

SWEDEN

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)	<p>Sweden's National Roma Strategic Framework (NRSF), adopted in 2012, remains a long-term strategy extending until 2032. Its stated overall aim is that a Roma child born in 2012 should, by 2032, enjoy the same life opportunities as a non-Roma child. The NRSF was originally designed as an expansion of Sweden's minority policy and covers five key areas: education, employment, housing, health and social services, and Roma civil society participation.¹</p> <p>The strategy has not been revised since its adoption, despite significant changes in the European policy framework, including the EU Roma Strategic Framework 2020–2030 and the 2021 Council Recommendation.²</p> <p>The NRSF is formally national, and all municipalities are expected to align with its objectives. In practice, however, implementation is fragmented and heavily dependent on local political will and temporary project-based funding. Pilot and development municipalities have carried out some positive initiatives, but there is no binding obligation or long-term financial framework to ensure equal implementation across the country. Data collection and monitoring remain weak; Sweden does not collect disaggregated ethnic data, making it difficult to evaluate progress. Instead, reporting relies on agency self-assessments and qualitative studies.</p>
ESTIMATED ROMA POPULATION	50,000-100,000 (CoE estimate) ³
National Roma Contact Point (NRCP)	Ministry of Culture, Unit for Languages, National Minorities and Archives.

¹ Government Offices of Sweden. 2011. *A Coordinated and Long-Term Strategy for Roma Inclusion 2012–2032*. Available at: <https://www.regeringen.se/rapporter/2011/02/romsk-inkludering/>

² Council of the European Union. 2021. *Council Recommendation on Roma equality, inclusion and participation*. 2021/C 93/01. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32021H0305%2801%29>

³ A more precise estimate is hard to make because there are no ethnically based statistics. The principle of self-identification is important and means that it is the individual themselves who decides their belonging to a minority group. *The Knowledge Guide – Theme National Minorities*. Available at: <https://kunskapsguiden.se/omraden-och-teman/arbetsmetoder-och-perspektiv/nationella-minoriteter/romer-och-romani-chib/>

HORIZONTAL OBJECTIVES

1. FIGHT AND PREVENT ANTIGYPSYISM AND DISCRIMINATION

PROGRESS MADE

During the reporting period (June 2023 – March 2025), several initiatives were launched or continued that directly targeted antigypsyism, although their scale and sustainability varied significantly.

- The County Administrative Board of Stockholm (CABS) conducted consultations with Roma civil society and organised national consultations on regional and municipal antigypsyism awareness. The publication of CABS' interim report consolidated evidence of antigypsyism in public services, including schools and social services, and recommended improved monitoring mechanisms.⁴
- The Living History Forum made progress in increasing awareness in education through its report *Antiziganism i skolan*. The report provide concrete teaching materials and recommendations for educators to integrate Roma history and culture into the classroom. The materials were piloted in a limited number of municipalities, with positive feedback from teachers and Roma civil society organisations.⁵
- The Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society further developed its programme to prevent antigypsyism among youth. Roma youth ambassadors carried out awareness campaigns in schools and youth centres, strengthening knowledge of minority rights and antigypsyism among both Roma and non-Roma young people. This initiative also contributed to empowering Roma youth to speak publicly about discrimination, which improved visibility and representation.⁶

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Despite these positive developments, antigypsyism remains deeply entrenched⁷, and the measures taken have been fragmented and insufficiently institutionalised.

- The National Roma Strategic Framework still lacks specific objectives, indicators, or mandatory mechanisms to combat antigypsyism. Most activities depend on temporary project funding and the goodwill of individual municipalities. As a result, implementation is inconsistent, with some municipalities taking proactive steps while others do nothing.
- Monitoring and data collection remain major weaknesses. The Equality Ombudsman still does not collect disaggregated data on ethnic discrimination, rendering antigypsyism statistically invisible. Hate crimes with antigypsyist motives remain severely underreported; in 2022 only 33 such cases were recorded, likely reflecting low trust in authorities rather than a real decline.⁸
- There is also a lack of structural enforcement. Training and awareness-raising activities, while valuable, are not mandatory for public servants, educators, or law enforcement officials. Roma mediators and coordinators often work under insecure contracts with limited influence on decision-making, which undermines long-term trust-building.

