recommendation recognises that housing exclusion and homelessness may disproportionately affect certain groups, including Roma, and includes measures to address discrimination through outreach, transparent social housing criteria, anti-bias training and support for tenants facing discrimination.

The EU Anti-Poverty Strategy highlights that prejudice and stigma can increase the risk of poverty for specific groups, including Roma, and recalls the EU Roma strategic framework target to halve the poverty gap by 2030. It also underlines the Commission's commitment to continue working with Member States and stakeholders on targeted anti-poverty measures. It is accompanied by the Principles for effective anti-poverty policies[64]. Building on the 2021 Council Recommendation, which identified Roma children as a priority group, the Communication strengthening the European Child Guarantee announces guidance to address the specific challenges faced by Roma children in accessing services through integrated measures, from outreach and mediation to inclusive education, family support and community-

[62] Available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:62023CC0799.
[63] Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/inf_26_1380.
[64] These principles are partially presented in section II.II. of this report.

based interventions. It represents a strategic opportunity to advance more targeted and effective policies for Roma children – who remain disproportionately affected by poverty and discrimination – and to break the intergenerational cycle of exclusion. It also announces an ESF+ call for proposal with a budget of EUR 5 million to support transnational projects designed to improve the access to employment for Roma young people not in employment, education, or training (NEETs[65]).

The Council Recommendation on improving the provision of digital skills in education and training is also relevant for Roma inclusion, as it promotes equitable access for disadvantaged and marginalised groups, including Roma, and calls on Member States to address accessibility, territorial and socio-economic gaps contributing to digital exclusion. The Council Recommendation on Human Capital in the European Union explicitly recognises Roma people among the groups facing barriers to quality education and training, underscoring the need for targeted measures to address their skills and employment gaps. The Action plan against cyberbullying 'Safer online, stronger together' explicitly recognises Roma people and other racial and ethnic minorities as particularly exposed to online harassment and illegal hate speech linked to systemic exclusion.

Making the best use of EU funds

In the current programming period (2021-2027), the ESF+ provides approximately EUR 1.8 billion across 15 Member States to fund Roma targeted interventions in education, employment and social inclusion. The ERDF complements this through targeted and mainstream investments in housing, social infrastructure, education and healthcare, which directly or indirectly benefit Roma people. A dedicated thematic enabling condition on Roma inclusion links funds and policies. The recovery and resilience plans include actions across several social policy areas. They combine investments and reforms with attention to disadvantaged groups, including Roma, by supporting digital and financial skills development, or school desegregation. The Technical Support Instrument also helps Member States design strategies and policies that better address the challenges faced by marginalised Roma communities. For instance, the instrument is supporting inclusive education, including school desegregation activities.

The Erasmus+ programme has supported more than 480 projects promoting the inclusion of Roma communities; these amounted to close to EUR 29 million and involved around 1500 organisations across the EU. The projects focused mainly on youth, school and adult education, covering Roma mediators, improving the access of Roma grassroots organisations to the Erasmus+ programme, learning about the Roma Holocaust and preserving the Romani language. The European Solidarity Corps has supported over 100 projects promoting Roma inclusion, involving 104 organisations and more than EUR 1.4 million, mainly in education, culture, sport, health, environmental action, community engagement and youth volunteering. Under the EU4Health programme (2021-2027), several initiatives target health inequalities affecting Roma communities, with a focus on prevention and access to healthcare. For example, ShowUp4Health addresses non-communicable diseases by tackling social and environmental determinants and strengthening health literacy among Roma. European initiatives such as SASTIPE, MENTBOX, and JA MENTOR promote Roma access to quality mental health services. Moreover, the SOLACE project piloted lung cancer screening approaches involving Roma populations in Croatia, Greece and Hungary, in cooperation with

[65] Available at: https://www.socialinnovationplus.eu/call/strengthening-the-european-child-guarantee-national-governance-systems-and-supporting-access-to-the-labour-market-for-roma-neets-2/.

community mediators. Interreg offers opportunities for cooperation, as illustrated by the CHESS START project, which involved over 100 Roma children from Romania and Hungary.

Through the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV) programme, the Commission continued to support NRCPs in setting up or strengthening national Roma platforms that ensure Roma participation in decision-making processes. The Commission also funds a transnational project, ROVA, which strengthens the capacity of Roma NGOs. The EQUAL and REM calls for proposals under CERV support activities combating racism and discrimination, including antigypsyism, as well as commemoration and educational activities on the Roma Holocaust and Roma slavery. In addition, under the programme, three EU-level Roma-led organisations active in capacity-building, culture, advocacy and Roma rights serve as the Commission's institutional partners and receive operating grants.

Guidance for the Effective Use of EU Funds on Roma Equality, Inclusion and Participation

To accelerate progress towards the achievement of EU-level objectives, in line with the 'common but differentiated approach', the Commission calls on Member States, particularly those with significant Roma populations, to:

- **strengthen the link between governance structures and EU funds**, ensuring that Roma equality and inclusion priorities are reflected throughout programme design, implementation and evaluation to support the achievement of the targets of the EU Roma strategic framework by 2030;
- **combine targeted measures addressing the specific needs of Roma communities with inclusive mainstream policies and services,** with particular attention to education, employment, health, housing and social inclusion, ensuring coordinated and integrated action across policy areas and long-term investment to address the multiple and interconnected dimensions of exclusion;
- **ensure that EU-funded investments in education and housing promote the principles of desegregation and non-segregation,** prioritising desegregation to eliminate or significantly reduce existing segregation by integrating Roma into mainstream schools and neighbourhoods, while ensuring that, where immediate desegregation is not possible, investments do not create new segregated settings or reinforce existing ones (non-segregation) and pave the way for future desegregation.

