



Council of the
European Union

126741/EU XXVII. GP
Eingelangt am 12/01/23

Brussels, 12 January 2023
(OR. en)

5211/23

SOC 12
ANTIDISCRIM 5
GENDER 5
JAI 21
FREMP 3
COHOM 7
EDUC 9

COVER NOTE

| | |
|------------------|--|
| From: | Secretary-General of the European Commission, signed by Ms Martine DEPREZ, Director |
| date of receipt: | 9 January 2023 |
| To: | Ms Thérèse BLANCHET, Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union |
| No. Cion doc.: | COM(2023) 7 final |
| Subject: | COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS Assessment report of the Member States' national Roma strategic frameworks |

Delegations will find attached document COM(2023) 7 final.

Encl.: COM(2023) 7 final



EUROPEAN
COMMISSION

Brussels, 9.1.2023
COM(2023) 7 final

**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN
PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**

Assessment report of the Member States' national Roma strategic frameworks

{SWD(2023) 3 final}

INTRODUCTION

As part of its overall political priority to advance a Union of Equality, on 7 October 2020 the Commission adopted a new EU Roma Strategic Framework for Equality, Inclusion and Participation¹ (the EU Roma Strategic Framework). Drawing on the evaluation of the previous EU Roma Strategic Framework 2011-2020², the new EU Roma Strategic Framework highlights the need to strengthen the commitment at EU and national level, based on a paradigm shift from socio-economic integration towards a more comprehensive approach to promoting equality, inclusion and the participation of Roma. Member States have endorsed this approach by unanimously adopting a Council Recommendation on Roma equality, inclusion and participation³ on 12 March 2021.

The EU Roma Strategic Framework focuses on fighting antigypsyism and discrimination, while taking account of the diversity of the Roma population and the need for an intersectional approach regarding the possible combination of discrimination on grounds of ethnic origin with other characteristics, such as being a woman, an older or young person, a child, an LGBTIQ person, a person with disability, EU-mobile, non-EU national, and/or a stateless person. The framework also promotes the participation of Roma through empowerment, cooperation and trust, and their involvement in all policy and decision-making processes that affect them. It sets out seven common EU objectives and, for the first time, proposes EU-level targets for 2030, to ensure minimum progress. The seven objectives address the horizontal areas of equality, inclusion and participation, and the sectoral areas of education, employment, health and housing. To support the effective monitoring of progress, the EU Roma Strategic Framework also proposes the use of a portfolio of indicators for Member States⁴.

Developed during the COVID-19 crisis, the EU Roma Strategic Framework takes into account the disproportionate impact on the Roma population exposed by the pandemic by setting out guidance on better rising to challenges, boosting digital inclusion and ensuring environmental justice.

Achieving the objectives of the EU Roma Strategic Framework requires both EU and national action, with Member States having the main competencies. That is why the EU Roma Strategic Framework and the Council Recommendation called on Member States to develop national strategic frameworks⁵ by September 2021 and to share them with the Commission. Given the diversity of situations in Member States, national frameworks (NRSFs) were expected to be developed following a common but differentiated approach. The Commission invited all Member States to include a series of common features and minimum commitments, possibly complemented by additional commitments depending on specific national contexts,

¹ [COM\(2020\) 620](#) - *EU Roma strategic framework for equality, inclusion and participation*.

² Report on the evaluation of the EU framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020, COM(2018) 785 final.

³ Council Recommendation of 12 March 2021 on Roma equality, inclusion and participation 2021/C 93/01 [Council Recommendation of 12 March 2021 on Roma equality, inclusion and participation 2021/C 93/01](#).

⁴ Developed by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) in cooperation with the national Roma contact points (NRCPs), national statistical offices and the Commission.

⁵ A national Roma strategic framework refers to national Roma strategies and/or integrated sets of policy measures within a broader socio-economic context, which are relevant for Roma equality, inclusion and participation.

and in the case of Member States with a significant Roma population (i.e. above 1%⁶), to include more ambitious commitments.

Complementary to the EU Roma Strategic Framework, the Council Recommendation sets out measures to achieve progress in the seven common objectives, depending on the relevance to their national context. It also emphasises the importance of putting in place sound monitoring mechanisms, and of making full and optimal use of both EU and national funds.

This Communication takes stock of national Roma strategic frameworks, assesses the commitments made by the Member States and provides guidance on any improvements needed. It is accompanied by a Staff Working Document (SWD) in two parts, consisting of country fiches summarising the analysis of national strategies adopted by individual Member States, as well as by several EU candidate countries and potential candidates participating in the Poznań process⁷. For each Member State, the country fiches assess how well the main proposed measures correspond to the objectives of the EU Roma Strategic Framework and the Council Recommendation, highlighting areas for improvement and examples of promising practices. The second part of the SWD, covering the EU candidate and potential candidate countries, follows the same approach. The first part of the SWD includes a table produced by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) on targets set by each Member State, and a summary of the findings of the country assessment reports produced by the Roma Civil Monitoring initiative (RCM)⁸.

1. OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE NATIONAL ROMA STRATEGIC FRAMEWORKS

Five Member States shared their national Roma strategic frameworks (NRSFs) by September 2021, while most Member States submitted them only between October 2021 and May 2022. Two Member States adopted their NRSFs only at the end of June 2022⁹. Six Member States have either ongoing strategies that extend beyond 2021, or a set of integrated policy measures¹⁰, and one Member State has not yet renewed its NRSF, which expired on 31 December 2021. For these seven Member States the assessment was based on a questionnaire on existing or planned measures, which aimed to determine the extent to which their current frameworks and plans integrate elements of the new EU Roma Strategic Framework and Council Recommendation¹¹.

This assessment looks at the correspondence between the measures in the NRSFs and the measures proposed in the Council Recommendation. It also looks at the extent to which the

⁶ Bulgaria, Czechia, Greece, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, and Spain.

⁷ Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo (this designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence), which agreed, within the Poznań process, to bring their national Roma strategic frameworks/action plans into NRSFs /Action Plans in line with the EU Roma framework.

⁸ Preparatory Action 2021-2025 – Roma Civil Monitoring: Strengthening capacity and involvement of Roma and pro-Roma civil society in policy monitoring and review. Participation and involvement of civil society is an important part of the EU Roma framework. Roma and pro-Roma organisations were already involved in previous implementation assessments.

⁹ See the Annex, which contains a table that provides an overview of submissions.

¹⁰ Generic mainstream social inclusion and anti-discrimination measures.

¹¹ Malta did not adopt a National Roma Strategic Framework as there is no known Roma population on its territory.

measures reflect key challenges in each Member State and assesses whether they are ambitious enough to help meet the objectives of the EU Roma Strategic Framework and its 2030 targets. The FRA analysed the targets and indicators set out in the NRSFs. Examples of promising practices from Member States are provided under each objective.

