

ADVANCING EDUCATION AND ROMA KNOWLEDGE- PRODUCTION IN EUROPE AND BEYOND: A POSITION PAPER

by

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1. FOREWORD

Education is frequently lauded as the primary solution for Roma inclusion at international and national conferences, at which different policies and strategies were developed over the last decades. Some of these showcased success stories of individual Roma in education, yet they fall short of being a collective achievement of overcoming the lack of education¹.

Conversely, in recent decades another discussion has arisen addressing both the capacity of the public educational systems to adapt to the current technological trends, and their capacity to fulfil their mission in today's societies². Surprisingly, these two educational system issues have remained completely disconnected over the years. Solutions were elaborated and implemented by governments for one without considering the other. We consider this move not only a tactical mistake but also a means to reposition Roma as marginal – something disconnected from the social realities and challenges of our societies.

At Roma Education Fund (REF), as we embark on the extensive path of strategic reform³, our initial mission of reducing the gap between Roma and non-Roma is no longer a valid goal per se. Instead, the goal should shift from merely reducing the gap to actively fostering connections between Roma communities, future employment opportunities, and social interactions. There is wide recognition that the educational systems are ineffective and sluggish in reform to meet the demands of the new economies driven by the new technologies. In this context, reducing the gap between the Roma on the one side and non-Roma misses a crucial point.

¹ European Fundamental Rights Agency's Roma Survey FRA, 2022.

² European Commission, Digital Education Action Plan (2021-2027); Council of Europe, The Role of Education in the Digital Era: from "Digital Natives" to "Digital Citizens", Resolution 2313, 2019.

European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, Preventing School Failure: Final Summary Report, Final Summary Report, 2020.

³ Al Jazeera, Why Europe Needs Roma To Drive Its Economy, Roma Inclusion Is Not Only A Moral Imperative; Ageing Societies In Europe Mean That It Is Also Smart Economics, 2023.

While it might appear to reduce inequality in access to education, it does not address the fact that education must be helpful for income generation⁴. This shift is even more vital given the multiple layers of crises in the past years (as well as those anticipated), that have had a catastrophic impact on most of the Roma. Therefore, the first clarification should not only focus on enhancing the educational standards of the least formally educated European community but also on the challenges faced by national educational systems in adapting to societies, including Roma communities. Considering this, it is a great opportunity for Roma educators and education experts to envisage an alternative approach, one that goes beyond assuming the need to "reduce a gap" and instead focuses on connecting formal education of Roma individuals to the future of our societies.

In this context, REF, an international organization founded in 2005 by the World Bank and Open Society Foundations, has reformed itself to work for the future of Roma communities by designing new strategy connected to digital developments and innovative educational methods. We will continue to support Roma individuals to excel within public systems but with the overarching goal of developing resilient Roma communities through education. The new vision of the organization is to create a supportive environment for every child, young person, and parent with whom REF works, empowering them to develop personal and collective resilience in rapidly changing societies. REF aims to instil confidence, a sense of belonging, and active participation within communities, emphasizing the importance of education as a catalyst for growth and development.

Drawing from years of successes and failures, as well as scientific knowledge, we have a solid empirical foundation indicating that without serious engagement in broader discussions on educational systems, we will not achieve different results from what we see today. Without investing in long-term qualitative educational support in Roma communities, utilizing new technologies, methods, and setups, without promoting Roma dignity, culture, and history, and without investing in education for future jobs, we risk repeating the ineffective patterns of the past.

⁴ Al Jazeera, Why Europe Needs Roma To Drive Its Economy, Roma Inclusion Is Not Only A Moral Imperative; Ageing Societies In Europe Mean That It Is Also Smart Economics, 2023.

Conducting an objective analysis of the government's experience with "Roma inclusion" in educational systems might provide valuable insights for European and national leadership to identify shortcomings and rectify systemic issues. For instance, interpreting and providing solutions to the cultural and identities representations, various forms of bullying in educational systems, the issue of low retention, lack of purpose in education, and an overall disconnection from societal and individual needs are prevalent issues. These lessons can guide the adaptation of education to promote dignity, technological competence, societal engagement, and critical thinking abilities.

Therefore, as current educational systems are at a reforming point, it is imperative that we stop focusing only on increasing the number of "included Roma". Instead, we should concentrate on the quality of the education and equity⁵ we offer to the enrolled individuals and envisioning the kind of societies we aim to build in the near future. This way, Roma individuals and communities may finally have a genuine opportunity to rise above their current status as the least educated European group and emerge as successful and thriving contributors to society.

I am trustful that the current pivotal position paper of the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture will serve as a good ground for rethinking the place of the Roma as part of a system that needs to be adapted to a different context. Moreover, initiating this paper around education in Roma communities, within a space where Roma culture takes center stage, promising a fresh approach to changing times.

Dr. Ciprian Necula

Chair of the Roma Education Fund

⁵ Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, Education GPS, The World Of Education at Your Fingertips, Equity, 2023

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The aim of this position paper is to discuss strategies of advancing Roma culture, history, and education as a tool to challenge stereotypes and foster social and cultural inclusion of Roma communities in Europe. It delves into critical issues related to Roma education, knowledge production, and their broader implications.

This position paper, developed by the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERIAN) in the frame of ERIACNET4EU: ERIAC NETWORK TO ADVANCE ROMA INCLUSION BY COMBATTING AND PREVENTING ANTIGYPSYISM IN THE EU project, financed by the European Commission, builds on the input and experience – through survey responses, discussions, and written contributions – of the members of the ERIAC Knowledge-Production and Publication thematic section.

This paper highlights that while some progress has been made in the realm of Roma education, the educational disparities experienced by Roma students and scholars persist, indicating an urgent need for expansion and scaling up of lessons learned from leaders in Roma education.

On the one hand, the 2020-2030 Roma framework emphasizes setting clear and measurable targets to be achieved by 2030. The tension between supranational and national initiatives which mainly comes due to the soft policy nature of the Framework, is addressed by EC through a promising approach that relies on clear-cut targets and strengthened, robust monitoring mechanisms to maintain member state accountability while respecting their legal rights. At the same time, the Council of Europe ground-breaking Recommendation CM/Rec (2020)2, urges member States to revise their curricula, textbooks, and teaching materials to incorporate the history of Roma and/or Travellers into their school curricula and teaching materials. This initiative is seen as a powerful means to combat hatred, discrimination, prejudice, radicalization, Holocaust denial, and revisionism.

On the other hand, however, this paper reconfirms that a distorted collective memory imbued with biases towards Roma, persists and is perpetuated through educational materials and institutional practices.

The current portrayal of Roma in educational materials relies on stereotypes of Roma and focuses on historical victimization while neglecting the contemporary presence and diversity of Roma communities. In this context, developing reliable and scientifically sound educational materials and training opportunities, which both underscore the history of anti-Roma racism and Roma Holocaust, while simultaneously highlighting Roma contributions and achievements, is becoming an urgency.

Moreover, there is a staggering underrepresentation of Roma scholars in academic institutions, coupled with limited access to opportunities, grants, and mentorship programmes that could expedite the development of Romani scholarship within academia. Research protocols frequently overlook crucial ethical considerations concerning Roma, thereby perpetuating racist narratives and objectification. Institutionalization of Romani Studies at European universities, with a focus on critical and ethical research, presents a promising avenue for addressing these challenges. However, its successful implementation requires adequate funding and structural support to foster dynamic development.

Drawing on the contributions of ERIAC membership, this paper underscores the importance of initiatives that promote Romani knowledge production and foster inclusion in education. The active involvement of Roma scholars in academia, along with the inclusion of Romani experts in the evaluation of projects and applications, is critical. Roma knowledge production has the potential to dispel stereotypes and biases, inform better policies, and cultivate solidarity within European societies and beyond. Furthermore, it plays a crucial role in addressing the cultural trauma experienced by the Roma community due to assimilation policies.

Two significant crises - the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war - have further exacerbated challenges faced by Roma communities. These events have highlighted the substantial gap in digital infrastructure and knowledge between Roma and non-Roma. Urgent investment in securing access to education and technology is essential, particularly for Roma refugees.

In this paper, ERIAC presents a comprehensive set of recommendations to foster inclusive education and combat discrimination, calling on a broad set of stakeholders to consider, adopt and implement the proposed recommendations. Key recommendations include, among other, the integration of Romani culture and history into educational curricula and the promotion of Romani scholarship. Bridging educational disparities is not just a moral imperative; it is also an economic necessity for the economic recovery of Europe and beyond. Roma communities make significant contributions to the labour market, paving the way for a more inclusive and prosperous future. By confronting antigypsyism, enhancing educational opportunities, and broadening the representation of Roma culture and history, Europe can work towards a more just, equitable and inclusive future for all.

3. INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

About ERIAC

The European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture e.V. (ERIAC) is a joint initiative of the Council of Europe, the Open Society Foundations, and the Roma Leaders' initiative – the Alliance for the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture. ERIAC was registered under German law on 07 June 2017, in Berlin, Germany.

ERIAC exists to increase the self-esteem of Roma and to decrease negative prejudice of the majority population towards the Roma by means of arts, culture, history, and media. ERIAC functions as an international network which upscales the voices and promotes the activities of Roma organizations, intellectuals, and artists to form multilateral initiatives and regional alliances, and to connect them with the policymakers and leaders of the different national and European levels.

ERIAC is an international membership-based network, currently bringing together 105 associate members: Roma and non-Roma individuals and organizations, with relevant and demonstrated competencies and experience in the field of arts and culture and who are committed to ERIAC's values. ERIAC's associate members are organized in four thematic sections: Arts and Culture; History and Commemoration; Research and Publication in the fields of arts and culture; Media and Information in the fields of arts and culture. The Romani language is a transversal thematic section. Associate Members have key roles in building the resources of ERIAC, engaging in creative exchange and co-production, taking ownership of ERIAC's initiatives and engaging in its decision-making. The entire ERIAC programming is built with the participation of and relying on knowledge and expertise of its members. Additionally, ERIAC relies on a large network of community members who provide input, expertise, and advice, and at the same time contribute as multipliers to our work.

ERIAC's work towards making an impact in the academic field

In 2023, the ERIAC Knowledge-Production Thematic Section brings together a community of 38 associate members, and includes both accomplished Roma and non-Roma scholars, early-career scholars as well as relevant Roma-led organizations working in the field of education, knowledge-production and publication.

