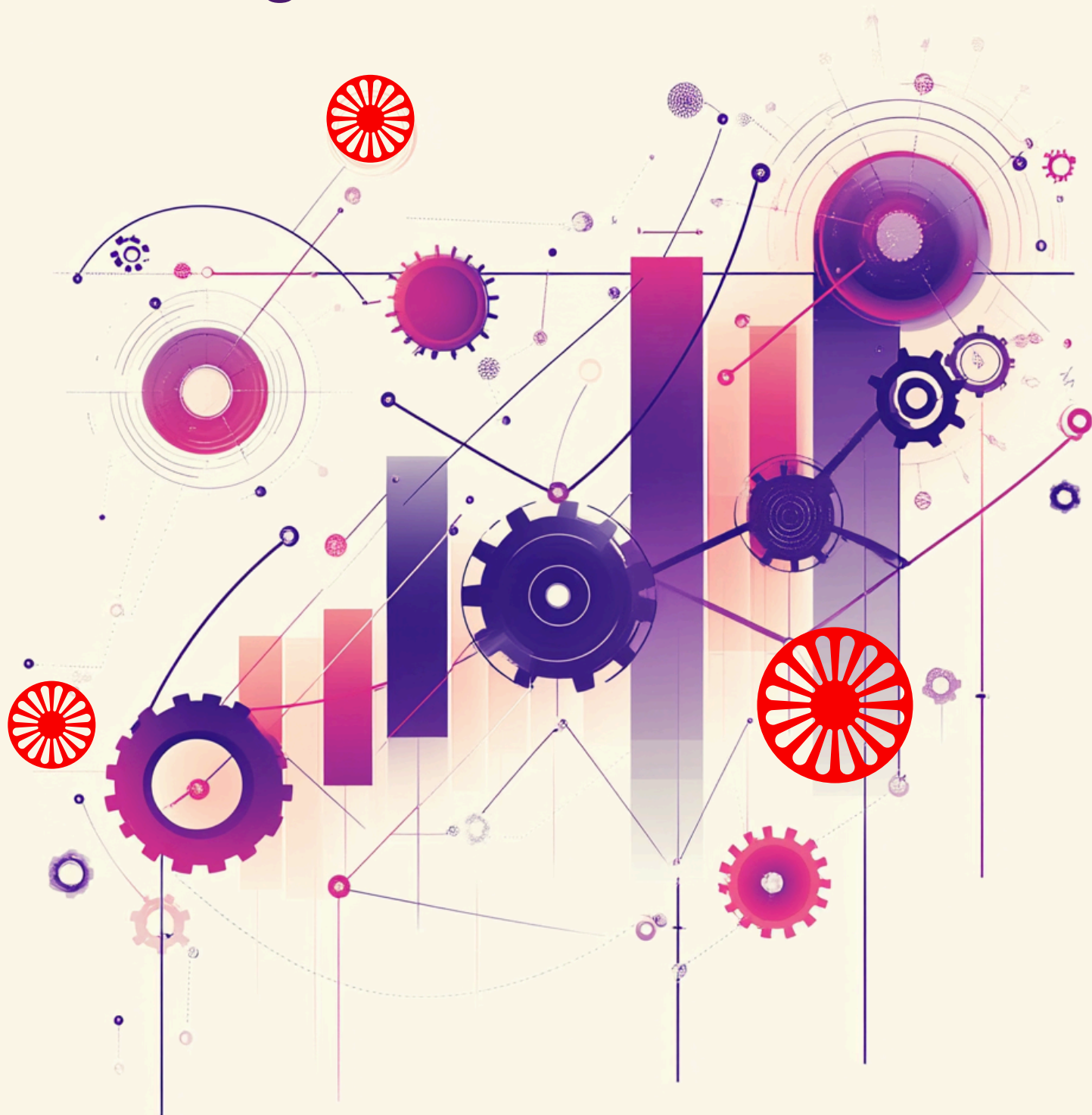


Survey Report:

Fighting Antigypsyism through National Roma Strategic Frameworks



Acknowledgements

This report was written by Isabela Mihalache, Senior Advocacy Officer with the European Roma Grassroots Organisations (ERGO) Network, based on an extensive data collection exercise among the ERGO Network national membership, carried out between April and September 2024.

