

FINLAND

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)	Finland responds to EU requirements by National Roma Strategic Framework (NRSF), or Finland's National Roma Policy (ROMPO) 2023–2030, ¹ with a supplemental Implementation plan 2023–2026 for Finland's National Roma Policy (ROMPO 3). ²
ESTIMATED ROMA POPULATION	10,000-12,000, including 400-600 migrant Roma
National Roma Contact Point (NRCP)	Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Advisory Board on Romani Affairs.

HORIZONTAL OBJECTIVES

1. FIGHT AND PREVENT ANTIGYPSYISM AND DISCRIMINATION

PROGRESS MADE	AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While not specifically targeted to the Roma, the knowledge base on discrimination in general improved in 2020-2023. Many reliable institutions participate in the data collection and analysis, and the analyses carried out are more profound than before.³ This makes also discrimination against Roma visible. In 2024, Prime Minister Orpo's Government published the government action plan for combating racism and promoting equality.⁴ Antigypsyism was 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finland consecutively ranks as one of the most racist countries in the EU,⁷ in addition to which Roma are the group facing the most discrimination in Finland by origin.⁸ Discrimination and other similar phenomena (e.g. school bullying, harassment, hate crime) increased in 2020-2023.⁹ In 2023, the number of suspected hate crimes continued to increase. 11 % of offences were against a member of the

¹ Finland's National Roma Policy (ROMPO) 2023-2030. Publications of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2023:15. <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-00-8345-8>

² Implementation plan 2023–2026 for Finland's National Roma Policy (ROMPO 3). Reports and Memorandums of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2024:17. <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-00-6892-9>

³ Mannila, Simo (2024). Syrjintä Suomessa 2020–2023. Tietoraportti. Publications of the Ministry of Justice, Reports and guidelines 2024:11. https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/165623/OM_2024_11_SO.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

⁴ A New Boost for Equality in Finland: Government action plan to combat racism and promote equality. Publications of the Finnish Government 2024:43. https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/165805/VN_2024_43.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

⁷ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2018). Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey – Being Black the EU. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union (Publications Office).

⁸ European Commission, Special Eurobarometer 253, Discrimination in the European Union – Country Factsheets, Finland.) Discrimination in the European Union. <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2972>

⁹ Mannila, Simo (2024). Syrjintä Suomessa 2020–2023. Tietoraportti. Publications of the Ministry of Justice, Reports and guidelines 2024:11. https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/165623/OM_2024_11_SO.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

included in the programme with its proper name for the first time ever.

- In addition, the government launched an extensive anti-racism campaign “Action, not only words” in August 2024.⁵ Organisations from different sectors were invited to make commitments and select measures that are suitable for their organisations on the Sustainable Development Commission’s Sitoumus2050 online platform⁶.
- As part of Decolonised Museum activity, the major institutions, such as the National Museum of Finland, the Finnish National Gallery and Finnish Heritage Agency, brought the history and culture of the Roma population systematically as part of their activities.

Roma minority.¹⁰ The proportion is very high, considering that the Roma are a very small minority. Moreover, only a small fraction of crimes is being reported.

- In a same vein, the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman received frequent complaints from Roma concerning discrimination, but these seem to be only the tip of the iceberg.
- Roma children still faced discrimination and racism both in and out of school.¹¹
- Since 2023, the resources of the public and third sector to support Roma people have been cut considerably and continue to be so. In particular, the government decided to cut the funding of the Funding Centre for Social Welfare and Health Organisations (STEA) by around 130 million euros, or a third of STEA’s funding of 384 million EUR, starting in 2026. For example, the Victim Support Finland, a non-profit organisation reliant on government funding, is facing significant cuts to its budget.
- Antigypsyism is not yet being recognised or acknowledged sufficiently at any level of society, although the concept is brought upon in the EU anti-racism action plan 2020-2025¹², as well as in the EU Roma strategic framework.¹³
- Migrant Roma report being disproportionately and unfairly profiled, monitored, and removed from public spaces. These practices contribute to the growing stigma against racialised migrant Roma, many of whom rely on informal work in public areas to survive. Such