⁴ Ibid

⁵The Living History Forum. 2023. *Antigypsyism in Schools – Report from a Government Commission*. Available at: <https://www.levandehistoria.se/material/antiziganism-i-skolan>

⁶Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society (MUCF). 2023. *Report on the Work Against Antigypsyism*, Available at: <https://www.mucf.se/publikationer>

⁷ Ibid

⁸Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (BRÅ). 2023. *Hate Crimes 2022: Statistics and Trends*. Available at: <https://bra.se/statistik/statistik-utifran-brottstyper/hatbrott.html>

2. REDUCE POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION

PROGRESS MADE

Sweden's NRSF acknowledges the multidimensional nature of poverty and social exclusion affecting Roma communities. However, progress has been modest and largely project-based rather than systemic.

- Municipalities participating in pilot projects, such as Gothenburg, Helsingborg, and Malmö, report some positive developments in local Roma inclusion work, particularly where Roma mediators or bridge-builders have been employed to improve access to social services and education.⁹
- Some targeted initiatives have also been launched at the national level. For example, the National Board of Health and Welfare funded awareness-raising and inclusion projects aimed at improving Roma access to social services, healthcare, and eldercare. These included training programmes for Roma bridge-builders and a state-funded Roma inclusion project within Stockholm's social services (2023–2024), which focused on building trust with Roma families and increasing cultural competence among social workers.¹⁰

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

No new national policy or comprehensive reforms have been introduced to systematically address Roma poverty since the NRSF was adopted in 2012. To reduce poverty and social exclusion effectively, Sweden must move from project-based interventions to long-term structural reform.

Several systemic problems persist:

- Socio-economic segregation and residential exclusion have worsened. Roma families remain concentrated in socio-economically deprived suburbs, often characterised by high crime rates, low employment opportunities, and limited social infrastructure.¹¹ This has increased Roma children's exposure to risks such as drugs, gang recruitment, and violence, undermining educational and social inclusion efforts.
- Over-indebtedness and financial exclusion are major barriers to economic independence,¹² yet no national measures targeting Roma-specific challenges in this area have been implemented. Many Roma adults, particularly young people, enter adulthood with multiple debts or records of payment default, restricting access to housing, loans, and stable employment.¹³
- Social protection measures are not tailored to the Roma context. The NRSF does not include goals or indicators for reducing Roma poverty or dependency on social benefits. There is no framework for helping Roma transition from long-term reliance on social welfare to economic self-sufficiency.
- Insufficient Roma participation in designing poverty reduction measures means that many interventions fail to reflect community priorities. Roma organisations

⁹ County Administrative Board of Stockholm. 2024. *Annual Roma Inclusion Report*. Available at: <https://www.lansstyrelsen.se/stockholm/>

¹⁰ National Board of Health and Welfare. 2024. *In the Face of Treatment, the Future Takes Shape: Roma Inclusion Project in Social Services (2023–2024)*. Available at: <https://www.socialstyrelsen.se/>

¹¹ National Board of Housing and Planning. 2024. *Development of Segregation 2024:18*. Available at:

<https://www.boverket.se/globalassets/publikationer/dokument/2024/boendesegregationens-utveckling.pdf>

¹² BRIS. 2025. *Increasing Indebtedness in Families with Children*. Available at: <https://www.bris.se/om-bris/press-och-opinion/pressmeddelanden/allt-fler-barn-vaxer-upp-i-familjer-med-skulder-hos-kronofogden/>

¹³ Interviews with four Swedish Roma NGOs conducted for the Roma Civil Monitor Report in October 2024

stress that poverty reduction requires structural measures, including stable funding for Roma-led initiatives, yet such funding is scarce.¹⁴

- Data gaps severely hinder monitoring and evaluation. Neither national nor local authorities collect disaggregated socio-economic data on Roma, making it impossible to measure the impact of poverty reduction policies or identify priority groups.