1.1 Summary of the assessment

a) Common features, minimum commitments, more ambitious commitments

The EU Roma Strategic Framework proposed that all NRSFs should include some common features, focusing on equality, participation and diversity; a combination of mainstreaming and targeted actions; and improved target-setting and data collection. To put those features into practice, all Member States were invited to include in their NRSF, as a minimum commitment, the following elements, which are also reflected in the Council Recommendation:

- setting baselines and targets towards the overall EU objectives and headline targets, including for specific groups, to reflect the diversity of Roma people;
- tackling antigypsyism and discrimination;
- ensuring the socio-economic inclusion of marginalised Roma;
- combining targeted and mainstream measures;
- allocating a dedicated budget and creating mechanisms for implementation, reporting, monitoring and evaluating progress;
- including Roma and pro-Roma civil society organisations, sectoral ministries, equality bodies and other actors in a systematic process of consultation and cooperation;
- promoting the active participation of civil society organisations in policy-making and in national and EU platform processes; and
- providing the National Roma Contact Point (NRCP) with the necessary mandate, resources and staff, and strengthening their role, including by reforming national Roma platforms.

Overall, Member States have reflected in their NRSFs most of the EU Roma Strategic Framework's novelties, and followed the three-pillar approach on equality, inclusion and participation. They have also put forward measures proposed by the Council Recommendation, depending on their national contexts.

Eight Member States (CZ, EL, ES, FR, HR, LT, SI and SK) have included in their NRSFs the common features and minimum commitments proposed in the EU Roma Strategic Framework, while twelve other Member States (AT, BE, BG, DE, EE, FI, HU, IT, LV, NL, PL and RO) have partially included these. The missing elements are mainly targets, clearly earmarked budgets for implementation and monitoring, or measures that cater for diversity within the Roma population. The remaining six Member States (CY, DK, IE, LU, PT and SE) have included the minimum commitments to a very limited extent.

Depending on the specific national contexts, the EU Roma Strategic Framework invited Member States facing specific challenges as regards equality and inclusion of Roma to complement the common features and minimum commitments with additional commitments. Examples of such specific challenges relate to living conditions of Roma, transnational mobility, or issues associated with official documentation. Following the common but differentiated approach, many Member States included additional commitments, for example

by setting quantitative targets in certain **areas**, or by detailing how they plan to invest EU and national funds to benefit Roma people.

In addition, the seven Member States (BG, CZ, EL, ES, HU, RO and SK) with larger Roma populations (above 1% of the total population) were expected to include even more ambitious commitments in their NRSFs. All of them, as well as Croatia, submitted NRSFs with more ambitious commitments (although with different levels of ambition) to prevent and fight discrimination and address antigypsyism and anti-Roma prejudices and stereotypes. Most of these NRSFs were accompanied by a plan or set of measures indicating how EU and national funds will be spent to support Roma equality and inclusion. These Member States included plans to address and prevent segregation in education and housing. Regarding housing, Bulgaria and Romania lack specific desegregation measures. However, plans for the financing of measures often do not provide a sufficient level of detail.

b) Objectives and measures

The EU Roma Strategic Framework acknowledged that **preventing and fighting antigypsyism and discrimination** is crucial for Roma equality and inclusion. Most Member States have included measures in this area as proposed by the Council Recommendation. However, those measures are not systematically applied in a cross-cutting manner in all sectoral areas. Addressing intersectional and multiple discrimination on all grounds of vulnerability is only included in some NRSFs.

Many NRSFs link Roma-related measures **promoting social inclusion** to national policy programmes and funding, including EU funds, through a mainstreaming approach that addresses poverty and social exclusion, child protection and access to education and essential services. However, in many cases the extent to which Roma will benefit from those mainstream policies is not clearly described.

On **Roma participation** in consultative mechanisms, policy, and decision-making processes, many Member States refer to the contribution of Roma people to the development of the NRSFs, including through their participation in the National Roma Platforms. However, the assessment of Roma civil society, conducted through the Roma Civil Monitoring initiative¹², indicates that closer involvement and cooperation is both possible and necessary.

Most NRSFs plan to ensure continuous cooperation with Roma, facilitating their participation throughout the implementation of strategies and in the monitoring, evaluation and reporting processes. Furthermore, Member States (e.g. AT, BE, CZ, DE, EL, ES, FI, HR, HU, LT, LV, SE, SK and SI) have described activities to support empowerment and participation of Roma organisations, including those representing Roma women and young people, children and youth, although with lesser focus on investing in the capacity-building of these organisations.

Under the sectoral objectives in **education, employment, health and housing**, many NRSFs include the recommended measures to a good extent. Some of these measures are linked to national targets and indicators, based on national statistics, where available. The sectoral objective dedicated to education stands out as the area where Member States plan to take the most extensive measures. On desegregation in education and housing, however, the plans do not appear to be sufficient to successfully address the full extent of the problem. Moreover,

¹² The detailed assessment is to be found in the Appendix of the first part of the SWD.

the measures in the areas of employment, health and housing do not always match the scale and complexity of the challenges encountered by Roma.

c) Targets¹³

Several Member States, in particular Member States with a larger Roma population, have set national targets corresponding to the EU level targets in the EU Roma Strategic Framework. Those Member States are expected to make a good contribution to the collective effort to achieve these targets. Hungary and Slovakia have only partly set national targets corresponding to EU level targets; Romania has only included some national targets that do not correspond to the EU level targets.

Other Member States have set quantitative or qualitative national targets on issues different from those addressed by the EU level targets in a given objective of the EU Roma Strategic Framework. Therefore, the extent of their contribution toward achieving the EU Roma Strategic Framework targets cannot be accurately measured. Some Member States have not set any targets (DE, DK, LU, NL and SE).

Some Member States with a smaller Roma population have set national targets that correspond to the EU level targets (HR in particular, but also EE, SI, FI and LT for some objectives) and the Commission welcomes these efforts. Depending on national challenges and contexts, more Member States could follow these positive examples.

Overall, and particularly the NRSFs submitted by Member States with larger Roma populations, show that good efforts were made in setting targets that correspond to the EU Roma Strategic Framework targets and in planning related measures. However, Romania did not set national targets corresponding to the EU Roma Strategic Framework's targets. The absence of national targets for the country with the largest Roma population risks to impact negatively the Member States' collective capacity to reach the EU Roma Strategic Framework's 2030 targets.

1.2 Status and role of the national Roma contact points (NRCP)

The EU Roma Strategic Framework recommended, as a minimum, that the NRSFs should provide the NRCPs with an adequate mandate, resources, staff capacity and institutional authority. The NRSFs should also empower them to effectively coordinate action with sectoral ministries and other relevant authorities, monitor the implementation of Roma-related policies and strengthen co-operation with Roma civil society, including through National Roma Platforms.

While the NRCPs have a major role to play in facilitating co-operation between the authorities and civil society, and in promoting Roma participation, the scope of their mandates varies from one Member State to another. Overall, the new strategies have not strengthened the NRCPs with additional financial and staff resources and, while some have a broad mandate, they are still limited in their capacity to carry out their coordination role effectively.

