

FRANCE

Country Fiche

Assessment of the progress in the NRSF implementation
between 1 June 2023 and 30 March 2025

APPROACH OF THE NATIONAL ROMA STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK (NRSF)	Formally, France does not recognise minorities and is proud to not conceive public policies on ethnic basis. However, thanks to the determined advocacy of La voix des Roms, the government drafted a strategic framework “in response to the EU Framework” approaching the topic by the antigypsyism. Making the fight against antigypsyism its first objective, the strategy further sets objectives on “gens du voyage” and on “shantytowns”, two realities which in the eyes of the mainstream population represent the “Roma” in France
ESTIMATED ROMA POPULATION	300,000 to 500,000 according to CoE estimates ¹ of 2012 which remain unchanged since the years 1990. There is no census data as this is prohibited but estimates go as far as about one million.
National Roma Contact Point (NRCP)	Interministerial Delegation on Sheltering and Housing (DIHAL), a government agency

HORIZONTAL OBJECTIVES

1. FIGHT AND PREVENT ANTIGYPSYISM AND DISCRIMINATION

PROGRESS MADE	AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Antigypsyism officially recognised in the National Plan against racism, antisemitism and discriminations on origin (PRADO).² Roma CSOs involved in PRADO’s design and consultation processes. Some training launched for civil servants, police, and magistrates on antigypsyism. During meetings with the NRCP the need to monitor and counter online antigypsyism hate speech has been acknowledged. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only 0.42% of the budget allocated to the implementation of the PRADO targeted antigypsyism. Implementation of measures remains symbolic, with no structural change. Roma remain the most rejected group in public opinion surveys³. Persistent anti-Roma discrimination in public services, education, and policing. No robust, nationwide monitoring or enforcement mechanisms in place.

¹ CoE Publications on Roma and Travellers <https://www.coe.int/en/web/roma-and-travellers/publications>

² Plan national de lutte contre le racisme, l’antisémitisme et les discriminations liées à l’origine, 2023-2026 https://www.dilcrach.gouv.fr/files/2023-12/Plan-national-de-lutte-contre-le-racisme-lantisemitisme-et-les-discriminations-liees-a-lorigine-2023-2026-Janvier-2023_1.pdf

³ CNCDH, Rapport sur la lutte contre le racisme, l’antisémitisme et la xénophobie, 2024 <https://www.cncdh.fr/sites/default/files/2025-06/Essentiels%20RRacisme%202024%20Format%20A4%20VDEF.pdf>

2. REDUCE POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION

PROGRESS MADE

- Mediation by Roma and pro-Roma civil society organisations improved Roma access to social services, especially for families in informal settlements.
- National programmes such as the one on slums' clearance funded tailored support for employment, administrative guidance, and temporary housing.
- DIHAL (NRCP) facilitated welfare access for marginalised groups, through targeted inclusion strategies.
- Integrated local strategies were adopted in some cities, like Bordeaux, Nantes or Montpellier, combining housing, employment, and education initiatives.

In certain departments, like Gironde or Loire-Atlantique, collaborative frameworks between CSOs and public services led to more inclusive anti-poverty practices. As an example, charters are being drafted or adopted which engage authorities, CSOs and employers with the objective of improving the working and living conditions of seasonal workers and families.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Many Roma continue to be excluded from social rights due to complex administrative procedures, lack of digital literacy, and language barriers.
- Discriminatory practices by some local authorities persist, including in housing and welfare allocation.
- The absence of a national enforcement mechanism results that inclusive measures depend heavily on local goodwill.
- Roma lacking residency or address documentation are frequently denied access to basic services.
- Funding for actions against poverty and exclusion remains limited, project-based, and without long-term continuity.

3. PROMOTE PARTICIPATION THROUGH EMPOWERMENT, COOPERATION AND TRUST

CONTEXT

Like also elsewhere in Europe, institutions don't perceive "Roma" otherwise than those supposed to be "gypsies". In France, this mental category is composed by "Gens du voyage" and "Intra EU-citizens living in slums". While the former are represented within "consultative commissions of gens du voyage" (1/3 of their members), the later are less represented in the "Follow-up committee of the slums' clearance", composed by Central and local authorities and CSOs. Beyond its imperfection, this participation leaves outside the majority of Roma in France, who are neither "gens du voyage" nor "slums inhabitants".