3. PROMOTE PARTICIPATION THROUGH EMPOWERMENT, COOPERATION AND TRUST

PROGRESS MADE

The NRIS recognises Roma participation as a central pillar of inclusion policy. During the reporting period, formal consultation structures such as the Government Roma Reference Group have continued to operate, and a number of municipalities have employed Roma coordinators or bridge-builders to support local trust-building efforts.

- Projects such as Stockholm City's "Mutual Bridges" (2023–2025) have successfully combined Roma bridge-builders and social services staff to co-create trust-building activities, including cultural evenings, anonymous advisory services, and Roma-led podcasts. These initiatives, which were designed with strong Roma participation, improved access to services and fostered dialogue between Roma residents and local authorities.¹⁵
- In Malmö, the Revised Action Plan for Roma Inclusion (2023–2025) incorporated regular consultations with Roma representatives and included local antigypsyism studies. This approach demonstrated that inclusive and participatory methods can build trust and empower Roma communities when properly funded and institutionalised.¹⁶

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Participation is still fragmented and often symbolic, and Roma actors report limited influence in official consultation bodies. Local bridge-builders are often under-supported and diverted from their original mandate, while national strategies fail to embed Roma voices in core policymaking processes.¹⁸

- At the national level, trust has been undermined by the government's decision in 2024/25 to transfer coordination responsibilities for Roma inclusion from the Stockholm County Administrative Board (CABS) to the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society. The decision was made without proper consultation with Roma organisations or national minority representatives, provoking strong criticism and a coordinated boycott of government information meetings by national minority organisations. Roma civil society actors argue that this shift risks deprioritising Roma inclusion, weakening institutional expertise, and disrupting long-standing trust-building efforts developed under CABS. They call for permanent, institutionalised consultation mechanisms, transparent communication, sufficient and long-term funding for capacity-building,

¹⁴ County Administrative Board of Stockholm. 2024. *Annual Roma Inclusion Report*. Available at: <https://www.lansstyrelsen.se/stockholm/>

¹⁵ <https://start.stockholm/om-stockholms-stad/stockholmarnas-fokus/nationella-minoriteter-i-stockholms-stad/nationella-minoriteter-i-vara-verksamheter/omsesidiga-broar/>

¹⁶ Malmö City. 2023. *Revised Action Plan for Roma Inclusion 2023–2025*. Malmö Municipality Publication

¹⁸ Roma Civil Monitor (2022) *Civil society monitoring report on the quality of the national strategic framework for Roma equality, inclusion and participation in Sweden*. <https://romacivilmonitoring.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/RCM2-2022-C3-Sweden-CATALOGUE.pdf>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project-based initiatives, such as MUCF's youth ambassador programme and Living History Forum's education collaborations, have created platforms for Roma youth and activists to raise awareness and influence public debate. • Advocacy by Roma civil society, especially around media misrepresentation and antigypsyism, has increased visibility and prompted institutional responses.¹⁷ 	<p>and meaningful Roma involvement in the monitoring and evaluation of the NRSF.¹⁹</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The transfer coincides with substantial cuts in funding for minority organisations. <p>Without structural reforms, progress in promoting participation and trust will remain limited. For meaningful empowerment, Sweden must move from consultative rhetoric to institutionalised co-ownership, with transparent mechanisms for Roma participation in policy design and monitoring.</p>
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SECTORAL OBJECTIVES

4. INCREASE EFFECTIVE EQUAL ACCESS TO QUALITY INCLUSIVE MAINSTREAM EDUCATION

PROGRESS MADE

Progress in ensuring equal access to quality education for Roma children has been limited but not entirely absent.