One of these organizations is the Roma Education Fund (REF), standing out as one of the most important entities in Europe actively contributing to closing the gap in educational outcomes between Roma and non-Roma. Since its inception, ERIAC has acknowledged the importance of generating impact in the academic and educational fields. This commitment is aimed at ensuring the development of Romani scholarship, particularly in Critical Romani Studies, and enhancing the visibility of Roma academic narratives and scholars. The ultimate objective of ERIAC is to become a referential source of knowledge about Roma culture, history and identity for higher education institutions, governments, and the Roma community. Additionally, one of ERIAC's strategic objectives for the years 2021-2025 is to build on the recent breakthrough Council of Europe (CoE) Recommendation on the inclusion of the history of Roma and/or Travellers in school curricula and teaching materials. This involves positioning ERIAC as a key institutional partner providing policy input to the CoE secretariat and its member states. Simultaneously, ERIAC aims to establish enduring partnerships with educational institutions, particularly universities.

To do so, ERIAC has launched several flagship projects, including:

- The Barvalipe Roma Online University, financed by the Federal Foreign Office of Germany
- "Re-thinking Roma Resistance" project, financed by the EVZ Foundation

Moreover, ERIAC has forged enduring partnerships with academic institutions, conducted training programs tailored to various audiences and formats, hosted multiple high-level international academic conferences, and published numerous articles and reports.

All these initiatives, drawing on knowledge and expertise of the ERIAC associate members, play a crucial role in advancing the status of Roma scholarship. This, in turn, strengthens the fight against antigypsyism on the one hand, and enhances self-esteem and knowledgebase of the Roma community members on the other.

About ERIACNET4EU

This paper is published in the frame of the ERIACNET4EU: ERIAC NETWORK TO ADVANCE ROMA INCLUSION BY COMBATTING AND PREVENTING ANTIGYPSYISM IN THE EU project. ERIACNET4EU, initiated in 2022, is a multi-year initiative developed through a framework partnership agreement (FPA) under the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV) of the European Union.

With the adoption of the new EU Roma Framework, the EU and its member states are transitioning towards implementation, requiring expert advice and reliable partners at all levels of policy making and implementation. (local, regional, national, European) ERIACNET4EU aims to leverage the knowledge and expertise of the ERIAC community members in collaboration with an alliance of donors and partner organizations. This collaboration is intended to provide expertise, specific know-how, and reliable methodologies to support the implementation of the new framework.

The radical, progressive and professional quality of this initiative is rooted in the responsibility and leadership undertaken by Roma, aiming to offer informed, reliable, consolidated, and high-quality input to European and national policymakers and public institutions. This is intended to enhance the effective implementation of strategies and laws that impact the lives of Roma in the EU.

ERIACNET4EU serves the following objectives:

1. Ensure quality input to policymaking and policy-implementation at local, regional, national and EU levels through mutual learning and exchange of good practices among/between ERIAC members as well as with other public and private stakeholders;
2. Awareness raising, information and dissemination activities;

3. Increasing capacities and knowledgebase of members and other stakeholders through training activities;
4. Growing the network and community outreach.

In the frame of the project, ERIAC will release thematic evidence-based position papers which gather the expertise of ERIAC's members to serve the work of European institutions and member states in implementing their commitments as part of the EU Roma Framework. This position paper dedicated to knowledge production is the first paper in this series.

Objectives of the Position Paper

Drawing on the knowledge, experience, and expertise of the ERIAC community, this position paper provides a comprehensive overview of crucial issues in Roma education and scholarship. This paper, based on consultations with the ERIAC associate members, and existing research, maps out aspects of Roma knowledge-production, proposes an analysis of priority areas, and outlines past good and bad practices in this field.

This position paper specifically addresses the representation of Roma in school curricula, examines the status of Romani people in higher education, critically reflects on the recognition and institutionalization of Roma scholarship, and provides a comprehensive overview of the Romani Studies departments in European universities.

The paper concludes with recommendations for diverse stakeholders, including European institutions, member states, donors, academic institutions, civil society. It acknowledges the broad scope of education, spanning policy change, legislative measures, legal action (e.g., strategic litigation for school segregation) and research methodologies addressing the situation of Roma students.

The reader should be aware that this position paper exclusively delves into the domain outlined by the ERIAC mandate, specifically centring Roma knowledge-production in academic contexts, alongside history teaching and curriculum development.

We hope that this position paper informs policymakers, educational institutions, and donors to enhance the effectiveness of initiatives and laws directly impacting the quality of life of Roma Europeans.

The urgency to enhance the success of Roma- targeted measures extends beyond the Roma community; it is crucial for fostering social and cultural inclusion and building a better Europe for all. Unless the prejudiced image and representation of Roma within the majority society are challenged, socio-economic progress will remain slow. The importance of cultural recognition and inclusion becomes increasingly evident as preconditions for socio-economic inclusion and the success of policies targeting Roma.

4. METHODOLOGY

This evidence-based position paper analyses pressing issues and recommendations on knowledge production and education, drawing on the experiences of ERIAC Knowledge Productions, Research, and Publication Section associate members.

In our research we employed a mixed methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis. ERIAC gathered expert opinions through written submissions and hosted an online roundtable discussion on June 15, 2023. The discussion focused on specific policy, political, structural, institutional, and academic improvements needed for substantial progress in Roma education and knowledge-production. Quantitative data includes responses from ERIAC associate members in a survey response, featuring insights from internationally recognized Romani and non-Romani scholars, offering evidence-based recommendations in the fields of academia and education⁶.

The study is complemented by in-depth desk research and a policy analysis of expert and written submissions concerning the issues addressed in this position paper.

⁶ The survey was conducted between June 14 and June 26, 2023 and aimed to provide policy recommendations on Romani education and knowledge production. The survey was circulated to ERIAC associate members and other stakeholders. The results were based on 19 valid responses of Romani and non-Romani scholars, artists, educators and policy advisers.

5. ROMA AND EDUCATION IN EUROPE – AN OVERVIEW OF MAJOR ISSUES AND DEVELOPMENTS

Understanding the broader context: genealogy and effects of antigypsyism in Europe

Antigypsyism is a phenomenon that spans history, borders, and generations, encompassing specific forms of racism and intolerant attitudes that directly impact Romani people. It suppresses and undermines identity, cultural and economic contributions, and collective memories of Romani people.

Anti-Roma racism includes daily racial microaggression, spatial segregation, limited or no access to basic services, police brutality and physical violence in the form of hate crimes among various other forms of racial violence towards the Roma. These injustices persistently marginalize and harm Romani communities, contributing to enduring socio-economic disparities and an educational gap between the Roma and non-Roma populations.

Historical injustices, including Roma slavery (in Romania and other countries), collective imprisonment (in Spain), and forced sterilization (in Czech Republic and Sweden) coupled with policies and legislation aiming to assimilate the Romani people (in Eastern Europe), are believed to have contributed to eroded political trust among the Roma along with individual negative experiences with institutions.⁷ The consequences of antigypsyism, such as social exclusion of Roma, impose significant economic and fiscal burdens for the society at large, resulting in productivity losses and reduced fiscal contributions to governments.⁸

Qualitative research highlights the pervasive nature of antigypsyism throughout the journey of Roma students pursuing higher education. Often, Roma students internalize antigypsyism as a strategy for success within an

⁷ Jeffrey Mitchell and Daniel La Parra-Casado, "Who gets the blame and who gets the credit? Policing, assistance, and political trust among the Roma in Europe," *European Societies*, 2023: 1–22, [DOI: 10.1080/14616696.2023.2220014].

⁸ World Bank, "Economic Costs of Roma Exclusion," 2010.

education system, resulting in suppressed identity, social distancing from other Roma within educational institutions and low persistence rates.⁹ In the UK, Romani, Traveller, and Gypsy (GRT) students are five times more likely to face permanent exclusion than their non-GRT peers. Additionally, the rate of temporary suspensions for GRT students is nearly four times the national average for all other students.¹⁰

Recognizing the presence and impact of anti-Roma racism, along with acknowledging Romani history and lived experiences, enables the cultivation of a collective memory and consciousness that embraces both Roma-specific and shared European history. Restoring eroded trust is anticipated through targeted spending for the benefit of Roma communities.¹¹ This targeted investment is expected to yield positive impacts that will extend to the broader society through spill-over effects. Understanding the Romani past and fostering inclusive knowledge has the potential to dispel stereotypes and biases, leading to more informed policies and increased justice and solidarity in Europe and beyond.

Roma in education: A brief overview of the status quo

Limited recent data on the educational situation of Roma students in Europe hampers the analysis of challenges Roma face. While qualitative and mixed methods studies contribute to academic discussions, recent comprehensive quantitative data is scarce.¹²

⁹ Simona Torotcoi and Marko Pecak, "Path to Higher Education: Combating Antigypsyism by Building Roma Students' Aspirations and Resilience," in Dimensions of Antigypsyism in Europe (European Network Against Racism Aisbl and Central Council of German Sinti and Roma), 2019: 317.

¹⁰ Department for Education 2016 in Ellie Mulcahy, Sam Baars, Kate Bower Viner, and Loic Menzies, "The Underrepresentation of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils in higher education: A report on barriers from early years to secondary and beyond," LKMco, 2017: 21.

¹¹ Jeffrey Mitchell and Daniel La Parra-Casado, "Who gets the blame and who gets the credit? Policing, assistance, and political trust among the Roma in Europe," European Societies 2023: 1–22, [DOI: 10.1080/14616696.2023.2220014].

¹² See: Rizova et al. 2020; Torotcoi and Pecak, 2019; Chopin et al. 2017; European Fundamental Rights Agency's Roma Survey FRA, 2022; Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey EU MIDIS-II, FRA 2016 and 2017; earlier FRA Roma surveys 2012 and 2013; sporadic governmental sources, and reports from organizations such as the World Bank 2010; EBRD 2016 and the UNDP 2018; also provide data.

Policy experts emphasize the necessity of disaggregated data from educational institutions concerning the academic achievements of students from ethnic minority backgrounds.¹³ However, data that is available reveals a troubling reality. In 2021, data exposed a concerning situation: over half of Roma children lacked access to early childhood education, with only 44% participating- a mere 2% increase since 2016. In contrast, the general population boasted a 93% participation rate as of 2019.¹⁴ Furthermore, 71% of Roma individuals aged 18 to 24 left education prematurely, mirroring the 2016 figures.¹⁵ In terms of gender disparities in education, the FRA survey reveals that there are generally no significant differences between Roma girls and boys across all surveyed countries.

