



Civil society monitoring report
on the implementation of the national
strategic framework for Roma equality,
inclusion, and participation
in Austria

Prepared by:
Romano Centro
June 2025

*Justice
and Consumers*



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers
Directorate D — Equality and Union Citizenship
Unit D1 Non-Discrimination and Roma Coordination

European Commission
B-1049 Brussels

Civil society monitoring report on the implementation
of the national strategic framework
for Roma equality, inclusion, and participation
in Austria

Manuscript completed in June 2024.

LEGAL NOTICE

The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

PDF	ISBN 978-92-68-28943-3	doi:10.2838/6410298	Catalogue number DS-01-25-130-EN-N
-----	------------------------	---------------------	------------------------------------

How to cite this report:

Roma Civil Monitor (2025) *Civil society monitoring report on the implementation of the national strategic framework for Roma equality, inclusion, and participation in Austria*. Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2025

© European Union, 2025

Reuse is authorised provided the source is acknowledged and the original meaning or message of the document is not distorted. The European Commission shall not be liable for any consequence stemming from the reuse. The reuse policy of European Commission documents is implemented by Commission [Decision 2011/833/EU of 12 December 2011 on the reuse of Commission documents](#) (OJ L 330, 14.12.2011, p. 46).

This report has been written by Ms Michaela Schipper-Schauer (board member) and Mr Dejan Segic (project staff) from the *Romano Centro* Association. We want to thank all the interview participants who contributed to the report's ability to present a variety of perspectives on the situation in Austria.

The report was prepared as part of the initiative "[**Preparatory Action – Roma Civil Monitoring – Strengthening capacity and involvement of Roma and pro-Roma civil society in policy monitoring and review**](#)" implemented by a consortium led by the Democracy Institute of Central European University (DI/CEU), including the European Roma Grassroots Organisations Network (ERGO Network), the Fundación Secretariado Gitano (FSG) and the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC). The initiative was funded by the European Commission's Directorate-General Justice and Consumers (DG Just) under service contract no. JUST/2020/RPAA/PR/EQUA/0095.

The report represents the findings of the authors, and it does not necessarily reflect the views of the consortium or the European Commission, which cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained herein.

CONTENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	5
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	6
INTRODUCTION	8
1. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NRSF.....	9
1.1. Key developments and effectiveness of implementation.....	9
1.1.1. Changes in the NRSF	9
1.1.2. Progress in implementation.....	9
1.1.3. Effectiveness of monitoring	9
1.1.4. Data collection.....	10
1.2. NRSF's synergy with domestic and EU actions	10
1.2.1. Complementary policies.....	11
1.2.2. Alignment with EU actions	11
1.2.3. Addressing concerns of previous assessments.....	11
1.3. Roma participation in implementation and monitoring.....	11
1.3.1. Involvement of Roma CSOs in implementation	12
1.3.2. Roma in public institutions implementing the NRSF	13
1.3.3. Roma participation in monitoring and evaluation	13
1.3.4. Contribution of National Roma Platform to the NRSF implementation	13
2. REVIEW BY THEMATIC AREA.....	15
2.1. Fighting antigypsyism and discrimination.....	15
2.2. Education	18
2.3. Employment	23
2.4. Healthcare	25
2.5. Housing, essential services, and environmental justice	26
2.6. Social protection	26
2.7. Social services	27
2.8. Child protection.....	28
2.9. Promoting (awareness of) Roma arts, culture, and history.....	28
3. FOCUS ON KEY PROBLEMS AFFECTING ROMA	30
3.1. Placement of Roma pupils in special schools.....	30
3.2. Employment Barriers and Successful Approaches for Roma Inclusion in the Employment Sector.....	31
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	35
REFERENCES	1

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EURSF	EU Roma Strategic Framework
NRSF	National Roma Strategic Framework
OeAD	Austria's Agency for Education and Internationalisation (<i>Österreichs Agentur für Bildung und Internationalisierung</i>)
RCM	Roma Civil Monitor
SENSIRO	Study on the Evaluation of the National Roma Strategy in Austria (<i>Studie zur Evaluierung der nationalen Strategie der Roma in Österreich</i>)
SORA	SORA Institute for Social Research and Consulting Ogris & Hofinger GmbH

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report discusses the progress and challenges in implementing the Austrian Roma Strategy focusing on the equality, inclusion, and participation of Roma communities. Positive steps have been made, such as studies, anti-discrimination reports, and various activities focused on Roma inclusion. However, discrimination and negative media portrayals continue, particularly in rural areas. Since the Austrian Roma Strategy update in 2021, there have been no significant changes or expansions in policy.

The strategy lacks clear quantitative evaluation criteria, making it difficult to measure success. Furthermore, the strategy is largely unknown to the Roma population itself. Several recommendations made in previous reports, such as the creation of indicators, hiring staff for compliance, and improving civil society awareness, were not implemented.

While Austria has made some progress, such as through participatory research (e.g., the SENSIRO study), employment and education projects, and alignment with EU Roma policy, significant gaps remain. The SENSIRO survey gathered strong feedback from Roma communities. The core demands include anti-discrimination workshops, stricter sanctions, more inclusive education, support for the Romani language, open community spaces, psychological support, and emergency housing. Discrimination, especially antigypsyism, continues to affect Roma in education, employment, housing, and healthcare. Key barriers include the complex ESF administration and limited capacity in small Roma-led groups. Most Roma are unaware of the strategy (only 36% are informed, mostly men in eastern Austria).

Efforts to combat antigypsyism have included public events, awareness programmes, and legal reforms. However, advisory bodies remain unestablished, and data on Roma-specific hate crimes is still missing. Educational inequality persists, with high dropout rates, placement of Roma children into special schools, and limited access to Romani language instruction. Employment initiatives, managed mainly by large CSOs, show promise, but Roma-led organisations face bureaucratic hurdles that limit their involvement. In healthcare, access remains inequitable due to language and literacy barriers.

Roma civil society participation is growing but constrained by information gaps, administrative complexity, and limited influence in decision-making platforms. The report calls for stronger political will, targeted measures, broader outreach, and sustainable funding. Roma CSOs, especially in labour market and education initiatives, are involved through the Roma dialogue platform.

The present report further evaluates Austria's progress in addressing antigypsyism and Roma inclusion under the National Roma Strategy Framework (NRSF). Key developments include:

1. **Antigypsyism and Awareness:** There have been efforts to raise awareness about Roma history, such as the *Erinnern.at* Programme and International Roma Day. However, the establishment of advisory councils to combat antigypsyism has not happened. Some exhibitions on Roma culture and history have been organised, but the re-exhibition of '*Romane-Thana*' has not occurred. Discrimination persists, and the lack of a comprehensive National Anti-Racism and Anti-Discrimination Strategy hinders progress.
2. **Discrimination and Hate Crimes:** Cases of discrimination, especially against Roma by police and in schools, remain widespread. The Austrian government has made efforts to combat hate crimes, such as training police officers and introducing new laws to fight hate speech. Still, challenges remain, especially in addressing Roma-specific issues.
3. **Education:** Roma children face educational inequalities, such as early dropouts and misplacement into special education. Discrimination in schools, particularly in lower-quality schools in certain areas, persists. While some measures have been taken to improve educational opportunities for Roma, more targeted actions are needed.
4. **Employment:** The labour market remains challenging for Roma, with projects like *Empowerment für Roma* (Empowerment for Roma) focusing on connecting Roma to employment. However, workplace discrimination continues, and there are no specific programmes in public employment services for Roma youth.

5. Healthcare: The healthcare system does not fully address the specific needs of Roma, particularly in terms of access to information and health literacy. Recommendations for improving healthcare access, such as training Roma health mediators, have not been fully implemented.
6. Housing and Social Services: Roma face discrimination in housing and struggle to access social services. Studies show high rates of discrimination in renting, and Roma immigrants often fall through the cracks of the welfare system. Roma organisations help with mediation and housing issues, but more systemic support is needed.

Roma, who are severely affected by poverty, remain underrepresented in the strategy's papers and measures. However, both studies and experts point out that poverty and existential hardship characterise the reality of many Roma. Poverty cannot be categorised into one area, such as employment, education, health or housing, but instead requires a cross-sectoral perspective and a holistic approach. In addition to material and social hardship, those affected often have to contend with an unfavourable legal status, which excludes them from access to social support services. Homelessness and emergency travel/poverty-related migration very often play a significant role in the lives of people experiencing severe poverty.

7. Child Protection: Roma children face higher rates of school dropout and segregation. While child protection is a national priority, there is no Roma-specific guideline addressing these issues.
8. Cultural Awareness: There are some positive steps in promoting Roma arts, culture, and history, with events and festivals supported by public funding. However, there is still a need for more widespread implementation of Roma-related educational materials in schools to combat prejudice.

INTRODUCTION

This report describes the implementation of the Austrian National Roma Strategic Framework (NRSF). In 2023, the RCM recommended specific priorities to public authorities that would help the NRSF to come to life.¹ In 2025, in this present report, the actions taken are assessed both in terms of the process of Roma participation as well as on the implementation of policies for inclusion and non-discrimination in various sectors.

Austria adopted the NRSF in a written procedure on 12 March 2021. With the Council of Ministers' presentation of 7 April 2021, the NRSF was therefore updated and submitted to the European Commission on 30 September 2021.² The current '*Strategy for the Continuation of Roma Inclusion in Austria*' represents an update and expansion from the one in 2017. It also contains all the priorities of the EU 2020-2030 Roma Strategic Framework (EURSF) – combating antigypsyism, increased participation, and targeted empowerment of Roma youth, Roma women and girls). The Austrian Government, during the 2018 EU Council presidency, had been instrumental in defining the strategy and specific actions against antigypsyism.³

Since 2021, the NRSF has not been changed, altered or expanded. While the EURSF suggests quantitative measurement criteria with minimum targets for 2030 to fulfil, the NRSF still lacks quantitative criteria for evaluation.⁴

This lack of quantitative or qualitative indicators or timelines makes measuring the success of the strategy difficult. Regarding the action against antigypsyism, Roma activists recommended measures from all areas of society (such as media, educational institutions, etc) to achieve the goal of the inclusion of Roma in Europe. While some improvement can be noted, namely the commissioning of specific studies on anti-racism, no specific progress can be indicated on antigypsyism.⁵

In conclusion, Austria's implementation of the NRSF is a work in progress, with continuous efforts to address challenges in education, employment, healthcare, and housing. Regular monitoring, community involvement, and international collaboration are essential for long-term success. While some improvements have been made, further attention to systemic discrimination and targeted interventions will be key to advancing Roma integration in Austria.

¹ RCM / Romano Centro. (2022). *Civil Society Monitoring Report on the Quality of the National Strategic Framework for Roma Equality, Inclusion, and Participation in Austria*. Available at: <https://romacivilmonitoring.eu/countries/austria/>

² Federal Chancellery of the Republic of Austria. (2021). *Strategischer Rahmen der EU zur Gleichstellung, Inklusion und Teilhabe der Roma bis 2030 – Strategie zur Fortführung der Inklusion der Roma in Österreich [EU Strategic Framework for Roma Equality, Inclusion and Participation until 2030 – Strategy for Continuing Roma Inclusion in Austria]*. Available at: <https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/themen/volksgruppen/roma-strategie.html>

³ Federal Chancellery of the Republic of Austria. (2019). *Conference on Antigypsyism – How to address Antigypsyism in a post-2020 EU Roma Framework – Expert Recommendations*. Available at: <https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/themen/volksgruppen/roma-strategie.html>

⁴ European Commission. (2020). *A new EU Roma Strategic Framework – Factsheet*. Available at: https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2020-10/factsheet_-_a_new_eu_roma_strategic_framework_en.pdf

⁵ ZARA. (2022). *Antirassismusreport [Anti-Racism Report]*. Available at: https://assets.zara.or.at/media/rassismusreport/ZARA-Rassismus_Report_2022.pdf?mc_cid=3d2c6925c1&mc_eid=189739dd4d

1. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NRSF

1.1. Key developments and effectiveness of implementation

1.1.1. Changes in the NRSF

No significant new key developments can be observed in terms of policy development over the last two years.⁶

The government commissioned the University of Vienna to conduct a participatory study to assess measures for empowering Roma: the SENSIRO study.⁷ The study captures the main dimensions of the EURSF and the Austrian NRSF, including Roma participation, employment, education, health, housing, poverty, empowerment, discrimination and historical remembrance. This made it possible to create a control instance and indicates that more tangible (qualitative and quantitative) indicators can be developed in the future.

1.1.2. Progress in implementation

The SENSIRO report reveals that while the NRSF expresses a clear commitment to Roma inclusion, its implementation has been fragmented and inconsistent. Despite widespread recognition among stakeholders of the strategy's importance, many Roma communities remain unaware of its existence.

Participation mechanisms, such as the Roma Dialogue Platform, are perceived as useful. However, they only reach a narrow segment of the Roma population, particularly those already affiliated with established organisations. Broader community engagement and policy co-creation remain largely underdeveloped, limiting meaningful inclusion.

In terms of practical outcomes, access to education and employment remains inequitable. Roma continues to face systemic barriers such as discrimination in schools, overrepresentation in special education, and precarious employment conditions. While ESF-funded projects have shown localised success, they are often dominated by large CSOs with limited involvement from Roma-led organisations due to bureaucratic hurdles and funding inaccessibility. Similarly, health and housing services are difficult to access for many Roma due to linguistic, legal, and social barriers. This reflects a lack of targeted and sustainable interventions at the grassroots level.

For Roma inclusion, tailored policy measures and a shift in the broader socio-political framework are required. This includes combating antigypsyism through institutional reform, public education, and robust anti-discrimination mechanisms. Moreover, sustainable funding structures, transparent decision-making, and the institutionalisation of Roma perspectives across all levels of governance are not yet established. Without these changes, Austria risks perpetuating structural exclusion despite formal policy commitments.

1.1.3. Effectiveness of monitoring

To fulfil the SENSIRO study's aim of presenting the perspective of the target groups as comprehensively and differentiated as possible, a large-scale questionnaire survey was carried out throughout Austria as part of the evaluation of the strategy. This survey helped connect the strategy to people's living conditions.

The results of the survey are presented in thematic contexts at various points in the report in intermediate empirical chapters. They provide information on general assessments and views and also provide information on the significance of influencing factors such as social status, education, origin, religious affiliation, family situation, and subjective attitudes in all of these topics.⁸

⁶ Reinprecht, Ch., Walch, N., & Nardai, T. (2022). *Studie zur Evaluierung der nationalen Strategie zur Inklusion der Rom*nja in Österreich [Study on the Evaluation of the National Strategy for the Inclusion of Roma in Austria]*, University of Vienna. Available at: <https://sensiropjekt.univie.ac.at/>

⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁸ For the survey, almost 400 people throughout Austria were interviewed face-to-face using a standardised questionnaire. The composition of the interviewees was based on a quota plan, considering several selection criteria: gender, age, migration background, and school education. In addition, attention was paid to a realistic distribution by the federal state. A total of 31 people conducted the survey. They all had access to the target group surveyed and were

At the end of the SENSIRO survey, Roma throughout Austria were asked for suggestions for improving their living situation and further developing the strategy. The feedback shows a high level of commitment to social justice and includes a wide range of demands. One central topic was the fight against discrimination. Demands included mandatory anti-discrimination workshops for employees in institutions and public organisations, as well as stricter sanctions for racist discrimination, including on the internet. In addition, many Roma would like to see more school projects and cultural events that promote dialogue with the majority population.

Regarding education, the expansion of learning support measures and school mediation projects, particularly outside Vienna, were suggested. There were also calls for more native-speaking teachers and literacy courses. Better access to Romani language lessons and specific educational projects for women should also be improved.

Other important areas are empowerment and cultural strengthening. Romani language courses and identity-strengthening programmes for young Roma were particularly emphasised. There is a great desire for open, low-threshold meeting spaces within the Roma community and the majority society.