⁵ Campaign website: <https://toimirasismiavastaan.fi/>

⁶ The campaign’s umbrella commitment: <https://sitoumus2050.fi/en/rasismmin-vastainen-kattositoumus#/>

¹⁰ Rauta, Jenita (2024). Hate crime reported to the police in 2023. Police University College of Finland. https://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/866764/Polamk_katsauksia_38.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

¹¹ Weckström, E., Kekkonen, K. & Kekkonen, O. (2023). The well-being of Roma children and the realisation of their rights in Finland, Publications of the Office of the Ombudsman for Children. <https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/handle/10024/164839>

¹² EU Action Plan against Racism 2020-2025. https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/beb25da4-e6b9-459e-89f7-bcdbc3a8f0c8_en?filename=a_union_of_equality_eu_action_plan_against_racism_2020_-2025_en.pdf

¹³ EU Roma Strategic Framework for equality, inclusion and participation 2020-2030. https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2021-01/eu_roma_strategic_framework_for_equality_inclusion_and_participation_for_2020_-_2030_0.pdf

actions also hinder access to basic needs, such as warming up indoors.^{14 15 16}

2. REDUCE POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION

CONTEXT

- The Finnish social policy largely prevents poverty and there is an efficient income-redistribution system, but pockets of relative poverty and social exclusion persist.¹⁷

PROGRESS MADE

- No significant achievements have been made in reducing poverty and social exclusion. The Hirundo Day Centre, operated by the Deaconess Foundation, served as a key platform for engagement with migrant Roma in Helsinki. It provided not only emergency social support but also opportunities for dialogue and empowerment.¹⁸

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- The socioeconomic status of the Roma people is lower than that of the mainstream population, yet Roma do not perceive themselves as poor nor marginalised and may consider discussions about poverty to be stigmatising.¹⁹
- The significant cuts in the basic social security benefits in 2024 affect unemployment benefits, housing benefits and social assistance. The cuts will increase the number of people in need of social assistance by 100,000 (27%) by 2027.²⁰ As such, the impacts are likely to hit the Roma people.
- According to a survey among elderly Roma in 2024 (N=59), 29% received only the national pension (EUR 775.70) or less, no earnings-related pensions at all. The incomes of respondents ranged from EUR 550 to EUR 1,450, which positions the respondents among low-income population. In addition, it is noteworthy that the respondents were among the most wellbeing Roma elderly, as the vulnerable are not reached or do not answer in surveys.²¹

¹⁴ Keskinen, S., Aminkeng Atabong, A., Himanen, M., Kivijärvi, A. H., Osazee, U., Pöyhölä, N. & Rousku, V. (2018). The Stopped - Ethnic profiling in Finland. SSKH Notat, no. 1/2018, vol. 1/2018, University of Helsinki, Swedish School of Social Science, Helsinki.

¹⁵ Enache A. & Baldovin, I. (2024). Gender and Violence in Romani and Traveller Lives: Methods, Ethics and Dilemmas. In Blasco, P. G., Sarafian, I. & Roman, R. (eds.). Gender and Violence in Romani and Traveller Lives. Methods, Ethics and Dilemmas. Routledge. p. 25-41.

¹⁶ Enache A., Dorofte M. & Iordache A. (2025). Mentoring as Support for Roma Women's Life Goals. National Research Report for Finland. Helsinki: Helsinki Deaconess Institute Foundation sr.