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Introduction



We need ongoing accountability, transparency, and active Roma participation to drive genuine change across Europe.

Between July and October 2024, ERGO Network conducted a survey to evaluate the implementation of National Roma Strategic Frameworks and Action Plans post-2020, examining how EU Member States are acting on their commitments outlined in the EU Roma Strategic Framework for Equality, Inclusion, and Participation (2020-2030) and the 2021 Council Recommendation on Roma Equality, Inclusion, and Participation.

These key EU policy tools aim to address antigypsyism, discrimination, and the social inclusion of Roma communities across Europe by setting measurable objectives in areas like equality, inclusion, participation, and socioeconomic progress. The Framework marks a shift in EU policy by explicitly recognising antigypsyism as a structural barrier and encouraging Member States to embed Roma issues within broader social and economic policies.

The survey done by ERGO Network, drawing on responses primarily from civil society representatives, offers critical insights into how these national frameworks and action plans have translated EU-level commitments into practical, on-the-ground measures, with a particular focus on combating antigypsyism and fostering Roma inclusion.

Respondents assessed the degree to which their governments have fulfilled these commitments, highlighting both progress and gaps in action. This analysis not only sheds light on the strengths and weaknesses of national responses but also underscores the need for ongoing accountability, transparency, and active Roma participation to drive genuine change across Europe.

Summary findings

The analysis of the survey focuses on the key themes of antigypsyism, discrimination, and the inclusion of Roma communities in national Roma strategies post-2020.

Overall, the report indicates that while some progress has been made in addressing antigypsyism, significant gaps remain in national strategies, legal frameworks, and practical actions. A more focused and comprehensive approach is needed to ensure that antigypsyism and discrimination against Roma communities are fully addressed.

Here's a summarised analysis of the main findings:

01 | Civil society engagement

The vast majority of respondents, 94.12%, are from civil society organisations, showing strong involvement of this sector in Roma-related advocacy and policy work. However, the representation of independent experts is minimal, which could signal the need for broader inclusion of diverse stakeholders, such as academia or consultants.

02 | Adoption of National Roma Strategic Frameworks

Most governments (88.24%) have adopted post-2020 strategies for Roma inclusion. However, there is a concern that strategies may not adequately address antigypsyism in all cases.

03 | Inclusion of antigypsyism in policies

A substantial portion of respondents (76.47%) reported that their national strategy addresses antigypsyism. However, gaps exist in some countries, which may affect efforts to combat this form of racism. In some cases, antigypsyism may be handled under broader anti-discrimination frameworks.

04 | Action Plans for antigypsyism

Fewer than half of the countries have a specific action plan to address antigypsyism, with 47.06% of respondents indicating the absence of such plans. This points to a potential reliance on broader anti-discrimination frameworks that may not capture the unique challenges Roma face.

05 | Recognition of antigypsyism

There is significant variation in how antigypsyism is recognised in national legal frameworks, with only 47.06% reporting it as a distinct form of racism. The absence of recognition in legal frameworks can leave Roma vulnerable to unchecked discrimination.

06 | Roma Holocaust Memorial Day

While 52.94% of respondents confirmed official recognition of the European Roma Holocaust Memorial Day, a substantial number of countries (41.18%) do not observe this day, highlighting the need for broader historical recognition.

07 | Segregation and Hate speech

The majority of national strategies include measures to combat segregation (64.71%) and address hate speech (82.35%), which are crucial areas for addressing systemic racism. However, tangible progress in addressing segregation and hate speech remains slow in many countries.

08 | Limited action on hate crimes and police violence

Only a small percentage of respondents reported progress in addressing hate crimes and police violence against Roma, reflecting slow or inadequate governmental actions.