Concerning social protection, the need for emergency shelters, low-threshold psychological help, and holistic counselling was highlighted.⁹

1.1.4. Data collection

Regarding the characteristics of the respondents to the SENSIRO study, there are clear differences in assessing the areas of action. Young people, people with higher education, respondents from Vienna and Burgenland, and immigrants particularly emphasise the relevance of school, education, and training. When it comes to work and employment, people in employment and those with a higher level of education are particularly likely to prioritise these areas. Higher education also influences the assessment of the importance of combating Roma hostility and strengthening Roma youth, Roma women and Roma associations. Health is mentioned more frequently by older respondents over 60 and people with a migrant background. The topic of housing is mentioned more frequently by people from Western federal states and people with lower incomes.¹⁰

1.2. NRSF's synergy with domestic and EU actions

Austria has implemented several complementary policies in alignment with EU actions for Roma inclusion, particularly following the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020 and the EU Roma Strategic Framework for Equality, Inclusion, and Participation 2020–2030. The NRSF was designed to match the EU's key priority areas: education, employment, healthcare, housing, and anti-discrimination.

Funded partly through EU mechanisms, the Roma dialogue platform enables regular consultation and cooperation between public administration and Roma civil society. It reflects EU guidelines on participation and transparency and contributes to the design and monitoring of Roma-related policies.¹¹

Austria co-financed employment and education projects for Roma through the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+), which are aligned with the EU's priority of Roma socio-economic integration. Projects within the 'Empowerment of Roma' framework focused on vocational training, job coaching, and soft-skills development. These measures were often implemented by large welfare organisations (e.g., Caritas, Volkshilfe).

trained for their work. 20 interviewers are themselves members of the Roma target group. In this part of the research, each step was organised in cooperation with the project team.

⁹ Reinprecht, Ch., Walch, N., & Nardai, T. (2022). *Studie zur Evaluierung der nationalen Strategie zur Inklusion der Rom*nja in Österreich* [Study on the Evaluation of the National Strategy for the Inclusion of Roma in Austria], University of Vienna. Available at: <https://sensiropjekt.univie.ac.at/>

¹⁰ *Ibidem*.

¹¹ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. (2020). *Roma and Travellers in Six Countries*. Available at: <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2020/roma-travellers-survey>

1.2.1. Complementary policies

Complementary to EU targets for inclusive education, Austria supported initiatives such as Roma school mediation (e.g., by Romano Centro) and informal educational support, including language support and after-school programmes. However, these were not always structurally anchored or long-term funded.¹²

Austria extended EU anti-discrimination directives into national legislation, particularly through the Equal Treatment Act. National efforts to combat antigypsyism have included awareness-raising campaigns and workshops, sometimes with EU funding support.¹³

1.2.2. Alignment with EU actions

In the special guidelines for labour market projects – qualitative and quantitative indicators are defined in alignment with EU actions and framework.

Austria has reported progress to the European Commission and participated in EU-wide evaluations. It also conducted the SENSIRO survey to gather data on Roma's experiences and needs, aligning with EU data collection priorities.

Austria aligned with EU goals to reduce health and housing disparities by including Roma as a target group in general social inclusion and poverty reduction programmes. While specific housing projects were limited, some local efforts (e.g., in Vienna) addressed Roma housing access.¹⁴

1.2.3. Addressing concerns of previous assessments

Previous assessments were addressed regarding the participation of Roma in evaluation processes, creating an Intermediate Body within the framework of the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) in the Operational Programme.¹⁵

Austria provided project-based funding for Roma associations, often supported by EU grants. However, sustainability and administrative complexity remain challenges. The EU's call for capacity building has only been partially implemented at the national level.¹⁶

1.3. Roma participation in implementation and monitoring

A significant development in the implementation of the NRSF is the increased focus on participatory processes.

The SENSIRO study demonstrated that local Roma communities, CSOs, and advocacy groups have been involved in developing and implementing local projects. Their involvement is particularly evident in sectors such as labour market projects, where special guidelines were made with quantitative indicators. Several Roma-led or pro-Roma initiatives targeted at Roma inclusion in the labour market operate in different regions. These generally apply an integrated approach, including orientation on benefits, housing, schooling and debt management. However, it remains unclear whether these experiences can be upscaled and will lead to better-targeted interventions that reflect the actual needs of the Roma population.

Regarding political participation, members of the Roma have become involved as political representatives at both local and national levels. Mainly in Burgenland, a region traditionally with a high concentration of autochthonous Roma population, Roma are acting in politics. Unfortunately, this research did not identify Roma working in public institutions responsible for implementing the NRSF in Austria. The dialogue platform in Austria

¹² Romano Centro Wien: Projektbeschreibungen und Jahresberichte (<https://www.romano-centro.org>)

¹³ Federal Law Gazette. (2004). *Equal Treatment Act (BGBl. I Nr. 66/2004)*. Available at: <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=20004515>

¹⁴ *Ibidem*.

¹⁵ Federal Chancellery of the Republic of Austria. (2023). *30. Dialogplattform Roma-Strategie [30th Dialogue Platform - Roma Strategy]* – 24. April 2023. Available at: <https://www.bundestkanzleramt.gv.at/themen/volksgruppen/roma-strategie/dialogplattform-roma-strategie/30-dialogplattform-24-april-2023.html>

¹⁶ Reinprecht, Ch., Walch, N., & Nardai, T. (2022). *Studie zur Evaluierung der nationalen Strategie zur Inklusion der Rom*inja in Österreich [Study on the Evaluation of the National Strategy for the Inclusion of Roma in Austria]*, University of Vienna. Available at: <https://sensiropjekt.univie.ac.at/>

brings together representatives of various Roma associations and involves representatives from government agencies, CSOs and experts in science and research. Meetings are held at irregular intervals under the direction of the Roma Contact Centre. Amongst the missions of the Roma Dialogue Platform are the promotion of human rights and the protection against discrimination.

The first Roma Dialogue Platform took place on 27 June 2012. Responsible organisations are mostly associations with large organisational structures, most of which are social service providers. Lately, however, the Ministry also tried to motivate smaller organisations to participate in these projects. On the 24 of January 2023, the platform was dedicated to labour market projects, which were presented there.

Participation begins with approaching, addressing and reaching the addressees. As the SENSIRO study shows, nearly two-thirds of the almost 400 respondents do not know the strategy exists (more details below). Therefore, they are also unaware of the opportunities to get involved in debates about the strategy and its further development.¹⁷ Of the 36% who are aware of it, an above-average number belongs to highly educated, well-integrated people in eastern Austria, especially men and middle-aged people. In contrast, young people under 30, women, less well-integrated people with a lower level of education and people from federal states without ESF-funded measures are not informed. The results clearly show social inequality in the dissemination of information.¹⁸

1.3.1. Involvement of Roma CSOs in implementation

There are two key areas where the involvement of Roma in the implementation of the strategy comes into play: employment and education.

The main pillars of employment in the strategy are the projects co-financed by the ESF and the Ministry of Labour with 4 million EUR each, which achieved a duration of up to seven years through two consecutive calls. Operating under the slogan '*Empowerment of Roma*', they were mainly carried out by large mainstream organisations such as Caritas, Volkshilfe, and others. There was only one *Rom:nja* organisation that successfully implemented an ESF project. A form of participation was guaranteed in the projects, and one of the main criteria was that Roma must also be employed in leading positions in the projects.

On an organisational level, a significant problem was the complex bureaucracy in implementing an ESF-funded project. Organisations without a specialised administrative unit are almost incapable of completing such a project. However, most Roma associations are not equipped with these competencies, which is why their participation remains limited.¹⁹

Even if there is little data available, existing scientific studies and the data from the SENSIRO survey indicate that Roma are disadvantaged within the Austrian education system, which emphasises the need to focus attention on the Roma. The importance of education in improving the living conditions of Roma in Austria was highlighted both by the Roma surveyed as part of the SENSIRO survey and by the numerous experts with whom interviews were conducted.

Within the strategy, action on education mainly consists of a commitment to continue existing measures, which were often established years or decades before the introduction of the strategy framework by Roma associations, and a reference to general structural measures that should also benefit Roma in Austria. Since the Austrian school system fundamentally reproduces inequalities and often has a discriminatory and disadvantageous effect on certain groups, the need for structural changes is undisputed. However, it does not replace the need for a specific Roma strategy, and specific measures tailored to Roma should also be continued and specifically promoted.

When problems in the education sector are addressed, it is very often a question of responsibility: the complex organisation of this sector between the federal government, provinces, municipalities, public institutions, and

¹⁷ University of Vienna. (2022). '*Sensiro*' – Studie zur Evaluierung der nationalen Strategie zur Inklusion der *Rom*nja* in Österreich ['Sensiro' – Study on the Evaluation of the National Strategy for the Inclusion of Roma in Austria], 33f. Available at: <http://sensiro.univie.ac.at/>; <https://www.statistik.at/statistiken/bevoelkerung-und-soziales/bildung/bildungsstand-der-bevoelkerung>

¹⁸ Idem, 38f

¹⁹ SENSIRO study, interviews.

individual training centres makes it difficult to identify responsible bodies and often offers actors opportunities to avoid responsibility, especially when it comes to funding. This circumstance was also problematised several times by the experts who were asked for their assessment as part of the evaluation.

1.3.2. Roma in public institutions implementing the NRSF

Apart from the Roma Dialogue Platform, there is another institution – *Volksgruppenbeirat der Roma* [Roma Minority Advisory Board].²⁰ This institution is a body in Austria that formally represents the interests of the Roma community. Established in 1995 following the recognition of Roma as an official minority group in 1993, it advises the federal government on cultural, social, and economic matters affecting the Roma. There is no coordinating body in which Roma are active that accompanies, evaluates, or monitors the implementation of the strategy.

1.3.3. Roma participation in monitoring and evaluation

The two most important instruments for participation are the Roma dialogue platform and online consultation. However, both formats only reach a small group of already involved people.

A key problem is the lack of public relations work. Many potentially relevant people and local stakeholders are unaware of the NRSF despite their access to hard-to-reach target groups. The design of the dialogue platform is also full of hurdles (e.g. language, time, location), which further limits participation. In addition, it is hardly suitable for reaching new target groups. The power to decide on content and formats lies with the Federal Chancellery, not those affected.

The 2016 online consultation allowed anonymous participation but was only available in German and mainly used by associations. Its results led to strategic prioritisations, some of which were criticised. In future, participation should be considered more fundamentally: The aim should be not only to allow Roma men and women to participate but to enable them to also actively shape and co-determine the process.²¹

1.3.4. Contribution of National Roma Platform to the NRSF implementation

The Austrian 'Roma Dialogue Platform' is the place where the policy and, with it, the administration from which the strategy originates and is implemented, become accessible to people who do not come from the respective sector. In addition to the meetings of the dialogue platform, a workshop track was also established. This format was successfully expanded and extended, especially until 2017, when the focus was on 'establishing the dialogue' (expert interview R, lines 69f). The dialogue platform is considered a 'lighthouse project' by those responsible for the strategy and is also valued by participants.

Above all, the political and official actors who had their say in the interviews and expert questionnaires separate the participants of these events – open to everyone – into clear groups: The people from the administration are contrasted with those from so-called 'civil society'. This usually refers to representatives of Roma associations, Roma who are active as activists or journalists/publicists or who (should) represent the target group in other ways. In addition to these two most important groups, depending on the topic of the dialogue platform, people from academia, politics or CSOs are also invited to share their knowledge and expertise on the topic. The division into two groups (roughly speaking, one could say: 'those responsible' and 'those affected') also

²⁰Federal Law Gazette. (n.d.). Bundes-Verfassungsgesetz [Federal Constitutional Law]. Available at: <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/NormDokument.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=10000602&Artikel=&Paragraf=3&Anlage=&Uebergangsrecht=>

Baumgartner, G. (n.d.). *Roma: Geschichte – Volksgruppe – Kulturverein* [History – Ethnic Group – Cultural Association]. Available at: https://www.erinnern.at/themen/e_bibliothek/roma/388_Baumgartner_%20Roma%20Geschichte-Volksgruppe-Kulturverein.pdf

²¹ University of Vienna. (2022). '*Sensiro*' – Studie zur Evaluierung der nationalen Strategie zur Inklusion der Rom*nja in Österreich ['Sensiro' – Study on the Evaluation of the National Strategy for the Inclusion of Roma in Austria], p. 33f. Available at: <http://sensiro.univie.ac.at/>; <https://www.statistik.at/statistiken/bevoelkerung-und-soziales/bildung/bildungsstand-der-bevoelkerung>

emphasises once again the fundamental divide that runs through the Austrian Roma policy and implementation practice.²²

²² *Idem*, p. 37f.

2. REVIEW BY THEMATIC AREA

2.1. Fighting antigypsyism and discrimination

2.1.1. Effectiveness of the NRSF in addressing the problems

The NRSF has recognised the problem of antigypsyism and negative stereotypes about Roma in Austrian society. An expert group, convened during the Austrian Council presidency, gave clear orientation in the conception phase of the new EU framework.²³ NRSF suggested several measures, mainly focused on raising awareness among the majority population and increasing Roma presence in public discourse.²⁴ However, in the last two years, progress in implementing these measures has been only partial.

In general, discrimination and negative media discourse about travellers in rural areas are constant features throughout lower Austria, such as in press releases and social media campaigns.²⁵

Some progress has been made in the development of educational materials and in raising awareness about Roma and their tragic history. In particular, the *Erinnern.at* Programme (Austria's National Programme for Holocaust Education and Remembrance) promoted by the Austrian Civic Education Agency (OeAD), which operates under the Ministry of Education, has expanded its activities in the last two years. This programme provides teaching materials, training, and projects for teachers, students, and the general public to raise awareness about Roma history, encourage critical reflection on their past, and contribute to preventing antigypsyism and eliminating prejudices against Roma.²⁶

Since the last report in 2023, the Austrian Parliament has celebrated International Roma Day (8 April) and National Minorities Day (12 December) in both 2023 and 2024 to raise awareness 'among parliament members' about Roma as an ethnic group in Austria and contribute to the combat against antigypsyism. Representatives of Roma organisations participated in these events.²⁷

²³ Federal Chancellery of the Republic of Austria. (2019). *Conference on Antigypsyism - How to address Antigypsyism in a post-2020 EU Roma Framework - Expert Recommendations*. Available at: <https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/themen/volksgruppen/roma-strategie.html>

²⁴ Federal Chancellery of Austria. (2021). *Strategie zur Fortführung der Inklusion der Roma in Österreich [Strategy for Continuing Roma Inclusion in Austria]*, pp. 15-17. Available at: <https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/themen/volksgruppen/roma-strategie.html>

²⁵ See for example: ORF Niederösterreich. (2024). *Aufregung um Roma und Sinti in St. Pölten [Uproar over Roma and Sinti in St. Pölten]* [media story, 15 May 2024]. Available at: <https://noe.orf.at/stories/3257172/>

NÖN. (2024). *Aufregung in Gerasdorf: Roma ließen sich auf Zieselwiese nieder [Uproar in Gerasdorf: Roma Settled on a Ziesel Meadow]* [media story, 11 May 2024]. Available at: <https://www.noen.at/korneuburg/im-schutzgebiet-aufregung-in-gerasdorf-roma-liessen-sich-auf-zieselwiese-nieder-421328416>

NÖN. (2024). *Erneut campiert eine Gruppe Sinti/Roma bei der Tullner Südfahrt [Once again, a Group of Sinti/Roma is Camping near the Tulln Southern Bypass]* [media story, 11 May 2024]. Available at: <https://www.noen.at/tulln/fahrendes-volk-erneut-campiert-eine-gruppe-sinti-roma-bei-der-tullner-suedumfahrung-421383804>

²⁶ See: <https://www.erinnern.at/lernmaterialien>

²⁷ Austrian Parliament. (n.d.). *Veranstaltung: 30 Jahre Anerkennung der Roma als Volksgruppe in Österreich [Event: 30 Years of Recognition of the Roma as an Ethnic Group in Austria]*. Available at: <https://www.parlament.gv.at/erleben/veranstaltungen/1192732>
<https://www.parlament.gv.at/erleben/veranstaltungen/1142236?selectedtab=inhalt>

ORF Volksgruppen. (2024). *30 Jahre Anerkennung der Roma als Volksgruppe in Österreich [30 Years of Recognition of the Roma as an Ethnic Group in Austria]*. Available at: <https://volksgruppen.orf.at/roma/meldungen/stories/3279804/>

The NRSF also mentions the re-exhibition of '*Romane-Thana—Orte der Roma und Sinti*' (Romane Thana — Places of the Roma and Sinti] in the Vienna Museum and other regional museums,²⁸ but this has not happened. However, in 2024, several exhibitions were organised in public institutions and museums such as the Austrian Parliament,²⁹ the Austrian Museum of Folk Life and Folk Art, the Carinthian State Museum,³⁰ the Burgenland State Museum³¹ and the Ebensee Museum.³² These exhibitions focused on the Romani language and tragic history of Roma in Austria.

