

Strasbourg, 14 January 2025

**18TH MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE  
DIALOGUE WITH ROMA AND TRAVELLER<sup>1</sup> CIVIL SOCIETY**

**"INTEGRATING INSIGHTS: SHAPING THE DRAFT COUNCIL OF EUROPE  
STRATEGY ON ROMA AND TRAVELLER INCLUSION (2026-2030) THROUGH  
FINDINGS FROM MONITORING BODIES"**

**Strasbourg, 3-4 December 2024  
Palais de l'Europe**

**REPORT**

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<sup>1</sup> The term "Roma and Travellers" is used at the Council of Europe to encompass the wide diversity of the groups covered by the work of the Council of Europe in this field: on the one hand a) Roma, Sinti/Manush, Calé, Kaale, Romanichals, Boyash/Rudari; b) Balkan Egyptians (Egyptians and Ashkali); c) Eastern groups (Dom, Lom and Abdal); and, on the other hand, groups such as Travellers, Yenish, and the populations designated under the administrative term "Gens du voyage", as well as persons who identify themselves as Gypsies. The present is an explanatory footnote, not a definition of Roma and/or Travellers.

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## INTRODUCTION

On 3-4 December 2024, the 18<sup>th</sup> Dialogue Meeting of the Council of Europe with Roma and Traveller civil society took place in Strasbourg. It focused on how to integrate Roma and Traveller-related findings of the Council of Europe monitoring bodies into the future Council of Europe Strategy on Roma and Traveller Inclusion (2026-2030).

The main objective of the meeting was to provide an opportunity for a broad exchange on relevant findings and recommendations of the Council of Europe monitoring bodies (the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)<sup>2</sup> and the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (ACFC)<sup>3</sup>, in particular) and their implementation by the Council of Europe Member States. It set the ground for the work on developing the next policy framework of the Council of Europe in the area of Roma and Travellers inclusion.

The Council of Europe Strategic Action Plan for Roma and Traveller Inclusion (2020-2025)<sup>4</sup> which was adopted in 2020 is a policy framework for guiding the work of the Organisation in the area of inclusion of Roma and Travellers in Europe. The strategic priorities to combat antigypsyism and discrimination and support real and effective equality, to support democratic participation and promote public trust and accountability and to support access to inclusive quality education and training.

Currently, the Strategic Action Plan for 2026-2030 is being prepared. Discussions during the 18<sup>th</sup> Dialogue Meeting served as an important input to be considered in the final evaluation of the implementation of the Strategic Action Plan for 2020-2025 and in the process of drafting of the Strategic Action Plan for 2026-2030.

Overall, 21 participants from both national and international civil society organisations (CSOs) took part in the 18<sup>th</sup> Dialogue Meeting in person and three more joined the meeting online. They were joined by representatives from various sectors of the Council of Europe secretariat.

This report summarises the main issues discussed, outlining conclusions and recommendations of the 18<sup>th</sup> Dialogue Meeting.

### 1. CAPACITY BUILDING TRAINING FOR ROMA AND TRAVELLER CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

Representatives of many CSOs participating in the 18<sup>th</sup> Dialogue Meeting have taken part in the capacity building training led by the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC)

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-commission-against-racism-and-intolerance>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/minorities/advisory-committee>

<sup>4</sup> Available at: <https://edoc.coe.int/en/roma-and-travellers/8508-council-of-europe-strategic-action-plan-for-roma-and-traveller-inclusion-2020-2025.html>

with the support of the Council of Europe. Overall, 17 Roma and Traveller NGOs from nine countries across Europe took part in the training.

The training's goal was to enhance the participants' knowledge and understanding of the standards set by the Council of Europe and of the monitoring mechanisms in place for advancing and promoting the rights and inclusion of Roma and Travellers. The training also sought to develop expertise within these organisations, enabling them to engage more effectively with these standards and mechanisms by, among others, preparing and submitting inputs to them, reflecting on submissions and reports by member states and complementing the information with grassroots viewpoints.