- The Swedish National Agency for Education has continued to offer support for mother tongue instruction in the Romani language following legal reforms that have expanded the right to national minority language education even for children without prior language knowledge.
- Bridge-builders have played an important role in improving communication between Roma families and schools. The National Board of Health and Welfare and the Swedish National Agency for Education, in cooperation with Södertörn University, has provided targeted training for bridge-builders. These measures have been appreciated by Roma communities, as they help foster trust between schools and Roma families.²⁰

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Despite these initiatives, systemic barriers remain largely unresolved.

- There is no system for structured monitoring or evaluation of Roma students' educational outcomes, which is sometimes blamed on legal limitations on collecting ethnically disaggregated data. This lack of monitoring makes it impossible to measure the impact of inclusion measures or to identify where additional action is needed.²³
- Antigypsyism in schools continues to be widespread, with Roma students frequently exposed to bullying, low expectations from teachers, and social exclusion. While antigypsyism is increasingly recognised in policy discourse, national strategy still lacks specific, measurable objectives to address it.²⁴
- Participation in Romani language education remains critically low, and participation is steadily declining.²⁵ The key barriers

¹⁷ Interviews with four Swedish Roma NGOs conducted for the Roma Civil Monitor Report in October 2024

¹⁹ Dikko. 2025.. *National Commission Leaving the County Administrative Board*. Available at: <https://dikko.nu/nationella-uppdrag-lamnar-lansstyrelsen-minoritetspolitiken-och-romsk-inkludering/>

²⁰ The Swedish National Agency for Education. 2025. Available at:

<https://www.skolverket.se/download/18.2812543a19545f4070d4b6c/1741079906959/pdf13210.pdf>

²³ County Administrative Board of Stockholm. 2024. *Annual Roma Inclusion Report*. Available at: <https://www.lansstyrelsen.se/stockholm/>

²⁴ Living History Forum. 2023. . *Antigypsyism in Schools – Report from a Government Commission*. Available at: <https://www.levandehistoria.se>

²⁵ The Swedish National Agency for Education. 2025. Available at:

<https://www.skolverket.se/download/18.2812543a19545f4070d4b6c/1741079906959/pdf13210.pdf>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several municipalities have reported successful local initiatives. In Malmö, the Roma Information and Knowledge Centre, in cooperation with municipal school departments, implemented targeted outreach to reduce absenteeism among Roma pupils.²¹ Awareness of antigypsyism in schools has also increased at the institutional level. The County Administrative Board of Stockholm and the Living History Forum have contributed through studies which have been used to develop awareness-raising materials for teachers. These reports have been instrumental in acknowledging systemic barriers faced by Roma students.²² 	<p>include a severe shortage of qualified teachers, lack of awareness among families about their legal rights, and fear of discrimination leading many Roma to conceal their identity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no binding national framework to ensure that schools include Roma history and culture in curricula, despite the fact that minority education is formally part of the national curriculum. Teachers often lack the competence and resources to teach about Roma history, culture, and rights. Finally, Roma participation in shaping educational policies remains limited. Consultations with Roma organisations are often ad hoc, and bridge-builders are sometimes misused for tasks outside their mandate, undermining their intended function.
5. INCREASE EFFECTIVE EQUAL ACCESS TO QUALITY AND SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYMENT	
<p>PROGRESS MADE</p> <p>Little progress has been made in addressing Roma exclusion from the labour market during the reporting, primarily through targeted but small-scale initiatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Swedish Public Employment Service (AF) was assigned a Roma inclusion mandate, which included the development of the digital training course <i>Equality for Roma in the Labour Market</i>. This course aimed to build internal competence among AF staff by increasing knowledge of Roma history, antigypsyism, and cultural understanding. Additional measures included providing services in the Romani language and other national minority languages and offering support for Roma women through collaborations with initiatives initially aimed at foreign-born women.²⁶ 	<p>AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT</p> <p>Structural barriers remain largely unresolved, and the impact of the measures has been very limited. National strategy lacks enforceable targets, dedicated resources, or a coherent national policy framework to combat antigypsyism in the labour market.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roma applicants continue to face systemic discrimination, often being stereotyped or rejected by employers. Many Roma feel compelled to conceal their identity to avoid exclusion, reinforcing cycles of invisibility and mistrust.²⁷ The AF's Roma inclusion measures were not monitored or independently evaluated. Partly contributed to legal restrictions on collecting ethnically disaggregated data, AF cannot follow up on whether Roma job-seekers actually benefited from the initiatives. There is no evidence of improved employment rates among Roma,