Strengthening governance and policy coordination

The European Semester continued to monitor the situation of Roma and to guide Member States in designing and implementing reforms and investments to address persistent challenges. In the context of the 2026 European Semester cycle, the recitals of the Council Recommendation identified the need to address challenges faced by Roma communities in Bulgaria, Czechia, Greece, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Spain. The successive Guidelines for the employment policies adopted by the Council consistently identify marginalised Roma communities among the groups requiring targeted labour market activation, integrating Roma equality in the EU's employment policy coordination framework.

Looking ahead, the forthcoming national and regional partnership plans[66] under the 2028-2034 multiannual financial framework (MFF) offer an important opportunity for Member States to address these challenges in a more comprehensive and targeted manner. The Commission has integrated Roma equality and inclusion across several 2028-2034 MFF regulatory proposals, including AgoraEU, the Justice Programme and Erasmus+, as Roma inclusion remains an EU political and social priority.

Promoting Roma participation and stakeholder engagement

The Commission continued to support Roma participation through structured dialogue, capacity-building, and institutional cooperation. Every year the European Platform for Roma Inclusion brings together authorities and civil society to identify priorities and assess progress towards reaching the 2030 targets. Cooperation with stakeholders also included regular meetings with the NRCPs and other relevant national authorities, civil society and the European Network of Equality Bodies (Equinet)[67].

The Commission continued cooperation with Member States holding the rotating Presidency of the Council of the EU and with the European Parliament to keep Roma equality, inclusion and participation high on the political agenda. It also actively supported Roma Week, marked International Roma Day and Roma Holocaust Memorial Day by issuing dedicated statements, and participated in the Auschwitz commemoration ceremony on 2 August.

Promoting equality and combating antigypsyism

Combating antigypsyism requires sustained action across all policy areas. The Commission has pursued a dual approach: addressing it directly through targeted action and public communication, while mainstreaming the fight against antigypsyism across sectoral policy areas.

Over the years, the Commission has continued its structured cooperation with the Council of Europe, through a range of joint programmes, namely: (i) the Roma Memory programme launched in June 2024, which promoted awareness and remembrance of the Roma Holocaust; (ii) ROMACT, which strengthened the capacity of local and regional authorities to work on ensuring Roma inclusion; and (iii) EQUIROM, which combated antigypsyism through positive narratives about Roma in the media. In addition, the Roma on Par social media campaign, launched on International Roma Day, aims to combat antigypsyism and challenge negative stereotypes about Roma.

The Commission also supports UNESCO's work on anti-racism education in the EU, as announced in the Anti-Racism Strategy. In March 2026, UNESCO launched a two-year project, funded by the Commission, which specifically addresses forms of racism such as antigypsyism. The project aims to equip educators with resources for teaching students about contemporary racism and its historical legacies, thereby fostering more inclusive learning environments for Roma students[68].

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[66] Under the Commission proposal for the 2028-2034 MFF, national and regional partnership plans would bring together several EU funding streams, including the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund.

[67] Available at: https://equineteurope.org/.

[68] Available at: https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/unesco-launches-new-programme-address-racism-and-through-education-europe.

CONCLUSION

Since the adoption of the EU Roma strategic framework, Member States have strengthened the institutional foundations for implementing their national Roma strategies. The 2023-2025 period saw the continued development of key governance structures in the Member States. NRCPs have strengthened their coordinating role, dialogue with Roma and pro-Roma civil society has become more structured and, in several countries, some increase in Roma representation in public administration and elected office has also been reported. In addition, visible progress has been made across several policy areas: political recognition of antigypsyism has increased, the participation of Roma children in early childhood education has improved, employment rates among Roma have risen, and Member States have expanded measures in housing, health and social protection. EU funding supported inclusive national reforms and initiatives throughout the period.

The Roma Survey 2024 shows improvements in 10 of the 16 indicators used to monitor the EU Roma strategic framework. For instance, most of EU Roma strategic framework employment-related targets appear to be within reach by 2030. Nevertheless, substantial efforts are still required to reach all targets, including through more consistent national target setting. Short-term funding, uneven monitoring frameworks and limited coordination across governance levels continue to undermine the effectiveness and sustainability of Roma equality and inclusion policies.

The coming years will be decisive. The fight against antigypsyism and further progress in Roma equality, inclusion and participation will require sustained political commitment, effective systemic reforms, stronger institutional capacity, integrated, cross-sectoral policy approaches and predictable long-term investment. Effective enforcement and strong public leadership will also be essential. The forthcoming MFF will provide an important opportunity to further step up these efforts.

Roma equality, inclusion and participation are not only rooted in fundamental rights but are also strategic priorities for Europe. In the context of demographic decline, labour shortages and growing global competition, the inclusion of Roma – one of Europe's youngest population groups – can also contribute to economic resilience. As 2030 approaches, the EU Roma strategic framework must continue to advance these priorities while also contributing to Europe's long-term cohesion and competitiveness, reflecting the EU's commitment to leaving no one behind.