The training commenced with two group online sessions held on 8 and 15 October 2024. Thanks to the sessions led by the ERRC and the Council of Europe staff, the participants gained knowledge regarding the work of various Council of Europe human rights monitoring bodies.

After the two group sessions, the customized coaching sessions tailored for the specific needs of each participating organisation were conducted. These personalised interactions took place in October and November 2024 and aimed at enhancing knowledge, honing skills, shaping attitudes, and fortifying capabilities in crucial areas like monitoring, research, data collection, and the drafting of advocacy documents, coordination of briefings to be prepared by Roma and Traveller CSOs, to be discussed during the 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Europe Dialogue with the Roma and Traveller civil society organisations, all aligned with Council of Europe standards.

The ERRC project staff took the lead in coordinating collaborative efforts, resulting in the preparation and discussion of briefings by Roma and Traveller CSOs during the 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Europe Dialogue in Strasbourg on 3-4 December 2024.

These briefings were developed to address prevalent human rights challenges encountered by Roma/Traveller communities, covering a wide spectrum of pressing and pertinent issues.

## **2. KEY DISCUSSION POINTS AND CONCLUSIONS**

### **Importance of the dialogue with civil society organisations in the human rights monitoring process**

The Dialogue Meetings organised by the Council of Europe provide a platform to exchange information about the situation of Roma and Traveller communities in respective member States of the Council of Europe.

Roma and Traveller CSOs are crucial source of information for the work of the Council of Europe human rights bodies and play an important role in the monitoring process carried out by them. They are in the best position to provide accurate information

from the ground and localised evidence about the daily struggles of Roma and Traveller communities. Their input increases the credibility of the monitoring process as they often fill-in the gaps left by official government reports. Feedback from the CSOs is also very useful for the preparatory works on the Council of Europe Strategic Action Plan for Roma and Traveller Inclusion for 2026-2030.

However, the relationship and dialogue between the Council of Europe and the CSOs is dynamic and reciprocal. The fact that the situation of Roma and Travellers is among the priorities of several Council of Europe bodies is extremely promising. The Strategic Action Plan plays a major role in promoting and advancing their rights. Furthermore, the reports produced by the Council of Europe monitoring bodies serve as important reference points for CSOs in their advocacy and legal efforts. Dialogue with the Council of Europe offers CSOs a unique opportunity to drive change at the national level, particularly in contexts where direct confrontation with domestic authorities may prove less effective.

As several participants of the Dialogue Meeting noted, even after many years of active fight against antigypsyism, human rights violations and discrimination of Roma and Traveller communities, many issues they face remain the same. The fact that the recommendations of international human rights monitoring bodies have remained almost the same for years serves as a clear proof of that. Fortunately, there are also areas where some progress was made, although, the situation remains far from ideal.

There has been a consensus among the Dialogue Meeting participants from CSOs that, although, there have been a plenty of strategies and action plans adopted at international and national levels, their implementation remains problematic. Lack of action and funding dedicated to adoption of concrete effective measures to improve the situation of Roma and Traveller communities can often be attributed to absence of political will.

## **Antigypsyism is a real and serious problem**

Antigypsyism<sup>5</sup> remains a persistent and specific form of racism across Europe, deeply rooted in societal structures and attitudes. It is manifested, among others, by segregation in education, discrimination in housing, barriers to equal healthcare and social services or labour market exclusion. A major challenge in addressing antigypsyism is its nature which is often subconscious, meaning that discriminatory behaviour can occur even without deliberate intent.