²¹ City of Malmö. 2024. *Yearly Report on the work of the Municipal Roma Council*. Available at: <https://motenmedborgarportal.malmo.se/welcome-sv/namnder-styrelser/kommunstyrelsen/mote-2024-08-14/agenda/arlga-rapport-2023-fran-malmo-stads-rad-for-den-nationella-minoriteten-romerpdf?downloadMode=open>

²² Ibid

²⁶ The Swedish Public Employment Service. 2023. *Equality for Roma in the Labour Market*. Available at: <https://arbetsformedlingen.se>

²⁷ Ibid

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AF also organised consultations with Roma civil society representatives—five during the assignment period—allowing for dialogue on employment barriers. These consultations were positively received as an opportunity to exchange perspectives and build trust, even though systematic follow-up was lacking. • At the municipal level, some Roma bridge-builders have begun to support Roma job-seekers by facilitating communication with employers and public employment offices. • Overall, these efforts represent an increased recognition of antigypsyism as a structural barrier to employment, aligning partially with the EU Roma Strategic Framework’s (2020–2030) emphasis on embedding equality and participation into mainstream labour market policies. 	<p>and the initiatives ended without any clear plan for continuation or scaling up.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additionally, economic barriers—such as over-indebtedness, unstable housing, and limited access to credit—remain unaddressed in employment policy. These factors significantly limit Roma participation in the labour market, yet the NRSF does not include measures to tackle financial exclusion.²⁸ • At the municipal level, Roma bridge-builders are underutilised due to a lack of clear mandates, and their work is often restricted to education. Their potential to support Roma in accessing employment, training, and entrepreneurship is largely untapped.
6. IMPROVE ROMA HEALTH AND EFFECTIVE EQUAL ACCESS TO QUALITY HEALTHCARE AND SOCIAL SERVICES	
<p>PROGRESS MADE</p> <p>Sweden’s general healthcare system is publicly funded and legally universal, and Roma in theory have equal rights to access healthcare. The National Board of Health and Welfare (NBHW) has continued its efforts to increase awareness of Roma rights within the healthcare and social services sectors. Notable initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridge-builder training programmes: Two rounds of specialised training for Roma bridge-builders have been conducted, focusing on healthcare and social services. These programmes, delivered in cooperation with Södertörn University, aim to enhance understanding of relevant legislation, minority rights, and communication strategies. As of 2024, eight Roma participants have completed the training, with three more enrolled for the following term. • Information and awareness-raising: NBHW produced a short digital information film on Roma inclusion, targeting healthcare and social service professionals, and launched the training package <i>In the Face of</i> 	<p>AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of systemic measures and follow-up: Most initiatives remain short-term and project-based, dependent on temporary funding. When projects end, their outcomes are rarely integrated into regular healthcare or social service operations. There is still no national strategy or binding framework for Roma health inclusion, nor specific targets within the NRSF to reduce health disparities. • Limited outreach and impact: The NBHW’s informational materials and training courses have had limited reach. For example, the digital Roma inclusion film was viewed only 143 times by 107 users within six months of its release, indicating weak dissemination strategies. There is also no monitoring mechanism to evaluate whether healthcare workers’ behaviour has changed as a result of these trainings. • Persistent structural barriers: Roma communities, particularly elderly people, Roma with disabilities, and LGBTI Roma, continue to face discrimination and

²⁸ Interviews with four Swedish Roma NGOs conducted for the Roma Civil Monitor Report in October 2024