¹³ An overview of the situation of targets per Member States for all objectives is to be found as an appendix of the first part of the SWD.

In Member States with a larger Roma population, the EU Roma Strategic Framework recommended that the role and status of the NRCs should be strengthened to ensure effective coordination and mainstreaming of Roma equality and inclusion across different sectors at regional and local levels. The framework also invited Member States to involve the NRCs in cross-governmental programming of the distribution of EU funds for Roma and in monitoring this spending, and ensure that public policies and services reach Roma effectively, including those living in remote and rural areas.

Most Member States with a larger Roma population have given their NRCs adequate mandates and roles in coordinating and cooperating with ministries to implement the NRSFs, including the EU funds. Slovakia, Spain, Croatia and Czechia are some promising examples of this. However, even in those Member States, the staffing and financial resources of the NRCs do not seem to have been increased. This could limit their capacity to thoroughly monitor and report on the implementation of NRSFs and their involvement in developing and monitoring mainstream policies and programmes. Among the other Member States, some NRCs have very limited resources and capacity.

2. HORIZONTAL OBJECTIVES

2.1 Fight and prevent antigypsyism and discrimination

The Council Recommendation calls on Member States to fight and prevent antigypsyism and discrimination, including by tackling harassment, hate crimes and hate speech, both online and offline. The recommendation also asks Member States to develop and promote a comprehensive system of support for victims, raise awareness of antigypsyism, and promote awareness of Roma history, including by commemorating the Roma Holocaust and through reconciliation processes in society.

Overall, Member States made significant efforts to align their NRSFs with the Council Recommendation. Most Member States have developed measures to combat discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes, and, to some extent, to fight antigypsyism. These measures include awareness-raising and information campaigns aimed at the general public, public institutions and the media. While Hungary refers to antigypsyism in its analytical section, it lacks explicit measures to fighting antigypsyism. Bulgaria mentions combatting anti-Roma attitudes, but their proposed measures focus on discrimination rather than on antigypsyism. Furthermore, some measures aim to systematically involve equality bodies in Roma equality measures and to promote positive narratives about Roma people and Roma role-models. Some NRSFs have proposed measures to address intersectional or multiple discrimination, including dedicated actions to tackle the specific challenges faced by Roma women.

Several Member States have included measures to promote Roma history and culture in their NRSFs, such as facilitating dialogue to recognise past injustices and engaging in reconciliation processes. Examples of measures to promote Roma history and culture also include developing and introducing specific elements in curricula and textbooks, celebrating International Roma Day (8 April), and commemorating the Roma Holocaust (2 August). These days are recognised by law in some Member States. Several Member States fund radio and television programmes and museums dedicated to Roma history and culture.

While most Member States have acknowledged in their NRSFs the existence of racism and discrimination, this awareness could be translated into even stronger measures to respond more adequately to the challenges identified in some of the Member States.

Some examples of promising practices include the application of legal tools to fight discrimination and tackle hate speech in France, and the adoption of an Antigypsyism Law¹⁴ in Romania.

Information about budgetary allocations for this objective, either specifically for the NRSFs or related to relevant mainstream programmes, is either missing or rather general and vague. Russia's war against Ukraine has led to significant flows of refugees, including Ukrainian Roma¹⁵. This situation has exposed a range of risks that affect them, including that of unequal treatment.¹⁶ While acknowledging Member States' efforts to tackle the situation so far, more should be done to accommodate the needs of Roma refugees from Ukraine by making optimal use of the NRSFs to ensure they have equal access to mainstream education, employment, housing, health and social care, and other essential services.

2.2 Reduce poverty and social exclusion to close the socio-economic gap between Roma and the general population

The Council Recommendation calls on Member States to tackle the extremely high at-risk-of-poverty rate and material and social deprivation among the Roma population.

Measures set out under this objective aim to address the intergenerational transmission of poverty and child poverty and reduce the social exclusion of Roma. This will be achieved by improving their access to essential public services and social allowances through coordination across relevant sectors such as education and employment.

Some Member States (e.g. BG, DE, EL, ES, HR, HU and SI) have included reducing poverty and social exclusion as a specific stand-alone objective. Czechia did not include this objective but has set one target responding to the EU-level target. Other Member States have not included this objective in their NRSF, however, they include measures to address socio-economic inclusion and to combat poverty throughout the sectoral objectives of employment, education, health and housing.

Measures to address the digital gap and promote the digital inclusion of disadvantaged Roma communities are specifically included in only some NRSFs, while in others they are part of Member States' mainstream social inclusion policies.

Some NRSFs refer to the European Child Guarantee¹⁷ and the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+)¹⁸ funding opportunities to combat child poverty but lack details on budgetary allocations.

As a promising practice, Greece has developed subsidies to tackle energy poverty and provide an 'energy card' to affected households, but a comprehensive package of integrated services to tackle the phenomenon is still to be developed. Hungary provides another example of a

¹⁴ [Law 2 /2021 regarding measures to prevent and combat antigypsyism.](#)

¹⁵ According to the official census of 2001, Ukrainian Roma number 47,917 people. Other estimates, such as of the Council of Europe (CoE), put their number much higher.

¹⁶ [The Russian war of aggression against Ukraine — The broad fundamental rights impact in the EU \(europa.eu\).](#)

¹⁷ [European Child Guarantee.](#)

¹⁸ [European Social Fund Plus](#) – ESF+ in partnership.

promising practice, as it has included measures to provide advice and training on preventing household debt.

2.3 Promote participation through empowerment, cooperation and trust

The Council Recommendation calls on Member States to step-up, as appropriate, the meaningful participation and consultation of Roma, including women, young and older people, and persons with disabilities, in order to provide effective support for Roma equality and non-discrimination.

To facilitate the consultation of Roma civil society in the review and development of public policies, the participation of Roma is included in most NRSFs through their involvement in either Roma-specific governmental consultative and advisory bodies, or the bodies for ethnic and national minorities.

Some of the NRSF measures under this objective support capacity building and empowerment of Roma civil society organisations (CSOs), including those for Roma women and young people. These measures propose to establish and strengthen multi-purpose Roma community centres that provide a variety of services such as healthcare, the development of parental skills, support for participation in education, literacy and after-school activities, and guidance and support in accessing job opportunities.

A few NRSFs include measures to promote Roma role-models or action for the recruitment of Roma in public institutions. While several NRSFs have mentioned the need to strengthen the representation of Roma and build the capacity of Roma organisations, only a few Member States have proposed concrete measures to that effect.

Spain provides an example of a promising practice. It has adopted measures aimed at capacity building in CSOs, as well as among Roma women and young people to ensure their meaningful participation and civic engagement. Italy provides another promising example through the work of the National Roma and Sinti Platform and the Community Forum. Estonia, Latvia and Austria provide other examples of structured and regular forms of dialogue between relevant stakeholders, such as National Roma Platforms or other consultative processes.