Roma in surveyed European countries continue to exhibit lower educational attainment levels despite often being native speakers of the country's official language.¹⁶ Subpar living conditions, inadequately skilled teachers, a lack of teaching materials in Romani language and low educational attainment among Roma parents are among the multitude of factors contributing to difficulties in acquiring basic literacy skills and elevated rates of high school dropouts.¹⁷

Moreover, one of the most pressing challenges is the persistent segregation in education systems across the EU. The European Commission has taken legal action against the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic, and Hungary due to allegations of discriminatory practices against Roma children in the field of education.¹⁸

¹³ Decade of Roma Inclusion Secretariat Foundation, Roma Inclusion Index 2015, Budapest, 2015.

¹⁴ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), Roma in 10 European Countries: Survey 2021. Main Results (Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg), 2022:37.

¹⁵ Ibid; 38.

¹⁶ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey – Selected findings (Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg), 2017:92.

¹⁷ Elena Rizova, Mira Bekar, and Zoran Velkovski, "Educational Challenges of Roma Minorities: The Case of the Republic of North Macedonia," International Journal of Cognitive Research in Science, Engineering and Education 8, no. 3, 2020: 113-122.

¹⁸ Isabelle Chopin, Catharina Germaine, and Judit Tanczos, "Roma and the Enforcement of Anti-discrimination Law" (Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg) 2017: 15.

One in five Roma children experienced hate-motivated bullying or harassment at school, with high rates in Italy (50%) and significant proportions in Czechia, Portugal, and Serbia (around a quarter).¹⁹

Roma communities have been profoundly affected by two successive and destabilizing shocks: the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war, leaving a lasting impact. The emergence of COVID-19 has brought attention to a new challenge– the significant gap in digital infrastructure, knowledge, and skills between the Roma and non-Roma populations.²⁰ The closure or destruction of schools in Ukraine, coupled with the forced displacement of millions, has disrupted the education of numerous children. Among them, Roma children have been significantly affected. Their access to education has deteriorated due to limited access to technology for online learning, especially when residing in temporary settlements or host communities.²¹ The ERRC highlights that Roma individuals are typically directed towards state-appointed refugee shelters, located far from educational resources accessible to children.²²

Despite this, some progress has been made in increasing participation in education in most countries, especially during the period from 2011 to 2016. However, the years from 2016 to 2021 were characterized by overall stagnation, particularly concerning the participation of Roma children in early childhood education and the enrolment of compulsory school-age children in education. While there has been limited impact achieved, breakthrough initiatives have been pioneered by the Roma Education Fund (REF).

¹⁹ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), Roma in 10 European Countries: Survey 2021. Main Results (Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg) 2022: 41.

²⁰ 2022 transnational research indicates that Roma respondents exhibit high confidence in their smartphones, but the majority lack any familiarity or experience with desktop computers, laptops, or tablets (DIRA, 2022: 15-16). A 2019 study conducted in Spain concludes that even though Roma/Gitano children have smartphones, they often lack access to an internet plan or reliable data connection, or they may have intermittent access at best (Garmendia and Karrera, 2019: 25).

²¹ IRF, 2023 in Padmini Iyer, Aresel, the Tenth of April, Foundation Towards Dialogue. "Further into the Margins. A Regional Report on Roma Communities Displaced by the Ukraine Crisis." Oxfam Research Report. England and Wales, 2023: 12.

²² Anti-discrimination Centre, Hungary. 2022. "Discriminatory Practices against Roma refugees from Ukraine." in European Roma Rights Center, "Roma Rights Under Siege. Monitoring Reports from One Year of War in Ukraine", Brussels, 2023: 15.

Strategies such as implementing Roma teaching assistant programs in primary schools have proven effective in boosting academic achievements. Lessons learned and best practices from leaders in the field of Roma education, such as REF, should be further enhanced and scaled up.

Existing data underscores the urgent need for European governments to address Roma exclusion through comprehensive educational policies, including those focused on digital education and initiatives targeting Roma refugees. As noted in the EU Roma Strategic Framework 2020-2030, Roma communities contribute significantly to labour market entrants in European countries. Therefore, bridging disparities and fostering inclusion is a moral and economic necessity.²³ By investing in Roma education, Europe will pave the way for a more equitable and prosperous future for all its citizens.

Role of the international community

The international community has been actively involved for years in making progress in the educational achievements of Roma. Initiatives such as the Decade of Roma Inclusion (2005—2025), European Roma Integration Frameworks (2010-2020 and 2020-2030), and national inclusion strategies, have significantly advanced the international agenda for Roma inclusion. The Decade of Roma Inclusion, launched by the Open Society Foundation and the World Bank Group in 2005, played a pivotal role in Roma inclusion, particularly in education. Following its conclusion in 2015, the Roma Integration 2020 initiative was introduced, focusing on the Western Balkans Six region and Turkey. Initially overseen by the Regional Cooperation Council, it presently operates under the auspices of the Council of Europe as of 2023. While previous initiatives have placed some degree of attention on mitigating education-related issues, the focus on educational access alone failed to address the broader need for equitable access to quality education and the effectiveness of inclusive measures²⁴, as access to education and basic services is insufficient.

²³ European Commission. "Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council. A Union of equality: EU Roma Strategic Framework for Equality, Inclusion and Participation for 2020-2030." European Commission, Brussels. 2020

²⁴ Violeta Naydenova and Martina Matarazzo, "Post-2020 EU Roma Strategy, the Way Forward," Open Society Foundations, 2019.

Therefore, integrated, comprehensive measures are essential for genuine inclusion. Moreover, synthesizing civil society reports on NRIS implementation in the EU highlights the cultural trauma and dislocation resulting from assimilation policies. This unaddressed cultural trauma leaves many Roma without the necessary support and recognition of their identity and culture.²⁵ Bridging the gap between supranational policies and national implementation is crucial to effectively address these issues, protecting and promoting Roma identity and culture, and employing data-informed, targeted strategies for enhanced social inclusion and educational outcomes. Measures that address the lack of representation and/or misrepresentation of Roma in schools are necessary to mitigate the above-mentioned issues.

The European Union and the EU Roma Framework – a renewed approach for 2020-2030

In 2020, the European Commission (EC) introduced an updated EU Roma strategic framework, placing a strong emphasis on achieving equality, socio-economic inclusion, and setting clear, measurable targets to be reached by 2030. This framework also offered specific recommendations for different sectors, aligning with the original priorities of the Decade of Roma Inclusion, including education.

Notably, the 2020-2030 framework aligns directly with the EU Action Plan against Racism 2020-2025, the European Pillar of Social Rights, Sustainable Development Goals, and the UN Agenda 2030. In a novel approach, the 2030 framework sets three horizontal objectives and four sectoral objectives supported by a series of quantifiable benchmarks. Furthermore, the 2020-2030 framework underscores the critical role of education in fostering the inclusion and providing equal opportunities of the Roma community. Consequently, the EU Member states were required to develop their own National Roma Integration Strategies, reflecting priorities, and following guidelines set by the EC. In January 2023, EC published the first assessment of the Member's national Roma strategic frameworks (NRSFs), which found that in the domain of education, Member States are focusing on extensive actions.

²⁵ European Commission, Directorate General For Justice and Consumer. "Roma Civil Monitor: A Synthesis of Civil Society's Reports on the Implementation of National Roma Integration Strategies in the European Union." European Commission, Brussels, 2020: 40.

However, when it comes to desegregation in education (and housing), it appears that the plans are insufficient to effectively tackle the entire scope of the issue.²⁶

The Council Recommendation urged Member States to ensure equal access and participation in all education levels, from early childhood to lifelong learning. It also emphasized the need to prevent and eliminate educational segregation, outlining various measures to enhance access to education, support language proficiency, acquire digital skills, retain students in school, and facilitate successful progression from compulsory to post-compulsory education. While some NRSFs mention the development of teaching materials in the Romani language and address adult education, budget allocations in this area are often unclear, making it challenging to assess funding adequacy and potential impact.

CoE Recommendation on Roma in School Curricula and Textbooks

A significant milestone has been the Council of Europe Recommendation on inclusion of Roma in School Curricula and Textbooks. A thematic visit and research conducted by the Council of Europe's Ad hoc Committee of Experts on Roma and Traveller Issues (CAHROM) revealed that the portrayal of Roma in school curricula and textbooks in 21 Council of Europe member States was often limited, stereotypical, and historically inaccurate. They were frequently depicted as victims rather than integral members of society. To rectify these issues, the Committee of Ministers (CoE) recommended, through Recommendation CM/Rec(2020)2, that member States revise their curricula, textbooks, and teaching materials. On July 1, 2020, the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers adopted this ground-breaking Recommendation, urging its 47 member states to incorporate the history of Roma and/or Travellers into their school curricula and teaching materials. This move is seen as a powerful means to combat hatred, discrimination, prejudice, radicalization, Holocaust denial, and revisionism.

²⁶ European Commission, "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". European Commission, Brussels.) 2023.

The Recommendation highlights the importance of teaching about the Holocaust's impact on Roma and Travellers, promoting remembrance activities, and encouraging both formal and non-formal education related to the European Roma Holocaust Memorial Day. Beyond addressing the dark historical periods, it also emphasizes the need to include positive narratives of Roma and Travellers' contributions to culture, heritage, and their roles in anti-Nazi and anti-Fascist resistance. The Recommendation aims to counter antigypsyism and encourages a balanced and context-rich approach to teaching their history, covering aspects of their culture, traditions, and highlighting disparities in social progress throughout their history. Importantly, it suggests integrating this education into existing subjects, with minimal budgetary implications, making it a feasible and vital educational initiative.²⁷

Additionally, CoE offers resources such as "Right to Remember: A Handbook for Education with Young People on the Roma Genocide", "Factsheet on Roma History" and has in collaboration with OSCE/ODIHR, created an online database focused on the Roma and Sinti genocide to aid in these efforts.

OSCE/ODIHR and IHRA: Roma Holocaust education

The international community's efforts to promote the memory of the Roma Holocaust and address dark chapters in European Roma history are crucial for combatting antigypsyism and fostering historical justice, particularly within the context of Roma education. In 2003, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) adopted the Action Plan to improve the situation of Roma and Sinti, highlighting education on their Holocaust experiences. As part of the Action Plan, OSCE participating states committed to promoting remembrance and education about genocides, including that of the Roma and Sinti. OSCE recognizes the growing international focus on the Roma and Sinti genocide, with heightened support for events; such as Roma and Sinti Genocide Remembrance Day on August 2nd. Since 2011, ODIHR has released bi-annual reports on Holocaust Remembrance Days in the OSCE Region.

²⁷ Council of Europe. "Recommendation CM/Rec(2020)2 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the inclusion of the history of Roma and/or Travellers in school curricula and teaching materials.", 2020b.