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- It looks clearly that participation can't happen without some clarification, which passes necessarily by a more active recognition of Rromani identity. This can't be done in a formal/official way, but it does not need to be formal/official. Some support to civil society for projects in relation to Rromani history, identity and culture would certainly help
- Parallely, among the civil society, there is need for a change in self-perception. In fact, the local initiatives mentioned in the part "Progress made" remain isolated both geographically and in terms of origin of Roma: French, former Yugoslavian Republics or Romania/Bulgaria.

PROGRESS MADE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation of “gens du voyage” in the “consultative commissions” has known some little improvement essentially thanks to the empowerment of mainly ANGVC (National association of citizen gens du voyage), which has organised some trainings of delegates or of the association “Da So Vas” in Northern France, which advocates for relocation in healthy conditions of gens du voyage community. • La voix des Roms seeks to better involve especially Roma youth, through its Nevi Yag Bari project, which builds upon the experience of Yag Bari (popular education of children through sport and culture) and the experience of PECAO (Peer education to counter antigypsyism online). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roma and pro-Roma CSOs lack stable funding and institutional backing.
--	---

SECTORAL OBJECTIVES	
4. INCREASE EFFECTIVE EQUAL ACCESS TO QUALITY INCLUSIVE MAINSTREAM EDUCATION	
PROGRESS MADE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Mediation Initiatives⁴: Pilot projects financed by the NRCP (DIHAL) and implemented by local CSOs deploy school mediators in several French territory departments. They have shown initial promise in bridging access between marginalised communities (especially those living in slums or travelling populations) and mainstream education. These efforts are currently being extended to include Traveller communities • Curricular Inclusion and Teacher Training: In September 2024 the history of the Roma genocide has been partially integrated into the national educational resource portal Eduscol⁵. A national training plan for education staff now includes components on antigypsyism, aiming to enhance understanding and support within schools 	AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited Reach and Uneven Implementation: The educational projects, including school mediation and memorial work, remain sporadic and geographically limited. Their localised nature prevents a systemic national impact • Barriers to Distance Learning: Since the 2021 separatism law, administrative procedures for obtaining authorisation for distance learning have become more complex and opaque. Families must now prove future itinerancy, often with little guidance and inconsistent criteria between regions, resulting in arbitrary rejections that disrupt children’s schooling • Insufficient Resources and Arbitrary Refusals: There is evidence of significant delays and denials in enrolment of Traveller

⁴ DIHAL, Toutes et tous à l’école – Programme d’accompagnement vers l’école dans le cadre de la résorption des bidonvilles, Assessment 2023-2024, <https://www.info.gouv.fr/upload/media/content/0001/12/3cee2e455e6b73289d030bcad69af133dcfc4d94.pdf>

⁵ Enseigner le génocide des Roms d’Europe <https://eduscol.education.fr/4068/enseigner-le-genocide-des-roms-d-europe>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Cultural-Educational Projects: Projects like Barvalo-MUCEM and the Rivesaltes memorial are interesting as they have been or are visited by public and especially school groups, promoting in this way historical awareness and fostering inclusive memory work. These initiatives received backing from national agencies such as DILCRAH • Formal Commitment to Antigypsyism Awareness: For the first time, antigypsyism was included in the National Action Plan against Racism (PRADO), which mandates the integration of this topic in training and education policies⁶ 	<p>children, especially at the secondary level. Once enrolled, many are placed in unsuitable mainstream classrooms without adequate academic support, contributing to disengagement and educational exclusion⁷</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Reliable Data: There is a persistent deficit in data regarding school attendance, drop-out rates, and the outcomes of mediation or distance learning schemes. This absence of monitoring hinders the ability to assess disparities and plan targeted interventions • Logistical Challenges Hindering Attendance: Families facing eviction or displacement struggle to maintain regular school attendance due to lack of transport and the instability of living conditions. Despite enrolment efforts, children's schooling is often interrupted by mobility and poverty.⁸
---	--