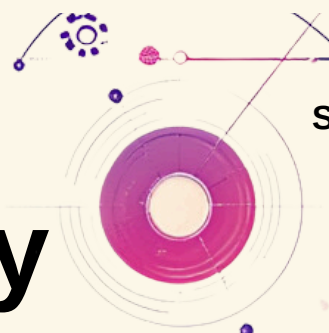
09 | Roma-specific discrimination in employment and healthcare

National strategies moderately include employment (64.71%), and healthcare (47.06%) discrimination, but significant gaps remain in effectively addressing these issues.

10 | Governmental training

Limited anti-discrimination and anti-gypsyism training is implemented for public servants, teachers, law enforcement, and the judiciary, which is a critical area for improvement to tackle systemic bias and ensure effective policy enforcement.

Methodology



This report is based on data collected through a comprehensive survey and complemented by contextual insights from various reports on Roma inclusion and antigypsyism, such as those from the European Commission, the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), and the Council of Europe. The primary aim of this methodology was to analyse the implementation of National Roma Strategic Frameworks (NRSFs) across EU Member States, focusing on antigypsyism, discrimination, and the inclusion of Roma communities.

Survey design and objectives

The survey was designed to capture the experiences and perspectives of civil society organisations involved in Roma inclusion efforts. The survey sought to:

Assess the implementation of post-2020 National Roma Strategic Frameworks and action plans.

Evaluate how antigypsyism is addressed in national policies and legal frameworks

Gather insights on the progress made in key areas such as education, employment, housing, healthcare, and the participation of Roma NGOs

The survey consisted of 45 questions, divided into two main types:

Closed-ended questions to gather quantitative data on policy adoption, inclusion of antigypsyism measures, and progress in various sectors.

Open-ended questions to allow respondents to provide qualitative feedback and elaborate on specific challenges, successes, and areas for improvement.

Key thematic areas of the survey



The survey covered the following thematic areas:

- National Roma strategies and their inclusion of antigypsyism and discrimination.
- Progress in combating segregation in education, housing, and access to basic services.
- Government responses to hate speech, hate crime, and police violence against Roma.
- Involvement of Roma civil society in developing and implementing national strategies.
- Resource allocation, including funding for Roma inclusion measures and EU-funded initiatives.

Respondent demographics

A total of 17 respondents completed the survey, all representing civil society organisations (94.12%) and independent experts (5.88%). The respondents came from different EU Member States and provided insights based on their professional experiences working on Roma inclusion and advocacy issues.

The sample size, though relatively small, was representative of organisations deeply engaged in Roma inclusion at national and grassroots levels.

Data collection

The survey was conducted online from July to mid-October 2024, allowing respondents to participate at their convenience. The online platform ensured wide accessibility, allowing respondents from different countries to share their insights.

Respondents were given the option to remain anonymous. No personal data beyond organisational affiliation was collected, ensuring that the feedback was focused on policy and strategic issues rather than individual experiences.

Closed-ended responses were aggregated and analysed to produce percentage-based findings. These figures were then cross-referenced with broader EU reports, such as the 2021 FRA Roma Survey, the 2024 European Commission Report on Roma Inclusion, and the Council of Europe Reports on antigypsyism, to contextualise the survey results within broader EU-wide trends.

Open-ended responses were thematically analysed to identify recurring issues, specific challenges, and promising practices reported by respondents. These insights were incorporated into the report's analysis sections, providing a richer understanding of the complexities behind national Roma strategies.

In addition to survey data, the report draws on other key documents and reports that provide a broader context for the findings, such as:

The European Commission's EU Roma Strategic Framework for Equality, Inclusion, and Participation (2021-2030).

The FRA's 2021 Report on Roma Discrimination and Inclusion.

The Council of Europe's 2022 and 2023 reports on Roma rights and antigypsyism.