One of the measures outlined in the NRSF is the publication of an '*Antizyganismus Report*' (Antigypsyism Report). Until 2017, the Romano Centro Association published reports documenting cases of antigypsyism in Austria.³³ Since 2018, this association no longer publishes such reports. Since 2018, there have been no other studies or reports that specifically examine or quantify cases of discrimination against the Roma community in Austria.

The ZARA Association publishes the annual '*Rassismuus Report*' (Racism Report), which presents cases of discrimination in general in Austria. Their latest report from 2023 has shown that the number of general racist discrimination cases in the Austrian society is not decreasing.³⁴ Cases of school segregation, abuse by authorities, or welfare exclusion demonstrate that antigypsyism remains widespread and significant in Austria, as shown by newest examples of racism against Roma by police officers,³⁵ cases of segregation of Roma children from Ukraine in schools in Salzburg,³⁶ feelings of discrimination among some Roma children in schools in Vienna,³⁷ and instances of discrimination cases in *Jugendamt* (Youth Welfare Office).³⁸ This shows that documenting cases of antigypsyism, as well as conducting professional and systematic monitoring of such cases across Austria, along with scientific research on this phenomenon, remains necessary.

In the NRSF, hate crimes against Roma and hate speech – both online and offline – are mentioned as forms of discriminatory offences to be targeted. Austria has long had civil society networks such as *Hatecrimekontern*

²⁸ Federal Chancellery of Austria. (2021). *Strategie zur Fortführung der Inklusion der Roma in Österreich* [Strategy for Continuing Roma Inclusion in Austria], p. 16. Available at: <https://www.bundestkanzleramt.gv.at/themen/volksgruppen/roma-strategie.html>

²⁹ Demokratiewebstatt. (n.d.). *Jubiläum '30 Jahre Anerkennung der Roma als Volksgruppe in Österreich'* [Anniversary: '30 Years of Recognition of the Roma as an Ethnic Group in Austria']. Available at: <https://www.demokratiewebstatt.at/aktuelles/news/jubilaum-30-jahre-erkennung-der-roma-als-volksgruppe-in-oesterreich>

³⁰ Initiative Minderheiten. (2024). *Ausstellung: Bomben gegen Minderheiten – Rechter Terror 1993–1996* [Exhibition: Bombs Against Minorities – Right-Wing Terror 1993–1996]. Available at: <https://initiative.minderheiten.at/wordpress/index.php/2024/04/ausstellungbomben-gegen-minderheiten-rechter-terror-1993-1996/>

³¹ Volksgruppen ORF. (2024). *Die österreichische Romanes. Ausstellung im Landhaus Eisenstadt* [The Austrian Romanes: Exhibition at the Eisenstadt Provincial House]. Available at: <https://volksgruppen.orf.at/roma/meldungen/stories/3278341/>

³² Salzkammergut 2024. (2024). *Ceija Stojka. Hoffnung – Das war was uns stärkt* [Ceija Stojka. Hope – That Was What Strengthened Us]. Available at: <https://www.salzkammergut-2024.at/projekte/ceija-stojka-hoffnung/>

³³ These reports were published by the Romano Centro Association between 2013 and 2017.

³⁴ See: Verein ZARA – Zivilcourage & Anti-Rassismus-Arbeit. (2024). *Rassismus Report 2023. Analyse zu rassistischen Übergriffen & Strukturen in Österreich* [Racism Report 2023: Analysis of Racist Attacks and Structures in Austria]. Available at: https://assets.zara.or.at/media/rassismusreport/ZARA-Rassismus_Report_2023.pdf

³⁵ *Idem*, p. 52.

³⁶ Kugler, A. (2024). *Segregation von Roma-Kindern in Salzburger Volksschule* [Segregation of Roma Children in a Salzburg Primary School]. *Romano Centro* 100, p. 10.

³⁷ Interview with the Roma School Mediator.

³⁸ Interview with the activist 1.

(Countering Hate Crime)³⁹ and the *No Hate Speech Komitee (No Hate Speech Committee)*.⁴⁰ The goal of these two networks is to fight hate crime and hate speech and to initiate activities that prevent such offences, both online and offline. These networks include actors from CSOs, scientific institutions, and relevant Austrian ministries. They actively engage in media campaigns to raise awareness about the negative phenomena and the harms of discrimination while promoting and initiating activities and methods to combat it. Among Roma organisations in Austria, Romano Centro Association is a member of both networks.

Over the past two and a half years, specific actions have been developed by government institutions, including the legislative framework related to this issue. Since November 2022, the Austrian police have been recording hate crime cases in criminal reports and regularly publishing reports on these cases.⁴¹ In 2023, the Austrian police identified 6,461 cases of hate crime. However, it is unknown how many of these cases relate to antigypsyism, as such a category does not exist in the report.⁴²

On 17 February 2024, the *DSA-Begleitgesetz* [The Digital Services Act – Accompanying law] came into force, improving the *Hass-im-Netz-Bekämpfungsgesetz* (Hate on the Internet Combat Act) from late 2020.⁴³ The new law accelerated judicial procedures, made it easier to identify perpetrators, eliminated the possibility of victims bearing legal costs, and enabled greater compensation.⁴⁴

Additionally, in the last two years, training and education for police officers and judicial staff on hate crime and hate speech has also significantly increased.⁴⁵ In October 2023, the Austrian Institute for Advanced Studies and the Ministry of the Interior started a two-year study, which among other things analyses possible preventive measures against hate crime and hate speech.⁴⁶ Again, there is no specific training on antigypsyism resentment.

The NRSF called for establishing working groups and advisory councils to combat antigypsyism and improve Roma media representation.⁴⁷ However, this measure has never been implemented, meaning that the proposed councils were never established. The NRSF mentions awareness-raising workshops on antigypsyism in the Federal Administrative Academy and Judiciary.⁴⁸ This measure has been partly implemented, but it has never been evaluated. Some associations, such as Romano Centro, *HochschülerInnenschaft Österreichischer Roma und Romnja* (Austrian Roma and Romnja Student Union, HÖR), and *Wiener Volkshochschule* (Vienna Adult Education Centre) within the framework of the 'Nevo Drom' [...]Project have conducted and continue to conduct awareness-raising workshops for public institutions. However, these workshops are rare, voluntary, and lack a predefined plan. These efforts seem insufficient to sensitise the majority of the society and combat

³⁹ HateCrimeKontern. (n.d.). *Counter Hate Crime – English Information*. Available at: <https://hatecrimekontern.at/en/>

⁴⁰ No Hate Speech Committee Austria. (n.d.). *Komitee Mitglieder* [Committee Members]. Available at: <https://www.nohatespeech.at/komitee/mitglieder/>

⁴¹ Federal Ministry of the Interior (BMI). (2024). *Hate Crime Report 2023*. Available at: https://www.bmi.gv.at/408/Projekt/files/285_2024_Hate_Crime_Bericht_2023_Englisch_V20241009_webBF.pdf

⁴² *Ibidem*.

⁴³ Federal Ministry of Justice. (2020). *Ministerialentwurf für ein zivilrechtliches Hass-im-Netz-Bekämpfungsgesetz* [Ministerial Draft for a Civil Law Hate on the Internet Combat Act]. Available at: https://www.bmj.gv.at/ministerium/gesetzesentwuerfe/entw%C3%BCrfe-2020/hass-im-netz_zivil.html

⁴⁴ Federal Ministry of Justice. (2023). *Entwurf für ein DSA-Begleitgesetz (DSA-BegG)* [Draft for a DSA Accompanying Act (DSA-BegG)]. Available at: [https://www.bmj.gv.at/ministerium/gesetzesentwuerfe/Entw%C3%BCrfe-2023/Entwurf-f%C3%BCr-ein-DSA-Begleitgesetz-\(DSA-BegG\).html](https://www.bmj.gv.at/ministerium/gesetzesentwuerfe/Entw%C3%BCrfe-2023/Entwurf-f%C3%BCr-ein-DSA-Begleitgesetz-(DSA-BegG).html)

⁴⁵ OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). (n.d.). *National Frameworks: Austria*. Available at: <https://hatecrime.osce.org/national-frameworks-austria#capacityBuilding>

⁴⁶ OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). (2023). *Austria – Hate Crime Data*. Available at: <https://hatecrime.osce.org/austria?year=2023>

⁴⁷ Federal Chancellery of Austria. (2021). *Strategie zur Fortführung der Inklusion der Roma in Österreich* [Strategy for Continuing Roma Inclusion in Austria], p. 15.

⁴⁸ *Idem*, p. 16.

antigypsyism, considering that antigypsyism and prejudices against Roma are deeply rooted in Austrian society and institutions.⁴⁹

2.1.2. Addressing the problems beyond the NRSF

The NRSF has not recognised the development and implementation of a National Action Plan against Racism (*Nationaler Aktionsplan gegen Rassismus*). In 2023, the Council of Europe's Advisory Committee called on Austrian authorities to intensify efforts to combat discrimination against Roma.⁵⁰ In September 2020, the European Commission introduced a five-year 'EU Action Plan against Racism', asking member states to adopt national plans against racism and discrimination by the end of 2022. The development of a National Anti-Racism and Anti-Discrimination Strategy was also included in the programme of the Austrian government for 2020–2024.⁵¹ A national strategy has not yet been adopted.

However, some positive steps have been taken, such as the establishment of the '*Kompetenzzentrums für Diversität, Antirassismus und Antidiskriminierung*' (KDA) (Competence Centre for Diversity, Anti-Racism, and Anti-Discrimination) in 2022. It is housed within the Ministry of Culture, Arts, Public Administration, and Sports (*Bundesministerium für Kunst, Kultur, öffentlichen Dienst und Sport*). In 2024, the KDA, in collaboration with representatives of civil society organisations, developed an Anti-Racism Strategy for this ministry. Among other forms, the strategy explicitly recognises antigypsyism as a form of discrimination. Although this strategy is undoubtedly positive, it is limited to only one Ministry and the 23 measures it proposes apply only to employees in culture, arts, sports, and public administration. Although it has been very often presented in public discourse as a general anti-racism strategy, its focus is merely on preventing discrimination within this Ministry and supporting diversity in culture, arts, and sports. This strategy does not address the scope of the problem in society or the broad implementation it should have. Since this strategy was adopted only recently, it is too early to assess its impact.

2.2. Education

2.2.1. Effectiveness of the NRSF in addressing the problems

Education represents one of the most critical areas. Roma in Austria have a significantly lower level of education compared to the majority population. This applies to primary and secondary education, and to the situation in tertiary education. Compared to the majority population, where 17.2% has basic education (17.1%) or no education at all (0.1%), among Roma in Austria, this percentage is 57%.⁵² This mainly involves older people and those with a migrant background. 25% of Roma in Austria have completed an apprenticeship; these are mostly autochthonous Roma.⁵³

The high rate of early school dropouts among Roma children in primary and secondary level of education is a significant problem. Although this rate in Austria is generally lower than the EU average, it is three times higher

⁴⁹ University of Vienna. (2022). '*Sensiro*' – Studie zur Evaluierung der nationalen Strategie zur Inklusion der Rom*nja in Österreich ['Sensiro' – Study on the Evaluation of the National Strategy for the Inclusion of Roma in Austria], p. 175. Available at: <http://sensiro.univie.ac.at/>

⁵⁰ Council of Europe. (2023). *Resolution CM/ResCMN(2023)14 on the Implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by Austria* (Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 13 December 2023). Available at: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/minorities/austria>

⁵¹ Federal Ministry for Arts, Culture, the Civil Service and Sport. (2024). *Antirassismus-Strategie (ARS)* [Anti-Racism Strategy], p. 6. Available at: <https://www.bmkoes.gv.at/Themen/Aktuell/antirassismus-strategie.html>

Verein ZARA – Zivilcourage & Anti-Rassismus-Arbeit. (2024). *Rassismus Report 2023. Analyse zu rassistischen Übergriffen & Strukturen in Österreich* [Racism Report 2023: Analysis of Racist Attacks and Structures in Austria], p. 15. .

⁵² University of Vienna. (2022). '*Sensiro*' – Studie zur Evaluierung der nationalen Strategie zur Inklusion der Rom*nja in Österreich ['Sensiro' – Study on the Evaluation of the National Strategy for the Inclusion of Roma in Austria], pp. 65-66. Available at: <http://sensiro.univie.ac.at/>

⁵³ 21% of the people surveyed had no school qualification (mostly older people and those with a migration background). 36% had only completed compulsory schooling (mainly autochthonous Roma population). 25% had finished an apprenticeship (also mostly autochthonous Roma population). 10% had passed the high school exam (*Matura*), and 8% had a university degree. Regarding the majority population, 17% have completed only primary school, 20.4% have graduated university, and only 0.1% have no school qualification. (*Ibidem*.)

among children of migrant background; and compared to children from the majority population, this disparity is even greater among Roma children. When it comes to early school and training leavers in Austria, the average rate is 8.6% of school children, while among Roma children, according to available data, this percentage is 21%.⁵⁴ Although the number of children of migrant background who have left school prematurely has decreased by approximately 4% over the past three years, it is still nearly twice as high as the EU average.⁵⁵

The main causes of school dropouts are linked to economic, social, and cultural factors. Parents' financial difficulties often force children to leave school early and start working.⁵⁶ Additionally, the lower educational level of parents also plays an important role, as they often do not recognise the importance of education. As one of the interviewed activists pointed out, they do not see the connection between better education and a better quality of life.⁵⁷ For girls, early and forced marriage is sometimes a factor.⁵⁸

Bilingual education and native-language instruction for members of the Roma national minority within the Austrian school system is a big challenge, too. In the province of Burgenland, Roma language education is conducted under *Minderheitenschutzgesetz* (Law on the Rights of National Minorities). In Vienna,⁵⁹ Roma language has been offered since the 2001/02 school year as part of the *freiwillige Muttersprachenunterricht* [Voluntary Mother Tongue Education], which was renamed to *Erstsprachenunterricht* [First Language Instruction] in the 2023/24 school year. In Burgenland, only six children attended bilingual education in the 2022/23 school year,⁶⁰ while in Vienna, fewer than 200 children are enrolled at the moment in Roma language instruction in the scope of *Erstsprachenunterricht*.⁶¹ In other provinces, Romani language is not part of the educational system in any form.

Several obstacles hinder the implementation of measures and greater inclusion of the Roma language in the educational system. First, when enrolling in school, parents of Roma children often do not list Romani as the *Erstsprache* [first language]. Roma usually do not declare themselves as Roma but rather use their citizenship, country of origin, etc. As a result, they are statistically much less visible compared to the actual situation. Given that the teachers for *Erstsprachenunterricht* are contracted based on statistical data, this directly affects the number of teachers and the visibility of the Romani in education.⁶² The second problem is the lack of teaching staff.⁶³ To teach a mother-tongue in schools, one must complete a Pedagogical Academy for Mother Tongue

⁵⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 206.

Interview with the representative of the public authority with responsibility in the key area 2.

⁵⁵ Fundamentally, the proportion of early school and training leavers in Austria, with a rate of 8.6% (2023), remains below the EU average (9.5%). The rate of individuals born abroad decreased to 16% in 2023 (2020: 20.4%), but it was still more than twice as high as that of pupils born in Austria (2023: 6.8%).

Interview with the representative of the public authority with responsibility in the key area 2.