3. SECTORAL OBJECTIVES - FOUR KEY AREAS

3.1 Increase effective equal access to quality inclusive mainstream education

The Council Recommendation calls on Member States to ensure effective equal access to and participation in all forms of education, from early childhood to tertiary education, including second chance education, adult education and lifelong learning. The Council Recommendation also calls on Member States to prevent and eliminate segregation in education.

Measures set out by Member States under this objective include a wide range of activities covering access to early childhood education and care, facilitation of access to education, literacy in the language of instruction, support for Roma children to acquire digital skills, measures to increase school retention and prevent early school leaving, and, to some extent, measures to help increase educational attainment and the successful advancement of Roma pupils from compulsory to post-compulsory education.

All Member States with a larger Roma population, in line with the more ambitious commitments proposed by the EU Roma Strategic Framework, included measures to prevent segregation and engage in transitioning Roma pupils from segregated schools into mainstream educational settings. However, in some cases (e.g. HU, RO and SK), the proposed measures, not always systematically developed from a well-defined baseline and accompanied by indicators and targets, seem to be insufficient to match the scale of the challenges. Other measures promote inclusiveness in schools and tackle discrimination of Roma children. Several NRSFs mention the development and use of teaching materials in Romani language.

Most NRSFs have not set out sufficient measures to increase the social mobility of Roma students and to help them advance successfully from upper-secondary to tertiary education. The NRSFs generally do not adequately address how to remove obstacles to the participation of Roma children in kindergartens, including children living in remote, rural or segregated areas. Nor do they propose adequate measures to support the employment of Roma teachers, assistants and mediators. Measures to support the education of Roma adults are mentioned in several NRSFs (e.g. AT, BG, DE, EL, ES, HR, HU, FI, IT, LT, PL and SI).

Many NRSFs are vague about the budgets allocated in this area, which makes it difficult to assess the adequacy of funding or to predict the potential impacts of proposed measures.

Measures to prevent students from leaving school early are insufficiently complemented by adequate measures to re-integrate into formal education those Roma pupils who have dropped out. A few Member States (e.g. CZ, HR, IT, LV and SK) have measures in place to address and prevent the misdiagnosis and inadequate placement of Roma pupils in special needs education. More measures are needed to address digital skills in education and improve access to the internet. Measures are also needed to improve the provision of PCs, laptops, tablets and teaching materials for distance learning and to ensure that they reach impoverished communities, in particular Roma children. The risk of further digital exclusion of Roma from education, as seen during the COVID-19 pandemic, is insufficiently addressed by the NRSFs.

Promising practices in this area are provided by the Netherlands, which makes available a school subsidy of EUR 1 million per year to support schools with Roma children. Finland's National Advisory Board on Romani Affairs reviews the contents of educational materials that concern Roma people and provides guidance on and proposals for this content. The Polish government provides incentives for local government to further increase the number of Roma school mediators.

3.2 Increase effective equal access to quality and sustainable employment

The Council Recommendation calls on Member States to promote effective equal access for Roma, in particular young people, to quality and sustainable employment, and measures to combat, prevent and eliminate discrimination and to promote employment activation.

Most Member States acknowledge the employment gap between the Roma and the rest of the population. They propose measures to promote inclusion through programmes for young Roma who are not in education, employment or training to improve their skills and digital proficiency, and to provide traineeships, apprenticeships and vocational training. Measures in some Member States aim at increasing practical experience to facilitate the transition from education to the labour market.

Labour market activation measures, with a particular focus on young people, are part of Member States' mainstream policies targeting disadvantaged or marginalised groups. A few Member States include measures to support self-employed and entrepreneurial Roma people.

Most of the NRSFs address the gender gap in employment by including measures aiming at labour market activation for Roma women or by carrying out studies on the causes of Roma women's lower rates of participation in the labour market. Only a few Member States include measures to train potential employers on non-discrimination and diversity, and even fewer Member States include training on antigypsyism.

Most of the Member States with a larger Roma population have put forward comprehensive mainstream and targeted measures, at regional and local levels, to promote the inclusion of Roma, and tackle discrimination and antigypsyism as an obstacle to access to employment. National funds, ESF+, ERDF¹⁹ or the Just Transition Fund²⁰ are mentioned in several NRSFs as sources of funding for the implementation of proposed measures, although they refer to mainstream initiatives and lack details of budgetary allocations for Roma.

One example of a promising practice is provided by Bulgaria and its mainstream active labour market policy aimed at young unemployed people under the age of 29, among them Roma. Lithuania provides another example, as it has adopted measures to promote and support entrepreneurship, including for disadvantaged groups such as Roma. Belgium implements the Roma@work projects funded through the ESF, which help Roma who are looking for work through training and coaching.

3.3 Improve Roma health and increase effective equal access to quality healthcare and social services

The Council Recommendation calls on Member States to ensure effective equal access without barriers to quality healthcare and social services, especially for people who are most at risk or living in marginalised or remote rural and segregated areas.

Most Member States acknowledge the specific challenges in ensuring equal access of Roma people to healthcare. Some NRSFs plan to carry out studies on the health situation of the Roma population, with the aim of increasing the authorities' knowledge and capacity to develop better targeted measures.

Most Member States focus on training healthcare practitioners, field workers and Roma health mediators, and on awareness-raising campaigns promoting a healthy lifestyle and healthcare for children. Other measures include direct outreach to the Roma population living in settlements, through which mobile healthcare services are provided.

Some Member States have set out measures targeting Roma women, with a focus on reproductive health. The needs of people with a disability, older persons, LGBTIQ Roma, as well as victims or potential victims of trafficking in human beings, are addressed in a small number of NRSFs. Few Member States include measures aimed at increasing life expectancy in the Roma population. Almost half of the NRSFs propose measures to counteract the impact

¹⁹ [European Regional Development Fund](#).

²⁰ [Just Transition Fund](#).

of the COVID-19 pandemic, including via campaigns encouraging vaccination (e.g. BG, CZ, CY, EE, EL, ES, FR, HU, HR, IE, LV, RO and SK).

Most of the Member States with a larger Roma population have established combined mainstream and targeted measures and mention the existence of implementation plans to carry out these measures at local and regional level, although in some cases these plans are not well articulated. These Member States consider discrimination and antigypsyism as one of the reasons preventing Roma people from accessing healthcare.

Several NRSFs indicate that they are using ESF+ and ERDF financing for this objective, mostly for mainstream measures to improve access to healthcare for marginalised people.

Examples of promising practices come from Portugal, which is implementing targeted measures to train Roma health mediators, and from Cyprus, which is providing easily-accessible mainstream free of charge access to paediatricians for all people.

3.4 Increase effective equal access to adequate desegregated housing and essential services

The Council Recommendation calls on Member States to ensure equal treatment of Roma people in access to adequate non-segregated housing and essential services. These include water, sanitation, energy, transport, financial services and digital communications, as per principle 20 of the European Pillar of Social Rights²¹.