These supplementary reports provided background information, validated survey findings, and offered comparative perspectives on Roma inclusion efforts across the EU.

The survey's small sample size (17 respondents) limits the generalisability of the findings. While the respondents represent key stakeholders in Roma inclusion, the experiences of other sectors, such as government bodies or non-civil society actors, were not included. The majority of respondents came from civil society organisations, which may have influenced the perspectives shared. The report acknowledges that including other sectors, such as government or private sector actors, might present a more diverse view of the challenges faced.

While the survey provides valuable insights into national frameworks, the depth of the responses varies, particularly for open-ended questions, where respondents' interpretations of issues may differ.

Comparative approach

In addition to analysing the survey responses, a comparative analysis was conducted between the survey findings and broader European reports. This allowed for:

- **Validation of Findings:** The reliability of the findings was strengthened by comparing the survey results with large-scale reports such as the FRA 2021 Roma Survey and the 2024 European Commission report.
- **Identifying Gaps:** The comparison also helped highlight gaps between policy commitments at the EU level and actual implementation at the national level, particularly regarding antigypsyism, segregation, and hate crimes.
- **Policy Recommendations:** Drawing from the broader EU context, the report offers targeted recommendations based on identified gaps in national frameworks.

Survey analysis

1. National Frameworks and antigypsyism

88%

of respondents reported their governments have adopted post-2020 Roma strategies, and 76.47% indicated that these strategies include measures to fight antigypsyism.

Background:

Antigypsyism is widely recognised as a specific form of racism directed towards Roma and related groups. The European Commission and the European Parliament have repeatedly acknowledged antigypsyism as a root cause of Roma exclusion across Europe. According to the European Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), **80% of Roma** continue to face discrimination in at least one aspect of their daily lives. Many Roma communities suffer from systemic exclusion, particularly in housing, education, and healthcare.

While most Member States have adopted National Roma Strategic Frameworks (NRSFs), the extent to which antigypsyism is specifically addressed varies. The European Commission's **2020 Roma Strategic Framework** emphasises the need for an intersectional approach, combining anti-discrimination measures with social inclusion. However, the **FRA 2021 report** notes that national strategies often fall short of explicitly integrating antigypsyism, limiting their effectiveness.



2. Legal and Policy Frameworks

47%

of respondents indicated that antigypsyism is recognised as a specific form of racism in their national policies, but 70.59% noted that antigypsyism is not introduced into national legislation.

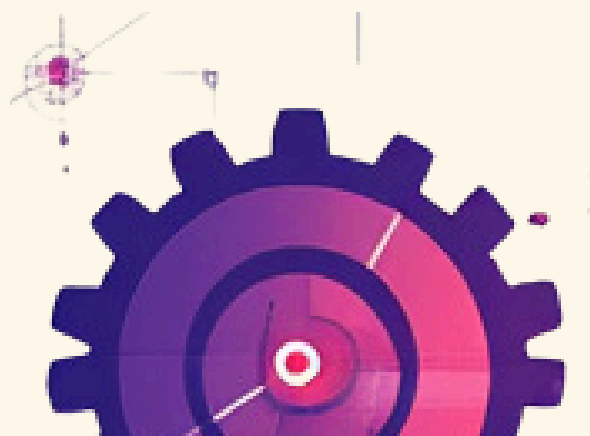
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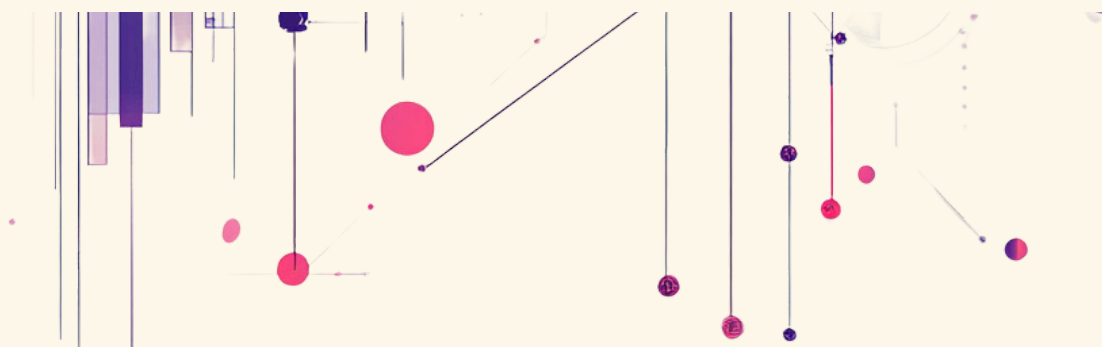
Roma communities continue to face legal invisibility in many EU Member States. Despite EU efforts, such as the **EU Anti-Racism Action Plan 2020-2025**, antigypsyism is still not widely recognised in national legal frameworks.