¹⁷ Hiilamo, Heikki; Kati Kuitto & Mi Ah Schøyen (2024). Sustainable Governance Indicators 2024. Finland Report. Bertelsmann Stiftung. https://www.sgi-network.org/2024/Finland/Social_Sustainability

¹⁸ See more: <https://www.hdl.fi/en/hirundo/>

¹⁹ Roma Civil Monitor (2024) Civil society monitoring report on the quality of the national strategic framework for Roma equality, inclusion, and participation in Finland. <https://www.romacivilmonitoring.eu/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/RCM2-2024-C3-Finland-FINAL-PUBLISHED-CATALOGUE.pdf>

²⁰ Hiilamo, Heikki, Minna Kivipelto, Pasi Moisio, Susanna Munkila, Eeva Nykänen, Joonas Ollonqvist, Johanna Peltoniemi, Peppi Saikku, Jussi Tervola, Anna-Kaisa Tuovinen and Lotta Virrankari (2023). Hallitusohjelman mukaisten sosiaaliturvan leikkausten vaikutukset vuoteen 2027. https://www.julkari.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/147877/URN_ISBN_978-952-408-229-7.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

²¹ Autio, Petra & Astrid Valerius ja Birge Schwartz (2024). Romanivanhusten palvelutarvekartoituksen seurantaselvitys: Anna kunnia vanhuksille. Suomen Romaniyhdistys. <https://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/palvelutarvekartoitus2024.pdf>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The elderly Roma with the lowest incomes are in the most vulnerable situation as they do not have sufficient access to the services or a livelihood, they do not have sufficient digital skills, they cannot afford to purchase medicine or the medical equipment, and they may not even be able to afford the use of the public transportation.²² • In Roma families, household and childcare responsibilities still fall predominantly on women. On the current trajectory it is inevitable that this is going to interrupt the long-standing positive development as all of their time goes on surviving everyday tasks, which further isolates and segregates them. • As to migrant Roma, many continue to live in conditions of extreme poverty and social marginalisation. They often lack access to secure and decent housing, employment opportunities, and those who do not have access to permanent residency also lack access to social security. Those who managed to become permanent residents are prompt to instable employment and have difficulties to use the social and employment services. There is a clear need for more sustainable, long-term solutions that go beyond emergency aid.^{23 24}
3. PROMOTE PARTICIPATION THROUGH EMPOWERMENT, COOPERATION AND TRUST	
CONTEXT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are dozens of small Roma civil society organisations (CSO) all-around Finland, but most of them operate without any paid personnel and have very limited 	AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a good awareness of Roma affairs in the ministries thanks to the National Advisory Board on Romani Affairs, but the same is not true in the regional and local levels. • In the current EU seven-year funding period, there has been a great advancement

²² Autio, Petra & Astrid Valerius ja Birge Schwartz (2024). Romanivanhusten palvelutarvekartoituksen seurantaselvitys: Anna kunnia vanhuksille. Suomen Romaniyhdistys. <https://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/palvelutarvekartoitus2024.pdf>

²³ Enache, A. & Markkanen, A. (2023). Claiming Translocal Place among Romanian Roma Migrants in Helsinki. Infrastructures, Urban Encounters and Displacement. In Assmuth, L., Aure, M., Hakkarainen, M. & Siim, P. M. (eds.). Migration and Families in East and North Europe Translocal Lifelines. 1st Edition ed. London.

²⁴ Enache A., Dorofte M. & Iordache A. (2025). Mentoring as Support for Roma Women's Life Goals. National Research Report for Finland. Helsinki: Helsinki Deaconess Institute Foundation sr.

<p>funding, which significantly hinders their capacity to contribute as effectively.²⁵</p> <p>PROGRESS MADE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> By the end of March 2025, the keyword ‘Roma’ generated six ESF+ projects with a total value of planned EU funds of 2.9 million EUR.²⁶ Some of the project applicants, mostly public organisations, covered co-funding on behalf of the participant Roma CSOs. This is a giant leap for the Roma CSOs, who do not have any permanent funding which could be used to cover the requested co-funding. 	<p>in the simplification for financial management of the projects. However, the monitoring and evaluation of the project has become extremely complicated. The beneficiaries must log in to the EU system with their online bank user identifiers to prove their participation in the project. Not everyone however has online bank user identifiers or smartphones, and some only have a joint account with their spouses. This creates serious barriers to the participation of the most vulnerable people including Roma.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Migrant Roma remain largely excluded from formal participation in decision-making processes. Their voices are underrepresented in policy development, and trust in institutions is often low due to experiences of surveillance, discrimination, and fears related to being treated unequally.^{27 28} To promote genuine empowerment, Finland’s Roma policy should establish mechanisms that enable migrant Roma to participate meaningfully in both local and national consultations.
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SECTORAL OBJECTIVES	
4. INCREASE EFFECTIVE EQUAL ACCESS TO QUALITY INCLUSIVE MAINSTREAM EDUCATION	
<p>PROGRESS MADE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The compulsory education was extended in 2021, raising the minimum school leaving age from 16 to 18 years.²⁹ The impact on Roma youth is still unclear, but the extension enables the completion of a secondary education degree during compulsory education, which is likely to raise the educational level of the Roma 	<p>AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to a survey among Roma youth (N=69), the COVID-19 pandemic and related restrictions interrupted the long-standing positive development in the educational level of the young Roma. For example, every tenth respondent lacked a comprehensive school leaving certificate,