Several Member States include measures to improve access to essential services, in particular access to running water and, to some extent, measures to prevent and eradicate spatial segregation. Few NRSFs include both mainstream and targeted measures to facilitate access to social housing, while several NRSFs propose measures to carry out official procedures for urban and residential upgrading, encourage home ownership, and invest in infrastructure such as electricity, gas, running water, sewage and waste management, roads and access to transport.

The important aspect of combatting discrimination and antigypsyism, as obstacles to accessing housing, is only acknowledged by a few Member States and this is reflected even less in terms of concrete measures. Most NRSFs address insufficiently issues such as forced evictions, the lack of possibility for Roma to become property owners or to afford sustainable renting, or reducing household overcrowding gap.

Most Member States (CZ, EL, ES, HU and SK) with a larger Roma population have generally included desegregation initiatives at local level, while Bulgaria and Romania lack specific desegregation measures. Such initiatives consist of ensuring that new developments financed by public funds are non-segregated, monitoring the presence of Roma in residential districts, or engaging the wider community in desegregation processes by preparing them to welcome Roma people who have moved out of segregated areas.

In this area, most NRSFs plan the use of EU funding programmes, however they only exceptionally provide details in terms of funding allocation.

²¹ [European Pillar of Social Rights](#).

Examples of promising practices include Germany, which shows how local authorities can include a Roma-specific approach in their Access to Housing” strategy, or France’s plan to achieve full slum clearance by 2030²², supported by targets and a timeline. Further examples are provided by Slovenia, which is mapping and legalising settlements to improve their infrastructure, and Sweden, which produced guidance material to raise landlords’ awareness of the situation of Roma people on the housing market and to combat discrimination. Another example of a promising practice is provided by the Housing First Romodrom project²³ in Czechia, which addresses homelessness and housing deprivation of people of Roma origin who are socially excluded or at risk of social exclusion

4. MONITORING AND REPORTING

The EU Roma Strategic Framework proposed that all Member States should improve target-setting, data collection, monitoring and reporting, and that data should be collected regularly to feed into the reporting and monitoring. All Member States were invited, as a minimum commitment in their NRSFs, to set out national baselines and targets towards the EU objectives and targets, based on a comprehensive needs-assessment. The EU Roma Strategic Framework further proposed that Member States include as additional commitment in their NRSFs the setting of national quantitative and qualitative targets towards all seven EU objectives and associated targets, depending on data availability and national context and challenges.

This is also reflected in the Council Recommendation which, considering the EU objectives and headline targets, invites Member States to include national quantitative and/or qualitative targets in their national Roma strategic frameworks, tailored to national circumstances and to the availability of data on equality.

The Roma Survey 2020-2021²⁴ carried out by the FRA was published in October 2022. It provides the baseline data about the situation of Roma in eight EU Member States²⁵ and two candidate countries²⁶. Based on this data, progress in the EU and the Member States covered will be monitored.

To ensure more effective data collection, reporting and monitoring of progress towards EU and national targets, the Commission has proposed the use of a portfolio of indicators, developed by the FRA with the involvement of NRCP, national statistical offices and the Commission.

Most Member States have put in place a monitoring and reporting mechanism coordinated by the NRCP, taking into account inputs from National Roma Platforms, Roma civil society organisations, ministries, equality bodies and national statistics institutions. These monitoring and reporting mechanisms will also benefit from the contribution of the Roma Civil Monitoring initiative.

²² [France’s plan to achieve full slum clearance by 2030.](#)

²³ <https://romodrom.cz/en/our-activities/housing/housing-first/>.

²⁴ [EU FRA 2020-2021 Survey: Roma in 10 European countries – Main results.](#)

²⁵ Croatia, Czechia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Romania and Spain.

²⁶ North Macedonia and Serbia.

The assessments of individual countries' monitoring frameworks, carried out jointly with the FRA, has proven challenging as comparability across Member States of their statistical approach to baselines, indicators and targets needs to be improved.

National quantitative targets for Roma equality, inclusion and participation towards the EU Roma Strategic Framework's headline targets for the seven objectives of the EU Roma Strategic Framework are set out in the NRSFs of some Member States with a larger Roma population (BG, CZ, EL, ES, as well as HR). Slovakia responded to the EU Roma Strategic Framework's targets for six objectives, excluding the horizontal objective 'Reducing poverty and social exclusion'. Hungary included explicit national quantitative targets in response to the EU Roma Strategic Framework's targets in the areas of poverty, education and employment. Romania did not include national targets towards the EU Roma Strategic Framework's headline targets.

Estonia, Slovenia, Latvia and Lithuania set national targets corresponding to the framework's headline targets for one or more objectives.

Several Member States, applying the common but differentiated approach, have responded to one or more of the seven objectives of the EU Roma Strategic Framework, however, they have responded only partially to the EU headline targets. These Members States have set qualitative or quantitative targets and associated measures which can nevertheless help improve the situation of Roma in the respective areas.

The measures proposed by Member States that have not set any targets also help improve the situation of Roma, however, it is not possible to determine the extent to which they contribute to the achievement of the EU headline targets.

The Member States that have established quantitative and qualitative targets for the seven objectives, towards the EU Roma Strategic Framework's targets, make a valuable contribution to achieving the EU targets by 2030. However, those Member States with specific challenges and a sizeable Roma population (in particular Romania, which has the largest Roma population in the EU) need to make greater efforts to set such targets to increase the chances of collectively reaching the EU targets by 2030.

On data collection, several Member States have referred to data available from EUROSTAT and FRA surveys, as well as national statistical institutes. At the same time, some Member States have justified their lack of baselines and targets by the legal restriction on collecting data on ethnicity.

Following the Council Recommendation, Member States should ensure full public disclosure of national reports on Roma equality, inclusion and participation. However, information about this aspect is missing in most NRSFs.

5. FUNDING FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL ROMA STRATEGIC FRAMEWORKS

The EU Roma Strategic Framework and the Council Recommendation highlight the importance of EU and national funding for Roma equality, inclusion and participation, and invite Member States to explain in their national frameworks how EU and national funds and financial instruments will be used. Many Member States have mentioned as sources of funding a combination of national and EU funding, mostly under the EU cohesion policy, as

well as funding from other international donors. This mix of funding is used to implement the measures set out in the NRSFs, and measures that include Roma as part of mainstream programmes in education, employment, health, and housing.

The EU Roma Strategic Framework and the Council Recommendation encourage the Member States, in particular those with greater challenges and those with a significant Roma population, to make full use of the funding available under the 2021-2027 multi-annual financial framework (MFF) and NextGeneration EU for Roma people. To enable this, the 2021-2027 regulations have been strengthened and streamlined, for example through the ESF+ specific objective to promote the socio-economic integration of marginalised communities, such as Roma, and complementary ERDF investments in this area, and the introduction of the corresponding thematic enabling condition in the Common Provisions Regulation²⁷ for cohesion policy funds.