According to the findings of the at the European Roma Grassroots Organisations (ERGO) Network report which will be published in 2025, antigypsyism continues to create profound barriers to the full inclusion of Roma and Traveller communities. The

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<sup>5</sup> For more information see the ECRI's General Policy Recommendation No.13 on combating antigypsyism and discrimination against Roma, available here: <https://rm.coe.int/ecri-general-policy-recommendation-no-13-on-combating-anti-gypsyism-an/16808b5aee>

report is a result of a comparative analysis assessing the state of inclusion of Roma communities across twelve European countries. It focused on key areas such as housing, education, and hate crimes. The report highlights a concerning decline in the reporting of discrimination and hate crimes. According to the ERGO Network, implementation of the Council of Europe Strategic Action Plan for Roma and Traveller Inclusion remains inconsistent.

In order to effectively tackle antigypsyism and the barriers it creates, sustained commitment at all levels of governance is needed, alongside stronger legal frameworks and community engagement. Building trust with Romani communities is essential to overcoming these barriers. Public authorities have a duty to support Roma and Traveller communities in reporting incidents of discrimination and must ensure that appropriate actions are taken in response.

When it comes to remedies for victims of discrimination, sanctions for perpetrators should be effectively strict and dissuasive. Furthermore, to ensure that decisions finding violations of anti-discrimination law as well as courts scrutiny are made public and debated on could have both repressive and preventive effect.

## **Segregation in education remains a challenge**

Education is crucial in combating antigypsyism. However, educational segregation of Roma children persists across Europe despite the important judgments of the European Court of Human Rights, adoption of the EU Racial Equality Directive and even infringement proceedings initiated by the European Commission against the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary. Roma children are often educated in separate schools, buildings and classrooms. In many countries, they are disproportionately over-represented in the special education system for children with mental disabilities.

While there is growing recognition that school segregation constitutes a violation of human rights law, effective desegregation continues to pose a significant challenge across Europe. Most often, schools have neither desegregation nor inclusion policies.

During the 18<sup>th</sup> Dialogue Meeting, the overview of the “*Feasibility study on desegregation and inclusion policies and practices in the field of education for Roma and Traveller children*”<sup>6</sup> was presented by Mihai Surdu who served as the lead consultant of the study. It represents a collaborative effort, incorporating contributions from various Council of Europe bodies, Roma and Traveller organisations, and civil society groups. Its objective was to assess the necessity and feasibility of a potential recommendation from the Council of Europe’s Committee of Ministers regarding desegregation and inclusion policies for Roma and Traveller children.

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<sup>6</sup> Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/item-02-cdadi-2024-19rev-feasibility-study-on-desegregation-and-inclus/1680b29c7e>

According to the study, although all countries participating in the ADI-ROM survey have embraced the concept of inclusive education, only Romania and Slovakia have adopted a legal definition of school segregation. Moreover, aside from Croatia, none of the surveyed countries conducts regular monitoring of educational segregation affecting Roma pupils. The study identified a lack of research into the impact of segregation on Roma children's development and highlighted that desegregation measures, when implemented, are usually confined to short-term projects dependent on external funding. Systematic evaluations of these initiatives remain rare.

In May 2024, the ACFC adopted the *Thematic Commentary No. 1 on Education under the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities*.<sup>7</sup> The Commentary provides an updated interpretation of the Convention's provisions related to education and reflects the Advisory Committee's insights from five monitoring cycles. Specific country opinions regarding segregation of Roma and Traveller children were also recalled.

ECRI has adopted several general policy instruments which are important when it comes to the issue of segregation of Roma and Traveller children in education (e.g. General Policy Recommendation no. 10 on combating racism and racial discrimination in and through school education<sup>8</sup> or General Policy Recommendation No.13 on combating antigypsyism and discrimination against Roma).<sup>9</sup> Despite these frameworks and numerous recommendations to Member States, ECRI notes that segregation remains a profound challenge for Roma communities.

Segregation is not the only problem Roma and Traveller children face in accessing quality education. They experience high early dropout rates and grade repetitions. The attendance at the pre-school education remains low which leads to a disadvantaged position at the beginning of the primary education.