Multiple participating states are developing educational materials and official commemorations focused on the persecution of the Roma and Sinti during this period.²⁸ In May 2023, the OSCE released a guide recommending comprehensive training for police officers, emphasizing awareness of the historical complicity of the state and law enforcement in the genocide against Roma and Sinti during the Holocaust. This training aims to increase awareness of the historical complicity of the state and law enforcement in the genocide against Roma and Sinti during the Holocaust.²⁹

In these efforts, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) plays a pivotal role in education, research, and remembrance of the Roma and Sinti genocide.³⁰ Initiated in 1998 by former Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) has a unique mandate to focus on the Holocaust and Genocide of the Roma. Their 2018-2024 priority is countering distortion and safeguarding the historical record. IHRA has a dedicated committee focusing on the Genocide of the Roma, co-founded the educational website www.romasintigenocide.eu and developed the working definition of antigypsyism/anti-Roma discrimination, adopted in 2020. It is a valuable tool for governments, organizations, and individuals to address discrimination against Roma communities.

Recognizing the neglect of the Roma Genocide as contributing to the continual prejudice and discrimination, IHRA is also developing recommendations for teaching and learning about the persecution and genocide of Roma during the Nazi era.³¹

²⁸ Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). "Teaching about and Commemorating the Roma and Sinti Genocide Practices within the OSCE Area." Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Warsaw, 2015.

²⁹ Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). "Understanding Anti-Roma Hate Crimes and Addressing the Security Needs of Roma and Sinti Communities: A Practical Guide." Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Warsaw, 2023: 82.

³⁰ Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). "Teaching about and Commemorating the Roma and Sinti Genocide Practices within the OSCE Area." Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Warsaw, 2015.

³¹ This project is expected to be finalized by 2024 and is primarily aimed at political decision-makers, policymakers in the field of education and remembrance, as well as agents of non-formal education.

6. REPRESENTATION OF ROMA IN KNOWLEDGE-PRODUCT AND EDUCATION

When discussing the issue of school achievements of Roma in formal education, it is also important to analyse a parallel and interrelated problem: the under representation of Roma in both the school curricula and spaces of knowledge-production in general. This chapter provides a brief overview of the representation of Roma in school curricula as well as an analysis of the presence of Roma in higher-education and scholarship.

Representation of Roma in the school curricula

Based on the analytical report of Council of Europe from 2020, 'The representation of Roma in European Curricula and Textbooks'³², out of 22 researched countries (including Kosovo), only 8 mention Roma in their formal curricula, in subjects such as geography, history, and civics/ civic education.

Interestingly, among the countries that do not mention Roma in their curricula at all are those member states where Roma represent a significant minority:

- Bulgaria, where Roma constitute approximately 9.9 % of the population;
- the Slovak Republic with a Roma community of approximately 9 % of the population;
- Serbia with a Roma population of approximately 8.2 %;
- and Albania, which has a considerable Roma minority of approximately 3.6 % of the population.

Research indicates that representations of Roma in teaching materials are often inaccurate and stereotypical. Additionally, Roma are frequently portrayed in historical contexts solely as victims of the past, with little reference to their contemporary presence.

See: International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), Recommendations for Teaching and Learning about the Persecution and Genocide of the Roma during the Nazi era, 2022.

³² Council of Europe, "The Representation of Roma in European Curricula and Textbooks a joint report commissioned by the Council of Europe to the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research in partnership with the Roma Education Fund", 2020.

The acknowledgment of Romani history, arts, and culture across European countries typically centres around discussions contextualized within racial frameworks related to minority issues, debates on nationality, classification as national minorities or within ethnic societies, statistical data such as census records, and primarily focuses on discussions regarding the number of victims during the Holocaust.

“To conclude, the results of the curriculum analysis show that Roma are primarily represented as victims without agency, especially in the thematic contexts of demography, the Second World War and the Holocaust, but in some cases, they are also depicted as minorities faced with discrimination in today’s European societies. With regard to the Holocaust, Roma largely appear as just another minority group, aside from Jews, who were persecuted and murdered.” (ibid.)

Furthermore, Roma are predominantly referred to as a collective, often resulting in a homogenizing and anonymous representation of Roma history and culture. Individual stories, names or contributions to society are seldom conveyed. Discourses presenting Roma as an integral part of their respective national societies are nearly non-existent in all textbooks surveyed for this study. The report clearly demonstrates:

“the necessity for European nations that aim to promote inclusion and antidiscrimination to address both the lack of representation of Roma and their misrepresentation in European curricula and textbooks as presented in the research findings. In most of the analysed textbooks, Roma voices are marginalised, if not ignored, and as shown in this report, only a few textbooks include sources from Roma authors or stories from Roma witnesses.” (ibid.)

The recently published study 'General Report on the State of History Teaching in Europe' (2023)³³, by the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe (OHE) affirm these findings. OHE, an Enlarged Partial Agreement of the Council of Europe, with a mission to promote quality education for enhancing the understanding of democratic culture, reveals that among its member states,

³³ Council of Europe, Observatory on History Teaching in Europe (OHE), General Report on the State of History Teaching in Europe, 2023.

only 9 include Roma history in their curricula include the Roma history in their curricula, while 7 do not. In fact, "compared to the overall inclusion of cultural, ethnic, linguistic, national or religious minority groups more generally (in the curricula of 14 out of the 16 OHTE member states), the number of countries in which Roma and/or Travellers are absent from the history curriculum is significantly higher." The report also underscores that, in comparison to the inclusion of minority groups more generally, Roma and/or Travellers receive considerably less coverage in the history curricula, being featured in only 9 of the 16 member states. Additionally, "monitoring procedures take the representation of Roma and/or Travellers into account even less frequently (in 4 out of 16 states)." Interestingly, the teachers surveyed for the report are well aware of the absence and/or misrepresentation of Roma in school curricula. In 12 member states, a majority of teachers agreed that Roma and Travellers are not adequately represented in the history textbooks. Specifically, "nearly all respondents from Greece (91%) and Cyprus (90%), and more than three quarters of respondents from Ireland (86%) and Malta (82%), view the representation of Roma and Travellers most critically on OHTE average: significantly more than three quarters of respondents disagreed with the statement that Roma and Travellers are adequately represented in history textbooks. In no member state did a solid majority of history teachers agree with this statement."³⁴

Roma in the higher education

As demonstrated in the previous section, many Romani children have limited access to quality education, contributing to a societal gap between Roma and non-Roma the European Union Member States. This discrepancy is noticeable across all levels of education, but nowhere is the different between Roma and non-Roma more visible than in the higher education. In 2018, concerning the OECD countries, nearly 44,5 % of adults aged between 25 and 34 attained higher education.³⁵ However, when comparing these results with the educational attainment of Roma in higher education, the contrast is significant and challenging the measure precisely.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Education Working Paper 28. 2020. "Inclusion of Roma Students in Europe: A literature review and examples of policy initiatives"

Available estimated data suggest that only 1% to 4% of Roma individuals have achieved a higher education degree.³⁶ Several intertwined reasons contribute to the limited access of Roma to higher education, including:

- The persistence of school segregation;
- Frequent misdiagnosis as mentally disabled (or as children with special educational needs);
- Lack of sufficient infrastructure and mechanisms to facilitate access to quality and fundamental education;
- Discrimination and antigypsyism.

According to the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights 2009 report, 81% of Romani people are victims of discrimination and intolerant attitudes in education, including assault, threat, or serious harassment, across Europe. The limited presence of Roma in academic spaces where knowledge is produced not only hampers the overall social advancement of Roma communities, but it also crucially impacts for the quality of knowledge about Roma. Currently this knowledge is primarily created without Roma involvement in spaces of academic excellence.

Institutionalization of Romani Scholarship and the development of Critical Romani Studies

Scholarship suggests that over the last three centuries, knowledge production on Roma has been marked by external standpoints, often entailing a racist, classicist, and exoticized objectification of Romani people. Unfortunately, this stands as a regrettable part of the historic legacy of Romani Studies as a scientific discipline.³⁷ These hegemonic and frequently dehumanizing academic representations of Roma were predominantly shaped by members of the non-Roma majority, resulting in a notable absence of Romani narratives from the knowledge-production process.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ See: Ken Lee, "Orientalism and Gypsylorism," *Social Analysis: The International Journal of Social and Cultural Practice* 44, no. 2, 2000: 129–156; Margareta Matache, "Word, Image and Thought: Creating the Romani Other," Roma Program, François-Xavier Bagnoud Center for Health and Human Rights, Boston, Harvard University, 2016 and Anna Mirga-Kruszelnicka, "Challenging Anti-Gypsyism in Academia," *Critical Romani Studies* 1 (1), 2018: 8–28.

However, a recent and noteworthy development is the reclamation of awareness, visibility, and spaces by Romani scholars, marking a timid yet undoubtedly evident growth of Roma individuals pursuing academic careers.

In the 1960s, the inhumane and racist academic research methods that have historically dominated scholarly practices concerning Roma necessitated a re-evaluation of research strategies and the introduction of a new scientific paradigm within social sciences. The term 'Romology' is a compositum that reflects the identity politics of Romani people, combining the words 'Romani' and the anti-Greek phrase 'logos' which encompasses speech, power of thought, logic, and morals. According to Rajko Đurić, Romology serves as the 'logos' of Romani people's lives, offering reflections on their historical and putative ethnic roots, cultural heritage, linguistic patterns, and other characteristics. Đurić argues that Romology marks a departure from the dominant discourse of previous eras, which portrayed 'Gypsy' as a menace, danger, and threat. With the emergence of Romology, these portrayals began to be challenged by Roma identity-politics and self-representations, particularly within academia. Đurić defines Romology as the initial transition to a modern critical academic engagement with the subject of Roma, still maintaining a distance and hierarchy between the researched 'subjects' and mainly non-Roma researchers. This assumption of putative non-Romani objectivity is reinforced through ethnography, anthropology, history, and sociology descriptions.³⁸

In the second half of the 20th century, research on Roma began to incorporate Roma voices, laying the foundation for the emergence of Romani Studies. This shift was a testament to the rise of first and second-generation Roma public intellectuals and the development of Roma political, cultural, and academic movements. Despite the ground-breaking emancipation of Roma intellectuals, academic institutions continued to be predominantly influenced by non-Roma scholars who, at times, tokenized Roma voices in their research. Romani academic narratives were often labelled as the 'authentic voices', or the 'narrators'. The field of Romani Studies primarily relied on the cultural-anthropological, linguistic, sociolinguistics, sociological, educational, and political science approaches.

³⁸ Rajko Đurić, "Romology," Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit, Government of the Republic of Serbia, Belgrade, 2001.