According to the Council of Europe's **2022 Report on Roma Rights**, while there has been some progress in adopting anti-discrimination laws, very few Member States have introduced specific legislation targeting antigypsyism as a distinct form of racism. In many countries, antigypsyism is either subsumed under broader anti-discrimination laws or not addressed at all.

This lack of legal recognition is a critical issue. Without specific legislation, it becomes difficult to track, address, or sanction antigypsyism effectively.

Moreover, underreporting of hate crimes and a lack of training for law enforcement often lead to inadequate responses to incidents of antigypsyism.





3. Education and Segregation

65%

of respondents indicated that their national strategies include measures to combat segregation, particularly in education, but only 23.53% reported progress in addressing segregation.

Background:

Educational segregation remains a widespread issue across many EU Member States. The **FRA's 2021 Roma Survey** reported that **52% of Roma children** aged 6-15 face segregation in schools, with countries like Slovakia and Bulgaria reporting exceptionally high rates of segregation. This practice exacerbates inequality, limits educational opportunities, and contributes to long-term socioeconomic exclusion.

In response, the European Commission has emphasised the importance of desegregation in education as part of the **EU Roma Strategic Framework for Equality, Inclusion, and Participation (2021-2030)**.

Despite this, many Member States still struggle to implement comprehensive desegregation plans. The lack of political will, resources, and local capacity are cited as key obstacles. For example, **Slovakia**, despite launching initiatives, was referred to the **European Court of Justice** in 2023 for failing to tackle the educational segregation of Roma children.

4. Hate Speech and Hate Crimes

82%

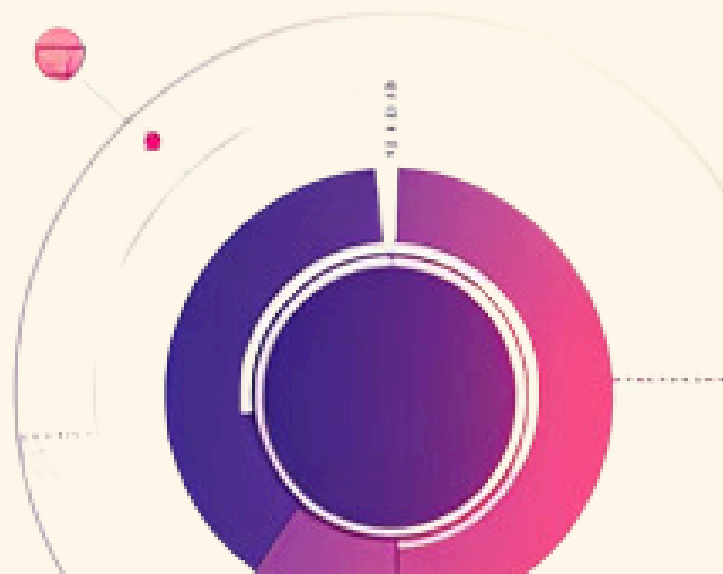
of respondents indicated that hate speech against Roma is included in their national strategies, but only 5.88% reported progress in addressing it.

