

KEY MESSAGES

of the European Roma Grassroots Organisations (ERGO) Network to Executive Vice-President Roxana Mînzatu

ROMA INCLUSION AND ANTI-RACISM

1. Antigypsyism is the decisive barrier to Roma inclusion

ERGO Network welcomes the EU Anti-Racism Strategy 2026–2030, in particular its recognition of antigypsyism as a specific form of racism and of structural and intersectional discrimination as systemic EU challenges. However, ERGO's civil society evidence on the implementation of the EU Roma Strategic Framework (2021–2025) shows that antigypsyism remains the primary obstacle to Roma inclusion across education, housing, employment and access to services. Where antigypsyism is not explicitly addressed, Roma inclusion measures remain largely symbolic and fail to deliver sustainable impact.

2. The 2026 mid-term review must shift the Roma Framework from commitments to delivery

The European Commission's mid-term review of the EU Roma Strategic Framework in 2026 is a pivotal moment to correct course. It should:



Align implementation of the Roma Framework and the Anti-Racism Strategy, including stronger coordination between responsible ministries at national level and systematic exchange of knowledge, expertise, good practices and resources;



Translate political recognition into operational and enforceable measures, through dedicated budgets, clear indicators and targets – especially on combating antigypsyism and segregation – and meaningful Roma participation in implementation, monitoring and evaluation;



Position antigypsyism as a core Union of Equality priority, not a marginal social issue, including through high-level political initiatives such as a European Roma Summit in 2028 and clear Roma prioritisation in the upcoming Multiannual Financial Framework.

3. Implementation must be built around four non-negotiable pillars

Based on ERGO Network's evidence-based recommendations, effective implementation of the EU Roma Framework for 2026–2030 requires:

(1) Antigypsyism made explicit, measurable and enforceable

Antigypsyism must be operationalised in National Roma Strategic Frameworks and National Action Plans Against Racism, with clear objectives, indicators and accountability mechanisms, supported by independent Equality Bodies.

(2) Stronger accountability and coherent monitoring

EU and national monitoring systems must be better aligned, follow-up on national commitments must be transparent, and civil society and FRA expertise must be systematically integrated into monitoring and review processes.

(3) Meaningful Roma participation beyond consultation

Roma civil society participation must be structured, resourced and rights-based, ensuring real influence over policy design, implementation and monitoring at national and local level.

(4) Political ownership and institutional capacity

National Roma Contact Points need stronger mandates, political backing and cross-ministerial authority, supported by clear expectations and guidance from the Commission.

4. Roma civil society is a partner in delivery, not just a stakeholder

ERGO Network stands ready to act as a strategic partner to the Commission and Member States in implementation, monitoring and evaluation, building on community-led monitoring tools and long-standing grassroots expertise.

- *Read our report on the implementation of the EU Roma Framework [here!](#)*
- *Contact Isabela Mihalache – i.mihalache@ergonetwork.org for more info.*

MAINSTREAM ROMA FRAMEWORK TARGETS IN BROADER EU SOCIAL POLICY

1. Use the European Semester to drive Roma inclusion

Roma-related issues should be systematically integrated into the European Semester, including through explicit Roma Country-Specific Recommendations. The absence of Roma-specific CSRs in 2026 is a worrying step back. We would urge the Commission to return to the more holistic approach exemplified by Romania's 2025 CSR, which addressed Roma poverty and social exclusion across several interconnected areas.

2. Link existing Roma Framework targets with corresponding EU social policy initiatives

The existing quantified targets in the EU Roma Strategic Framework should be clearly reflected in the implementation of the EU Anti-Poverty Strategy, the Second Social Pillar Action Plan, and the Child Guarantee – particularly the upcoming Guidance for Member States on Roma children. The same logic should guide the design of upcoming initiatives such as the Affordable Housing Act and the Quality Jobs Act. This would help Member States avoid parallel reporting and fragmented implementation, while increasing the chances that Roma Framework objectives are actually achieved.

3. Mainstream the fight against intersectional discrimination, racism and antigypsyism across EU social and economic policies

Roma poverty and exclusion, as well as all other poor social indicators, are driven in no small measure by structural antigypsyism and intersecting forms of discrimination. If the main EU social policy frameworks do not include concrete measures to combat intersectional discrimination, including racism and antigypsyism, they will remain ineffective.

4. Ensure meaningful and continued cooperation with Roma communities and the civil society organisations representing them

The dialogue should continue and be strengthened, both at EU level and in Member States, with Roma communities, Roma civil society organisations, Roma people experiencing poverty, Roma women, young Roma, Roma with disabilities, people living in segregated or informal settlements etc. They should be meaningfully included in consultations, events, monitoring and policy design, while strengthening partnerships with Roma civil society.

- ***Read our response paper to the EU Anti-Poverty Strategy ([here](#)), to the strengthening of the Child Guarantee ([here](#)) and to the proposal for a Council Recommendation on fighting Council Exclusion ([here](#)).***
- ***Our analysis of the European Semester Spring Package and of the Second Social Pillar Action Plan will be released later this month.***
- ***Contact Amana Ferro - a.ferro@ergonetwork.org for more info.***

DON'T LEAVE THE ROMA BEHIND IN THE NEXT MFF!



Explicitly name Roma in the MFF and EMPL instruments, and maintain the enabling conditions. While the 14 percent social target is a positive step, without explicitly naming Roma there is no guarantee that funding will reach Roma communities. Explicit inclusion is necessary to ensure visibility, accountability, and traceability under **ESF+ and other social funds, and without enabling conditions the Roma Framework** will neither be properly considered nor effectively implemented. Neither Council mandate agreed in June 2026 names Roma or antigypsyism.



Restore binding partnership with Roma civil society and strengthen monitoring and accountability. The removal of the explicit partnership obligation weakens Roma participation. Binding, enforceable requirements to involve Roma-led organisations in design, implementation, and monitoring must be restored, supported by capacity-building funding and Roma-specific data collection. Independent civil society, especially Roma-led NGOs, must be formally involved in monitoring national and regional plans, since Roma-disaggregated data is essential to verify whether social spending benefits those most affected by poverty and exclusion. None of this features in Council's NRPP mandate.



Protect the 14 percent social target from dilution. The social target should be a binding minimum baseline, ring-fenced and legally anchored, with corrective mechanisms where social spending declines, particularly in Member States with high Roma exclusion. Neither Council mandate agreed in June 2026 addresses earmarking, as this sits within the still-open financial negotiating box for the overall MFF. Concretely, ERGO's amendments to Articles 19 and 20 of the ESF+ Regulation ask for a minimum 30% ESF earmark for social inclusion and a dedicated €20 billion Child Guarantee budget, with 5-10% national floors where AROPE and Roma population rates are highest.



Link funding to anti-discrimination commitments. Compliance with anti-discrimination law, National Roma Strategic Frameworks, and Anti-Racism Action Plans should be a condition for funding, monitored through the European Semester and EMPL performance reviews.



Ensure Roma inclusion in employment and skills transitions. Green and digital transitions must include targeted measures for Roma access to jobs, skills, reskilling, and inclusive labour market through EMPL-funded programmes.

*Read our key messages on the next Multiannual Financial Framework [here](#) and [here](#)!
Contact Carmen Tanasie – c.tanasie@ergonetwork.org for more info.*

For more information about ERGO Network and our work to connect grassroots realities from Roma communities with EU decision-making, check out our website – www.ergonetwork.org or contact our Director, Gabriela Hrabánová – g.hrabanova@ergonetwork.org