There is also a lack of teaching assistants especially those from Roma and Traveller communities. The idea of less strict requirements to become a teaching assistant (or educational mediator) might help to increase the number of assistants from the communities.

Shockingly, many educational materials still continue to contain stereotypical or racist portrayals of Roma and Traveller communities. Removing such content and promoting inclusive curricula is essential for combating prejudice. Equally important is the teaching of Roma and Traveller history — not only to prevent future discrimination but also to recognize their contributions to society and foster a shared sense of identity and belonging.

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<sup>7</sup> Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/prems-104224-gbr-2568-framework-convention-thematic-commentary-no1-a4-/1680b1ff31>

<sup>8</sup> Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/ecri-general-policy-recommendation-no-10-on-combating-racism-and-racia/16808b5ad5>

<sup>9</sup> Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/ecri-general-policy-recommendation-no-13-on-combating-anti-gypsyism-an/16808b5aee>



## Active participation of youth is crucial for furthering rights of Roma and Traveller communities

In April 2023, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted Recommendation CM/Rec(2023)4 on Roma Youth Participation<sup>10</sup>, a significant policy step aimed at enhancing the participation, representation, and inclusion of Roma and Traveller youth across Europe. The recommendation provides a set of guidelines for member States to ensure that young Roma are given meaningful opportunities to engage in public and political life. It calls on governments to create inclusive environments, strengthen institutional support, and ensure that Roma and Traveller youth are active contributors to democratic processes.

As part of its ongoing efforts, the Council of Europe has been organising the “Roma Youth Together” seminars<sup>11</sup>, which serve as a key tool for empowering Roma and Traveller youth. These seminars have been held regularly for several years, providing a platform for dialogue, networking, and capacity building among young leaders and activists. They aim to equip participants with skills and knowledge to advocate for their communities and promote their involvement in civic and political life.

In addition to the above-mentioned efforts, the Council of Europe has published educational and cultural resources such as Mirrors<sup>12</sup> and Right to Remember<sup>13</sup> that support the identity, history, and rights of Roma and Traveller youth. These tools are valuable in raising awareness, combating stereotypes, and fostering a sense of pride and solidarity among young Roma.

Despite these positive developments, several challenges continue to undermine Roma and Traveller youth participation. All around Europe, democratic backlash and the persistent phenomenon of antigypsyism have a severe impact on young Roma and Travellers. These systemic issues result in social exclusion, discrimination, and limited access to opportunities.

Roma and Traveller communities are often mistrusted by public authorities and the wider population. The lack of trust translates into pressure on Roma youth to continuously justify their presence and value through projects and initiatives. As a result, many young Roma struggle to have their voices heard, particularly at the local level, where decisions often most directly affect their lives.

CSOs have to play a critical role in countering these trends. They should be more engaged with Roma and Traveller youth by organising events, creating opportunities for participation, and implementing inclusive projects. Even though, the European Youth Foundation (EYF),<sup>14</sup> a fund established by the Council of Europe offering grants

<sup>10</sup> Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/roma-youth-participation-cm-rec-2023-4-web/1680af2a36>

<sup>11</sup> For more information, please visit: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth-roma/roma-youth-together>

<sup>12</sup> Available here: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth-roma/mirrors-manual-on-combating-antigypsyism-through-human-rights-education>

<sup>13</sup> Available here: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth-roma/right-to-remember1>

<sup>14</sup> For more information, please visit: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-youth-foundation>



that could support such initiatives, there are not many Roma and Traveller organisations that have accessed this funding.

Roma youth organisations could be involved more in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of Roma inclusion strategies at local, national, and international levels. Their insights and lived experiences are vital to shaping effective and inclusive policies. They should be enabled to actively shape their future.