Critical Romani Studies not only provides critical responses and methodologies to ensure ethical research on Roma but also, through these reflections, generates knowledge capable of challenging existing power positions, the status quo, images, and perceptions by contrasting them with the research and productions of Romani scholars. In the early 2010s, Critical Romani Studies emerged, led by Roma and non-Roma intellectuals who recognized the necessity for a fresh approach in Romani Studies as a scientific discipline.

It was founded on the belief that Romani and non-Romani supportive allies have the potential to foster modern, ethical, and critical knowledge production on Roma, collaboratively within the Roma community. Critical Romani Studies scholars ground their academic work in ethical research approaches and methodologies, ensuring inclusion of Roma voices that were previously relegated to mere subjects.

The scholarship in Critical Romani Studies aims to uncover the manifestations of diverse and intersectional positions, spanning disciplines such as art history, media studies, political anthropology, political science, gender studies, sociology, and social psychology, among others. This approach and method stand poised to promote an open and transdisciplinary notion, integrating broad and inclusive knowledge production and representation. It critically examines the legacy of knowledge-production dominated in the previous eras by non-Roma scholars. As a discipline, Critical Romani Studies offers scholarship that invites critical reflection on one's own positions and responsibilities. Simultaneously, it encourages the continuation of research rooted in highest academic standards.³⁹ The development and gradual institutionalization of Critical Romani Studies, mark a major milestone in the Roma cultural movement.

³⁹ Maria Bogdan, Jekatyerina Dunajeva, Tímea Junghaus, Angéla Kóczé, Iulius Rostas, Márton Rövid, and Marek Szilvasi, "Introducing the New Journal Critical Romani Studies," *Critical Romani Studies* 1 (1), 2018: 2-7.

The existence of Romani Studies Departments at European universities

Romani scholars currently lack dedicated academic institutions across Europe and beyond. Consequently, their critical scholarship is challenged in gaining recognition within the epistemic knowledge production landscape. The establishment of Romani academic institutions and academic leadership would be crucial not only for transforming public perceptions about Roma but also for contributing to the development of general knowledge in the societies.

However, the institutionalization of Romani Studies at European universities, achieved through the establishment of Romani Studies Departments and/or programs, represents a crucial step toward advancing academic knowledge on Roma and enhancing the recognition of this scientific discipline within academia. According to survey results, Romani studies are present at several universities in the European Member States, yet even in these instances, there are notable limitations.

These include:

- Limited recognition of Romani Studies in the mainstream academic currents;
- Limited engagement with progressive, critical and/or ethical research approaches and methodologies;
- Limited focus on the root causes of Roma exclusion and poverty, as there is a lack of interrogation of social and political structures of powers, along with their historical dimensions.

Furthermore, most Romani Studies departments are administratively and academically affiliated with other university departments, making them non-autonomous entities. The leadership of Romani Studies departments, with a few exceptions, is predominantly composed of non-Roma scholars, limiting the access of Roma scholars to decision-making levels of authority. A heightened awareness and sensitivity towards Roma leadership in academia, coupled with the introduction of affirmative action to ensure the ascendance of Roma scholars to high academic positions, can contribute to the growth of Romani scholarship.

The establishment of independent Roma-led research centers can also facilitate the recognition of knowledge produced from a Roma standpoint.

Currently, there are several Romani Studies Departments, Romani Studies programs and publications, including journals and book series, which serve as evidence of the growth of the field of Romani Studies. These include:

Institutions:

- Apor Vilmos Catholic College, Hungary
 - Kindergarten teacher, with Roma nationality specialization - BA Program
 - Elementary school teacher, with Roma nationality specialization - BA Program
- Charles University - Faculty of Arts, Department of Central European Studies, Romani Studies, BA, and MA Programs, Czechia, Prague
- Czech Academy of Sciences, Institute of Contemporary History, Prague Forum for Romani Histories, Czechia
- Central European University, Romani Studies Program, Advanced Certificate Program, Austria
- Columbia University, Center of Justice - Roma Peoples Project (RPP)
- Harvard University, François-Xavier Bagnoud Center for Health and Human Rights, Roma Program, United States of America
- Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Institute for Minority Studies, Research Department on Sociology and Anthropology of Minorities, Hungary
- Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales, Paris, Romani Studies, France
- Södertörn University, Stockholm, Critical Romani Studies Department, Sweden
- University of Bucharest, Faculty of Foreign Languages and Literatures, Romani Language and Literature Section, Romania
- University of Debrecen, Faculty of Child Education and Special Education, Romology, Hungary
- University of Graz, Romani Language Initiative, Austria
- University of Helsinki, Romani Studies, Finland
- University of Pécs, Romology, Hungary
- University of Zagreb, Faculty of Philosophy, Zagreb, Studies of Romistics, Croatia

Publications:

- *Critical Romani Studies Journal*, Central European University
- *International Journal of Roma Studies*, Autonomous University of Barcelona Spain
- *Journal of Gypsy Studies*, Transnational Press, London, United Kingdom
- *Romano Džaniben*, Prague, Czechia
- *Romani Studies*, Liverpool University Press
- *Studia Romologica*, Muzeum Okręgowe w Tarnowie, Poland
- *Romani Studies Book Series*, CEU Press
- *Romani Studies Book Series*, Berghahn Books

7. FINDINGS – BUILDING ON THE EXPERTISE OF ERIAC ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

The survey, conducted between June 14 and June 26, 2023, and aimed to gather data for policy recommendations on Romani education and knowledge production, resulting in 19 complete responses. The surveyed experts exhibit the following profile:

- The respondents comprised 42.11% female (8) and 57,89% male (11) falling within the age range of 31 and 60 years old. Notably, the data also included recommendations from senior experts aged 61 to 79, accounting for 21,05% with 4 responses.
- The surveyed experts represented a diverse European geography, with respondents from the United Kingdom (6), Germany (2), Hungary (2), Spain (2), Croatia (1), Finland (1), France (1), Romania (1), Switzerland (1), and 2 responses from the US.
- In terms of highest educational backgrounds of experts, 52,64% (10 persons) held a Bachelor and Master's University degree, 36,84% possessed a Ph.D. (7 persons), and 10,53% specified their educational training as "other".
- The expertise covered in the survey spanned a wide range of professional experiences and profiles, including university lecturers, researchers, program managers, artists, art historians, lawyers, and business consultant's contributions.

Main findings

Based on the collected expert data, the survey results enable us to identify the **most pressing issues related to Roma education** across Europe and beyond.

The data suggests that **antigypsyism (73,68%)** and the **exclusion of Roma history, arts, culture, and language from school curricula (63,6%)** are **significant concerns**. Additionally, it highlights the crucial need to address Romani children's lack of access to quality and inclusive education (57,89%) as well as limited presence of Romani school teachers, mediators, or employees (53.63%). Considering the social and economic status of Romani

children, the survey emphasizes that poverty and basic needs deprivation significantly impact **school achievements** (including a lack of adequate housing and living conditions), **bullying**, and **institutional motivation (42,11%)**.

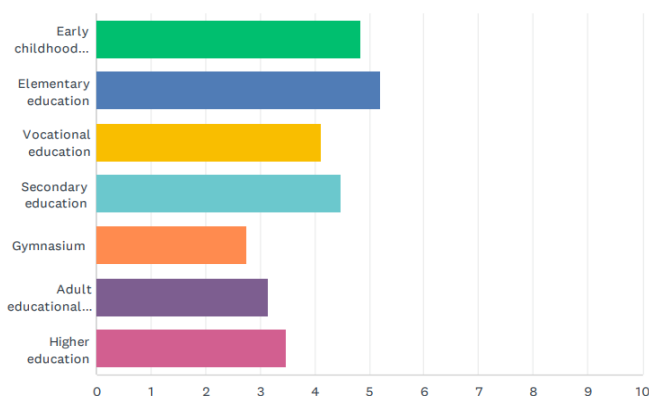
Moreover, Romani children face numerous obstacles in the education system, including a lack of access to reliable and quality education materials, trained teachers, adequate school materials (such as school utensils, computers, and internet connection), school facilities (adequate means of transport, proximity to home), mental and physical health prevention, a welcoming school atmosphere, and, notably, family motivation. Many children attend schools with non-qualified educators, and there is a general absence of inclusive Roma representation and visualization in the curricula.

The data indicates that the most crucial investment and targeted actions in education for Romani pupils **should primarily focus on early childhood education and preschool**, alongside elementary education. Following closely are secondary and vocational education. A key task for the educational development and inclusion units is to concentrate on policies and practices that reinforce affirmative actions for accessing higher education and adult educational training of Romani people.

ERIACNET4EU

Q7 On which level of education are the investment and targeted action most needed? Please rate them from 1 to 7 where 1 is the least and 7 is the most needed.

Answered: 19 Skipped: 0



Info chart 1: Recommended targeted actions on education by the "Knowledge Production, Research and Publication Thematic Section Members" (ERIAC, 2023.)

Regarding the inclusion of Roma history, identity and culture in school curricula, there appears to be a consensus among respondents. **All respondents clearly indicated that Romani history, identity, arts, and culture are not adequately included in educational curricula in their respective countries.** Despite notable initiatives in countries such as in Spain, France, Hungary, Romania, Poland, and Croatia, these materials are not mandated in schools. Unfortunately, some respondents highlighted those existing materials are stereotypical and, at times, racist. For example:

"Romani history and culture has recently been included in the curricula by law, however, there is no mechanism to monitor if it is implemented by the schools, or if the teachers are enough trained to talk about Roma free of anti-gypsy narratives." (Expert 15)

The matter of the presence and **access to Roma cultural heritage**, particularly through **Romani language education**, emerges as a significant theme in the survey. The majority of respondents stated that learning **Romani in public schools is not provided** in their countries. According to respondents, in some countries, Romani language education in public schools becomes an option only when a certain number of Romani parents request it in writing from the school. However, this is not universally applied, and access to Romani language can be impeded by institutional practices. As one respondent noted:

"Bulgaria is the best example. Romani language education as a mother tongue is forbidden by the Ministry of education. (Expert 11)"

It was also observed that the lack of reliable, accessible, and standardized materials, along with the notably small number of Romani language teachers, possess a barrier to offering Romani language education. Even when Romani language is offered in school, it tends to be included only as an extracurricular subject, with some exceptions. According to one expert:

"In some elementary schools, usually in segregated elementary education. There is an exception where is mandatory to learn the Romani language - Gandhi Gymnasium" (Expert 5)"

However, these examples are anecdotal, and enforcing the right to access to Romani language education remains a significant task ahead.

Regarding the status of Romani scholarship, responses point to several disadvantages. Despite the existence of numerous academic institutions and productions on Roma, Romani scholars are not adequately included in research and higher educational institutions across Europe.