⁵⁶ Interview with the Roma School Mediator.

⁵⁷ Interview with the activist 2.

⁵⁸ Interview with the Roma School Mediator.

⁵⁹ Vienna is the capital of the Republic of Austria and at the same time one of the nine Austrian provinces (federal states).

⁶⁰ Education Directorate Burgenland. (2023). *Mindeheitsschulwesen 2022/23 – Jahresbericht* [Minority School System 2022/23 – Annual Report], pp. 24, 61. Available at: https://www.bildung-bglld.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Downloads/Download-Verwaltung/Minderheiten/Jahresberichte/MSW_BGLD_Jahresbericht_2022-23.pdf

⁶¹ Interview with a Roma native language teacher in Viennese schools.

Five years earlier, in the 2022/23 school year, the number of children was similar: 192.

University of Vienna. (2022). *'Sensiro' – Studie zur Evaluierung der nationalen Strategie zur Inklusion der Rom*nja in Österreich* ['Sensiro' – Study on the Evaluation of the National Strategy for the Inclusion of Roma in Austria], p. 85. Available at: <http://sensiro.univie.ac.at/>.

⁶² Interview with the activist 1.

⁶³ *Ibidem*

Education (*Pädagogische Akademie-Muttersprachliche Ausbildung*),⁶⁴ which complicates the situation. In contrast, it was more flexible in the past, according to one teacher.⁶⁵ An objective challenge is the existence of multiple Romani dialects and no standardised literary language, which also negatively affects overcoming these obstacles.

The NRSF has recognised the challenges in the education sector regarding Roma in Austrian society. It highlights that formal education and preschool attendance rates among Roma are lower compared to the majority population in Austria. Additionally, the NRSF has identified the problem of early school dropout among Roma students. Furthermore, the NRSF points out that the level of education of Roma in Austria still largely depends on social and economic background.

The NRSF outlines both general measures and specific measures aimed directly at Roma. General measures are focused on improving the knowledge of the German language in preschool and school systems for children whose native language is not German, improving the overall quality of preschool education and full-day school formats (*ganztägige Schulformen*), and enhancing the quality of educational counselling services. The NRSF also includes an expansion of adult education opportunities. These measures aim to contribute to a broader structural change in the Austrian education system. It is expected that these changes will ultimately benefit Roma children as well.⁶⁶

The specific measures for Roma that the NRSF includes are aimed at Roma schoolchildren (such as learning assistance programmes and Roma school mediators) and adult education measures. The NRSF also outlines bilingual education in Burgenland and native-language instruction for the members of the Roma community in other provinces.

Regarding specific measures targeted solely at Roma pupils in Austria, the NRSF specifically mentions projects such as 'Roma School Mediation' and 'Learning Aid' for Roma children.⁶⁷ Roma school mediation is a project initiated by the Romano Centro Association, which started in the 2000/2001 school year, while 'Learning Aid' projects are even older. Additionally, in Styria, there is also the initiative '*Chavore*' (Children) implemented since 2017 aimed at integrating Roma children into schools and kindergartens through counselling, administrative and financial support, tutoring and leisure time activities.⁶⁸ These projects improve Roma children's educational opportunities, promote access to education, and support their integration into the school system. Roma school mediators assist Roma children in the educational process and mediate between Roma children, their parents, and teaching staff/schools to support their integration into the education system and ensure their regular school attendance.⁶⁹ In 2024, two Roma school mediators, employed by the Romano Centro Association,⁷⁰ were active in a total of six districts of Vienna, working in three primary schools, two centres for inclusion and special education, and one middle school.⁷¹ There were no other Roma school mediators in the country.

⁶⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁵ Interview with a Roma native language teacher in Viennese schools.

⁶⁶ University of Vienna. (2022). '*Sensiro*' – Studie zur Evaluierung der nationalen Strategie zur Inklusion der Rom*nja in Österreich ['*Sensiro*' – Study on the Evaluation of the National Strategy for the Inclusion of Roma in Austria], p. 63. Available at: <http://sensiro.univie.ac.at/>

⁶⁷ Federal Chancellery of Austria. (2021). *Strategie zur Fortführung der Inklusion der Roma in Österreich* [Strategy for Continuing Roma Inclusion in Austria], p. 12. Available at: <https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/themen/volksgruppen/roma-strategie.html>

⁶⁸ <https://www.caritas-steiermark.at/hilfe-angebote/flucht-integration/bildung-arbeit/chavore-schulunterstuetzung-fuer-romakinder>

⁶⁹ <https://www.romano-centro.org/14-jahresbericht/160-romano-centro-jahresbericht-2024-1>

⁷⁰ See: <https://www.romano-centro.org/images/pdf/RSM.pdf>

⁷¹ Securing funding for the Roma school mediators remains a persistent challenge. In 2025, the project is funded by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research (Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Forschung) and the "Future Fund" (Zukunftsfond), providing 48,000 EUR and 20,000 EUR respectively. In 2024, it was financed solely by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research (47,810 EUR), while in 2023, financial support for this project came from the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research and the Austrian Chamber of Labour (Arbeiterkammer Wien) (48,000 EUR and 25,000 EUR respectively).

Another educational project – ‘Learning Aid’ – offered by the CSO Romano Centro⁷² at two locations in Vienna and at one location in Burgenland. It involves individual or group work by teaching staff with Roma children aged 7 to 15, particularly those from disadvantaged economic and social backgrounds, to improve their educational opportunities.⁷³ In addition, there is a project in Vienna called “Roma-Lernhilfe” (Roma-Teaching help), run by *Die Wiener Volkshochschulen* (VHS, Vienna Adult Education Centres) in cooperation with several Vienna-based Roma CSOs (Romani Bah, Thernipe Wien, and Vida Pavlovic). VHS provides administrative support and premises, while the Roma organisations are responsible for human resources, i.e., the teaching staff. This project is funded by the City of Vienna. In Burgenland, a similar project is implemented by the CSO “Roma-Service.”

The Roma mediation project has been recognised as a ‘best practice model’ by the funding bodies and responsible authorities.⁷⁴ According to one of the school mediators, the dropout rate among Roma children has slightly decreased in the last two years.⁷⁵ School principals have also stated that the attendance of Roma children in the schools is 30% higher when mediators are engaged.⁷⁶ Although ‘Roma School Mediation’ and ‘Learning Aid’ are mentioned in the strategy, it should be noted that both projects existed even before the adoption of the NRSF, i.e. the strategy itself did not lead directly to the initiation or improvement of these projects.

Regarding Romani language education, some measures have been implemented by the government and government bodies, contributing to the progress in this area. From 2021 to 2023, *Bildungsdirektion Burgenland* [Burgenland School Directorate], acting on behalf of the Ministry of Education, developed digital and non-digital teaching materials for Roma language classes in primary and secondary schools.⁷⁷ This project continued in 2024.⁷⁸ Last year, a pilot project on bilingual education was conducted in four kindergartens in Burgenland.⁷⁹ Additionally, the offer of Roma language courses has also increased in Burgenland over the past few years. However, all these measures are limited to Burgenland, with no significant progress in other provinces in the last two years.

As general measures in the NRSF that are not exclusively aimed at the Roma population in Austria, the Ministry of Education implements ‘proven preventive measures’ such as support for learning German, educational and career orientation programmes, increased engagement of social workers in schools, and youth coaching (*Jugendcoaching*).⁸⁰ When it comes to *Frühkindliche Bildung* [Early Education and Childhood Care], all children older than five years have been required to attend preschool in Austria since 2010.⁸¹ Under the agreement

⁷² See: <https://www.romano-centro.org/bildungsangebote>

⁷³ This project receives annual funding of approximately 20,000 EUR from the Federal Chancellery – Department for Ethnic Group Funding (Bundeskanzleramt – Volksgruppenförderung).

⁷⁴ University of Vienna. (2022). ‘*Sensiro*’ – Studie zur Evaluierung der nationalen Strategie zur Inklusion der Rom*inja in Österreich [‘Sensiro’ – Study on the Evaluation of the National Strategy for the Inclusion of Roma in Austria], p. 87. Available at <http://sensiro.univie.ac.at/>.

⁷⁵ Interview with the Roma School Mediator.

⁷⁶ Reference letter from the school director Andrea Habacher for Roma school mediator Vesna Kovacevic.

⁷⁷ Interview with the representative of the public authority with responsibility in the key area 2

University of Vienna. (2022). ‘*Sensiro*’ – Studie zur Evaluierung der nationalen Strategie zur Inklusion der Rom*inja in Österreich [‘Sensiro’ – Study on the Evaluation of the National Strategy for the Inclusion of Roma in Austria], p. 85. Available at <http://sensiro.univie.ac.at/>.

Bildungsdirektion Burgenland. (2023). *Mindeheitsschulwesen 2022/23 – Jahresbericht* [Minority School System 2022/23 – Annual Report], pp. 59–60. Available at: https://www.bildung-bglld.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Downloads/Download-Verwaltung/Minderheiten/Jahresberichte/MSW_BGLD_Jahresbericht_2022-23.pdf

⁷⁸ Interview with the representative of the public authority with responsibility in the key area 2.

⁷⁹ Volksgruppen ORF. (2023). *Neues Konzept für zweisprachigen Elementarunterricht* [New Concept for Bilingual Early Childhood Education]. Available at: <https://volksgruppen.orf.at/roma/meldungen/stories/3213811/>

⁸⁰ Interview with the representative of the public authority with responsibility in the key area 2.

⁸¹ Interview with the representative of the public authority with responsibility in the key area 2.

between the Federal Government and the provinces, 200 million EUR have been allocated for preschools for the period from 2022/23 to 2026/27, of which at least 22.8 million EUR must be dedicated to German language learning support.⁸² Since the 2018/19 school year, 'Deutschförderklassen' [special classes for students who do not speak German] have been introduced. According to one interviewee, the quality of these classes is poor.⁸³ This is likely due to the immense pressure on the education system in Vienna caused by the large influx of children from Ukraine and the Middle East, as well as a shortage of qualified staff. The Federal Government has also increased financial resources to improve full-day school.⁸⁴ For the period from the 2019/20 school year to the 2032/33 school year, through the *Bildungsinvestitionsgesetz* [Education Investment Act], the Federal Government has provided 750 million EUR for the expansion of *ganztätige Schuleformen*.⁸⁵ In the civil sector, Caritas Steiermark is running the 'Chavore' project with the goal of better integration of Roma children into preschools and schools.⁸⁶

2.2.2. Addressing the problems beyond the NRSF

The NRSF neither mentions nor addresses concerns about inequality in the education system. The Ministry of Education and decision-makers claim that the school system is equal and open to all, 'regardless of citizenship, ethnic origin, gender, race, language, and similar factors'. According to them, the Ministry of Education aims to achieve inclusion of vulnerable groups, enhance their equal opportunities, and provide them support.⁸⁷ Although the Austrian school system is undoubtedly open to all children, the authors of the SENSIRO study argue that the Austrian school system is indirectly organised in a discriminatory manner, perpetuating social inequality, which affects mainly the Roma as the most vulnerable social and migrant group.⁸⁸ While legal equality is unquestionable in the Austrian school system, the situation is very often different in practice.

The RCM report for 2021–2023 also mentioned specific challenges faced by Roma children in the education system compared to the majority population.⁸⁹ Although there is generally no segregation of Roma children in Austrian schools – Roma children are not placed in separate classes as in some other EU countries – one such case occurred in Austria in spring 2024: Roma children from Ukraine were segregated into separate classes in Salzburg.⁹⁰ Particularly concerning was the reaction – or lack thereof – of local politicians, including statements from some of them that this was entirely acceptable.⁹¹

98.4 % of the children older than five years attended preschool in 2024.

⁸² Interview with the representative of the public authority with responsibility in the key area 2.

These measures are taken in accordance with Article 15a of the Federal Constitutional Law (B-VG) on elementary education.

⁸³ Interview with the Roma School Mediator.

⁸⁴ Interview with the activist 2.

⁸⁵ Interview with the representative of the public authority with responsibility in the key area 2.

⁸⁶ ORF Volksguppen. (2024). *Schulstart für Romakinder mit Hürden* [School Start for Roma Children with Obstacles]. Available at: <https://volksguppen.orf.at/roma/meldungen/stories/3276596/>

Caritas Steiermark. (n.d.). *Chavore – Schulunterstützung für Romakinder* [Chavore – School Support for Roma Children]. Available at: <https://www.caritas-steiermark.at/hilfe-angebote/flucht-integration/bildung-arbeit/chavore-schulunterstuetzung-fuer-romakinder>

⁸⁷ Interview with the representative of the public authority with responsibility in the key area 2.

⁸⁸ University of Vienna. (2022). '*Sensiro* – Studie zur Evaluierung der nationalen Strategie zur Inklusion der Rom*nja in Österreich' ['Sensiro' – Study on the Evaluation of the National Strategy for the Inclusion of Roma in Austria], pp. 64, 87. Available at <http://sensiro.univie.ac.at/>.

⁸⁹ Roma Civil Monitor. (2022). *Civil Society Monitoring Report on the Quality of the National Strategic Framework for Roma Equality, Inclusion, and Participation in Austria*, pp. 17–18. Available at: <https://romacivilmonitoring.eu/countries/austria/>

⁹⁰ Kugler, A. (2024). *Segregation von Roma-Kindern in Salzburger Volksschule* [Segregation of Roma Children in a Salzburg Primary School]. Romano Centro, 100, p. 10.

⁹¹ *Ibidem*.

Another problem is the relation between the place of residence and the quality of education. According to interviewed individuals,⁹² this connection is becoming increasingly evident in Vienna. This issue affects the non-majority population in general, particularly children of migrant backgrounds, including Roma. Higher-quality schools are located in central districts, while people of migrant background predominantly reside in non-central districts.⁹³ A child can only be enrolled in an elementary school within their district of residence. This connection between the geographic concentration of certain population groups and the quality of education reinforces the educational inequalities.

2.3. Employment

Although there are no recent studies or precise data on Roma in the Austrian labour market, available data from 2015 indicate that Roma are significantly more affected by unemployment compared to the majority population and other minority and migrant groups. According to these data, one in five members of the Roma community in Austria is unemployed. Roma in Austria are 4.5 times more affected by unemployment than the majority population.⁹⁴ This disparity is even more pronounced when it comes to long-term unemployment.⁹⁵ Gainful employment is connected to other areas such as poverty, housing, social protection, and education.

2.3.1. Effectiveness of the NRSF in addressing the problems

The NRSF has addressed the issue of employment. It has recognised the problem of the high unemployment rate among Roma in Austria, particularly the issue of their long-term unemployment. The strategy has highlighted as its main goals in this area the reduction of barriers to employment for socially and economically disadvantaged Roma, especially Roma women, as well as improving access to the labour market for members of the Roma community. It also emphasises several measures to achieve these goals, including the implementation of competence training and qualification measures, as well as organising informational and cultural events for the target group, thematically focusing on employment and the labour market.⁹⁶

The Ministry of Labour has implemented a special guideline for Roma projects for the labour market. According to the guideline, the measures serve to target unemployment and to combat the entrenchment of unfavourable living conditions of Roma due to a lack of integration and inclusion in the labour market.⁹⁷ As mentioned above, in past years, the Roma Dialogue Platform was dedicated to foster experience exchange, policy dialogue and exposure of intervention practices in the field of employment policies and measures.⁹⁸

Some Roma, and several non-Roma CSOs, which partly collaborate with Roma CSOs, run projects that implement the aforementioned measures within their activities. These activities include expanding competencies and skill development, acquiring qualifications for specific jobs, providing counselling and support in job searching and application processes, informing about opportunities, offering German language courses, and more.

⁹² Interview with the activist 1; Interview with the Roma School Mediator; Interview with the activist 2.

⁹³ Interview with the activist 1; Interview with the Roma School Mediator.

