

# SNAPSHOT: SITUATION OF ROMA IN EUROPE

## SOCIAL DIALOGUE AND INVOLVEMENT OF WORKERS

**82%** of Roma are unaware of organisations offering **support to victims of discrimination**

A stark lack of systematic data on Roma union membership and participation makes it hard to assess Roma workers' representation within these structures. However, there is broad consensus that Roma trade union coverage is very low, which leads to the marginalization of Roma-specific workplace issues such as ethnic pay gap, poor working conditions, antigypsyism etc.

Evidence from various countries shows that Roma workers are disproportionately employed in precarious, low-paid jobs, often in informal or "grey" economies. This precarious employment results in irregular hours, unstable income, and heightened vulnerability to exploitation, including unpaid overtime, sexual harassment, and unlawful dismissal. And yet, Roma workers are reluctant to report abuses, due to fear of retaliation or lack of awareness of their rights.

This underscores the keen need for Roma representation within trade unions. However, as many Roma work in sectors that are traditionally not unionised, they are excluded from collective bargaining processes, their needs unvoiced.

The umbrella term "Roma" encompasses diverse groups, including Roma, Sinti, Kale, Romanichels, Boyash/Rudari, Ashkali, Egyptians, Yenish, Dom, Lom, Rom and Abdal, as well as Traveller populations (gens du voyage, Gypsies, Camminanti, etc.), in accordance with terminology used by the [European Commission](#).

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Barriers such as discrimination, language difficulties, limited access to information, and low awareness of trade unions prevent Roma workers from joining or engaging with them. While some countries with stronger labour movements and inclusive policies show slightly higher Roma participation, overall union involvement remains minimal.

Addressing these challenges requires pro-active efforts, including by trade unions themselves, to ensure Roma workers are visible, represented, and supported in their fight against workplace discrimination and exploitation.

### Recommendations:

- **Strengthen the collection of disaggregated data on trade union membership**, to better understand how the concerns of vulnerable workers, including Roma, are represented and addressed in collective bargaining processes.
- **Promote and financially support anti-bias and anti-discrimination training for social partners**, to raise awareness of the specific challenges faced by minority workers and other vulnerable groups, ensuring these issues become integral to social dialogue.
- **Implement targeted information campaigns on workers' rights**, including materials in Romani language, alongside dedicated outreach efforts to engage Roma workers effectively.
- Guarantee that Labour Inspectorates and the European Labour Authority **uphold a workplace environment where all workers have equal access to recourse and appeal** mechanisms, free from discrimination or prejudice.
- **Invest in tailored protections for the most vulnerable workers**, such as seasonal, migrant, and informal economy workers, who are often excluded from standard employment contracts.
- **Support and empower trade unions and collective bargaining**, by providing adequate resources, creating enabling legal frameworks, and promoting inclusive policies.



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