This enabling condition requires from Member States that earmark funds for this targeted objective to have a national Roma inclusion strategic policy framework in place. This includes strong requirements related to monitoring, measures against segregation, mainstreaming of Roma inclusion at regional and local level, and close cooperation with the Roma civil society and other relevant stakeholders. The enabling condition will be monitored continuously throughout the programming period. Should the Member State no longer fulfil it, the reimbursement of expenditure will be blocked for the corresponding specific objective. Moreover, under the ESF+ all Member States must comply with a 25% thematic concentration requirement focused on social inclusion, of which Roma are a key target group. Member States should ensure that the available funding effectively reaches the Roma.

In the negotiations for the 2021-2027 partnership agreements and ERDF and ESF+ programmes, the Commission emphasised that country-specific challenges related to Roma should be properly reflected and addressed in the forthcoming programmes, and that measures promoting Roma inclusion and access to mainstream non-segregated infrastructure and services should be implemented.

Sixteen Member States intend to earmark funds under the ESF+ for marginalised communities, such as the Roma (BG, CZ, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HU, HR, IT, LU, PL, PT, RO, SK and SI), accounting for over EUR 1.8 billion²⁸.

In line with the Regulation establishing the Recovery and Resiliency Facility (RRF)²⁹, reforms and investments included in the national recovery and resilience plans (RRPs) are expected to contribute to effectively addressing all or a significant number of the challenges identified in the European Semester country specific recommendations (CSRs) addressed to

²⁷ Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy.

²⁸ This amount is treated as an estimate only. It corresponds to the information officially submitted by the Member States as of 21 November 2022. Final figures will only be available once all programmes have been adopted.

²⁹ [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/241 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 February 2021 establishing the Recovery and Resilience Facility.](#)

the Member States in the context of the European Semester from 2019 onwards³⁰. In the Semester framework, BG, CZ³¹, HU, RO and SK have regularly received CSRs in relation to the inclusion of the Roma population throughout 2012-2019. In 2019, the Council addressed CSRs to BG, HU, RO and SK, primarily covering the need for inclusive and quality education for Roma pupils.

In 2022, the country reports of BG, CZ HU, RO and SK referred specifically to the importance of Roma inclusion issues. In 2022, all Member States with an approved RRP received a recommendation on the implementation of the RRP and the cohesion policy programmes. Hungary, whose RRP was approved by the Council on 15 December 2022³², received a CSR on Roma inclusion in 2022. The RRF Regulation also requires Member States to explain how the measures in their respective RRP are expected to contribute to equal opportunities for all and the mainstreaming of those objectives, in line with the European Pillar of Social Rights. Several national RRP explicitly include Roma as beneficiaries of certain measures, for instance through support for childcare services and access to quality mainstream education of socially disadvantaged students, including Roma, as well as dedicated investments, e.g. providing medical services for Roma communities.

Other investments and reforms concern the creation of youth centres targeting the personal development of young people from vulnerable groups, such as Roma, and the provision of energy-efficient social housing for vulnerable groups. Overall, the plans include a significant number of reforms and investments to support social objectives. Overall, Member States have dedicated around 28% of their RRF funds to supporting social objectives spread across four categories: employment and skills, education and childcare, health and long-term care, and social policies.³³

Member States are invited to make optimal use of this funding to devise and implement measures to improve the access of marginalised groups such as the Roma to mainstream non-segregated education, housing, health, long-term care and employment, to promote their social inclusion, and to support civil society organisations working with marginalised Roma communities.

³⁰ National RRP are required to address CSRs addressed from 2019 onwards, which for most Member States meant the 2019 and 2020 CSRs, as most plans were adopted in 2021. The 2022 Semester cycle took a parsimonious approach and the CSRs only addressed outstanding and newly emerging priorities that had not been addressed in adopted RRP. As a result, in 2022, only HU (whose RRP was adopted on 15 December 2022) received a CSR on Roma. In 2019 the Council addressed CSRs to BG, HU, RO and SK primarily covering the need for inclusive and quality education for Roma pupils.

³¹ CZ received specific CSRs in relation to the inclusion of Roma population until 2016.

³² [Outcome of written procedure on Hungary's recovery plan - Consilium \(europa.eu\)](#)

³³ [Recovery and Resilience Scoreboard \(europa.eu\)](#).

6. ENLARGEMENT COUNTRIES: EU CANDIDATES AND POTENTIAL CANDIDATES³⁴

Demonstrating their strong commitment to Roma inclusion, the Western Balkans leaders, within the Poznań process³⁵, agreed to bring their NRSFs /action plans in line with the EU Roma Strategic Framework and are therefore covered in this assessment.

The objective of fighting antigypsyism is included across the Western Balkans region. The new NRSFs were prepared with the participation of civil society. All Western Balkans partners' NRSFs have national indicators and monitoring tools in place. However, regular data collection, public reporting, and evaluation should be strengthened to ensure a reliable assessment of progress, using the outcome of the Western Balkans surveys as baseline for the region.

Even though the poverty and social exclusion of Roma people are widespread in the region, the measures targeting this problem do not sufficiently cover multiple and structural discrimination (women, older people, children, LGBTIQ people and stateless Roma). The need to strengthen the mandate and administrative capacity of the national Roma contact points and to ensure their direct involvement in the programming and monitoring of EU funds, as underlined by the framework, is not sufficiently addressed.

On funding, the NRSFs and Action Plans pay increased attention to identifying funding needs and refer to allocations from national budgets. Nevertheless, there is a high level of dependency on donor funding. The significant financial support from the Commission through the instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA) funds, already helps governments and local authorities to improve their capacity, and supports education, entrepreneurship, settlements legalisation and Roma CSO networks. This financial support will continue both at national and regional level, covering new priority areas such as the digital area.

On the EU Roma Strategic Framework's sectoral objectives, increasing access to quality education, employment and health is a strategic goal in all NRSFs, albeit addressed with varying levels of detail. Employment of Roma women and young people and the acquisition of digital skills receive insufficient attention. Health measures for children, vulnerable people and victims of gender-based violence are only partially covered, while the improvement of health mediation is not sufficiently addressed. On housing, the countries of the Western Balkans have already completed a mapping of illegal/informal settlements. NRSFs include references to access to social housing, however they only partially cover issues such as legalising and improving the infrastructure in settlements, eradicating the practice of forced eviction, and measures to address Roma homelessness. Overall progress is going in the right direction, but further efforts will be required throughout the decade.

Equality, inclusion, and participation of Roma, and progressive alignment with the EU Roma Strategic Framework will need to be properly addressed in Ukraine and the Republic of

³⁴ Türkiye is not covered by the present assessment because it does not have a National Roma Strategy. In June 2022, following European Commission Opinions, the European Council gave Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia a European perspective, while Ukraine and Moldova were also granted candidate status. Due to the recent nature of these decisions none of the three are included in the assessment even if Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova have National Roma Strategies.