²⁵ Roma Civil Monitor (2024) Civil society monitoring report on the quality of the national strategic framework for Roma equality, inclusion, and participation in Finland. <https://www.romacivilmonitoring.eu/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/RCM2-2024-C3-Finland-FINAL-PUBLISHED-CATALOGUE.pdf>

²⁶ EURA2021, a digital system on all projects approved with the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+). <https://eura2021.fi/hanketietopalvelu>

²⁷ Saarinen A., Markkanen A., Enache A. (2020). Mobilising for Mobile Roma : Solidarity Activism in Helsinki in the 2000s-2010s. Helsinki: Osuuskunta Triologi-TRIA & Triologue Books.

²⁸ Saarinen, A. Puurunen, H., Markkanen, A. & Enache A. (2018). Against Romanophobia, for diversity and equality: exploring the activism modes of a "movement within a movement" in Finland. In Siim, B., Krasteva A., Saarinen A (eds.). Citizens' activism and solidarity movements: Contending with populism. Palgrave Studies in European Political Sociology ed. Palgrave Macmillan, 51-78.

²⁹ Internet pages of the Ministry of Education and Culture: <https://okm.fi/en/extension-of-compulsory-education>

<p>population. Moreover, it may prevent too early adulthood of Roma teenagers, notably early marriages and leaving the school early.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Romako</i> projects by the Diaconia University of Applied Sciences, or DIAK, (2021-2024; 2025-2026) successfully supported young Roma in completing vocational qualifications, applying for and completing higher education, and strengthening their attachment to higher education communities. • <i>Cultural Diversity for Study Paths</i> Project (2023-2026), led by the DIAK, is ESF+ joint project between the University of Eastern Finland and several universities of applied science in the Eastern Finland region. It provides support in finding educational and career options, applying for studies, and starting education for Roma and other minorities.³⁰ • <i>RomniME</i> mentoring project (2024-2026) coordinated by the Deaconess Foundation supported young Roma women – Finnish and migrant - in the field of education, working life and co-operation with public authorities.³¹ 	<p>and more than half had no secondary education.³²</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipalities are not obliged to organise teaching in pupils' own mother tongue, but they can apply for government funding if they wish. In 2024, only 12 Roma pupil received education in Romani language, as the principals are not interested in organising education, in addition to which there is a shortage of qualified teachers.³³ In addition, hourly-paid staff are hardly available after Kela removed the 300-euro monthly exempt amount that a recipient of an unemployment benefit. • There is a lack of understanding in schools regarding the needs and circumstances of Roma migrant children. This often leads to challenges in the relationship between parents and schools. Many parents struggle to use the schools' digital platforms and lack information about the Finnish education system.³⁴ Due to fear of discrimination, families often choose not to disclose their Roma identity, which results in children not receiving instruction in the Romani language. Additionally, some parents are afraid of child protection authorities, which further complicates their engagement with schools.³⁵
5. INCREASE EFFECTIVE EQUAL ACCESS TO QUALITY AND SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYMENT	
CONTEXT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the beginning of the 2025, the responsibility for providing employment services was moved from the state to the 	AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no disaggregated data on Roma employment rate, but the latest estimate is 60 %.³⁷ The most significant factor that