5. INCREASE EFFECTIVE EQUAL ACCESS TO QUALITY AND SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYMENT

PROGRESS MADE	AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergence of Local Employment Roadmaps: Project-based employment pathways have been developed at the local level (e.g. Haute-Garonne, Loire-Atlantique) involving coordination between public employment services (France Travail), associations, and local authorities. These initiatives, while not systemic, are increasingly addressing linguistic and administrative barriers faced by people living in slums. • Employer Engagement via Charters: In Loire-Atlantique, an Employer Charter has been introduced to formalise commitments around fair recruitment, decent working conditions, and the mitigation of informal job intermediation. It promotes the visibility and translation of job offers, workers' rights awareness, and partnerships with labour inspection services. Increased Recognition of Exploitation Risks: Awareness of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistent Discrimination by Employers and Services: Discrimination persists both at the hiring stage and in the way, jobseekers are received by employment services. Many feel devalued, unwelcome, or stereotyped, which dissuades continued engagement with these institutions. • Lack of Systemic Coordination and Long-Term Pathways: Although some local projects show promise, they remain isolated and experimental. There is a lack of national coordination or scaled models offering durable employment integration for marginalised populations. • Over-Reliance on Informal Intermediaries: Informal middlemen still mediate access to seasonal work, often demanding illegal commissions or deducting wages for transportation and accommodation. This

⁶ PRADO, see above

⁷ Interview with William Acker, General delegate of ANGVC, unpublished

⁸ Rapport annuel de l'observatoire des expulsions des lieux de vie informels, 31 octobre 2023 – 1^{er} novembre 2024, https://www.observatoiredesexpulsions.org/storage/wsm_publication/1v0ZPe1ge5XhnO8xUmTeCGwQP8qNVRZJTeUuXvOc.pdf

exploitative intermediaries in the agricultural sector has led to multi-actor coordination, including unions and labour inspectorates, to better protect workers. Seasonal employment is now being assessed through the lens of workers' vulnerability, with preventive structures under development.

perpetuates financial precarity and can border on exploitation.

- **Precarious and Segmented Job Offers:** Most available work is seasonal and low-skilled, especially in agriculture. While it provides an entry point, it rarely leads to stable careers. There is limited follow-through to offer training, certification, or pathways to higher-skilled roles.
- **Housing Barriers Undermining Employability:** Stable employment is obstructed by inadequate or unstable housing⁹. Without reliable accommodation—often tied to work sites—workers face logistical and legal barriers to sustaining jobs. Coordination between employment initiatives and housing policy is still weak.
- **Slow Cultural Shift Among Employers:** Prejudices about Roma and Travellers remain prevalent. While mediation and sensitisation efforts are ongoing, changing employer attitudes towards diversity and inclusion remains a long-term, underfunded challenge.

6. IMPROVE ROMA HEALTH AND EFFECTIVE EQUAL ACCESS TO QUALITY HEALTHCARE AND SOCIAL SERVICES

PROGRESS MADE

- **Inclusion of Health in National Strategy:** France's 2020–2030 strategy for Roma inclusion features a dedicated health access component (Axis 4), targeting both mobile Traveller populations and residents of informal settlements. It supports both data consolidation and medical mediation services.
- **Health Mediation Programmes:** The national health mediation programme has been instrumental in bridging the gap between Roma communities and mainstream healthcare. Mediators play a key role in “reaching out” and facilitating mutual understanding between healthcare professionals and Roma residents, thus helping prevent care refusal and discrimination.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- **Housing and Environmental Determinants of Health:** There is a clear correlation between degraded housing and poor health. Residents in “precarious and illegal” habitats show significantly worse health indicators than those in formal housing. Lack of access to water (22%), electricity (24%), and sanitation (41%) is widespread in informal settlements.
- **Legal and Administrative Barriers:** Roma individuals, especially undocumented EU citizens, face major obstacles in accessing health rights. The requirement for proof of residency, in-person applications, and delayed access to non-urgent care under AME (State Medical Aid) further restrict healthcare for those in irregular situations.