According to the conducted survey, **52,63% of the respondents consider the exclusion of Romani scholars and the lack of access to academic knowledge production as a pressing issue**, while **47,37 % declare that Romani scholars are rarely included in research and higher education**. In essence, there is a lack of access, fair and adequate recognition and inclusion of Romani scholars in knowledge production and academic institutions.

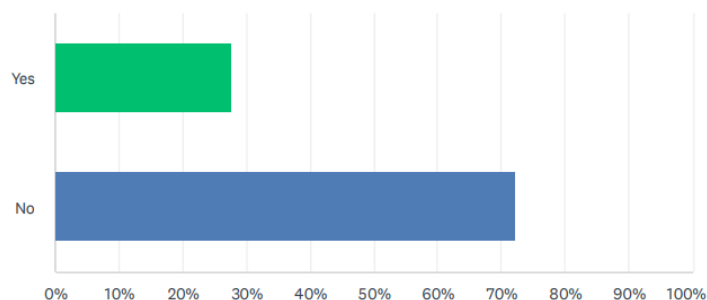
Additionally, **88.89% of respondents stated that there are insufficient opportunities (such as grants, scholarships, mentoring, etc.) to produce knowledge**. In their remarks, they elaborated that the main obstacles faced by Romani scholars in the European Member States include overly competitive access to project funding, institutional tokenism, non-recognition of their scholarships, structural and academic antigypsyism, as well as lack of inclusion and political will in research institutions.

When considering the inclusion of Romani scholars and experts' in policymaking, the survey reveals similar results and reasons as observed in academic institutions. A significant **72,22% of the responses indicate a lack of proper inclusion of Romani scholars in policy-making processes**.

ERIACNET4EU

Q19 Are Roma scholars and experts included in policy-making and academic/ research institutions in your county?

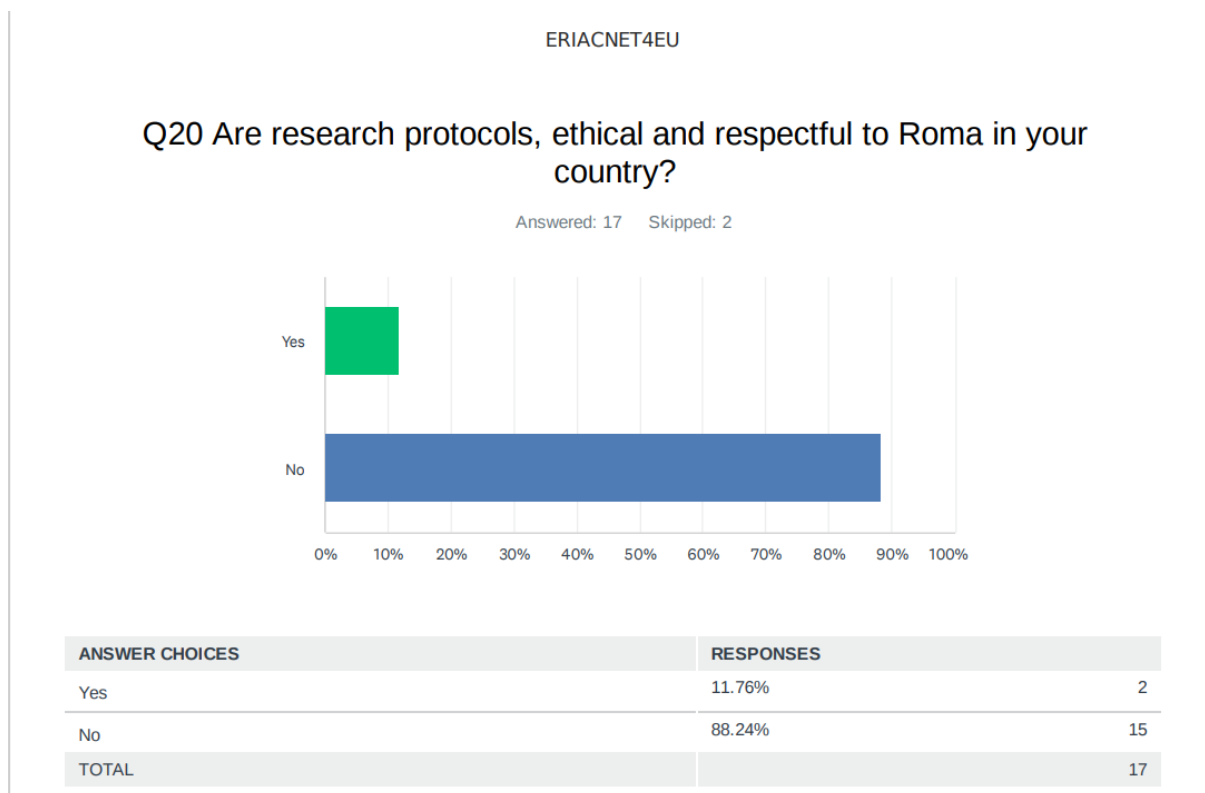
Answered: 18 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	27.78%	5
No	72.22%	13
TOTAL		18

Info chart 2: Roma scholars and experts' inclusion in policy-making and academic/research institutions across Europe and beyond % (ERIAC, 2023).

A constant debate surrounds the question of ethical and respectful methodologies. The collected data reflects the opinion that research protocols often fall short of basic research ethics when it comes to Roma. A significant 88,24% of experts recommend developing respectful approaches in research and policy recommendations with Romani scholars and experts. As noted in their remarks, Romani people in academic productions are objectified with racist ethnographical and anthropological labels by non-Romani descriptions. Moreover, portrayals of Romani people's identity lack fundamental ethics and respect. Antigypsyism and the colonial mindset are normalized in public education, mainstream media, and academic knowledge productions.



Info chart 3: Research protocols, ethical and respectful perceptions in academia and policy-making towards Roma across Europe and beyond % (ERIAC, 2023).

In the concluding segment of the survey, the ERIAC members were invited to rate the statements on a scale from 1–5 where 1 is “Strongly agree” and 5 is “Strongly disagree”. Their responses paint a rather problematic picture of the status of Roma in educational settings⁴⁰.

According to the respondents, there is a general agreement that European society generally **does not value the Romani arts, culture, and history** (average rating of 3.6), and inhabitants are **not aware of Romani arts, culture, and history** (average rating of 3.6).

Furthermore, **Romani culture and arts are considered invisible and not promoted** (average rating of 3.9).

⁴⁰ To interpret the score of the average ratings of this scale, the reader should consider that the closer the score to value of 5, the stronger the tendency to strongly disagree with the statement.

Considering the national and European funds and support of Romani scholars to develop knowledge are not sufficient (average rating of 4.4.), and the societies do not have reliable educational resources and materials to learn about Romani history, identity, and culture (average rating of 3.8). Educational institutes across Europe are not inclusive and welcoming for Romani pupils, as indicated by an average rating of 3.9.

Romani people lack adequate support and affirmative actions to improve their situations in the field of education as evidenced by an average of 4.3. Moreover, it is evident that Romani people do not actively participate in the development of national, and European Romani educational policies and priorities (average rating of 3.9), based on the lack of sufficient communication channels between Roma and the educational institutions, in particular, the Ministries of Education (average rating of 4.2). Considering the above results, it is evident that Romani history is not incorporated into the national and international curricula, and narratives (average rating of 4.2).

What works (and does not): some exemplary and subpar practices

Romani cultural heritage wields significant influence across Europe; however, Roma history, culture, and arts often face misinterpretation, misrepresentation, or simply exclusion from institutions and public narratives, all of which contain traces of antigypsyism. It is, therefore, essential to acknowledge the need for greater inclusion of Roma in national and European curricula starting from elementary to higher education.

Despite the generally bleak picture of the status of Roma in educational settings, there are, however, **some signs of progress**. Based on the survey, as much as **68,42% noticed improvement in the field of Romani education in their countries**. Respondents reported that most of the improvements are due to engagement of non-state actors, including non-governmental scholarships and special advanced Romani college courses, and not necessarily because of a major shift towards state-led affirmative and inclusive actions. In this context, the work of organizations such as REF needs to be acknowledged.

According to one respondent:

"During many years there were different programs that made it possible for Roma students to access fellowships and meetings with other Romani students. That meant a lot for many people". (Expert 01)

Another expert added that other private foundations played a key role in ensuring financial support to Roma children:

"Fundación Tagore is, or was, a good example. It was a private Romani lead foundation that offered fellowships to Gitano university students of Andalucía" (Expert 01)

The lack of inclusion of reliable Roma-themed content in school curricula has been reported numerous times as one of the main challenges. **According to 61.11% of responses**, one of the main reasons for the lack of respectful representation, the persistence of anti-gypsy narratives, and often racist portrayals of Romani people is the non-inclusion of Romani scholars and organizations in drafting and/or revisions of school curricula.

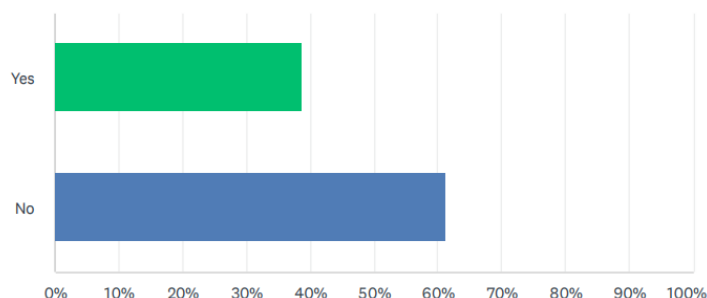
Notably, 38.89% declared that there are positive examples where Romani intellectuals act as consultants for Ministries of Education; however, their participation often encounters tokenism and glass ceiling effects. In the words of one of the experts:

"There is no equal recognition of Roma scholars' knowledge production. The curriculum writing and drafting is a non-Roma power from generations, from which the Romani voices are excluded." (Expert 4)

ERIACNET4EU

Q10 Are Roma scholars and/ or organisations involved in drafting or revision of school curricula to ensure respectful representation of Roma?

Answered: 18 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	38.89%	7
No	61.11%	11
TOTAL		18

Info chart 4: Roma scholars and/or organization involvement in drafting or revision of school curricula to ensure respectful representation of Roma (ERIAC 2023).