³⁰ See more: <https://monikulttuurisetopintopolut.fi/cultural-diversity-in-poka-analysis-of-the-current-situation-and-development-areas-considering-internationalization/>

³¹ See more: <https://www.hdl.fi/en/romnime/>

³² Choi, Yoon-Hee & Kristiina Elenius (2024). Romaninuorten koulutus ja työllisyys. Raportti Ternengo butti -hankkeessa vuonna 2024 tehdystä kyselystä. Suomen Romaniyhdistys. <https://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Ternengo-butti-raportti-111224.pdf>

³³ Seilola, Irja (interview on 17.6.2024), Senior Counsellor, Finnish National Agency for Education, Basic education and early childhood education and care.

³⁴ DIRA Project Report "Digital skills in the Roma community", February 2023. https://www.hdl.fi/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/DIRA_SurveyReport_final.pdf

³⁵ Enache A. (2018). Translocal Childhoods and Family Mobility in East and North Europe. In Assmuth, L., Hakkarainen, M., A. L. & Siim, P. M. (eds.). Translocal Childhoods and Family Mobility in East and North Europe. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. 193-216. Studies in Childhood and Youth book series (SCY).

³⁷ Weiste-Paakkanen, A., Lämsä, R. & Kuusio, H. (2018). Suomen romaniväestön osallisuus ja hyvinvointi. Romanien hyvinvointitutkimus Roosan perustulokset 2017–2018 [Inclusion and wellbeing of the Finnish Roma population, Basic findings of the Roma Wellbeing Study 2017–2018], Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare. <https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-343-246-8>

municipalities, which is likely to create significant discontinuities in services.

PROGRESS MADE

- The *Romako* project by the DIAK (2021-2024), funded by the ESF+ programme, successfully supported young Roma in obtaining jobs and internships.
- There have also been employment projects for the migrant Roma, the *Roma Gate* (2020-2023) and the *Roma Gate Employment Lab* (2024-26), led by the Deaconess Foundation, taking place in Pietarsaari region. The aim of the Roma Gate Employment Lab project is to strengthen the long-term employability, equality and inclusion of migrant Roma and to strengthen the ability of companies to build sustainable and inclusive work communities in the Pietarsaari region.³⁶

puts a job seeker in a weaker position than the other applicants is a Roma background.³⁸

- In 2023, along with the pay subsidy reform, the employer's subsidy for employing someone was decreased to 70 % of the payroll costs, instead of 100 % as earlier. This weakened the companies' motivation to hire a person in a vulnerable labour market position for a job or an apprenticeship. Since 2024, youth under the age of 25 must actively seek education and employment opportunities to maintain their unemployment security. Young Roma facing barriers like multigenerational unemployment or poverty, health problems, lack of childcare, and discrimination may struggle to meet these requirements, potentially leading to a benefit losses and further hardships.³⁹
- According to a survey among Roma youth (N=69), respondents felt that the job search was hopeless due to a recognisable Romani name on the application.⁴⁰
- Migrant Roma continue to face significant barriers to employment, including a lack of formal qualifications, language barriers, discrimination, and limited access to employment services - particularly for those without residency status. Many rely on informal or precarious work, which offers little security or income.⁴¹
- The Integration Act reform took place in the beginning of 2025, making integration more challenging. A shortened integration time from three to two years limits the possibilities to learn local languages which makes it more difficult to enter the labour market. The tendency to provide only

³⁶ See more: https://www.hdl.fi/en/roma_gate/

³⁸ Mannila, Simo (2024). Syrjintä Suomessa 2020–2023. Tietoraportti. Publications of the Ministry of Justice, Reports and guidelines 2024:11. https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/165623/OM_2024_11_SO.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

³⁹ Choi, Yoon-Hee & Kristiina Elenius (2024). Romaninuorten koulutus ja työllisyys. Raportti Ternengo butti -hankkeessa vuonna 2024 tehdystä kyselystä. Suomen Romaniyhdistys. <https://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Ternengo-butti-raportti-111224.pdf>

