

SNAPSHOT: SITUATION OF ROMA IN EUROPE

HOUSING AND ASSISTANCE FOR HOMELESS

47% of Roma households experience **housing deprivation**.

5% of Roma live in households that were **forced to leave their homes**.

19% of Roma live in households **deprived of light**.

25% of Roma reported **leaking roofs, damp walls, or rot in window frames**.

17% of Roma live in homes **without an indoor toilet**.

83% of Roma across the EU live in **overcrowded households**.

35% of Roma have experienced **discrimination when looking for housing** in the previous five years.

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Europe is grappling with a deep housing crisis marked by insufficient quality accommodation and skyrocketing costs consuming growing shares of household incomes. Most Roma meet the ETHOS criteria for homelessness: rooflessness, houselessness, living in insecure housing, and living in inadequate housing.

Roma are frequently subjected to forced evictions from homes they've occupied for generations, because they can't legally prove ownership or due to rampant antigypsyism by local authorities and neighbours, who want them out of a certain area. These evictions routinely occur without adequate notice or provision of alternative accommodation, pushing families into homelessness and deepening housing insecurity.

Public authorities tend to relocate the Roma to inadequate encampments at the edges of communities. There, in sprung-up informal, segregated settlements, families live in unsafe, overcrowded, makeshift dwellings that lack access to essential utilities and services. They are often located near environmental hazards, such as landfills or contaminated sites, exposing residents to serious health risks.

Increasing housing costs across Europe make it for the Roma, who experience poverty at rates of over 80%, to legally rent or buy, which forces them into substandard housing or homelessness. Additionally, most Roma experience energy poverty, where their inability to cover ever-rising utility bills result in their disconnection from service, fines, and accrued debts to suppliers.

Antigypsyism is a major barrier to Roma housing access, as reflected in widespread discrimination by local authorities, landlords, neighbours, and broader communities. Such attitudes consistently undermine efforts to implement desegregation plans and social housing strategies, or to sustainably invest in the development of Roma communities. Existing anti-discrimination laws remain ineffective without robust implementation and accessible reporting mechanisms.

While most of Europe's Roma are settled – not always by choice – remaining nomadic populations continue to encounter discrimination, lack of adequate facilities, denial of services and support due to a lack of a fixed address, and even violence.



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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Recommendations:

- **Define and implement adequate housing standards** in national legislation, consistent with the UN definition of adequate housing, encompassing security of tenure, access to utilities and infrastructure, affordability, environmental safety, and physical accessibility for all, including Roma.
- **Prevent forced evictions and legalise informal settlements**, by adopting legal safeguards to prevent forced evictions, in line with international human rights standards. Legalise long-standing informal settlements, regularise property ownership, and ensure adequate, permanent housing as a lawful alternative.
- **Develop and implement comprehensive desegregation strategies** with clear benchmarks and timelines, invest in inclusive and environmentally safe housing solutions for Roma, and legally prohibit housing segregation in line with ICERD obligations. Address the legacy of segregation through spatial planning reforms and proactive community integration measures.
- **Combat antigypsyism and housing discrimination** and make anti-bias and anti-racism training mandatory for housing officials and service providers. Strengthen anti-discrimination legislation and ensure its enforcement, including sanctions for non-compliance and accessible reporting procedures.
- **Improve housing infrastructure and environmental justice**, prioritising connection to basic services (water, energy, sanitation) and addressing the disproportionate exposure of Roma to pollution and environmental hazards, by integrate environmental justice into housing policy.
- **Make housing and utilities affordable and simplify access** through better income support, regulation of utility costs, simplified administrative procedures, and the decoupling of service access from fixed addresses or ID documentation wherever possible.
- **Expand and prioritise social housing** and step up public investment in social housing, while reforming allocation criteria to follow a housing-first and rights-based model that prioritises vulnerable groups such as Roma, removing discriminatory barriers.
- **Support nomadic lifestyles and Traveller accommodation** by providing safe, serviced halting sites and infrastructure, ensure access to services without requiring a fixed address, and curbing stigma associated with such lifestyles.
- **Prioritise Roma housing in EU and national policies and funding programmes**, including multi-fund ERDF and ESF+ allocations, as well as the Affordable Housing Initiative and the Just Transition. The European Commission should launch and follow up on infringement procedures in cases of systemic discrimination or forced evictions.
- **Ensure participation, monitoring, and accountability in housing policy** and guarantee the meaningful involvement of Roma stakeholders, including support for community-led housing initiatives and disaggregated data collection. Establish robust accountability mechanisms with Roma involvement, conduct regular equity audits, and ensure transparent reporting on housing policy outcomes and service quality.



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