Many respondents also highlighted **teachers in public schools are generally not offered specialized training** on Roma history, culture and identity and are not provided with specialized anti-discrimination training focused on recognizing and preventing antigypsyism. This gap is often filled by NGOs, yet this is not a structural or required practice. It is also important to highlight that there are positive initiatives which are initiated **outside of the formal educational curricula**. Several extracurricular, mostly non-governmental initiatives have been successfully implemented, including in:

- Factoria Cultural Program in Poligono Sur, in Seville,
- Tanoda, Sure Start children's program, Biztos Kezdet Gyerekhaz, Creative Partnership Program in Hungary,
- Celebration of Roma Slavery's Abolishment (20th of February), Roma International Day (8th of April), International Commemoration of Roma Holocaust (2nd of August), in Romania,

According to one respondent:

"The Roma population has the opportunity to access educational support programs and projects offered by social organizations. On very few occasions, Roma associations offer cultural activities related to the Roma language or arts. Very few neighbourhoods in Spain have Roma organizations that organize activities to promote and protect the Roma culture." (Expert 11)

According to the survey respondents, three types of **initiatives can have a transformative potential** for the status and achievements of Roma in schools:

- Respectful representation of Roma history, culture and identity, and inclusion of Roma knowledge-production;
- Greater presence of Roma staff in school, and development of affirmative action initiatives with this objective;
- Existence of grants and other funding schemes which ensure access to fair and quality education for Roma children on all levels.

On the other hand, unfortunately, respondents noted several ongoing **practices contributing to deterioration to the overall situation** of Roma in school settings. Despite countless policy recommendations and actions to support Romani children's inclusion, not only at the institutional but at the state level, some phenomena that breach fundamental human rights were reported. These include school segregation, language deprivation, discrimination, stigmatization, bullying, and unfair treatment. According to one respondent:

"A survey conducted a few years back in the capital region indicates that many teachers blame Roma culture for poor achievements." (Expert 10)

Other respondent added that:

"They [teachers] consider them [Roma pupils] as special needs children who are not capable to receive adequate information and learn." (Expert 5)

Conclusions from the Panel Discussion

On June 15th, 2023 ERIAC brought together most brilliant Roma scholars and educational experts to delve into the paths for improving the status of Roma in educational settings, particularly focusing on the recognition and development of Roma knowledge-production. The esteemed speakers included Dr. Delia Grigore, Dr. Adrain Marsh, Dr. Hristo Kyuchukov, Dr. Iulius Rostas, and Nadir Redzepi. The panellists provided expert advice to inform the work of ERIAC's knowledge-production thematic section and reflected on the current state of the entire field of Roma knowledge.

It was emphasised that a substantial change in the status of Romani scholars and the recognition of Romani knowledge-production require multi-layered interventions and the cooperation of diverse actors, both inside and outside of academia. This includes nuclei of academic excellence, research institutions, policymakers, and non-governmental actors. The proliferation of initiatives such as summer schools, Romani language teaching, book publication series, journals, conferences, and workshops will play a role in elevating the status and associated prestige of Romani studies. The role of Romani and non-Romani institutions should not be limited to initiating activities and programs. Through their leadership, they should shape the new academic and public discourse on Roma. Simultaneously, academic institutions across Europe and beyond should welcome Romani scholars to engage in scientific publications, conduct research, and contribute to the development of curricula encompassing arts and culture, languages, and history.

It is important to note that research methodologies and concepts in Romani Studies are continuously evolving. This evolution should reflect the diversity and intersectionality among the Romani society, encompassing various lived experiences and positionalities of scholars producing knowledge on Roma. Regarding research ethics, it is essential to consider power relations between Roma and non-Roma, and between and within the Romani communities. This understanding is crucial to grasp the complexity of issues such as exclusion, structural inequality, social distance, historical injustice, and more.

Based on expert opinions, it is asserted that Roma should have access to academia not only as students or visiting professors but with full tenure positions. The establishment of various Romani Studies Programmes across Europe and beyond in public universities is a key factor in educating Roma and non-Roma societies and changing public perceptions.

At the same time, national funding agencies should prioritize knowledge production in cooperation with and leadership of Roma. It is recommended to include Romani experts in the European Commission Horizon evaluation team Romani experts to assess proposals focusing on Roma. The European Research Council, as the highest research authority (and granting body) in the EU, should also be more sensitive to Roma issues, supporting cutting-edge science projects committed to academic excellence and social justice. Romani researchers should have a significant and visible role in shaping knowledge production in international and national agenda, based on their expert recommendations and expertise, including on education policies, linguistics, history, arts, and culture, etc.

The foundation for any community's growth and sustainable development must be education. Education, in its broadest context, is the critical component to strengthening individual and collective capacity and competencies, enhancing experience with expertise, and delivering development that can raise attainment, achievement, and excellence. The only institutions capable of delivering mass education on a sustainable basis are governments. At the same time, however, it is important to appreciate other stakeholders and platforms that complement the formal, institutional education process, through dynamics of non-formal education, driven and developed by non-state actors.

Concerning Romani children's linguistics and educational backgrounds, Romani bilinguals should not differ from other bilingual minorities in Europe, especially within European Union Member States' educational curricula. Despite low status and prestige assigned to Romani language teaching in formal institutional settings, Council of Europe recommendations advocate for Romani language education and heritage sustainability.

Psychological research has proven that, in the case of multilingual children, knowledge of the mother tongue is crucial for cognitive development. The inclusion of Romani language teaching in curricula should not be a question solely based on formal training and the protection of the Romani language in the Member States. The foremost issue lies in the methodology, quality, and attitude toward knowledge transfer of the language in formal education.

Romani language heritage should be protected not only in informal settings, such as families, communities, and extracurricular language teachings but also in formal institutional educational curricula as a priority. It is argued that forbidding the dances of language and implementing forced assimilation politics are detrimental to cultural heritages.

Languages, particularly in this case the Romani language, can be preserved with political, educational, and cultural institutional support and recognition. This involves curriculum developments, teaching practices, and language harmonization.

8. CONCLUSIONS

Since its creation, ERIAC has aimed to become a reliable source of quality knowledge on Roma and provide opportunities to improve the overall situation of Roma in educational systems. In this endeavour, ERIAC relies on the frame of its institutional mandate and carefully considers complementing and partnering with other stakeholders active in the field of Roma education. This includes civil society organizations, such as REF, academic institutions like CEU or the Södertörn University, and intergovernmental institutions, especially with the CoE.

In 2021, based on a thorough field assessment, multiple interviews, and discussions with ERIAC membership and other stakeholders, the ERIAC Board approved the ERIAC Strategy 2021-2025. One of the four pillars of the strategy explicitly focuses on working in the field of education. Specifically, the strategy guides ERIAC to:

“Build on the recent breakthrough Council of Europe Recommendation on the inclusion of the history of Roma and/or Travellers in school curricula and teaching materials:

1. In partnership with leading Roma organizations, develop referential history and cultural history-teaching materials; introduce them in formal and informal education practices and provide consultancy, training and teaching services (both through a learning community and through teacher-training strategies).”

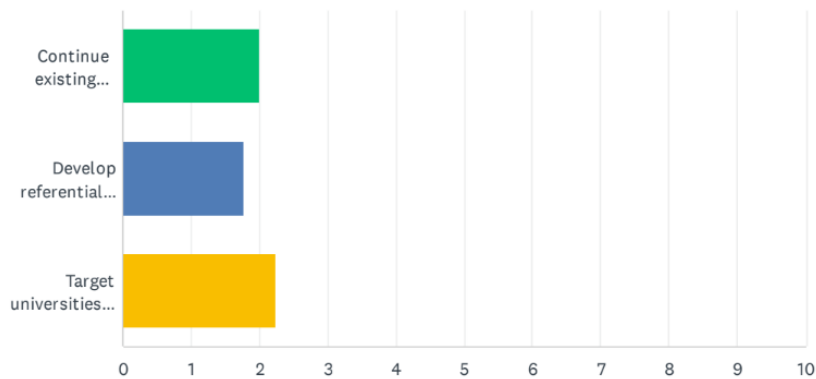
In 2022, the Board has indicated the following strategic objectives:

1. Target universities to develop lecture series, conferences, and Roma history education methodologies in collaboration, with inter alia, leading higher education institutions and Roma organizations.
2. Continue existing initiatives and develop new ones which build digital infrastructure for the visibility and archiving of publications and studies on Roma history and knowledge as a tool to fight antigypsyism by providing positive counter-narratives and encouraging Roma self-representation.
3. Target universities to develop lecture series, conferences, and Roma history education methodologies in collaboration, with inter alia, leading higher education institutions and Roma organizations.

As part of the survey, the ERIAC Management requested members to set up and rank the Knowledge Production, Research, and Publication Thematic Section priorities, which indicate the following:

Q23 What priorities would you like for your ERIAC's Knowledge Production, Research, and Publication Thematic Section? (rank from highest to lowest)

Answered: 13 Skipped: 6



Info chart 5: Priority preferences of Knowledge Production, Research and Publication Thematic Section members (ERIAC 2023).

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for the European Union and the Council of Europe

- Make use of existing legal and political tools to ensure access to quality education for all Roma in Europe;
- Ensure compliance of EU and CoE member states with standards of inclusive education;
- Use existing tools and dedicate funding to ensure inclusion of Romani history, arts, and culture in educational curricula in every European Member State;
- Promote inclusion of Romani language in schools and develop necessary educational materials and resources for Romani language preservation and teaching;
- Combat anti-racism and antigypsyism in all European Member States through establishing professional training and education;
- Support the establishment of affirmative action measures aiming at increasing the presence of Roma in educational institutions, as teachers and supporting staff, as well as researchers;
- Establish long-term collaboration with Roma experts and scholars, including (but not limited to) their role as consultants to evaluate and reflect on European Institutions and the Council of Europe policies with advocacy, recommendations, and knowledge production;
- The European Union, in partnership with Roma scholars and specialized organizations, should develop comprehensive initiatives with dedicated funding, to target Romani language, culture, and historical research;
- Support development of explicit measures aiming to recognize Roma contributions to national and European cultural heritage and history;
- Develop teacher-training programs for teachers working with Roma, as well as include anti-discrimination and antigypsyism as core issues covered at pedagogical universities;
- Develop dedicated funding calls to ensure ethical research with and on Roma;
- Invest in human capital and quality standards in education, in line with all-inclusive methods;

- Develop evidence-based research to measure the expression of structural and institutional antigypsyism inside the educational system;
- Generate new frameworks to work against antigypsyism, with Romani experts and professionals;
- Offer specialized training for public servants, law enforcement, health professionals and the target-groups;
- Focus on countering the spread of misinformation about the Roma and enhancing efforts to combat hate speech;
- Promote the exchange of experiences and best practices between accession countries and EU countries in addressing Roma-related challenges;
- Support initiatives aiming at the promotion of Roma history through memorialization, including establishing monuments, commemorative activities, institutionalizing dates relevant to Roma history and ensuring ongoing maintenance and investment in existing monuments.