### **Specific challenges faced by Roma and Traveller women**

Roma and Traveller women and girls face a complex and deeply rooted set of challenges stemming from both external societal discrimination and internal community-based inequalities. Discrimination based on ethnicity, gender and socio-economic status frequently intersects, compounding barriers to education, employment, healthcare, and political participation. Recognising this, the Council of Europe has increasingly prioritised the need for targeted strategies to address the structural inequalities affecting this group.

On 5 April 2024, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe has adopted a CM/Rec(2024)1 - Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member States on equality of Roma and Traveller women and girls<sup>15</sup>, calling on member states to ensure their full and equal participation in society. In parallel, ECRI has drawn attention to the phenomenon of intersectional discrimination, emphasizing that racism or ethnic prejudice often overlaps with discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation or religion.<sup>16</sup>

The ACFC has also demonstrated a growing emphasis on the rights of Roma and Traveller women in opinions and recommendations, such as those issued for Czechia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, and Slovakia. These opinions have addressed issues ranging from forced sterilisation to poor access to education and health services, and the lack of representation in political and public life. The ACFC also published two gender analyses of its opinions, covering the periods 2017-2020 and 2021-2024. They are available on the "Gender mainstreaming" website.<sup>17</sup>

Across various Council of Europe member states, Roma and Traveller women and girls experience a range of systemic barriers that limit their opportunities and wellbeing. These include, for example:

- Digital exclusion - due to limited access to modern technologies such as smartphones, laptops, and internet services, which prevents them from accessing essential state services in increasingly digitalised societies.

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<sup>15</sup> Available here: <https://search.coe.int/cm?i=0900001680af27e4>

<sup>16</sup> See, for example: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-commission-against-racism-and-intolerance/-/failure-to-address-complex-social-identities-may-undermine-protection-from-discrimination>

<sup>17</sup> Available here: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/minorities/gender-mainstreaming>

- Limited political participation - which remains a core concern. This lack of representation contributes to their marginalization from decision-making processes that directly affect their lives.
- Higher unemployment rates and lower levels of educational attainment - these are common among Roma and Traveller women compared to both Roma men and non-Roma populations.
- Limited access to healthcare and sanitary products. There is a lack of health practitioners from national minority background.

When it comes to political participation of Roma and Traveller women, this is often linked to poor access to quality education and stable employment. Targeted programmes with the aim to empower political participation of Roma and Traveller women could be one of the solutions for this problem. Moreover, Roma/Traveller women grassroot organisations which are limited in numbers should be supported more in their efforts addressing this issue.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has had an especially severe impact on Roma women, particularly those displaced by the conflict. According to a Task Force monitoring the situation, Roma women refugees face heightened difficulties in accessing social services, education, employment and personal documentation. The absence of identification documents renders many Roma women effectively invisible to state institutions, increasing their vulnerability and risk of statelessness. This invisibility severely hampers access to medical care and social services.

## **Hate speech and hate crimes against Roma and Travellers remain unpunished**

Hate speech and hate crimes against Roma and Traveller communities remain a persistent challenge across Council of Europe member states, undermining democratic values and disproportionately affecting these vulnerable communities.

ECRI has responded to this challenge through its General Policy Recommendation no. 15: on Combating Hate Speech<sup>18</sup>. It contains standards and recommendations for the member states for them to effectively tackle the aforementioned issues. It offers a structured approach for tackling hate speech by recommending improvements in legislation, data collection, victim support (including counselling), awareness-raising, and sanctions. It also emphasizes the importance of imposing civil and criminal liability on both individuals and organisations that incite hatred. ECRI follows up on the implementation of this recommendation through its periodic country monitoring, identifying strengths and gaps in national responses to hate speech.

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<sup>18</sup> Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/ecri-general-policy-recommendation-no-15-on-combating-hate-speech/16808b5b01>

A recurring issue across member states is underreporting of hate crimes and hate speech, as noted by several civil society actors. This is often due to:

- Lack of awareness among victims about their rights;
- Low levels of trust in public authorities;
- Inadequate victim support systems, including psychological counselling and legal aid.