⁹⁴ Schmatz, S., & Wetzel, P. (2015). *Zugewanderte Roma/Romnja. Ein Blick auf deren Bildungs- und Beschäftigungssituation in Wien* [Migrant Roma: A Look at Their Education and Employment Situation in Vienna]. In *Romane Thana. Orte der Roma und Sinti*. Eine Kooperation von Wien Museum, Landesmuseum Burgenland, Initiative Minderheiten, Romano Centro. Katalog zur Ausstellung, ed. Andrea Härle (Vienna: Czernin Verlag), p. 146.

⁹⁵ Federal Chancellery of Austria. (2021). *Strategie zur Fortführung der Inklusion der Roma in Österreich* [Strategy for Continuing Roma Inclusion in Austria], p. 12.

⁹⁶ *Idem*, pp. 12-13.

⁹⁷ Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy. (2022). *Sonderrichtlinien des Bundesministeriums für Arbeit und Wirtschaft 'Roma Empowerment für den Arbeitsmarkt 2023–2030'* [Special Guidelines of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy 'Roma Empowerment for the Labour Market 2023–2030']. Available at: <https://www.bmaw.gv.at/Themen/Arbeitsmarkt/Arbeitsmarktpolitik.html>

⁹⁸ Federal Chancellery of Austria. (2023). *30. Dialogplattform, 24. April 2023 – Dialogplattform mit dem Schwerpunktthema 'Roma Empowerment für den Arbeitsmarkt'* [30th Dialogue Platform, 24 April 2023 – Dialogue Platform on the Topic 'Roma Empowerment for the Labour Market']. Available at: <https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/themen/volksgruppen/roma-strategie/dialogplattform-roma-strategie/30-dialogplattform-24-april-2023.html>.

The Ministry of Labour and Economic Affairs funds many of these projects and activities. From 2015 to 2022, this ministry financed these projects within the framework of the European Social Fund. Since the end of 2022, the projects are financed solely by the Ministry of Labour and Economic Affairs under the programme 'Empowerment for Roma' (more details in Chapter 3.2). The Ministry of Labour and Economic Affairs is the only Austrian ministry with specific guidelines and financial resources directed towards Roma.⁹⁹

It is currently difficult to empirically measure the effectiveness of these projects and to what extent the measures from the NRSF have been successfully implemented through these projects in the last two years. According to the representative of the Ministry of Labour and Economic Affairs, evaluation of these projects is planned for 2025.¹⁰⁰ Interviews conducted for this review have found positive opinions about these projects.¹⁰¹ Counterparts from Roma rights groups, public administration and political representation assessed the projects as successful and applied, emphasising that they are exclusively targeted towards Roma, which is a unique case among Austrian ministries.

In December 2023, the Austrian Parliament approved a four-year project titled '*Level Up – Erwachsenenbildung*' (Level Up – Adult Education), worth 170 million EUR, designed to help young people and adults to gain basic skills and qualifications even after finishing school.¹⁰² This programme is intended for the most vulnerable groups in Austria, and 91% of the participants are of migrant origin.¹⁰³ Although this measure is not explicitly aimed at Roma, they also benefit from it.

The Public Employment Service (*Arbeitsmarktservice*) is the first point of contact for job seekers and employers, and its potential is significant. However, the Public Employment Service does not have programmes or projects specifically aimed at the employment of Roma. Moreover, the Public Employment Service is neither directly nor indirectly connected to associations, which run labour market projects funded by the Ministry of Labor and Economic Affairs.¹⁰⁴

Additionally, the Public Employment Service has a Youth Department (*AMS Jugendliche*), which works to connect young people aged 15 to 25 with the labour market.¹⁰⁵ However, within the work of AMS Jugendliche, there are also no programmes targeted explicitly at Roma or personnel specifically tasked with supporting young Roma in the employment process. There are no direct or specific programmes for young Roma people ages 18 or 25. However, AMS offers only programmes that support young people through counselling, information, and assistance in obtaining qualifications and finding employment. One such programme is *KOST Wien-Ausbildung-Beruf* (KOST Vienna – Education and Career Coordination Office).¹⁰⁶

2.3.2. Addressing the problems beyond the NRSF

The issue of discrimination in the labour market by employers, which remains a significant problem, is not mentioned in the NRSF. Regarding workplace discrimination, interviewed individuals (an expert and an activist)

⁹⁹ Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy. (2022). *Sonderrichtlinien des Bundesministeriums für Arbeit und Wirtschaft 'Roma Empowerment für den Arbeitsmarkt 2023–2030'* [Special Guidelines of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy 'Roma Empowerment for the Labour Market 2023–2030']. Available at: <https://www.bmaw.gv.at/Themen/Arbeitsmarkt/Arbeitsmarktpolitik.html>.

¹⁰⁰ Interview with the representative of the public authority with responsibility in the key area 1.

¹⁰¹ Activists from the CSO sector (Interview with the activist 2).

An interviewed member of the Austrian Parliament (Interview with the member of the National Parliament), and representatives of Austrian public institutions (Interview with the expert).

Interview with the representative of the public authority in charge of the NRCP.

Interview with the representative of the public authority with responsibility in the key area 1.

¹⁰² Interview with the representative of the public authority with responsibility in the key area 2.

¹⁰³ Level-UP Erwachsenenbildung. (2023). *Executive Summary: Monitoring Report HJ1 2023*. Available at: https://www.levelup-erwachsenenbildung.at/DOWNLOADS/monitoring/monitoringberichte/ExSum_Bericht_HJ1_2023.pdf

¹⁰⁴ Interview with the expert.

¹⁰⁵ <https://www.ams.at/regionen/wien/geschaeftsstellen/ams-wien-jugendliche-1-sfa>.

¹⁰⁶ <https://www.kost-wien.at/ausbildung-bis-18/>

believe that such cases exist but are never directly expressed, or, as one interviewee stated, it is "subtle and rarely direct". It occurs in the form of Roma being given the worst working conditions, the most unfavourable shifts, denied bonuses, and similar practices. This is compounded by a lack of awareness of labour rights and language barriers, worsening the situation. According to the interviewed activist, it is often unclear where the line lies in terms of discrimination – whether these cases occur as a result of widespread discrimination against foreigners, discrimination specifically against Roma, or even a combination of both.¹⁰⁷

2.4. Healthcare

Authorities highlight that healthcare services in Austria are available to all citizens.¹⁰⁸ However, some Roma individuals still require support in accessing information about the healthcare system and developing health literacy. For many, particularly Roma women, barriers to accessing the full range of health services remain high.¹⁰⁹ Organising targeted information events could be an effective measure to enhance awareness and understanding of available healthcare services in Austria.

Effectiveness of the NRSF in addressing the problems

The NRSF does not address healthcare services or health-promoting actions in particular.

There have been studies on the health of Roma, but there appears to be room for improvement in the implementation of the recommended measures.

All Austrian citizens in employment are compulsorily insured. People who receive unemployment benefits are also covered by health insurance. However, entitlement to unemployment benefits is also subject to certain conditions,^{110,111} leaving some people without insurance.

In the case of Roma who are not EU citizens, the problem is that they fall into the systems gap.

Sometimes, medical care may be denied by the attending physician if the patient is not insured. In emergency treatment, however, there is an obligation to treat patients. In principle, people without a residence permit are also entitled, but this is usually not without conflict. There are facilities that offer free care for those people without health insurance.^{112,113}

As far as the reasons and causes are concerned, non-insurance among Austrian citizens can generally be linked to exceptional status transitions, a lack of personal resources, a lack of information and, in some cases, specific 'gaps in the system', e.g. Austrians living abroad who return after a long absence or people who have missed a deadline in a procedure or are waiting for a benefit to be granted. EU citizens and other migrants without insurance coverage generally are not gainfully employed and have not yet lived in Austria for five years or cannot provide proof of permanent residence. This means that they are not entitled to social benefits. In some cases, these are also people who are in Austria 'on a visit' or for medical treatment or tourists, primarily from poorer, eastern EU states. In the case of asylum seekers, who are generally covered by federal health insurance, the reason for non-insurance is usually a change of residence without an application, which means that basic care is lost.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁷ Interview with the activist 2.

¹⁰⁸ Roma Civil Monitor. (2022). *Civil Society Monitoring Report on the Quality of the National Strategic Framework for Roma Equality, Inclusion, and Participation in Austria*. Available at: <https://romacivilmonitoring.eu/countries/austria/>

¹⁰⁹ University of Vienna. (2022). 'SENSIRO' – Studie zur Evaluierung der nationalen Strategie zur Inklusion der Romnja in Österreich ['SENSIRO' – Study on the Evaluation of the National Strategy for the Inclusion of Roma in Austria], p. 100f. Available at: https://sensiropjekt.univie.ac.at/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/SENSIRO_Endbericht.pdf

¹¹⁰ <https://www.sozialversicherung.at/cdscontent/?contentid=10007.821628&portal=svportal>

¹¹¹ <https://www.ams.at/arbeitsuchende/arbeitslos-was-tun/geld-vom-ams/arbeitslosengeld>

¹¹² <https://www.ropeskreuz.at/wien/ich-brauche-hilfe/medizinische-versorgung-ohne-versicherung>

¹¹³ <https://www.sozialversicherung.at/cdscontent/?contentid=10007.845161&portal=svportal>

¹¹⁴ <https://www.sozialversicherung.at/cdscontent/?contentid=10007.845161&portal=svportal>

Roma need better German skills to benefit from the health system and health insurance companies or interpreters, or more Roma in healthcare staff to build up health knowledge (esp. knowledge about diseases).¹¹⁵ Recommended is an accompaniment in the health service by trusted persons and building up education and sensitisation. Due to late entry into medical care, low health literacy, lack of adherence to appointments, and lack of financial resources, Roma cannot profit enough from the existing health services in Austria.

Formulating a public health policy directly addressing health care provision for vulnerable groups (like Roma), linking public health services to existing CSO structures, and developing models of public-private partnerships for the provision of a service¹¹⁶ would ensure an accessible and inclusive healthcare service delivery.

A more targeted study published in 2020 examined the reasons why Roma families with young children often do not access available health services.¹¹⁷ The study's recommendations to address this gap included the training and deployment of health mediators from within Roma communities, the development of low-threshold and outreach services, promotion of health literacy, awareness-raising among healthcare professionals, and, most importantly, improving the overall living conditions of Roma populations.¹¹⁸ Despite these recommendations, health mediator programmes have not yet been implemented in Austria.

2.4.1. Addressing the problems beyond the NRSF

Austrian health services, at regional or municipal level, do not usually have a strategy that would aim to reach out to the Roma population and compensate their disadvantages.

2.5. Housing, essential services, and environmental justice

Roma suffer discrimination when searching for a flat. In 2023, a research institute SORA conducted a general study about discrimination in housing in Austria with alarming results.¹¹⁹ For example, applicants with foreign names were not invited to view the flat in 62% of cases. Also, structurally racist comments from brokers were documented, such as 'You won the lottery; you are the first Austrian who called today'.

2.5.1. Effectiveness of the NRSF in addressing the problems

NRSF does not account for housing as a highly significant problem. As mentioned above, we see a 'first step' in allowing studies like the one from SORA to address the issue.¹²⁰

2.5.2. Addressing the problems beyond the NRSF

There are social centres in Austria that offer counselling on the issue of housing. These services are also available to Roma.¹²¹

2.6. Social protection

¹¹⁵ Trummer, U., Novak-Zezula, S., Renner, A., & Wilczewska, I. (2015). *Cost Analysis of Health Care Provision for Irregular Migrants and EU Citizens Without Insurance*. Commissioned by IOM, RO Brussels, Migration Health Division in the Framework of the EQUI-Health Project 'Fostering Health Provision for Migrants, the Roma, and Other Vulnerable Groups'. Available at: http://c-hm.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Policy_Brief_CHM_V12_Austria.pdf

¹¹⁶ *Ibidem*.

¹¹⁷ Weigl, M., Winkler, P., & Haas, S. (2020). *Sasto Chavoripe – Soziale Inklusion von Roma durch Frühe Hilfen. Ergebnisse der Literaturrecherche* [Sasto Chavoripe – Social Inclusion of Roma through Early Support. Results of the Literature Review], Gesundheit Österreich. Available at: https://goeg.at/Inklusion_Roma_Fruehe_Hilfen

¹¹⁸ *Ibidem*.

¹¹⁹ SORA. (2023). *You Won the Lottery, You Are the First Austrian Who Called: Ethnic Discrimination on the Housing Market*.

¹²⁰ *Ibidem*.

¹²¹ <https://www.vereinwohnen.at/noe-erstberatung/>

https://sozialinfo.noegov.at/content/de/9/InstitutionDetail.do?it_1=7342645

<https://www.caritas.at/hilfe-angebote/online-sozialberatung/wohnen-miete>

2.6.1. Effectiveness of the NRSF in addressing the problems

Homeless Roma immigrants, in particular, fall through the cracks of the social welfare system in Austria. They are also not included in the NRSF.¹²²

Social support is always mentioned in a general sense for all citizens in Austria, and this also applies to Roma, as it were, but as written above, they often fall through the cracks due to the incapacity to respond to the administrative requirements for entitlements or services, or other access barriers to claim them.¹²³

Eligibility requirements for social benefits are bound to Austrian citizenship, persons entitled to asylum and permanently settled foreigners, EU/EEA citizens, Swiss nationals and third-country nationals who have resided in Austria for at least five years, as well as persons entitled to subsidiary protection who only receive core social assistance benefits. Roma often do not meet those requirements.¹²⁴

The SENSIRO survey emphasises the importance of the topic of poverty and material living conditions, although it can be assumed that the results offer a realistic picture due to the carefully considered sample, i.e. that they neither overestimate nor underestimate the problem of poverty and material hardship.¹²⁵

Although the questionnaire included questions about the income available to the respondents' households, other variables were used as decisive measures for determining the material living situation. Firstly, expenditure-based questions were included, which are also becoming increasingly popular in international research, as they provide information on what individuals or households can (or cannot) afford over a specific period, regardless of often imprecise information on income. Secondly, respondents were asked about their subjective perception of whether they feel burdened by financial worries and how they assess the development of their income situation.¹²⁶

2.6.2. Addressing the problems beyond the NRSF

Many Roma are living in highly precarious conditions, especially in the Western provinces, and are dependent on low-threshold services, such as the Caritas contact projects or the support of CSOs like the *Waldhüttl* or the *Bettellobby* (Begging Advocacy Group), which are not recognised by the NRSF). People involved in institutions and projects such as those mentioned above often criticise the fact that the life situations they try to improve every day in their work are not taken into account by the strategy. They argue that the services offered by the strategy are too demanding for these groups and fail to reach the grassroots level.¹²⁷

2.7. Social services

2.7.1. Effectiveness of the NRSF in addressing the problems

Social services are not addressed as a significant problem in the NRSF. These approaches allow a more nuanced understanding of poverty among Roma in Austria, recognising the limitations of traditional income-based

¹²² Federal Chancellery of Austria. (2021). *Strategie zur Fortführung der Inklusion der Roma in Österreich* [Strategy for Continuing Roma Inclusion in Austria]. Available at: <https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/dam/jcr:b556a06c-cd86-4b3d-a492-815c8a1bfb84/Strategie%20Roma%20Inklusion.pdf>

¹²³ University of Vienna. (2022). 'Sensiro' - Studie zur Evaluierung der nationalen Strategie zur Inklusion der Rom*nja in Österreich ['Sensiro' - Study on the Evaluation of the National Strategy for the Inclusion of Roma in Austria], p. 120. Available at: <http://sensiro.univie.ac.at/>

¹²⁴ *Anspruchsvoraussetzungen* [Eligibility Requirements]. Available at: <https://www.sozialministerium.at/Themen/Soziales/Sozialhilfe-und-Mindestsicherung/Anspruchsvoraussetzungen.html>

¹²⁵ Measuring material living conditions has long been a challenge in social science research. In this survey, income was not used as an indicator because experience has shown that income-related questions are often difficult to address and can lead to fundamental reliability issues in the data collected.

University of Vienna. (2022). 'Sensiro' - Studie zur Evaluierung der nationalen Strategie zur Inklusion der Rom*nja in Österreich ['Sensiro' - Study on the Evaluation of the National Strategy for the Inclusion of Roma in Austria], p. 119. Available at: <http://sensiro.univie.ac.at/>

¹²⁶ *Idem*, p. 120.