³⁵ Outcome of the Sofia Summit on 6 November 2020 Sofia Summit, Poznań Declaration of Western Balkans partners on Roma integration within the EU Enlargement Process.

Moldova³⁶, the two new EU candidate countries, as well as in Georgia, as a potential candidate. The priorities defined in the European Commission Opinions³⁷ already include the need for the three countries to strengthen the rights and legal framework of their national minorities and vulnerable groups.

The Commission will closely monitor progress and continue to financially support Roma inclusion in the Western Balkans, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia and Türkiye, as part of Chapter 23 of the enlargement negotiations, ‘Judiciary and fundamental rights’.

7. GUIDANCE TO MEMBER STATES

The Commission calls on Member States to address the areas for improvement identified in this Communication and the country-specific analysis contained in the first part of the SWD, including by allocating corresponding budgets (as well as spelling out the financial sources, e.g. national budgets, ERDF, ESF+ programmes, RRP). According to their national context, Member States should make effective use of the mechanisms to renew or update their NRSFs and /or their action and implementation plans to make them more ambitious.

Member States with a significant Roma population are strongly encouraged to increase their level of ambition in addressing the challenges confronting Roma in the four sectoral areas, while ensuring a proper cross-cutting application of the horizontal objectives to fight antigypsyism, discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes, fight poverty, and ensure the meaningful participation of Roma in society. The implementation of NRSFs and action plans should be based on solid baselines, including the FRA Roma Survey 2020-2021 for the surveyed countries, and sufficiently ambitious targets, closely connected to the EU Roma Strategic Framework’s level targets. It is important for these Member States to take a combined approach that both targets and mainstreams Roma equality and inclusion.

The Commission invites Member States that have a set of policy measures for inclusion to make sure that mainstream social inclusion policies and programmes effectively reach the Roma population and to develop targeted measures that foster access for Roma to mainstream non-segregated infrastructure and services as necessary.

The Commission encourages all the Member States that are in the process of developing or implementing other national strategies aimed at reducing inequality or tackling discrimination, such as anti-racism action plans or action plans under the European Child Guarantee, to ensure adequate mainstreaming of Roma issues, as well as full complementarity and alignment with the measures committed to in the NRSFs.

The Member States all agreed to the EU-headline targets on employment, skills and poverty proposed in the 2021 European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan³⁸. They have developed national targets in these areas which should be used to their fullest extent to ensure that no one is left behind.

³⁶ [The Commission opinion of June 2022 on Moldova included recommendations on Roma.](#)

³⁷ [European Commission Opinions on the EU Membership applications.](#)

³⁸ [European Pillar of Social Rights targets by 2030.](#)

National Roma Contact Points

The role and effectiveness of NRCs are an essential element in the successful implementation of the national Roma strategic frameworks. While most Member States have equipped their NRCs with suitable mandates and coordination roles with ministries and other responsible authorities, most NRCs have not been sufficiently strengthened in terms of additional financial and staff resources, which limits their capacity to thoroughly carry out their coordination and monitoring role. They should also be involved, as relevant, in the programming, implementation and monitoring (including in Monitoring Committees) of ERDF and ESF+ programmes, as well as of the RRs, and any other Union fund which can support Roma equality and inclusion. The Commission reiterates the importance of Member States further empowering the NRCs so that they can fulfil their key role effectively.

Antigypsyism

Fighting and preventing antigypsyism is a key objective and guiding principle of the EU Roma Strategic Framework and the Council Recommendation. Many NRSFs acknowledge the importance of addressing its various forms of expression and manifestation, including anti-Roma racism, discrimination, prejudice, stereotypes and stigmatisation, as well as hate speech and hate crimes.

Many Member States refer to antigypsyism in their descriptions of national contexts and challenges. Most of the Member States with larger Roma populations have set out objectives and measures to fight this phenomenon, although to varying degrees and with different levels of ambition, which do not sufficiently match the scale of the problem. The Commission calls on the Member States to strengthen their efforts in this area and encourages those Member States which have not set out plans to address this problem to do so now.

Segregation in education and housing

The Commission calls on Member States, in particular those with a significant Roma population, to step up their efforts to prevent and eradicate school and spatial segregation of Roma children, and to address the issue of misdiagnosis leading to the incorrect placement of Roma children in special needs education. The Commission also encourages Member States to proactively identify and remove the obstacles that prevent Roma children from going to preschool and from receiving good quality education at all levels in non-segregated settings. The Commission strongly encourages the Member States to use EU funding (ESF+, ERDF, InvestEU and RR) to its full extent to help improve the living conditions and development prospects of marginalised Roma communities and of Roma living in low-income households at risk of poverty and social exclusion. Member States should provide mainstream social housing in non-segregated areas, accompanied by measures to foster access to mainstream education, employment, health and social care, and develop or update local actions and implement desegregation plans.

Targets and indicators

Setting national accurately quantified targets, connected to indicators and baselines, is instrumental to monitoring progress towards achieving the EU Roma Strategic Framework's targets. The FRA Roma Survey 2020-2021 provides a baseline for the surveyed countries. It is important for these Member States to take a combined approach that both targets and mainstreams Roma equality and inclusion.

The Commission further encourages all Member States to review and amend their NRSFs, as necessary, to develop specific quantitative targets that will help the EU to collectively achieve the targets in the EU Roma Strategic Framework by 2030.

Mainstreaming

Many NRSFs describe measures that are connected to mainstream social inclusion policies and programmes. However, those measures often lack detail about how and to what extent Roma can benefit from them. While efforts to address Roma inclusion through mainstream policies and programmes are necessary, Member States should set safeguards to prevent omissions or the superficial inclusion of Roma issues. NRCPs should be involved and enabled to assume a cross-sectoral coordination role in this process.

Participation

Member States should ensure and demonstrate the genuine and meaningful participation of Roma throughout all the stages of implementation of NRSFs and of EU funds programmes at national, regional and local levels, as well as in NRSF monitoring and reporting. Cooperation in this regard can be achieved by strengthening the involvement of the National Roma Platforms or equivalent consultative and participatory processes.

8. SUPPORT FROM THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

1) Enforcing EU legislation

The Commission will continue to monitor the enforcement and application of the Racial Equality Directive³⁹, the Victims' Rights Directive,⁴⁰ and the Council Framework Decision on combatting racism and xenophobia and will, if necessary, proceed with infringement cases, to prompt changes in national legislation and policy. The Commission will strengthen the institutional framework for combatting discrimination by putting forward a legislative proposal on standards for equality bodies.

2) Mainstreaming Roma equality in EU policy initiatives and mobilising EU funds for Roma

The Commission will ensure that the fight against racial or ethnic discrimination is mainstreamed into EU policies, legislation, and funding programmes that promote cohesion, inclusion and participation. The Commission will monitor the implementation of policies relevant for Roma equality, inclusion and participation, also in the context of the European Semester.