Recommendations to Member States, in Particular Ministries of Education

- Ensure access to appropriate infrastructure and quality education for all Roma pupils;
- Implement the National Strategy for Roma inclusion, focusing particularly on measures related to education, culture, combating racism, and reconciliation;
- Respect international law, standards and guidelines regarding access to education and, more broadly, fundamental human rights;
- Conduct thorough curriculum review to guarantee the appropriate inclusion of Roma in school textbooks;
- Include elements of Romani language, culture, as well as measures for preventing and combating antigypsyism in the mandatory school curriculum for all children/students. This should also apply to compulsory initial university training for future teachers in all fields, journalists, medical professionals at all levels, and for future public servants at all levels;
- Include the history of antigypsyism in textbooks;
- Ensure teacher-training programs that address the history of Roma and antigypsyism in Europe;

- Establish advisory boards to assist Ministries of Education and/or other appropriate bodies in developing school curricula and monitoring its implementation in schools;
- Introduce affirmative policies for accelerated integration at all levels of education;
- Dedicate funding to develop appropriate educational materials dealing with Roma history, identity and culture;
- Support a greater presence of Roma in public spaces of culture, including museum, national theatres, or galleries;
- Develop funding schemes supporting the development of Roma scholarship through dedicated research grant programmes;
- Create targeted measures contributing to a greater presence of Roma in school settings, including as teachers or school staff;
- Combat forms of residential and school segregation detrimental to Roma;
- Contribute to memorialization of Roma history and expansion of commemorative practices, both in public spaces and schools;
- Compulsorily train teachers, to work with different cultural communities;
- Guarantee equal access to education and prohibit discrimination in education;
- Introduce regular monitoring of policy implementation in order to combat discrimination and one-sidedness in the policy-making processes;
- Provide training in digital skills and distribute digital devices to Roma students and parents.

Recommendations to Public and Private Donor Organizations

- Provide wider funding to ensure the participation and access of Roma to education, particularly in universities;
- Offer support to ensure development of infrastructure and access to digital tools, to facilitate participation of Roma in education;
- Develop more educational resources that support the dissemination of facts about the history, arts, and culture of the Romani people;

- Provide financial support for the establishment of Roma research centers and Critical Romani Studies departments at major European universities;
- Offer financial support to programs focusing on Roma student pursuing pedagogical degrees;
- Support Romani experts and scholars who still face discrimination and antigypsyism by providing support to develop Romani scholarship, for example, through grants;
- Channel funds for the institutional development of Romani children, supporting their academic growth with anti-discrimination, anti-segregation policies;
- Provide support for the establishment of robust training opportunities, especially for teachers and school personnel;
- Support non-formal education initiatives and projects, especially those led by Roma themselves;
- Support initiatives that aim at the empowerment of Romani teachers and their more active involvement in school life;
- In partnership with Roma scholars and specialized organizations, create and implement a multi-annual program on Romani language, culture, and history research, development, and promotion with several open calls for projects. Additionally, establish another multi-annual program on preventing and combating anti-Roma racism with several open calls for projects;
- Set aside more financial opportunities for organizing extracurricular activities and open funds to Romani people with European scholarships, postgraduate education, and training;
- Fund specific programs to raise awareness in schools, from supporting the production of educational materials to sponsoring in-person visits by Roma artists and performers;
- Support publications on Roma history, culture, and language for all levels of the educational system;
- Implement training programs for young Roma individuals to effectively combat online hate speech as well as the phenomenon of bullying in schools.

Recommendations for Roma Civil Society Organizations

- Advocate for changes in school curricula to include Roma in the concept of European history and create more international spaces in Romani education to exchange experiences and knowledge production;
- Continue to develop initiatives and program focusing on Roma identity formation by raising awareness of Roma identity, history and culture through non-formal education;
- Build strong relationships with local educational centres to facilitate greater presence and involvement of Roma in school settings;
- Develop initiatives that strengthen education about the Holocaust through history, arts, and culture;
- Support Romani children's education, well-being, and identity affirmation through targeted activities and measures;
- Focus on lobbying, advocacy, and alliance building to support for Romani language, culture, and history research, development, and promotion on combating antigypsyism, and anti-racism;
- Act as watchdogs to monitor the commitment of governments to respecting fundamental rights of Roma in education;
- Mobilize parents, teachers, and local authorities to demonstrate best practice models, and to advocate Romani education and its challenges;
- Develop an intercultural mindset and a human rights approach, engage in education about history and culture of diverse Roma/Sinti/Traveller groups, and work towards social change;
- Implement culturally sensitive trauma-informed programs to support Roma individuals in healing from trauma and strengthening their cultural identity and self-perception.

Recommendations for Academic and Research Institutions

- Promote establishment and development of Critical Romani Studies departments and programs at public universities;
- Train schools and high-school teachers to combat racism and anti-gypsims in education at all levels;
- Consider establishing targeted fellowship and scholarship programs to support access of Roma to higher education;
- Support the job placement of Roma scholars;
- Facilitate academic exchange and create a welcoming environment to Roma students and scholars;
- Develop ethical research protocols for researching the topic of Roma;
- Build alliances and long-term partnerships with Roma NGOs and Roma scholars to advance together with Roma education in Europe;
- Promote affirmative action initiatives addressed to Romani scholars and their scholarships in mainstream institutions;
- Develop educational materials from the early learning stages through to higher education and the workplace on anti-racism and antigypsyism, focusing on history, arts, and culture;
- Create spaces for academic exchange and debates, through hosting academic conferences, summer schools and dedicated publications;
- Uphold Romani knowledge production with joined academic projects on the national level, across Europe, and beyond;
- Create and implement, in partnership with Roma scholars and specialized organizations, a National Program for Romani language, culture, and history research, development, and promotion and for building Roma self-esteem;
- Establish long-term programs with strong collaborations of local Roma education centers and NGOs.
- Continue to collaborate and accredit the Barvalipe Online University by ERIAC to offer high-quality academic materials to educational, research, and political institutions;
- Establish long-term projects with Romani scholars, and educators in academia to produce critical scholarships.

Annexes

Contributors

Dr. Anna Mirga-Kruszelnicka currently serves as Deputy Director of the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERIAC). She is both an anthropologist and Roma activist, born in 1985 in Cracow/Poland. She earned her Ph.D. in Social and Cultural Anthropology from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB) in 2016. Additionally, she holds an MA in European Integration from UAB and an MA in Comparative Studies of Civilizations from the Jagiellonian University in Cracow (UJ). Dr. Mirga-Kruszelnicka has been actively engaged in numerous Roma organizations, serving in various capacities as an employee, member, founder, and collaborator. Notably, from 2008 to 2012, she was the European project coordinator at the Federation of Roma Associations in Catalonia (FAGIC). From 2013 to 2015 she was an Open Society Foundations Roma Initiatives Fellow, during this period she conducted a comparative study of the Roma associative movements in Latin America and Europe. From 2015 to 2017 she was the coordinator and curator of the Academic Section (aka. Roma Civil Rights Movement Section) in the RomArchive – Digital Archive of the Roma. Between 2017–2018 she was a Post-Doctoral Research Fellow of the Romani Studies Program at the Central European University (CEU) in Budapest. Dr. Mirga-Kruszelnicka is the author of policy evaluations, reports and articles, co-editor of the “Education for Remembrance of the Roma Genocide: Scholarship, Commemoration and the Role of Youth” (Libron, 2015) and “Re-thinking Roma Resistance throughout History: Recounting Stories of Strength and Bravery” (ERIAC, 2020) and author of “Mobilizing Romani Ethnicity: Romani Political Activism in Argentina, Colombia, and Spain (CEU Press, 2022).

Dr. Dezso Mate is a Ph.D. in Interdisciplinary Sociology. In his dissertation, he focused on the Romani intellectuals' generational resilient lifepaths. Currently, he is a Romani Rose Fellow at the Research Centre on Antigypsyism at the Heidelberg University's Department of History, and since 2022 he is the Thematic Section Coordinator of the Knowledge Production, Research and Publication at the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture – ERIAC. Dr. Mate is an Alumnus of the Kulturwissenschaftliches Institut (KWI), Essen. He earned his MA degree in Media Studies– Film Theory and Romani Studies from the University of Pécs. Further study experience was gathered in the Netherlands at the Fontys University of Applied Social Sciences.

Dr. Mate previously held positions as a Research Fellow and Course Leader at the Central European University – Romani Studies Program in Budapest. He also served as a Visiting Research Associate at the University of Sussex – Centre for Higher Education and Equity Research from 2015 to 2017. Between 2013 and 2018 he contributed as a Junior Research Fellow at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences – Institute for Minority Studies. Dr. Mate’s involvement extended to consultancy and mentoring for the Open Society Foundations – Community Youth Fellowship Program from 2018- to 2020. This program focused on addressing intersectional challenges faced by the Romani community in public healthcare settings.

Nadja Greku currently serves as the Program Manager at the ERIAC Serbia, having previously held the position of Grants Officer for the ERIACNET4EU project initiative. She pursued MA Studies in International Relations at Central European University (CEU) in Vienna, Austria after obtaining a BA in Sociology from the University of Novi Sad, Serbia. Nadja further enriched her educational background by participating in the Romani Studies program at CEU Budapest. Expanding her academic horizons, she undertook Princeton University courses in Global History and Research Methods, complemented by a study visit to Cambridge University. Her research focus centres on the governmentality and securitization dynamics affecting the Roma population. With substantial experience in economic and human development, Nadja has collaborated with international organizations such as the World Bank and the Regional Cooperation Council. She has authored a book chapter on Roma inclusion strategies and governmentality for the Roma Civil Monitor and written op-eds for publications including LeftEast and the European Roma Rights Centre, addressing issues such as antigypsyism and Roma political engagement.

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Abbreviations

CEU	Central European University
CoE	Council of Europe
CoVID- 19	Coronavirus disease 2019
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EC	European Commission
EP	European Parliament
ERIAC	European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture
ERIACNET4EU	European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture for European Union
EU	European Union
EU MIDIS-II	Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey
FAGIC	Federation of Roma Associations in Catalonia
FRA	Fundamental Rights Agency
GEI	Georg Eckert Institute
IHRA	International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance
IPSOS	Institut Public de Sondage d'Opinion Secteur
KWI	Kulturwissenschaftliche Institut
MA	Master Studies
MS	Member States
NRIS	National Roma Integration Strategies
NRSFs	National Roma Strategic Frameworks
ODIHR	OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OHTE	Observatory on History Teaching in Europe
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
OSF	Open Society Foundations
Ph.D.	Doctor of Philosophy
REF	Roma Education Fund
UAB	Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
UJ	Jagiellonian University in Cracow
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

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