¹²⁷ <https://www.caritas.at/spenden-helfen/auslandshilfe/auslandsprojekte/europa/detail-auslandsprojekt-europa/news/72626-bildung-schenkt-roma-kindern-zukunft-rumaenien/>

indicators and highlighting subjective and practical dimensions of economic insecurity. Social support is mentioned in a general sense for all citizens in Austria, and this also applies to Roma, as it were, but they often fall through the cracks due to a lack of requirements for entitlements or services.¹²⁸

2.7.2. Addressing the problems beyond the NRSF

Austrian social services, at regional or municipal level, do not usually have a strategy that would aim to reach out to the Roma population and compensate for their disadvantages.

Volkshilfe (People's Welfare Association), an Austrian CSO supporting organisations for social projects, offers financial help with education funding and acute emergencies.¹²⁹

2.8. Child protection

2.8.1. Effectiveness of the NRSF in addressing the problems

In Austria child protection is considered to be of general importance. The Ministry for Women and Integration published a special guideline for child protection, but not especially for Roma children.¹³⁰

2.8.2. Addressing the problems beyond the NRSF

Roma organisations address child protection in the context of social counselling and social workers who advise parents with their children. In Austria, there are various sensitisation concepts in child protection, as well as events and courses for parents and carers financed by public services.¹³¹ For more than 20 years, the brochure (*Kein sicherer Ort*) ((Not) a Safe Place) has been an essential working tool for child protection which provides information on various forms of violence against children and young people and raises awareness of how to recognise signs of physical, sexualised or psychological violence. Various reporting and notification obligations for professional groups working with children and young people are addressed, and the brochure is aimed at members of the educational, psychosocial, and medical professions.

'Child protection centres' are located all over Austria, the primary task of a child protection centre is to offer counselling, crisis intervention, and psychotherapy in cases of violence or suspected violence against children and young people. If necessary, legal support, visiting support and child counselling are offered. These services are aimed at affected children and young people themselves, their families and carers, including the people who perpetrate the violence, as well as anyone who is confronted with the problem of violence against children and young people in their professional or private lives. By violence, we mean physical, psychological and sexual violence as well as neglect.¹³² The Austrian child protection system has not adapted explicitly to potential specific needs or access barriers that would aim specifically to reach out to the Roma children and compensate for their disadvantages.

2.9. Promoting (awareness of) Roma arts, culture, and history

2.9.1. Effectiveness of the NRSF in addressing the problems

¹²⁸ University of Vienna. (2022). '*Sensiro*' – Studie zur Evaluierung der nationalen Strategie zur Inklusion der Rom*nja in Österreich ['Sensiro' – Study on the Evaluation of the National Strategy for the Inclusion of Roma in Austria], p. 120. Available at: <http://sensiro.univie.ac.at/>

¹²⁹ Volkshilfe Österreich. (n.d.). *Finanzielle Unterstützung für Roma und Sinti* [Special Financial Help for Roma and Sinti]. Available at: <https://www.spendeninfo.at/finanzielle-unterstuetzung-fuer-roma-und-sinti-volkshilfe+2400+1122635>

¹³⁰ Bundeskanzleramt Österreich. (n.d.). *Sonderrichtlinie für Gewaltschutz und Prävention* [Special Guideline for Protection from Violence and Prevention]. Available at: <https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/agenda/familie/begleitung-beratung-hilfe/gewalt-in-familie/foerderung-kinderschutz-und-gewaltpraevention.html>

¹³¹ <https://www.schutzkonzepte.at/kinderschutz-in-oesterreich/>

¹³² <https://www.oe-kinderschutzzentren.at/qualitaetskriterien>

There are several festivals and events promoting Roma culture in Austria. *Romano Svato – E bistarde – Festival* is a theatre festival funded by several Austrian organisations and the Ministry of Art.¹³³

The date of 8 April commemorates the beginnings of the Roma civil rights movement with the First World Roma Congress, which took place in London on 8 April 1971.¹³⁴ On 8 April, there are several events which are funded by the public sector. For example, a commemorative event on the occasion of International Roma Day ‘ROMNJA Kraft.Sor Remembrance – Change – Awakening’,¹³⁵ took place in 2024. In 2025, the yearly event was focused on the remembrance of the 1995 attack against Roma in Burgenland.

Cultural events such as concerts and discussions organised by the ‘Voice of Diversity’ organisation receive public sector funding. Additionally, 2 August 2024 was officially declared National Roma Day in Austria, serving as an important occasion to remember the victims and raise awareness among future generations about Roma history and issues.

In 2023, an exhibition titled ‘Das österreichische Romanes’ [Austrian Roma] was held, focusing on the history and diversity of the Roma language.¹³⁶ The exhibition was based on a digital research archive called ‘The [Romani] Project’, which documents and curates the Romani language. This project is primarily funded by the National Minorities Programme of the Austrian Federal Chancellery. The exhibition took place in the Austrian Parliament, highlighting the significance of the topic to the ministry.

In Burgenland, a Roma Ball is held annually, organised by the Roma community and funded by the public sector.¹³⁷

2.9.2. Addressing the problems beyond the NRSF

There are several initiatives promoting Roma culture, such as a ‘Romanes’ language course offered in Vienna.¹³⁸

¹³³ <https://www.dschungelwien.at/festival-e-bistarde>

¹³⁴ https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internationaler_Tag_der_Roma

¹³⁵ <https://www.parlament.gv.at/erleben/veranstaltungen/1192732?selectedtab=inhalt>

¹³⁶ <https://akademie-graz.at/programme/das-oesterreichische-romanes/>

¹³⁷ <https://hango-roma.at/projekte/>

¹³⁸ Romanes Course in VHS Brigittenau, www.vhs.at

3. FOCUS ON KEY PROBLEMS AFFECTING ROMA

3.1. Placement of Roma pupils in special schools

3.1.1. Effectiveness of the NRSF in addressing the problem

The misplacement of Roma children into so-called *Sonderschulen* (special schools) has become significantly more frequent in the Austrian school system in the last two years.¹³⁹ The NRSF does not mention this issue or include any measures addressing it. The increased misplacement of Roma children into *Sonderschulen* is the result of several factors. The first factor is the insufficient sensitivity of teaching staff, ranging from a lack of understanding of the socio-economic situation of Roma children to outright discrimination.¹⁴⁰ The second factor is the strain on the Austrian education system in the last two years caused by the influx of a large number of children from Ukraine and the Middle East, as well as a shortage of teaching staff and specialists.¹⁴¹ Due to this overwhelming pressure, teaching staff have increasingly resorted to more radical measures, such as transferring children to *Sonderschulen*. The third factor is parents' lack of knowledge about procedures, leading them to sign documents without fully understanding the process, without proper consultation, etc.¹⁴² Language barriers also play a role, as the same tests are applied to children who do and do not have sufficient command of German. As a result, children are sometimes sent to *Sonderschulen* due to language barriers rather than actual needs.¹⁴³

Awareness-raising workshops and lectures for teachers and other school staff would help reduce prejudices against Roma children and raise awareness of the problems faced by Roma children and their parents. Although some associations offer thematic workshops and lectures, they must be more comprehensive. Additionally, improving general conditions in the Austrian education system, addressing the shortage of teaching and specialist staff, and greater focus by the educational institutions and decision-makers on the problems Roma children face would help overcome these obstacles.

3.1.2. Synergy with other actions

There have been no significant changes regarding the placement of Roma children in *Sonderschule*. Non-governmental organisations, such as Romano Centro, through their counselling services, assist parents whose children have been unjustly placed or are at risk of being placed in *Sonderschule*. Unfortunately, there are no statistical data, studies or articles on this issue. The data about this issue is collected by this report from other sources, primarily from school mediators, social workers and activists of Roma CSOs who face these problems on a daily basis.¹⁴⁴

Additionally, learning aid projects offered by several Roma CSOs can improve the school performance of Roma pupils, as many children are placed in special classes because their parents do not have the time, language skills, or expertise to support their kids in the learning process and school tasks. It should be noted that since April 2021, the Ministry of Education has offered free phone and video interpreting services in 61 languages to improve communication between parents, children, and teachers.¹⁴⁵ However, there is no available data on how much this measure has helped.

¹³⁹ This Information is based on information gathered in an interview with a Roma school mediator, social worker and a Roma-activist (Interview with the Roma School Mediator; Interview with the activist 1.)

¹⁴⁰ *Ibidem*.

¹⁴¹ Interview with the activist 1.

¹⁴² *Ibidem*.

¹⁴³ *Ibidem*.

¹⁴⁴ The last scientific article about this issue is from 2008:

Luciak, M. (2008). *Roma in Sonderschulen – eine Herausforderung für die Heilpädagogik Mittel- und Osteuropa* [Roma in special schools – A challenge for remedial education in Central and Eastern Europe].

¹⁴⁵ Interview with the representative of the public authority with responsibility in the key area 2; <https://www.bmbwf.gv.at/Themen/schule/beratung/videodolmetsch.html>

3.1.3. Roma participation

In recent years, representatives of Roma associations have had the opportunity to influence decisions related to education through the Roma Dialogue Platform, organised by the National Roma Contact Point (NCRP). In the last two years, three dialogue platforms have been organised, two of which focused thematically on education.¹⁴⁶ The topics of these two dialogue platforms were 'Romani Language and Identity' and 'The Genocide of Roma and Sinti and How It Is Taught in Schools'. At these platforms, representatives of government institutions discuss issues with representatives of Roma organisations, but unfortunately, in practice, Roma have little real influence on the final decisions made. Both interviewed activists stated that they have no impact on the selection of topics or the outcomes of the discussions within the Roma Dialogue Platform.¹⁴⁷ The selection of topics and the working methods of the platform are not conducted in consultation with Roma associations, but only with the chairman of the *Volksgruppenbeirat* (Ethnic Group Advisory Council) for Roma.

Once a year, the Ministry of Education organises the so-called *Forum Minderheitenschulwesen* (Forum for Minority School Education), where minority languages in the education system are discussed.¹⁴⁸ Representatives from the education sector and representatives from the CSOs take part in this forum. The NRSF foresees the involvement of Roma civil society representatives in the work of the Forum Minderheitenschulwesen. The interviewed representatives of Roma organisations from Vienna are unaware of this forum and do not participate in its work, either actively or passively. The Forum Minderheitenschulwesen primarily concerns bilingual education in Burgenland and Carinthia. The issue of placement of Roma children in Sonderschulen was not discussed at this forum either. Apart from the Roma Dialogue Platform, Roma individuals or associations are not part of the teams within public institutions that work on implementing the national strategy in the field of education.

The issue of placement of Roma children into special schools was not dealt with in the *Roma Dialogue Platform*. While the NRSF foresees the *Zivilgesellschaftliche Roma-VertreterInnen in die Arbeit des Forum Minderheitenschulwesen einbinden* (Involvement of Roma Representatives from Civil Society in the Work of the Forum on Minority Education), we are not aware of any Roma organisations or individuals being involved in discussions, projects, or programmes dealing with Sonderschulen in Austria.

3.2. Barriers and successful approaches for Roma inclusion in employment

3.2.1. Effectiveness of the NRSF in addressing the problem

The NRSF has highlighted as its main goals in this area the reduction of barriers to employment for socially and economically disadvantaged Roma, especially Roma women, as well as improving access to the labour market for members of the Roma community. Specific barriers that hinder or complicate the employment and inclusion of Roma in the labour market need to be linked with the issue of education. Centuries of segregation and discrimination against Roma in Austria have influenced a lower level of education among Roma compared to the majority population, and consequently, to their worse position in the labour market. As the expert interviewees pointed out, the poorer starting positions and generally lower education levels of members of the Roma community (still) negatively affect their position in the labour market in Austria. The situation is further exacerbated by some employers' still partially present discrimination. Although it is more subtle, less open, public, and documented, according to one of the activists, Roma are still exposed to poorer working conditions, lower wages, etc., which further worsens their situation.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁶ These were Roma Dialogue Platform 31 and 32:

<https://www.bundestkanzleramt.gv.at/themen/volksgruppen/roma-strategie/dialogplattform-roma-strategie.html>;

31st Dialogue Platform, 25 January 2024: *Dialogplattform mit dem Schwerpunktthema 'Romanes – Sprache und Identität'* [Dialogue Platform Focusing on the Theme 'Romanes – Language and Identity']

32nd Dialogue Platform, 17 June 2024: *Dialogplattform mit dem Schwerpunktthema 'Jahresschwerpunkt ERINNERN:AT – Genozid an Roma und Sinti und dessen schulische Vermittlung'* [Dialogue Platform Focusing on the Theme 'Annual focus ERINNERN:AT – Genocide of Roma and Sinti and its teaching in schools']

¹⁴⁷ Interview with the activist 1; Interview with the activist 2.

¹⁴⁸ <https://www.bildung-bgld.gv.at/news-presse/detail/article/forum-minderheitenschulwesen-2024>

¹⁴⁹ Interview with the activist 2.

The connection between education and the labour market witnesses a difference between immigrant and autochthonous Roma. Roma from other countries face problems in Austria, in addition to language barriers and the problem of unrecognised foreign diplomas. As a result, they often take jobs below their level of qualification. One of the activists emphasised the issue of diploma recognition as particularly important for this group of Roma, identifying the lack of information about the recognition process and the organisations or institutions that can assist them in this process as the main problem.¹⁵⁰ This is about diplomas from all levels of education, but most frequently the Apprenticeship Certificates.

Unresolved everyday financial and social issues also have a negative impact and represent significant barriers to the employment and integration of Roma into the labour market. Financial challenges, which have become particularly pronounced following the COVID-19 crisis and the war in Ukraine – due to inflation and rising living costs over the past two years – include financial instability, loan debts, execution proceedings, unpaid heating and rent bills, and even the inability to cover basic food expenses.¹⁵¹ Social issues that counsellors in Roma organisations face daily include unresolved work permit status, unresolved family relationships, and lack of childcare, unresolved housing issues, mental load, and more.¹⁵² Solving these social and economic problems is often a prerequisite for these individuals to even consider employment and become suitable for the labour market.

One activist noted that patriarchal and cultural factors still negatively affect Roma employment, particularly that of Roma women.¹⁵³ Patriarchal and conservative views on the role of women in the family, although significantly less prevalent than in the past, continue to hinder efforts to remove barriers and increase the employment rate of Roma women. Additionally, members of the Roma community are often unaware of opportunities and state support programmes, which adversely impacts their chances of securing adequate employment.

The practice has shown that solving everyday social and financial issues and stabilising the daily living conditions of Roma is a crucial prerequisite for their successful integration into the labour market. Through the holistic approach that CSOs predominantly use in their labour market projects and the understanding of the target group's social and cultural background, significant progress has been made in this area.¹⁵⁴ Projects, measures, and programmes in this direction should continue to be supported and certainly expanded.

Additionally, projects aimed at qualifying and training Roma for specific jobs and integrating them into the labour market, such as those implemented by BFI Wien¹⁵⁵ and VHS Brigittenau¹⁵⁶ with financial support from the Ministry of Labour and Economic Affairs, have also had positive and direct effects.¹⁵⁷ The expert stated that it would be beneficial to financially support projects that aim to qualify Roma for better-paid and more attractive jobs, rather than focusing solely on the least desirable ones, as has been the case so far.¹⁵⁸

It is also necessary to improve the accessibility of information for members of the Roma community. This primarily refers to better access to information about appropriate training courses, employment and education support programmes, diploma recognition and organisations that provide assistance in these processes.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibidem*.

¹⁵¹ Interview with the activist 2; Interview with the activist 1; Interview with the expert.

¹⁵² Interview with the activist 1.

¹⁵³ Interview with the activist 2.

¹⁵⁴ Interview with the representative of the public authority with responsibility in the key area 1.