⁴⁰ Choi, Yoon-Hee & Kristiina Elenius (2024). Romaninuorten koulutus ja työllisyys. Raportti Ternengo butti -hankkeessa vuonna 2024 tehdystä kyselystä. Suomen Romaniyhdistys. <https://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Ternengo-butti-raportti-111224.pdf>

⁴¹ Katisko, M., Enache, A. & Jylhø M. (2022). "If you want to work, you need to speak the language of the employer". Roma migrants' narratives of agency and insecurities in Pietarsaari. Helsinki: Helsinki Deaconess Institute Foundation sr.

short-term contracts or zero-contracts remain an issue both with regards to sustainable employment in general, but they also push many migrant Roma into a vulnerable position leading to bureaucratic stress and furthers the cycle of poverty and lack of social participation.

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

CONTEXT

- The Finnish healthcare system is based on public healthcare services to which everyone residing in the country is entitled. The responsibility for organising and financing the healthcare was transferred from municipalities to the regional level in the beginning of 2023, which has caused significant discontinuities.

PROGRESS MADE

- No progress has been made in improving the health of the Roma population or ensuring their equal access to quality healthcare and social services. No targeted measures addressing the specific needs of the Roma community have been implemented.
- The Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) continued to follow the development of health and wellbeing of Roma people.
- Some progress has been made in providing basic health-related services to migrant Roma in Helsinki through the cooperation between Hirundo and Global Clinic, a voluntary based initiative and the City of Helsinki. The Roma migrants have more knowledge about the municipal health and social services in Helsinki.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- The health and wellbeing level of Roma people continues to be lower than that of the mainstream population.⁴² Moreover, it is estimated by the Roma CSOs that as many as 20-30% of the Roma are living with vulnerabilities related to intergenerational poverty, marginalisation, crime, and drugs.⁴³
- There is no disaggregated data on Roma available, which makes it difficult to direct any targeted actions to the Roma population. However, the THL has clearly demonstrated that it is possible to gather and supply accurate knowledge on Roma people, as it did along with the Roma Wellbeing Study conducted in conjunction with the FinHealth 2017 population survey. A follow-up study to THL's Roma wellbeing survey must be compiled at the earliest opportunity.
- The racist and discriminatory attitudes are deeply rooted at the very core of the Finnish healthcare system. In 2023, the interviewed doctors admitted that there is a common level of acceptance for the idea that the Roma seek healthcare services for no particular reason.⁴⁴
- As a result of the government's social security cuts, income adequacy weakened in 2024–2025 in almost all households receiving basic security benefits. The

⁴² Weiste-Paakkanen, A., Lämsä, R. & Kuusio, H. (2018). Suomen romaniväestön osallisuus ja hyvinvointi. Romanien hyvinvointitutkimus Roosan perustulokset 2017–2018 [Inclusion and wellbeing of the Finnish Roma population, Basic findings of the Roma Wellbeing Study 2017–2018], Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare. <https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-343-246-8>

⁴³ Roma Civil Monitor (2024) Civil society monitoring report on the quality of the national strategic framework for Roma equality, inclusion, and participation in Finland. <https://www.romacivilmonitoring.eu/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/RCM2-2024-C3-Finland-FINAL-PUBLISHED-CATALOGUE.pdf>

⁴⁴ YLE News 6.11.2023. The Finnish Public Service Media Company. <https://yle.fi/a/74-20058794>

