

SNAPSHOT: SITUATION OF ROMA IN EUROPE

ACTIVE SUPPORT TO EMPLOYMENT

36% of Roma above age of 16 have experienced **discrimination when looking for work.**

26% of men and **11%** of women among Roma and Travellers in six countries think **it is hopeless to look for a job** or think they will not be hired because of their Roma and Traveller background.

45% of non-Roma think that **not enough is being done to promote diversity in the workplace** in what concerns Roma workers, while only

64% would feel **comfortable having a Roma co-worker.**



ERGO
N E T W O R K

Supporting Roma access to employment is a key thematic objective under the EU Strategic Framework for Roma Equality, Inclusion, and Participation. But for working-age Roma across Europe, discrimination and antigypsyism remain pervasive barriers to accessing quality and sustainable employment. As a result, many Roma turn to the informal economy or seek employment abroad.

Increasing Roma participation in the formal labour market is vital, as long as it is done through personalised support into quality jobs and sustainable employment. It can help break intergenerational cycles of poverty, challenge discriminatory attitudes, build positive role models, and fosters a more inclusive and resilient economy.

However, current “employment-first” approaches are insufficient for individuals facing complex challenges such as poverty, debt, low skills, poor health, and inadequate housing. Most existing active labour market policies consist of punitive measures such as sanctions and benefit withdrawals for failing to comply with rigid, overly complex procedures, or for refusing any job regardless of its conditions.

There is little evidence of personalized, comprehensive pathway approaches that address the complex and individual needs of Roma jobseekers and offer holistic, wrap-around support, combining income provision with enabling services, in line with comprehensive Active Inclusion strategies.

Public Employment Services, as well as private recruitment agencies, often engage in ‘creaming’ practices – prioritizing those easiest to place – while leaving Roma jobseekers, who are frequently furthest from the labour market, unsupported. These entities need more resources, trained staff, and stronger mandates to effectively support Roma jobseekers.

Roma jobseekers report experiencing widespread antigypsyism from both public and private employment agencies, frequently facing insults, humiliation, or outright denial of support.

They also often find themselves offered only low-paid, low-prestige positions, or what is considered ‘Roma jobs.’ Discriminatory attitudes are also prevalent among employers, who may reject Roma candidates outright, or assign them to undesirable roles.



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](#).

ERGO
N E T W O R K

Recommendations:

- **Eradicate antigypsyism and all other forms of discrimination in recruitment**, by fully enforcing the Racial Equality and Employment Equality Directives, with measurable indicators and concrete recourse and appeal processes.
- **Invest in Public Employment Services** to ensure both sufficient staff as well as adequate training, including anti-bias and cultural awareness, so they can provide Roma jobseekers with personalized Active Inclusion support, developed in genuine partnership with beneficiaries.
- **Invest in accessible, affordable, and high-quality public infrastructure and services** such as housing, healthcare, long-term care, education, social services, and income support schemes, recognizing their critical role in enhancing Roma employment opportunities, productivity, and job retention.
- **Expand and strengthen initiatives that support initial work experience and on-the-job training**, such as apprenticeships, internships, entry-level jobs, social economy projects, subsidized and adapted workplaces, lifelong learning, and career progression—leveraging the full potential of EU funds.
- **Promote positive workplace diversity through comprehensive anti-discrimination training** for recruitment services, employers, and staff, enforce sanctions for discriminatory practices, invest in inclusive and adapted workplaces, and recognize employers who champion diversity.
- **Facilitate multi-stakeholder collaboration**, by bringing together Roma and non-Roma jobseekers, workers, employers, public and private employment services, Roma and pro-Roma civil society organizations, and local authorities, in order to co-create and implement effective, inclusive solutions with full ownership.



Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.