¹⁵⁵ For more details on the project 'Roma Empowerment für den Einzelhandel' (Roma Empowerment for Retail), see: <https://www.bfi.wien/arbeitsuchende/kurs/roma-empowerment-fuer-den-einzelhandel#:~:text=Das%20Projekt%20%E2%80%9ERoma%20Empowerment%20f%C3%BCr,au%C3%9Ferordentliche%20Lehrabschlusses%20im%20Bereich%20Einzelhandel>

¹⁵⁶ For more details on the project 'EmpoweRom*nja: Chancengelegenheit durch Qualifizierung (EmpoR)', (EmpoweRom*nja: Opportunity through Qualification (EmpoR)), see: <https://www.vhs.at/de/b/2024/04/05/romnja>

¹⁵⁷ Interview with the activist 2.

¹⁵⁸ Interview with the expert.

Programmes and projects that support women's empowerment and challenge traditional and conservative patterns would undoubtedly improve the inclusion of more Roma women in the labour market. Additionally, programmes and workshops that raise awareness about the importance of education and emphasise the link between education and a better quality of life should be offered to the members of the Roma community on a larger scale. Furthermore, motivating individuals through counselling, particularly women and youth, as well as providing German language courses, would positively contribute to removing barriers and improving the overall situation in this field. Counselling, workshops, and language learning are among the measures implemented by CSOs for men, women, and youth within the Labour Market projects.¹⁵⁹ Romano Centro Association has also been providing specialised counselling for women for many years as a separate project funded by the Federal Chancellery (*Bundeskanzleramt*).¹⁶⁰

A significant portion of the aforementioned proposals are being implemented through projects funded by the Ministry of Labor and Economic Affairs. Expanding such projects both geographically and financially, as well as involving other ministries in funding initiatives exclusively targeted at the Roma community – following the example of this ministry – would be highly beneficial in overcoming the barriers mentioned above. Additionally, the Public Employment Service (AMS), as the primary institution linking employers and workers, does not currently offer measures or projects specifically aimed at the Roma community. AMS has not been involved in the ministry-funded Labour Market projects focusing on Roma, which certainly does not help improve the position of Roma in the labour market.

3.2.2. Synergy with other actions

The Ministry of Labour and Economic Affairs issued special guidelines on 8 September 2022, titled 'Roma Empowerment for the Labour Market 2022-2030' to facilitate the inclusion of Roma, 'as a recognised ethnic group and minority with specific challenges in the labour market', into the labour market and Austrian society.¹⁶¹ The Austrian Government decided to end co-financing with the European Social Fund (ESF) for projects related to the inclusion of Roma in the labour market in Austria, which were implemented over two calls between 2015 and 2022. Instead, the Austrian government decided that projects related to the employment and integration of Roma into the Austrian labour market would be financed exclusively at the national level, i.e., by the Austrian government. This decision represents a significant relief and encouragement for smaller Roma CSOs in Austria. The projects that were co-financed by the ESF and the Ministry of Labor and Economic Affairs from 2015 to 2022 faced significant challenges due to the high accounting and technical demands of the ESF, which led to the closure of two Roma organizations and caused significant problems for another one.¹⁶² Administrative challenges, bureaucracy, the lack of specialised departments, and financial requirements before starting projects were major obstacles for small Roma associations.¹⁶³

3.2.3. Roma participation

According to the aforementioned special guidelines, the Ministry of Labour and Economic Affairs finances up to ten projects in a two-year cycle with a budget of 250,000 EUR to 270,000 EUR per project. The stability of the projects is partially ensured, as the funding is provided in four two-year periods until 2030. Some Roma, as well as several non-Roma CSOs, which partly collaborate with Roma CSOs, run projects that implement the aforementioned measures within their activities, aimed at overcoming barriers and promoting the faster and greater inclusion of Roma in the labour market. In the first call at the end of 2022, seven organisations received funding for their projects and in the new call for the 2025-2026 period, ten organisations were selected. Two

¹⁵⁹ <https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/themen/volksgruppen/roma-strategie/dialogplattform-roma-strategie/30-dialogplattform-24-april-2023.html>; <https://www.romano-centro.org/arbeitsmarktprojekt/>; <https://www.volkshilfe.at/roma-sinti/thara-dialogrunde/>;

¹⁶⁰ <https://www.romano-centro.org/frauenberatung>

¹⁶¹ Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy. (2022). *Sonderrichtlinien des Bundesministeriums für Arbeit und Wirtschaft 'Roma Empowerment für den Arbeitsmarkt 2023-2030' [Special Guidelines of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy 'Roma Empowerment for the Labour Market 2023-2030']*. Available at: <https://www.bmaw.gv.at/Themen/Arbeitsmarkt/Arbeitsmarktpolitik.html>.

¹⁶² University of Vienna. (2022). 'Sensiro' – Studie zur Evaluierung der nationalen Strategie zur Inklusion der Rom*inja in Österreich ['Sensiro' – Study on the Evaluation of the National Strategy for the Inclusion of Roma in Austria], p. 50. Available at: <http://sensiro.univie.ac.at/>

¹⁶³ *Ibidem*.

Roma organizations are leading the projects, while another two are involved as project partners. Six projects are being implemented by large non-governmental organisations,¹⁶⁴ where Roma sometimes play a key role as a staff in project leadership. Experts and activists believe that these projects are beneficial, as they are exclusively focused on the specific needs of members of the Roma community and take into account the unique circumstances of Roma in Austria.¹⁶⁵

Regarding the participation of Roma and Roma CSOs in removing barriers and including Roma in the labour market, it is worth noting that Roma organisations participated in the 30th Roma Dialogue Platform, which focused on the theme 'Labour Market and Employment'. Only through the Roma Dialogue Platform do Roma associations have access to policy formulation, but their influence is limited. Experts and activists believe that more direct involvement of Roma organisations is necessary, not only in selecting the topics and shaping the discussions of the Roma Dialogue Platform but also in decision-making processes.¹⁶⁶ Roma organisations also do not participate in the evaluation of projects funded by the Austrian Ministry of Labour and Economic Affairs. More precisely, for projects funded jointly by the ESF and the Austrian Ministry of Labour and Economic Affairs from 2015 to 2022, Roma organisations did not take part in the evaluation of projects or shaping new policies related to them, except through the platform.

Regarding the new projects funded solely by the Austrian Ministry of Labour and Economic Affairs since autumn 2022, the first evaluation, according to this ministry, is scheduled for 2025.¹⁶⁷ How this evaluation will be conducted remains unknown to Roma organisations.

¹⁶⁴ These large non-governmental organisations are: *Volkshilfe Österreich, Volkshochschule Wien, Caritas Salzburg, BFI, Caritas Graz, and IP Center.*

¹⁶⁵ Interview with the expert; Interview with the activist 2.

¹⁶⁶ Interview with the activist 2; Interview with the activist 1.

¹⁶⁷ Interview with the representative of the public authority with responsibility in the key area 1.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The NRSF aims to address systemic challenges faced by Roma communities. It focuses on inclusion, education, employment, healthcare, housing, and anti-discrimination. While implementation has taken place, progress has been uneven. Initiatives like the SENSIRO study provided valuable data on Roma experiences and highlighted issues, such as educational disadvantages, unemployment, and discrimination.

Although participatory mechanisms like the Roma Dialogue Platform have been established, awareness and involvement among Roma communities remain limited, especially among women, youth, and those from less urbanized regions. Due to the diversity of Roma groups, it is a challenge to find a common denominator, but the aim of Roma empowerment work is for all groups and their representatives to work as broadly as possible, as closely meshed and as unanimously as possible. Currently, there is still a lack of structured community management where all groups can find each other, feel represented and thus be strongly represented in important decision-making.

Education and employment are among the most pressing concerns. Roma face disproportionately high dropout rates and low access to quality education, especially in provinces outside Vienna and Burgenland. Language barriers, lack of cultural sensitivity, and systemic biases exacerbate these problems. Employment initiatives have been supported by both the Ministry of Labour and the EU's Social Fund, with projects targeting skill-building, job placement, and support services. However, due to administrative barriers, Roma-led organisations often struggle to access these funds. Discrimination in hiring and on-the-job treatment persists, underscoring the need for more vigorous anti-discrimination enforcement and targeted support.

The action on the NRSF also falls short in areas like healthcare, housing, and social protection. Many Roma still lack access to health services due to language and systemic barriers. Housing discrimination is rampant, and social services are often inaccessible due to bureaucratic complexity. Notably, some critical issues – such as Roma children being disproportionately placed in special education – are not even addressed in the follow-up of the NRSF.

While cultural promotion and symbolic recognition (e.g., National Roma Day, exhibitions, etc.) have improved visibility, the NRSF has not fully addressed the structural inequalities affecting Roma. A universal knowledge about Roma (culture) is still absent in mainstream society. Behind closed doors, prejudices and lack of interest prevail. Experts call for broader participation, more sustainable funding, and a stronger commitment to addressing deeply rooted antigypsyism across Austrian society.

With the SENSIRO study that monitors the process of implementing the NRSF a significant step was taken, but it remains unclear how the findings will be translated into assessable action by duty-holders such as ministries, and regional or municipal authorities. There is also still a lack of measurable, tangible indicators by which the success of the NRSF can be measured. Another problem is that the NRSF is still largely unknown among the Roma themselves.

Recommendations to national authorities

1. Continue to professionalise the implementation of the NRSF, by defining measurable parameters: formulate objectives with quantifiable indicators to celebrate successes or initiate a change of direction if necessary.
2. Regarding granting Roma access to the labour market, upscale lessons from already successful approaches, such as the employment initiatives mentioned. Connect guidelines, such as the special guidelines for labour market projects, with universal services, namely those implemented by the Public Employment Service (*Arbeitsmarktservice*).
3. Be vigilant when special education facilities might be used as a measure for segregating Roma children. Reinforce inclusion measures in schools, such as by school mediation, reach out to parents to reinforce the capacity to choose and willingness to sustain the educational performance of their children, as well as evidence-based monitoring of school choice/assignment based on social factors.
4. Support studies about Roma discrimination in schools, lectures for teachers to cope with prejudices
5. Promote public campaigns to raise awareness of the NRSF.

Recommendations to European institutions

6. Do not stop persistently pointing out the framework and the fulfilment of its associated indicators.

Recommendations to the civil society

7. Work in a transparent and structured way so that the work of civil society is visible and trust in CSOs is strengthened.
8. Build helpful networks to achieve your goals, including Roma and non-Roma, and Roma belonging to diverse groups.
9. Meet and create projects for Roma, with Roma and non-Roma together, even if they are small.

Recommendations to other stakeholders

9. Roma: Be courageous and take part in offers for Roma and the majority population, seek support and speak openly about your fears, experiences and also prejudices in every direction.
10. Majority population: be curious, ask, learn about Roma culture and Romani language, meet Roma, visit Roma exhibitions, theatre, and celebrate National Roma Day.
11. Carry on funding studies for Roma health and implement recommendations for those that have already been completed.

REFERENCES

List of interviews

- a National Roma Contact Point representative, carried out in written form by Dejan Segić
- a Roma native language teacher in Viennese schools, carried out in person by Dejan Segić
- Mr Jürgen Schick, Representative of the Federal Ministry Republic of Austria for Education, Science and Research / Stellungnahme BMBWF (9 December 2024), carried out in written form by Dejan Segić
- Mr Rolland Hanak, Head of the Bilateral Labour Market Policy Cooperation Unit at the Federal Ministry for Labour and Economic Affairs), carried out in written form by Dejan Segić
- Ms Dana Pajković, psychotherapist, sociologist and project leader of labour market project 'The Future Begins Today', carried out in person by Dejan Segić
- Ms Danijela Clcvarić, Roma activist and Executive Director of Romano Centro Association, carried out in person by Dejan Segić
- Ms Flora Alvarado-Dupuy, National equality body, Head of the Advocacy for Equal Treatment), carried out in written form by Dejan Segić
- Ms Jelena Jovanović, Roma School Mediator, working for Romano Centro Association, carried out in person by Dejan Segić
- Ms Olga Voglauer, MP, Green Alternative und Spokeswoman of this party for Ethnic groups, carried out in written form by Dejan Segić
- Ms Usnija Buligović, the Roma-activist and the longstanding leader of the labour market project 'THARA PASO PO PASO', carried out in person by Dejan Segić

Key policy documents and reports

Austrian Education Directorate for Burgenland. (n.d.). *Minderheitsschulwesen 2022/23 – Jahresbericht* (Minority School System 2022/23 – Annual Report), available at: https://www.bildung-bglld.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Downloads/Download-Verwaltung/Minderheiten/Jahresberichte/MSW_BGLD_Jahresbericht_2022-23.pdf

Council of Europe. (2023). *Resolution CM/ResCMN(2023)14 on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by Austria* (Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 13 December 2023), available at: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/minorities/austria>

Federal Chancellery of the Republic of Austria. (2019). *Conference on anti-Gypsyism — How to address anti-Gypsyism in a post-2020 EU Roma Framework — Expert recommendations*, available at: <https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/themen/volksgruppen/roma-strategie.html>

Federal Chancellery of the Republic of Austria. (2021). *Strategischer Rahmen der EU zur Gleichstellung, Inklusion und Teilhabe der Roma bis 2030 – Strategie zur Fortführung der Inklusion der Roma in Österreich* (Strategic Framework of the EU for the Equality, Inclusion, and Participation of Roma until 2030 – Strategy for the Continued Inclusion of Roma in Austria), available at: <https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/themen/volksgruppen/roma-strategie.html>

Federal Chancellery of the Republic of Austria. (2023). *30. Dialogplattform, 24. April 2023 Dialogplattform mit dem Schwerpunktthema 'Roma Empowerment für den Arbeitsmarkt' (30th Dialogue Platform, 24 April 2023 – Dialogue Platform with the focus theme "Roma Empowerment for the Labour Market")*, available at: <https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/themen/volksgruppen/roma-strategie/dialogplattform-roma-strategie/30-dialogplattform-24-april-2023.html>

Federal Ministry for Arts, Culture, the Civil Service, and Sports. (2024). *Antirassismus-Strategie (Antiracism Strategy)*, available at: <https://www.bmkoes.gv.at/Themen/Aktuell/antirassismus-strategie.html>

Federal Ministry for Labour and Economy of the Republic of Austria. (2022). *Sonderrichtlinien des Bundesministeriums für Arbeit und Wirtschaft 'Roma Empowerment für den Arbeitsmarkt 2023-2030'* (Special Directives of the Federal Ministry for Labour and Economy: "Roma Empowerment for the Labour Market 2023–2030"), available at: <https://www.bmaw.gv.at/Themen/Arbeitsmarkt/Arbeitsmarktpolitik.html>

Luciak, M. (ed.) (2014). *Rombas Studienbericht. Zur Bildungssituation von Roma und Sinti in Österreich* (Rombas Study Report: On the Educational Situation of Roma and Sinti in Austria). Initiative Minderheiten, available at: https://initiative.minderheiten.at/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/01_Rombas_Studie.pdf

Riesenfelder, A., Schelepa, S., & Wetzel, P. (2011). *Beschäftigungssituation von Personen mit Migrationshintergrund in Wien. Endbericht* (Employment Situation of Persons with a Migration Background in Vienna – Final Report), available at: https://www.arbeiterkammer.at/infopool/wien/Beschaeftigungssituation_von_MigrantInnen_2015.pdf

Roma Civil Monitor. (2022). *Civil society monitoring report on the quality of the national strategic framework for Roma equality, inclusion, and participation in Austria*. Publication Office of the European Union, available at: <https://romacivilmonitoring.eu/countries/austria/>

Schmatz, S., & Wetzel, P. (2015). "Zugewanderte Roma/Romnja. Ein Blick auf deren Bildungs- und Beschäftigungssituation in Wien" ("Participation of Roma/Romnja Immigrants: An Overview of Their Educational and Employment Situation in Vienna"), in: Härle, A. (ed.) *Romane Thana. Orte der Roma und Sinti*, Czernin Verlag.

SORA. (2023). *You Won the Lottery, You Are the First Austrian Who Called: Ethnic Discrimination on the Housing Market*.