Background:

Hate speech and hate crimes against Roma are pervasive across Europe. The **2023 Eurobarometer on Discrimination** revealed that **65% of EU citizens** believe that discrimination against Roma is widespread in their country. Antigypsyism manifests in various forms, from public hate speech to violent attacks.

While most countries have anti-hate speech laws, enforcement is often weak. The **2022 FRA report** highlighted that Roma are one of the groups most affected by hate speech online. Despite some efforts, such as **France's initiative to monitor online hate speech against Roma**, progress in tackling hate speech remains slow.

The **Council of Europe's 2022 report** also emphasises the need for Member States to invest in educational campaigns and training for law enforcement to address hate speech and hate crimes effectively. However, in practice, many countries lack the resources or political commitment to implement these measures.



5. Health, Employment, and Housing

Progress in addressing discrimination in healthcare (17.65%) and employment (5.88%) was slow, while 64.71% noted that there were no measures in place to address forced evictions.

Background:

Roma communities face severe barriers to accessing healthcare, employment, and adequate housing. The **2021 FRA Roma Survey** reported that 80% of Roma live in poverty, with many experiencing homelessness or living in inadequate housing conditions. Health disparities are exacerbated by a lack of access to basic healthcare services, particularly for Roma women and children.

Employment remains a significant challenge, with **European Commission reports** highlighting that Roma is underrepresented in the labour market. Discrimination, coupled with a lack of access to education and training, leads to high unemployment rates among Roma.

Forced evictions are a critical issue, particularly in countries like Romania and Bulgaria. The **Council of Europe's 2021 report** on housing and Roma rights stressed that forced evictions without adequate alternatives are a violation of human rights. Despite this, the practice continues, and very few national strategies adequately address the housing crisis facing Roma communities.





6. Participation of Roma NGOs

24%

Only 23.53% of respondents confirmed that Roma NGOs were actively engaged in implementing national strategies.

Background:

Roma participation in policymaking remains limited. The **European Commission's 2024 report** highlights that while 20 Member States report some level of Roma NGO participation in national platforms, many Roma organisations still face barriers to meaningful involvement. Lack of funding, capacity, and access to decision-making processes remain significant challenges.

According to the **Roma Civil Monitoring Initiative**, many Roma civil society organisations are underfunded and lack the resources to engage effectively with governments. The EU has emphasised the need for Member States to strengthen Roma NGOs' capacity, but progress has been uneven across the region.

7. Funding

47%

Nearly half of the respondents (47.06%) indicated that there is no dedicated budget for combating antigypsyism in their national frameworks.

Background:

Funding for Roma inclusion remains insufficient. According to the European Commission, while **€1.574 billion** from the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) has been allocated to support Roma inclusion during the 2021-2027 period, access to these funds remains a challenge for grassroots organisations.

The Roma Civil Monitoring Initiative has pointed out that bureaucratic hurdles and complex application processes prevent many Roma NGOs from accessing EU funds.

Furthermore, national budgets often do not provide adequate funding for Roma inclusion measures. Many Member States rely heavily on EU funds rather than investing their own resources, which can lead to gaps in implementation.



Conclusions

The survey reveals a substantial gap between the commitments set out in the EU Roma Strategic Framework for Equality, Inclusion, and Participation and the implementation of these goals at the national level. Despite progress in some areas, many Member States fall short of fully addressing the specific forms of discrimination Roma communities face, particularly antigypsyism.

The following points summarise the key challenges:

Lack of comprehensive National Plans for Antigypsyism:

While most countries have adopted Roma inclusion frameworks, only a few include specific measures targeting antigypsyism. Many states rely on broad anti-discrimination laws, which often fail to address the unique issues Roma face.

Weak legal recognition of antigypsyism:

Without formal recognition in national legal frameworks, antigypsyism remains inadequately addressed, making it challenging to track and counteract effectively.