Even though most of the Council of Europe members states have hate speech and hate crime provisions and racial hatred is considered an aggravating factor in sentencing in those countries, the practice frequently falls short, particularly when it comes to effective investigation and the protection of victims. There is a lack of monitoring of hate crimes and hate speech specifically aimed at Roma and Traveller communities.

A clear case is, for example, Romania, where, despite training efforts, there has been no significant improvement in hate crime reporting and monitoring. Although, trainings for law enforcement and judicial professionals were carried out, training alone is insufficient to address systemic issues. The need for more comprehensive programmes was stressed, which go beyond awareness-building to include institutional reform and attitudinal change. Notably, many police officers reportedly continue to deny the vulnerability of Roma communities and use derogatory terms such as "Gypsies," undermining both the dignity of the communities and the intent of anti-discrimination training.

In the context of rising online hate speech, the potential of artificial intelligence (AI) to detect and combat digital hate content has emerged as a promising area for future development. Investment in such technologies, if paired with appropriate ethical safeguards and oversight, could enhance the ability of states to monitor and respond to online hate speech in real time.

## Other issues and conclusions

One of the cross-cutting issues discussed at the 18<sup>th</sup> Dialogue Meeting was the **lack of officially collected disaggregated data**. Collection of such data is crucial for monitoring and then addressing human rights violations and discrimination of Roma and Travellers in areas such as education, employment, housing, health, and violence prevention. Data broken down by ethnicity (but also gender) are also essential for monitoring progress achieved.

However, it is also important to note that collection of ethnic data must adhere to human rights standards, ensuring it is used ethically and without reinforcing stigma or surveillance.

Discrimination has severe consequences for the **mental health** of Roma and Traveller populations, especially young people. In particular, the suicide rate among Travellers is alarming. The suicide rate among Traveller men is seven times higher, and among Traveller women five times higher than that of the non-Traveller population. In

addition, life expectancy is significantly lower among Travellers compared to the general population.

A critical and often overlooked barrier is the fear within families that seeking mental health support could lead to the removal of their children by social services. This fear, deeply rooted in historical experiences of state intervention, discourages individuals from seeking diagnosis or treatment and contributes to the worsening of mental health conditions.

There is a growing need to **monitor the situation of Roma refugees** from Ukraine in other Council of Europe Member States. These individuals often face multiple layers of vulnerability, including statelessness, lack of access to healthcare and education, and heightened exposure to discrimination. Monitoring their treatment and ensuring their rights are upheld must be part of the broader inclusion agenda.

### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

The 18<sup>th</sup> Dialogue Meeting which focused on Roma and Traveller-related findings of the Council of Europe monitoring bodies and their incorporation into the future Council of Europe Strategy on Roma and Traveller Inclusion (2026-2030) consisted of comprehensive and fruitful discussions. Many recommendations were proposed during the meeting. They are summarised below, with indications of the stakeholders to which they are addressed.

#### **General recommendations (to all stakeholders)**

Vulnerable groups within Roma and Traveller communities

- Paying special attention to groups within Roma and Traveller communities who are in especially vulnerable position and may suffer multiple or intersectional discrimination (e.g. women, children, mentally handicapped, LGBTI+ communities) to address their needs.
- Monitoring the situation of Roma communities from Ukraine fleeing war and moving to other countries. Tailored measures should be adopted to prevent them from being victims of discriminatory treatment, exploitation, hate crimes, etc.
- Ensuring quality education to Roma and Traveller women is pivotal in fighting intersectional discrimination they face. Complex set of barriers they face inside and outside their communities should be tackled simultaneously rather than separately.

Increasing political participation

- Establishing initiatives, projects and activities to increase the involvement of Roma and Travellers in political life.
- Empowering Roma and Traveller women and youth for them to be able to effectively engage in public life.