	<p>social protection has weakened, especially for unemployed families with children. Therefore, the social assistance is used to replace cuts in primary benefits.⁴⁵ The impacts are likely to hit the Roma.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than half of all Roma people are aged 50+, which means that at least some have spent their childhood in inappropriate housing and received insufficient education. They suffer from premature physical and mobility issues. As Finland's public healthcare system struggles with budget shortfalls, the reality is that elderly people do not get the home services they need, or they get too little of them. • In 2023, the Finnish Roma Association reached 138 elderly Roma clients; during that year alone, it made 58 notifications of concern to the Social Services, which is high number considering that the Roma are a very small minority. What is worse, in many cases the notifications led to nothing, but the clients remained without the assistance they needed. • Migrant Roma face significant challenges in accessing healthcare services, as appointments often need to be booked by phone or through digital platforms. Many lack the necessary language and digital skills to make these reservations independently. In Helsinki, the municipality makes efforts to provide interpretation services, but suitable translators are not always available.⁴⁶
7. INCREASE EFFECTIVE EQUAL ACCESS TO ADEQUATE DESEGREGATED HOUSING AND ESSENTIAL SERVICES	
CONTEXT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Finland, the Roma population settled more permanently by the early 1980s. Their access to housing and settlement were supported by many social measures, 	AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2023, significant cuts to the general housing allowance were made. Due to strict income restrictions, many people living in state-subsidized rental housing have been forced to move to cheaper apartments. Therefore, at least in Helsinki, low-income families including many

⁴⁵ Mikkilä, S., J. Ollonqvist & J. Tervola (2025). Perusturvan riittävyys 2023–2025. Hallituskauden väliarviointi. Terveiden ja hyvinvoinnin laitos. https://www.julkari.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/151239/URN_ISBN_978-952-408-495-6.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

⁴⁶ Enache A., Dorofte M. & Iordache A. (2025). Mentoring as Support for Roma Women's Life Goals. National Research Report for Finland. Helsinki: Helsinki Deaconess Institute Foundation sr.

which led to a significant improvement in the housing situation of the Roma.⁴⁷

PROGRESS MADE

- The long-term positive development in the field of Roma housing is at risk. The previous positive trajectory was very much due to the active intervention by the Ministry of the Environment. In recent years, the role of the Ministry has been almost non-existent, probably due to the cuts to ministry budgets, which has justifiably raised concerns among the Roma civil society.
- When it comes to migrant Roma who lack residency in Helsinki, the municipality provides temporary emergency housing. Migrant Roma with residency live in state-subsidised rented apartments; sometimes several families in the same apartment.⁴⁸

Roma are increasingly being housed on the outskirts of the city where the prices are lower, public transportation is scarce and services non-existent.⁴⁹ In addition, as children are assigned to their nearest school based on their address, every time the family moves, the child's school changes, and as a byproduct, the child's route through school is interrupted.

- Roma people still face discrimination in the housing market, as well as racist behaviour from other residents.⁵⁰
- Municipalities outsource housing services to the private or municipally owned housing companies. These do not have any obligation to justify a negative decision, thus there is no way to complain about decisions either. Particularly in large cities, there may well be several housing companies, but, for example, only one which offers housing to the Roma population.
- Housing services, such as housing or housing allowance, are rapidly moving online, whether public or private. Many Roma have insufficient education and no digital skills, which makes it difficult to apply housing.
- Roma migrants without permanent residence status must obtain a referral from Helsinki Social Services in order to access temporary emergency housing. However, some face difficulties in reaching these services, and due to the uncertainty of support, many opt for informal housing arrangements or end up sleeping outdoors. As the emergency shelters are also used by individuals with severe addictions, which makes some

⁴⁷ Törmä, Sinikka & Kari Huotari (2018). Romanian asumisen yhdenvertaisuuden seurantaselvitys. Reports of the Ministry of Environment, 6/2018. https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/160489/YMra_6_2018.pdf

⁴⁸ Enache A., Dorofte M. & Iordache A. (2025). Mentoring as Support for Roma Women's Life Goals. National Research Report for Finland. Helsinki: Helsinki Deaconess Institute Foundation sr.

⁴⁹ Roma Civil Monitor (2024) Civil society monitoring report on the quality of the national strategic framework for Roma equality, inclusion, and participation in Finland.