Trummer, U., Novak-Zezula, S., Renner, A., & Wilczewska, I. (2016). *Cost analysis of health care provision for irregular migrants and EU citizens without insurance*. Commissioned by IOM, RO Brussels, Migration Health Division, available at: http://c-hm.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Policy_Brief_CHM_V12_Austria.pdf

University of Vienna. (2022). 'Sensiro' – *Studie zur Evaluierung der nationalen Strategie zur Inklusion der Rom*nja in Österreich* ['Sensiro' – Study on the Evaluation of the National Strategy for the Inclusion of Roma in Austria], available at: <http://sensiro.univie.ac.at/>

Verein ZARA – Zivilcourage & Anti-Rassismus-Arbeit. (2022). *Antirassismusreport (Anti-Racism Report)*, available at: https://assets.zara.or.at/media/rassismusreport/ZARA-Rassismus_Report_2022.pdf?mc_cid=3d2c6925c1&mc_eid=189739dd4d

Verein ZARA – Zivilcourage & Anti-Rassismus-Arbeit. (2024). *Antirassismusreport. Analyse zu rassistischen Übergriffen & Strukturen in Österreich* (Anti-Racism Report 2023. Analysis of Racist Attacks and Structures in Austria)

ANNEXE: LIST OF PROBLEMS AND CONDITIONS

Fighting antigypsyism and discrimination

Problems and conditions:	Significance:	Identified by strategy:	Measures to address:	Targets defined:	Details of NRSF implementation relevant to the problem:
Antigypsyism not recognised as a specific problem in national policy frameworks	significant problem	understood with limitations	adequate but with room for improvement	adequate but with room for improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: Anti-racism Strategy by the Ministry of Culture, Arts, Public Administration, and Sports - measures' effectiveness: Too early to estimate. - measures' outreach: available online - data collection: not known
Prejudice against Roma	critical problems	understood with limitations	indirect measures	indirect targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: Celebration of International Roma Day (8 April) and National Minorities Day (12 December) in the Austrian Parliament; - measures' effectiveness: not known - measures' outreach: not known - data collection: not known
Hate crimes against Roma	critical problems	understood with limitations	absent	absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: <i>DSA-Begleitgesetz</i> (The Digital Services Act – Accompanying law) - measures' effectiveness: not known - measures' outreach: not known - data collection: not known
Hate speech towards and against Roma (online and offline)	critical problems	understood with limitations	specific plans for prevention of hate speech against Roma	no defined targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: <i>DSA-Begleitgesetz</i> (The Digital Services Act – Accompanying law) - measures' effectiveness: not known - measures' outreach: not known - data collection: not known
Weak effectiveness of protection from discrimination	critical problems	understood with limitations	specific plans for prevention of hate speech against Roma	no defined targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: not known - measures' effectiveness: not known - measures' outreach: not known - data collection: not known
Segregation in education, housing, or provision of public	critical problems	understood with limitations	specific plans for prevention of hate speech against	no defined targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: not known - measures' effectiveness: not known - measures' outreach: not known

CIVIL SOCIETY MONITORING REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL ROMA STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK in Austria

services			Roma		- data collection: not known
Misconduct and discriminatory behaviour by police (under-policing/under-policing)	critical problems	understood with limitations	specific plans for prevention of hate speech against Roma	no defined targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: training and education for police officers and judicial staff on hate crimes and hate speech - measures' effectiveness: not known - measures' outreach: not known - data collection: not known

Education

Problems and conditions:	Significance:	Identified by strategy:	Measures to address:	Targets defined:	Details of NRSF implementation relevant to the problem:
High drop-out rate before completion of primary education	critical problem	mentioned but not analysed sufficiently	implicit measures for preventing drop out present but insufficient	adequate but with room for improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: without new measures since 2022 - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Early leaving from secondary education	critical problem	mentioned but not analysed sufficiently	implicit measures present but insufficient	adequate but with room for improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: without new measures since 2022 - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Secondary education/vocational training disconnected from labour market needs	significant problem	mentioned but not analysed sufficiently	adequate but with room for improvement	adequate but with room for improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Misplacement of Roma pupils into special education	critical problem	irrelevant	absent	absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Education segregation of Roma pupils	significant problems	irrelevant	absent	absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Increased selectivity	significant	irrelevant	absent	absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a

of the educational system resulting in concentration of Roma or other disadvantaged pupils in educational facilities of lower quality	problems				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Bilingual education	significant problems	mentioned but not analysed sufficiently	adequate but with room for improvement,	adequate but with room for improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: <i>Bildungsdirektion Burgenland</i> (Burgenland School Directorate), developed digital and non-digital teaching materials for Roma language classes in primary and secondary schools - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a

Employment

Problems and conditions:	Significance:	Identified by strategy:	Measures to address:	Targets defined:	Details of NRSF implementation relevant to the problem:
Poor access to or low effectiveness of public employment services	critical problem	irrelevant	absent	absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)	critical problem	understood with limitations	adequate but with room for improvement	adequate but with room for improvement implicit measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: Labour marker projects funded by the Ministry of Labour and Work in the scope of the '<i>Roma Empowerment für den Arbeitsmarkt 2023-2030</i>' - measures' effectiveness: Evaluation in 2025 - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Poor access to (re-) training, lifelong learning and skills development	significant problem	understood with limitations	adequate but with room for improvement	adequate but with room for improvement implicit measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: Labour marker projects funded by the Ministry of Labour and Work in the scope of the '<i>Roma Empowerment für den Arbeitsmarkt 2023-2030</i>'. - measures' effectiveness: Evaluation in 2025 - measures' outreach: n/a

CIVIL SOCIETY MONITORING REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL ROMA STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK in Austria

					- data collection: n/a
Discrimination on the labour market by employers	significant problem	irrelevant	absent	absent	- adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Risk for Roma women and girls from disadvantaged areas of being subjected to trafficking and forced prostitution	significant problem	irrelevant	absent	absent	- adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Barriers and disincentives to employment (such as indebtedness, low income from work compared to social income)	significant problem	irrelevant	absent	absent	- adopted measures: Labour market projects funded by the Ministry of Labour and Work in the scope of the ' <i>Roma Empowerment für den Arbeitsmarkt 2023-2030</i> ' - measures' effectiveness: Evaluation in 2025 - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a

Healthcare

Problems and conditions:	Significance:	Identified by strategy:	Measures to address:	Targets defined:	Details of NRSF implementation relevant to the problem:
Exclusion from public health insurance	allochthonous Roma critical problem, there	mentioned but not analysed sufficiently	present but	present but insufficient	- adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a

coverage (including those who are stateless, third country nationals, or EU- mobile)	are a few organisations in Vienna who treat ppl without insurance, but not enough supply all over Austria ⁵⁵ autochthonous Roma significant problem which was already addressed and partly successfully solved - they are included in Austrian healthcare system	- mentioned in context with other issues and goals e.g. "consideration of Roma issues" ⁵⁶	insufficient not well-defined measures but generalised measures which would fit for mainstream society	not well-defined targets but generalised goals which would fit for mainstream society	- measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Poor supply/availability of healthcare services (including lack of means to cover out-of-pocket health costs)	allochthonous Roma critical problem, there are a few organisations in Vienna who treat ppl without insurance, but not enough supply all over Austria	irrelevant	absent	absent	- adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Limited access to emergency care	allochthonous Roma critical problem, there are a few organisations in Vienna who treat ppl without insurance, but not enough supply all over Austria autochthonous Roma significant problem which was already addressed and partly successfully solved - they are included in Austrian healthcare system	irrelevant	absent	absent	- adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a

CIVIL SOCIETY MONITORING REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL ROMA STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK in Austria

Limited access to primary care	<p>allochthonous Roma critical problem, there are a few organisations in Vienna who treat ppl without insurance, but not enough supply all over Austria</p> <p>autochthonous Roma significant problem which was already addressed and partly successfully solved - they are included in Austrian healthcare system</p>	irrelevant	absent	absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Limited access to prenatal and postnatal care	<p>allochthonous Roma critical problem, there are a few organisations in Vienna who treat ppl without insurance, but not enough supply all over Austria</p> <p>autochthonous Roma significant problem which was already addressed and partly successfully solved - they are included in Austrian healthcare system</p>	irrelevant	absent	absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Limited access to health-related information	<p>allochthonous Roma critical problem, there are a few organisations in Vienna who treat ppl without insurance, but not enough supply all</p>	irrelevant	absent	absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a

	<p>over Austria a lot of work for consultations do Roma-led NGOs</p> <p>autochthonous Roma significant problem which was already addressed and partly successfully solved - they are included in Austrian healthcare system</p>				
Poor access to preventive care (vaccination, check- ups, screenings, awareness-raising about healthy lifestyles)	<p>allochthonous Roma critical problem, there are a few organisations in Vienna who treat ppl without insurance, but not enough supply all over Austria a lot of work for consultations do Roma-led NGOs</p> <p>autochthonous Roma significant problem which was already addressed and partly successfully solved - they are included in Austrian healthcare system</p>	irrelevant	absent	absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Poor access to sexual/reproductive healthcare and family planning services	<p>allochthonous Roma critical problem, there are a few organisations in Vienna who consult ppl without insurance, but not enough supply all over Austria a lot of work for consultations do</p>	irrelevant	absent	absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a

CIVIL SOCIETY MONITORING REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL ROMA STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK in Austria

	Roma-led NGOs				
	autochthonous Roma significant problem which was already addressed and partly successfully solved - they are included in Austrian healthcare system				
Specific barriers to better healthcare of vulnerable groups such as elderly Roma people, Roma with disabilities, LGBT+ and others	allochthonous Roma critical problem, there are a few organisations in Vienna who treat ppl without insurance, but not enough supply all over Austria autochthonous Roma significant problem which was already addressed and partly successfully solved - they are included in austrian healthcare system	irrelevant	absent	absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a

Housing, essential services, and environmental justice

Problems and conditions:	Significance:	Identified by strategy:	Measures to address:	Targets defined:	Details of NRSF implementation relevant to the problem:
Poor physical security of housing (ruined or slum housing)	significant problems	irrelevant	absent	absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Lack of access to	significant	irrelevant	absent	absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a

drinking water	problems				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Lack of access to sanitation	significant problems	irrelevant	absent	absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Lack of access to electricity	significant problems	irrelevant	absent	absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Limited or absent public waste collection	significant problems	irrelevant	absent	absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Restricted heating capability (families unable to heat all rooms/all times when necessary) or solid waste used for heating	significant problems	irrelevant	absent	absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Lack of security of tenure (legal titles are not clear and secure)	significant problems	irrelevant	absent	absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Lacking or limited access to social housing	significant problems	irrelevant	absent	absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a

CIVIL SOCIETY MONITORING REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL ROMA STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK
in Austria

Overcrowding (available space/room for families)	significant problems	irrelevant	absent	absent	- adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Housing-related indebtedness at levels which may cause eviction	significant problems	irrelevant	absent	absent	- adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Housing in segregated settlements/ neighbourhoods	significant problems	irrelevant	absent	absent	- adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Housing in informal or illegal settlements/ neighbourhoods	significant problems	irrelevant	absent	absent	- adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Exposure to hazardous factors (living in areas prone to natural disasters or environmentally hazardous areas)	significant problems	irrelevant	absent	absent	- adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Limited or lacking access to public transport	significant problems	irrelevant	absent	absent	- adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Limited or lacking internet access (e.g., public internet access)	significant problems	irrelevant	absent	absent	- adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a

points in deprived areas, areas not covered by broadband internet)					
Limited or lacking access to green spaces	significant problems	irrelevant	absent	absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Roma excluded from environmental democracy	significant problems	irrelevant	absent	absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a

Social services

Problems and conditions:	Significance:	Identified by strategy:	Measures to address:	Targets defined:	Details of NRSF implementation relevant to the problem:
Limited quality, capacity and comprehensiveness of help provided by social services	critical problems, use of available mainstream social services	understood with limitations, no special focus on Roma needs	absent	absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Limited access to social services: low awareness of them, low accessibility, (e.g., due to travel costs) or limited availability	critical problems, use of available mainstream social services	understood with limitations, no special focus on Roma needs	absent	absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a

CIVIL SOCIETY MONITORING REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL ROMA STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK in Austria

Services providers do not actively reach out to those in need	critical problems, hidden discrimination	understood with limitations, no	absent	absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Limited ability of social services to effectively work together with other agencies (e.g., public employment service) to help clients	critical problem, Roma often do not trust official social services or agencies as they fear discrimination and accusation of child neglect with consequences.	irrelevant	absent	absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Discrimination by social service providers	critical problem, Roma often do not trust official social services or agencies as they fear discrimination and accusation of child neglect with consequences				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a

Child protection

Problems and conditions:	Significance:	Identified by strategy:	Measures to address:	Targets defined:	Details of NRSF implementation relevant to the problem:
Child protection not considered in the NRSF	significant problems	irrelevant	absent	absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a

					- data collection: n/a
Specific vulnerability of Romani children as victims of violence not considered	significant problems	irrelevant	absent	absent	- adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Segregated or discriminatory child-protection services provided to Roma	significant problems	irrelevant	absent	absent	- adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Activities aimed at strengthening parental responsibility and skills	significant problems	irrelevant	absent	absent	- adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Large-scale and discriminatory placement of Romani children in early childhood care institutions	significant problems	irrelevant	absent	absent	- adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Persistence of large-scale institutions rather than family-type arrangements	significant problems	irrelevant	absent	absent	- adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Barriers to children's registration; statelessness	significant problems	irrelevant	absent	absent	- adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Biased treatment of Roma youth by security	significant	irrelevant	absent	absent	- adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a

CIVIL SOCIETY MONITORING REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL ROMA STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK
in Austria

and law enforcement	problems				- measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Inadequate child/ adolescent participation	critical problem	irrelevant	absent	absent	- adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a

Promoting (awareness of) Roma arts, culture, and history

Problems and conditions:	Significance:	Identified by strategy:	Measures to address:	Targets defined:	Details of NRSF implementation relevant to the problem:
Poor or lacking awareness of the general population of the contribution of Roma art and culture to national and European heritage	critical problem	irrelevant	absent	absent	- adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Exclusion of Roma communities from national cultural narratives	significant problems	irrelevant	absent	absent	- adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Romani history and culture not included in school curricula and textbooks for both Roma and non-Roma students	critical problems	mentioned but not analysed sufficiently	present (to include Roma exhibition in schools) but too less	absent	- adopted measures: n/a - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Lack of inclusion of Romani language in	significant	mentioned but not analysed	present (Roma school mediation) but not	absent	- adopted measures: <i>Bildungsdirektion Burgenland</i> (Burgenland School Directorate), developed digital and non-digital teaching

schools, and development of necessary educational materials and resources for Romani language preservation and teaching	problems	sufficiently	specific enough and no financial plan		materials for Roma language classes in primary and secondary schools - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a
Lack of memorialisation of Roma history through establishing monuments, commemorative activities, and institutionalising dates relevant to Roma history	significant problem	mentioned but not analysed sufficiently	present but insufficient	generalised targets	- adopted measures: In January 2023, the Austrian Parliament declared European Holocaust Remembrance Day for Sinti and Roma for a national day of remembrance in Austria; In November 2023, the Austrian Parliament gave the National Fund more authority, including the responsibility to plan, build, and maintain memorials for Roma victims of Nazi terror. - measures' effectiveness: n/a - measures' outreach: n/a - data collection: n/a

HOW TO OBTAIN EU PUBLICATIONS

Free publications:

- one copy:
via EU Bookshop);
- more than one copy or posters/maps:
from the European Union's representations (http://ec.europa.eu/represent_en.htm);
from the delegations in non-EU countries (http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/index_en.htm);
by contacting the Europe Direct service (http://europa.eu/europedirect/index_en.htm) or calling 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11 (freephone number from anywhere in the EU) (*).

(*) The information given is free, as are most calls (though some operators, phone boxes or hotels may charge you).

Priced publications:

- via EU Bookshop (<http://bookshop.europa.eu>).



Publications Office
of the European Union

ISBN 978-92-68-28943-3 doi:10.2838/6410298