#### Building trust and fighting stereotypes

- Promoting Roma culture, history and heritage and creating and more attractive inclusive online content created to break the social media bubbles.
- Using appropriate vocabulary: "Roma" instead of "Gypsies", "inclusion" as a desired state, not "integration", etc.
- Educating national, regional and local authorities about the systemic challenges Roma communities face.

#### Building on good practices of desegregation in education

- Collection of good practices of where and how desegregation was successfully implemented.
- Designing of desegregation measures by educational experts rather than lawyers.

### **Recommendations to member states of the Council of Europe**

#### Ratification

- Member states should ratify the human rights instruments adopted within the Council of Europe as well as the United Nations frameworks including the respective Protocols thereof.

#### Funding

- Funding needs to be allocated and effectively spent to fund the implementation of Roma inclusion strategies and action plans.
- Financial support should be provided to grassroots organisations which often substitute the activities which should be done by the state and its authorities.

#### Collection of data

- Disaggregated data based on ethnicity (and also gender) should be collected by member states in the fields of housing, education, employment, healthcare.
- Collection and processing of such data should be done in accordance with human rights standards.

#### Digitalisation

- Address the fact that many Roma are victims of digitalisation of state services because they do not have the necessary equipment which prevents them from accessing state services.
- Digital literacy of the Roma and Traveller communities should be improved.
- Electronic devices needed to access online education should be provided to children from socially disadvantaged communities, if they cannot afford them.

#### Strengthening structures of protection against discrimination

- Stronger anti-discrimination laws (especially in member states that are not in the European Union) should be adopted.
- Broader and stronger competences should be ensured for equality bodies and other similar institutions entrusted with protection of victims of discrimination.
- Severe sanctions and public shaming should be used as tools of deterrence to prevent discrimination.

#### Antigypsyism, hate speech and hate crimes

- Antigypsyism should be formally recognised as a form of racism.
- Firm and public stance should be taken on hate speech and hate crimes.
- Steps to increase awareness of the victims of hate crimes of their rights should be taken, so that they are able to effectively use them.
- Mental health issues related to being victim of hate crime or discrimination should be addressed.

#### Access to housing

- Concrete steps to eradicate housing segregation, which is one of the main causes of discrimination in other areas of life, should be taken.

#### Access to education

- A strong legal definition of school segregation should be adopted.
- Segregation at crucial entry points of the respective stages of education should be prohibited.
- Financial and material assistance should be provided to children from Roma and Traveller communities living in poverty to facilitate their enrolment in mainstream schools.
- Two years of preschool education should be made accessible and affordable
- Educational support to Roma and Traveller children who require it should be secured e.g. by using teaching assistants who should ideally come from the Roma and Traveller communities.
- Diagnostic testing in preschool and primary schools should be avoided for selection purposes and may be used only for educational formative purposes.
- Any stereotypical or racist parts of books or teaching materials should be removed.

#### Teaching Roma and Traveller history

- History courses should contain also the history of Roma and Traveller communities.

#### **Recommendations to civil society organisations**

- Participate actively in the monitoring process of the Council of Europe monitoring bodies for them to receive accurate information from the field.
- Submit shadow reports/advocacy submissions with comments on the situation of Roma and Traveller communities in respective countries.
- Strengthen partnerships including those with government agencies to enhance outreach and support.



- Create culturally sensitising campaigns on social media and media, in general, to tackle prejudices and stereotypes regarding Roma and Traveller communities.
- Emphasize positive contributions of minorities to society.
- Roma and Traveller CSOs should involve Roma youth in their work.
- CSOs working in the field of education should also focus on early childhood education in their focus.

### **Recommendations to Council of Europe bodies**

- Council of Europe bodies should have more comprehensive approach when monitoring implementation of their recommendations.
- Co-operation between respective monitoring bodies could be strengthened especially when it comes to monitoring of the implementation of the next Strategy.
- Roma and Traveller youth and women should be given special attention in the next Strategy.