⁵⁰ Nenonen T., Kivelä J., Ervasti E. & Villa S. (2021). Perusoikeusbarometri. [Fundamental Rights Barometer] Publications of the Ministry of Justice 2021:17. <https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/handle/10024/163261>

Roma feel unsafe and reluctant to use these facilities.⁵¹

- Migrant Roma with residence permits also face significant barriers in accessing stable housing. Discrimination in the rental market is common, and those who do manage to secure housing often struggle to afford rent - especially since housing subsidies have been reduced.⁵²

PARTNERSHIPS AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

The National Advisory Board of Romani Affairs conducted a mid-term review of the NRSF in the spring of 2025.⁵³ However, greater transparency regarding on how and in which extend this review was conducted would be needed as many of the civil servants as well as respondents from the Roma civil society said they were not aware of the review.⁵⁴

As to monitoring hate crimes and hate speech, as well as other crimes against Roma, there were long-standing trust building and fruitful cooperation between the Police and Roma CSOs, which however ended abruptly in 2024. Earlier, Roma CSOs used to provide cultural training and collaborate with the Helsinki Police Department, which carried out preventive work aimed at combatting honour-based violence. The preventive work was however shutdown in 2024, and the focus is turned more on crimes instead of crime prevention.⁵⁵ Moreover, heightening polarisation has increased the Roma CSOs' reluctance to address the increasing fear the young Roma experience, in addition to the generally tensing atmosphere. Many Roma fear that if they admit racism, it will just generate more hate towards Roma.

PROMISING PRACTICES

The Finnish Romani language is a seriously endangered language. Only about one third of the Finnish Roma have good conversational skills in the Romani language, and majority of those belong to the older age groups. Nevertheless, there are few Roma who have no understanding of the Romani language.⁵⁶

In 2020, the Finnish National Agency for Education appointed an expert group to prepare a restoration programme for the revitalisation of the Finnish Romani language. The task came from Finland's National Roma Policy 2018–2022, from where some of the measures were further transferred to the National Roma Policy for 2023–2030. The expert group organised open hearings, which were participated by 19 parties in 2022, after which the group completed its work in November 2022. Soon after, the Finnish Cultural Foundation announced it was willing to support the revitalisation of the

⁵¹ Enache, A. & Markkanen, A. (2023). Claiming Translocal Place among Romanian Roma Migrants in Helsinki. Infrastructures, Urban Encounters and Displacement. In Assmuth, L., Aure, M., Hakkarainen, M. & Siim, P. M. (eds.). Migration and Families in East and North Europe Translocal Lifelines. 1st Edition ed. London. 22 p.

⁵² Enache A., Dorofte M. & Iordache A. (2025). Mentoring as Support for Roma Women's Life Goals. National Research Report for Finland. Helsinki: Helsinki Deaconess Institute Foundation sr.

⁵³ Grönfors, Janette (16.6.2025 over Teams), General Secretary, National Advisory Board on Romani Affairs, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

⁵⁴ Roma Civil Monitor (2025, forthcoming) Civil society monitoring report, Finland.

⁵⁵ Police of Finland (13.9.2024) "Helsingin poliisi kehittää toimintaansa ja organisaatiotaan palveluiden tehostamiseksi", <https://poliisi.fi/-/helsingin-poliisi-kehittaa-toimintaansa-ja-organisaatiotaan-palveluiden-tehostamiseksi>

⁵⁶ The Programme for the Revival of the Romani Language 2023-2030. The Finnish National Agency for Education. Raportit ja selvitykset 2022:6. https://www.oph.fi/sites/default/files/documents/Suomen_romanikielen_elvytysohjelma_toimenpide-esityksineen.pdf

Finnish Kalo language and Romani art and culture with EUR 1 million in funding between 2023 and 2030.⁵⁷

The Programme for the Revival of the Romani Language takes place in 2023-2030. Right from the beginning many promising projects have been launched all over the country.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ The Finnish Cultural Foundation (15.12.2022). “One million euros to support Romani language and culture”.

<https://skr.fi/en/news/one-million-euros-to-support-romani-language-and-culture/>

⁵⁸ The Programme for the Revival of the Romani Language 2023-2030. The Finnish National Agency for Education. Raportit ja selvitykset 2022:6. https://www.oph.fi/sites/default/files/documents/Suomen_romanikielen_elvytysohjelma_toimenpide-esityksineen.pdf