⁹ Rapport annuel de l'observatoire des expulsions des lieux de vie informels, see supra.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Epidemiological Knowledge Production: Regional studies (e.g., in Nouvelle-Aquitaine) have generated robust data linking poor health outcomes to housing conditions. This evidence has raised awareness of environmental determinants such as pollution, overcrowding, and lack of basic infrastructure. • Emergency Health Interventions: Health services and NGOs have responded to outbreaks (e.g., scabies, measles, tuberculosis) in informal settlements. Some regional agencies have developed mobile outreach strategies, although coverage remains uneven. • Emerging Coordination Mechanisms¹⁰: The creation of the “Centre for inactive EU nationals” aims to address administrative gaps in access to health coverage for mobile EU citizens, partly mitigating the dysfunction of the European Health Insurance Card system in practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Impact of Evictions: Forced evictions interrupt medical follow-up, destabilise patients’ territorial bearings, and often relocate communities to isolated or polluted areas. Expulsions have occurred during active disease screenings (e.g., for tuberculosis or measles), compromising public health responses. • Structural and Everyday Discrimination: Roma patients report systemic bias within healthcare. Discrimination is often indirect manifesting in tone, urgency, or suspicion. Research has shown that Roma are frequently perceived by emergency staff as manipulative or undeserving, reinforcing their exclusion from proper care. • Underdeveloped Mediation Infrastructure: Health mediation, while essential, suffers from inconsistent regional implementation, lack of formal status, and limited funding. Calls to professionalise and standardise the role remain unanswered. Mediation efforts are currently fragmented and not sustainably institutionalised. • Fragmentation of Preventive Action: Outreach health efforts are poorly coordinated across regions. Agencies lack a unified vision or operational framework to support mobile and underserved populations in a consistent manner. This undermines long-term disease prevention and health promotion.
7. INCREASE EFFECTIVE EQUAL ACCESS TO ADEQUATE DESEGREGATED HOUSING AND ESSENTIAL SERVICES	
PROGRESS MADE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Health Studies: Public health studies, such as the one conducted by <i>Santé Publique France</i> in Nouvelle-Aquitaine, have helped highlight the impact of substandard living conditions on the health of Roma communities. These findings are increasingly used to inform state-level policies. • Guidance Against Hazardous Housing Locations: A 2022 circular recommended 	AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate Implementation of Housing Schemes: Only 26 out of 95 departmental schemes comply with their legal obligations, reflecting widespread institutional inertia. Many municipalities systematically underreport or downgrade Traveller housing needs. • Urban Planning Discrimination: Caravans are banned in 96% of zoning documents, leading to legal exclusion from nearly all

¹⁰ Fonctionnement de la coordination européenne de sécurité sociale en matière de soins, https://www.odse.eu.org/IMG/pdf/ue_coordo_note_analyse_fonctionnement_odse_2018_12_18.pdf

that future housing projects for Traveller populations avoid proximity to Seveso sites or other environmental hazards. This directive is now a condition for funding approval, encouraging safer living conditions.

- **Limited Development of Adapted Social Housing:** In response to legal exclusion and housing inaccessibility, the French government has developed specific social housing models adapted to caravans. These accommodate mobile lifestyles and help secure residential stability for eligible families.
- **Recognition of the Right to Housing in Urban Planning:** Acknowledgment of the need to integrate caravan living into urban planning documents (PLU) has begun, although practical implementation remains minimal.
- **Localised Innovative Approaches:** Some local authorities have implemented targeted strategies to facilitate housing access and avoid forced evictions. These include concerted planning with associations and NGOs, though such initiatives are not widespread.

residential areas. Even Traveller families who own land often cannot legally reside on it, resulting in instability and frequent evictions.

- **Chronic Forced Displacement:** Many Roma and Travellers live in a cycle of displacement due to expulsions from informal settlements. This undermines stability and blocks access to essential services including water, electricity, schooling, and healthcare.
- **Poor Housing Conditions:** A large proportion of Roma settlements lack basic infrastructure—running water, electricity, sanitation—and are often situated in environmentally hazardous areas, increasing exposure to pollution and health risks.
- **Ghettoisation Through Specialised Housing:** Adapted social housing developments are often grouped together, limiting social integration and reinforcing segregation. These models rarely promote true inclusion or desegregation.
- **Lack of Intersectoral Coordination:** Housing policy remains disconnected from social, health, and employment services, reducing the long-term effectiveness of integration strategies.
- **Limited Monitoring and Data Collection:** The lack of reliable, disaggregated data on housing conditions and needs makes it difficult to monitor progress or enforce accountability in policy implementation.

PARTNERSHIPS AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

Involvement of Roma and Pro-Roma NGOs in the NRSF

During the reporting period, the involvement of Roma and pro-Roma civil society organisations (CSOs) in the design and implementation of the French National Roma Strategic Framework (NRSF) has been described as limited, fragmented, and largely consultative rather than collaborative. While certain NGOs were occasionally invited to participate in thematic working groups or to comment on specific policy elements (notably concerning health, housing, and education), these opportunities were often lacking systematic structures for genuine co-design or decision-making power.

The National Strategy 2020–2030 referenced the importance of including Roma voices but as expected did not establish any permanent advisory bodies with meaningful Roma representation. As noted in interviews with NGO actors and local mediators, consultations were mostly initiated late in the process or focused narrowly on operational details rather than strategic orientations. True enough, the capacity of

Romani organisations is limited, however their strengthening needs support and involvement. In practice, this meant that Roma and Traveller communities, as well as grassroots organisations, remained peripheral to the core development of the NRSF.

Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms

France currently lacks a robust, transparent, and participatory mechanism for monitoring the NRSF's implementation. Although individual ministries (e.g. Interior, Health, Housing) publish thematic updates or contribute data to national action plans, there is no unified cross-sectoral monitoring structure with civil society participation. This gap is particularly acute at the local level, where implementation varies significantly between regions and often depends on informal relationships between state actors and NGOs.

Some independent monitoring has been carried out by civil society, but there is no recurring public forum or mechanism for reviewing the strategy with Roma community input.

CSO Involvement in Monitoring Hate Crimes and Assisting Victims

There is no centralised mechanism in France specifically dedicated to monitoring anti-Roma hate crimes with structured CSO participation. However, civil society organisations have been at the forefront of identifying, documenting, and assisting victims of hate speech, discriminatory practices, and police harassment.

Organisations such as the La voix des Roms or Romeurope, and local legal aid collectives have actively denounced expulsions, documented evictions that violate health or education rights, and supported victims in filing complaints. Despite their efforts however, these groups often face structural challenges: underreporting due to fear of retaliation, lack of trust in police or judicial systems, and administrative barriers. Victim support typically relies on NGO capacity, including legal counselling and public advocacy, rather than coordinated state-CSO frameworks. Worse, one case of illegal eviction that happened in 2023 in Paris region¹¹ had a lot of challenges to be brought to a criminal court, which finally acquitted the six defendants, among which the mayor. This kind of experience affects negatively the trust in judicial system, which is already weak.

Recent developments, including the work of the Défenseur des Droits and the planned 2025 report on 'Discrimination and Health', signal growing recognition of antigypsyism¹². However, these efforts remain isolated and disconnected from a systemic approach to hate crime monitoring involving Roma stakeholders.

PROMISING PRACTICES

School mediation has emerged as a particularly promising practice in advancing the educational inclusion of Roma and Traveller children. This innovative approach involves the recruitment and training of school mediators who work at the intersection of families, educational institutions, and public services. These mediators—often with a background in social work, education, or community activism—are instrumental in building bridges of trust between Roma communities and the school system.

What makes this practice promising is its long-term vision. Rather than responding to crises or dropouts after they occur, school mediation focuses on prevention and continuous engagement. It helps dismantle the mutual misunderstandings and distrust that often characterise the relationship between Roma families and educational institutions. By providing a consistent, culturally competent presence, mediators help

¹¹ Le Parisien, 6 feb. 2024, Expulsion « manu militari » de Roms par les habitants à Villeron : l'enquête piétine dénoncent les associations, <https://www.leparisien.fr/val-d-oise-95/expulsion-manu-militari-de-roms-par-les-habitants-a-villeron-lenquete-pietine-denoncent-les-associations-06-02-2024-XJ5WKJETZNDZPPNPKZNWHBP7TQ.php>

¹² Défenseur des droits, Rapport - Prévenir les discriminations dans les parcours de soins : un enjeu d'égalité <https://www.defenseurdesdroits.fr/rapport-prevenir-les-discriminations-dans-les-parcours-de-soins-un-enjeu-degalite-853>

families navigate administrative procedures, encourage regular attendance, and address early signs of disengagement. They also support teachers and school staff in better understanding the cultural context and lived realities of the pupils they serve.

This is an investment in future generations. Access to education—especially mainstream, inclusive education—is one of the most powerful levers for upward social mobility and long-term integration. When children succeed in school, the benefits extend beyond academic achievement: they gain confidence, language skills, social networks, and access to broader opportunities. Parents, in turn, are more likely to engage with local institutions and participate in community life.

Initial implementation results have been encouraging. Pilot programmes in several regions of France have led to measurable improvements in school attendance, reduction of absenteeism, and better communication between schools and Roma families. Mediators often report that families feel more respected and empowered, while schools gain tools to address diversity and inclusion more effectively.

However, for the full potential of this practice to be realised, institutional support is crucial. This includes recognition of the mediator profession, proper funding, long-term contracts, and integration into the public education system. Some current barriers include fragmented funding sources, lack of official status for mediators, and disparities in programme availability across regions.

In conclusion, school mediation is not only a socially just intervention but a pragmatic strategy with far-reaching impacts. It targets root causes of exclusion and offers a sustainable pathway toward equality and inclusion. Scaling up this initiative should be a priority for national and local authorities committed to breaking the cycle of marginalisation among Roma and Traveller populations.