Support will be provided to Member States to further develop and implement their national Roma frameworks, through financial support and coordination measures. Further support will also be provided in the form of assistance from the Technical Support Instrument⁴¹. Capacity-building will be offered, in particular via the FRA, for the development of solid monitoring and evaluation systems, and collection of equality data for policymaking and implementation

³⁹ [Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin.](#)

⁴⁰ [Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA.](#)

⁴¹ [Technical Support Instrument.](#)

of the national Roma frameworks. NRCPs will be helped to further their knowledge and capacity to monitor and report on the implementation of national Roma frameworks, and to develop tailored indicators.

The Commission will make the best use of the NRCP meetings to follow up on the findings of this Communication.

The Commission will support the implementation of various programmes and projects, such as the EU Pilot HERO⁴² which enables pilot projects that improve access to housing and employment for vulnerable Roma families, and the EU Preparatory Action 2021-2025 Roma Civil Monitoring initiative on capacity-building of Roma civil society organisations to monitor the implementation of NRSFs. Other projects focus on access to education, or capacity building for policymaking, such as the joint EU and Council of Europe programmes INSCHOOL and ROMACT⁴³.

National Roma Contact Points and National Roma Platforms will receive support through the Commission's dedicated calls under the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV)⁴⁴. The CERV programme also supports projects fighting racism, antigypsyism and discrimination, and projects commemorating the Holocaust through its European Remembrance calls⁴⁵.

The Commission will facilitate co-operation between Member States to promote equal access to quality education for all through the European Education Area (EEA) and the digital education action plan⁴⁶, as well as the ESF+. The Commission will continue to facilitate mutual learning on fighting discrimination in and through education under its EEA strategic framework working group on equality and values.

The Commission will further mainstream Roma issues in all relevant activities under the strategies implementing the Union of Equality⁴⁷, the Erasmus+⁴⁸ and European Solidarity Corps⁴⁹ programmes. The Commission will mobilise resources under the EU4Health Programme⁵⁰ to help prevent diseases and facilitate vaccination, and to help develop mechanisms to better deal with health-related crises, including among the Roma population. Through the Climate and Infrastructure Funds⁵¹, projects will promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities and persons at risk of poverty and social exclusion, including Roma people, and promote affordable social housing.

When implementing EU funds, including European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) programmes, the Commission will work with the Member States to ensure that the needs of Roma people

⁴² [HERO pilot project](#)

⁴³ Joint EU and Council of Europe programmes: access to education [INSCHOOL](#), and capacity building for policy-making [ROMACT](#); a project of REDI Economic Development S.A supports entrepreneurship of Roma in four countries, with support by the European Investment Fund (EIF).

⁴⁴ [Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme](#).

⁴⁵ Call for proposals on [European remembrance](#)

⁴⁶ [European Education Area](#), focus topics: [Improving quality and equity in education and training](#) and [digital education action plan](#).

⁴⁷ [Union of Equality: the first year of actions and achievements](#).

⁴⁸ [Erasmus+](#) - EU programme for education, training, youth and sport.

⁴⁹ [European Solidarity Corps](#).

⁵⁰ [EU4Health Programme](#).

⁵¹ [InvestEU Climate and Infrastructure Funds](#).

are addressed through a combined approach of mainstream and targeted measures, and will foster the exchange of best practices and guidance for Member States on desegregation in education and housing.

3) EU action and support to promote Roma participation, inclusion and diversity

Building on its established practice, the Commission will work with the Member State holding the Presidency of the Council of the EU to keep the issues of Roma equality, inclusion and participation high on the political agenda.

The Commission will advance its work on fostering transnational partnerships, mutual learning and exchange of know-how and promising practices by supporting: (i) the network of National Roma Contact Points (ii) the organisation of the European Platform for Roma Inclusion (iii) the implementation of the Roma Civil Monitoring project (iv) cooperation with the European Network of Equality Bodies (Equinet) and the EURoma network.

The Commission will also continue its co-operation and partnership with the European Parliament and with Roma civil society, to celebrate the International Roma Day.

The findings of this assessment will also be discussed with civil society organisations in the Commission's CSO Consultation Group, and as part of the 2021-2025 Roma Civil Monitoring exercise, to identify the best course of action to address shortcomings and ways to overcome them, and to replicate and expand promising practices.

The Commission will promote diversity and inclusiveness through the Creative Europe Programme⁵², as well as workplace inclusion of Roma through the EU Platform of Diversity Charters⁵³. The Commission's new Human Resources Strategy⁵⁴ will help increase the diversity of its staff, and seek to have more trainees and staff from under-represented groups and ethnic minorities. Through its Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy⁵⁵, the Commission also offers insights into developing inclusive citizen engagement exercises that can help foster inclusive political and local participation of Roma in Europe.

4) EU action and support to promote equality and fight antigypsyism

Following up on its commitment to promote positive narratives and Roma role-models, and to combat antigypsyism, stereotyping, anti-Roma rhetoric and hate speech, the Commission will continue its work through the High Level Group on combatting hate speech and hate crime, and cooperation and joint work with the Council of Europe through the forthcoming project EQUIROM⁵⁶.

⁵² [Creative Europe Programme](#).

⁵³ [EU Platform of Diversity Charters](#) - the Platform offers a place for existing European Diversity Charters (currently 26) to exchange and share experience and good practices.

⁵⁴ [Human Resources Strategy](#) for the Commission.

⁵⁵ [Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy](#).

⁵⁶ Equality and freedom from discrimination for Roma (EQUIROM) is a project which will be carried out by the Council of Europe with funding from the CERV-2021-COEU-1 call for proposals.

9. CONCLUSION

The main objectives, targets and measures included in the EU Roma Strategic Framework and the Council Recommendation are reflected to varying degrees in the National Roma Strategic Frameworks (NRSFs). For NRSFs to bring about the desired changes by 2030, strong partnerships have to be developed and maintained between all relevant stakeholders, to respond effectively to country-specific challenges, thoroughly monitor progress and adjust and update the NRSFs as necessary. The Commission will continue to work at EU level to ensure full support for this work.

The Commission invites the Member States to make the best use of the Commission's assessment, findings and guidance for improvement, and to report on their progress by June 2023, in accordance with the Council Recommendation. The next Communication of the Commission will assess the first reports of Member States on the implementation of their national Roma strategic frameworks and the progress they have made towards the 2030 targets.

The FRA has committed to conduct a new Roma Survey in 2024. Its findings, together with the biennial reporting of Member States, will enhance the capacity of Member States, as well as of the Commission, to measure progress towards the EU Roma Strategic Framework's 2030 targets. The Commission will work closely with the FRA in measuring this progress.

Progress in addressing the specific issues faced by the Roma is an important test for the Union of Equality, and for the EU more generally, and the Commission is committed to ensure that the EU-level contribution to these efforts is maintained.