Educational segregation continues:

Despite being a priority, many countries struggle to enforce anti-segregation policies in schools. This issue perpetuates inequality and limits opportunities for Roma children, especially in countries with high segregation rates.

Hate Speech and crimes remain pervasive:

Although hate speech and hate crime laws exist, enforcement is often insufficient, leaving Roma communities vulnerable to discrimination and violence.

Limited access to basic services:

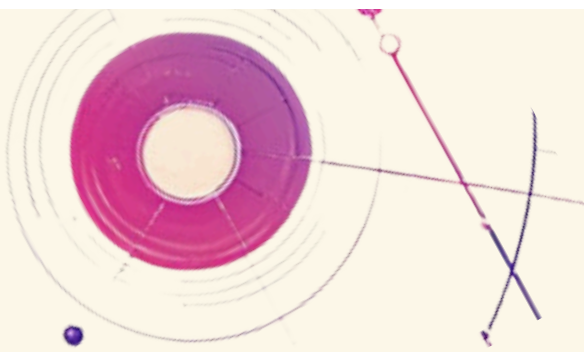
Health, employment, and housing support for Roma communities are inconsistent, with many respondents reporting inadequate measures in place to prevent discrimination and forced evictions.

Minimal Roma NGO participation:

Roma civil society organisations have limited engagement in national framework implementation, highlighting a lack of inclusive decision-making and collaboration.

Insufficient funding for implementation:

Many national frameworks lack dedicated budgets to tackle antigypsyism, which hinders the effectiveness of Roma inclusion efforts. Access to EU funding also remains a challenge for smaller, grassroots organisations due to complex application processes.



Recommendations

To bridge these gaps and foster meaningful change, the following recommendations aim to support national governments, EU bodies, and civil society in their efforts:

Develop and strengthen targeted Action Plans for antigypsyism:

Member States should establish specific, measurable action plans that directly address antigypsyism, ensuring they are distinct from general anti-discrimination policies. This approach would better capture and tackle the unique challenges Roma communities face.

Prioritise desegregation in education:

States must adopt concrete plans to combat educational segregation and support Roma students with inclusive policies and resources. Monitoring mechanisms should ensure that these commitments translate into tangible improvements for Roma children in schools.

Formally recognise antigypsyism in legal frameworks:

Governments should include antigypsyism as a recognised form of racism within national laws to facilitate better monitoring, reporting, and prosecution of related incidents. This would provide a stronger foundation for combating Roma discrimination.

Enhance enforcement of hate speech and hate crime laws:

Increased training for law enforcement on hate speech and hate crimes, particularly those targeting Roma, can help ensure cases are properly addressed. Member States should also launch public awareness campaigns to challenge stereotypes and promote solidarity.

Improve access to essential Services for Roma communities:

Roma-specific initiatives in healthcare, employment, and housing should be strengthened to address disparities. Governments should ensure that health services, employment programs, and housing policies are accessible and inclusive, with special attention to preventing forced evictions.

Allocate dedicated funding for antigypsyism:

National budgets should include dedicated funds to combat antigypsyism and support Roma inclusion efforts. Simplifying access to EU funds for smaller NGOs will allow grassroots organisations to engage more actively and effectively.

These steps represent an actionable roadmap toward a more inclusive and equitable Europe for Roma communities. By prioritising antigypsyism in policy, practice, and funding and fostering inclusive collaboration with Roma civil society, Member States can make meaningful strides in fulfilling their commitments to Roma inclusion and equality.

Foster meaningful participation of Roma NGOs:

Governments should involve Roma organisations in planning, implementing, and monitoring national strategies. Providing direct support and capacity-building resources to these NGOs will enhance their ability to contribute to policy and advocacy efforts effectively.

Recognise Roma Holocaust Memorial Day:

Broader recognition of the Roma Holocaust Memorial Day across EU Member States can play a key role in acknowledging historical injustices and fostering a more inclusive Europe.



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Annex

*Would you like to read the full survey
with answers to the questions?*

*Download the Annex **HERE**:*