<p><i>Treatment, the Future Takes Shape</i>, developed jointly with Roma civil society. These materials are designed to improve cultural competence and encourage respect for Roma rights in service provision.²⁹</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local inclusion projects: Stockholm municipality, with state funding, ran a Roma inclusion project within social services (April 2023–December 2024) aimed at building trust between Roma communities and social workers. This included workshops, co-developed educational materials, and consultations with Roma families. Focus on Roma women and vulnerable groups: Several local projects have sought to address the health needs of Roma women and girls, especially in reproductive health and mental well-being. Roma women's organisations have been involved as partners in these initiatives, which marks progress in recognising intersectional vulnerabilities.³⁰ <p>These efforts show growing recognition of the need for Roma participation and cultural sensitivity in healthcare and social services.</p>	<p>culturally insensitive treatment in healthcare settings. Fear of prejudice discourages many Roma from seeking care, leading to lower access to preventive services such as screenings, vaccinations, and mental health support.³¹</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of updated data: The latest comprehensive report on Roma health was published in 2018 by NBHW, and most of its recommendations have yet to be implemented at scale. There is no systematic collection of disaggregated data on Roma health outcomes, making it difficult to monitor inequalities or adjust policies.³² Trust deficit: Despite local trust-building efforts, Roma communities continue to report low confidence in healthcare and social services due to previous experiences of discrimination. Bridge-builders and Roma health mediators remain underutilised, with too few employed to make a meaningful systemic difference.³³
<h2>7. INCREASE EFFECTIVE EQUAL ACCESS TO ADEQUATE DESEGREGATED HOUSING AND ESSENTIAL SERVICES</h2>	
<p>PROGRESS MADE</p> <p>Efforts to address Roma housing exclusion during the reporting period have been limited but include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local initiatives: A few municipalities have taken steps to include Roma perspectives in housing-related dialogues. In Malmö, the Roma Information and Knowledge Centre has actively engaged Roma residents to document housing discrimination and provide guidance on tenant rights, 	<p>AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT</p> <p>Despite formal equality, structural housing inequalities persist. Overcrowding and housing-related indebtedness are common, and young Roma are disproportionately affected by credit default records, which restricts access to stable housing.³⁵ Stronger coordination, desegregation measures, and legal and financial safeguards are needed to ensure fair housing conditions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of national coordination and binding targets: The NRSF does not contain specific housing-related objectives or measurable

²⁹ Minoritet. 2025. <https://minoritet.se/lansering-av-utbildningsmaterial-for-romsk-inkludering>

³⁰ Minoritet. 2023. *New increased investments in Roma Health*. Available at: <https://www.minoritet.se/7372>

³¹ Roma Civil Monitor (2022) *Civil society monitoring report on the quality of the national strategic framework for Roma equality, inclusion and participation in Sweden*. <https://romacivilmonitoring.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/RCM2-2022-C3-Sweden-CATALOGUE.pdf>

³² The National Board of Health and Welfare. 2018. *Health and Vulnerability in the Roma Minority*. Available at: <https://www.socialstyrelsen.se/globalassets/sharepoint-dokument/artikelkatalog/ovrigt/2018-12-48.pdf>

³³ County Administrative Board of Stockholm. 2024. *Annual Roma Inclusion Report*. Available at: <https://www.lansstyrelsen.se/stockholm/>

³⁵ Interviews with four Swedish Roma NGOs conducted for the Roma Civil Monitor Report in October 2024

<p>contributing to better understanding among municipal housing officials.³⁴</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal framework: Sweden's general anti-discrimination legislation, together with the Minority Act (SFS 2009:724), continues to provide Roma tenants with formal legal protection. Municipal anti-discrimination bureaus and civil society actors occasionally offer support to Roma who experience housing discrimination. 	<p>indicators. Housing inclusion is treated as a general minority rights issue rather than as a targeted priority, resulting in fragmented implementation. There is no national mechanism to monitor housing discrimination against Roma or to ensure that municipalities integrate Roma inclusion in their housing policies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistent discrimination: Roma individuals continue to face both direct and indirect discrimination in the housing market.³⁶ Many report that revealing their Roma identity significantly reduces their chances of securing housing, forcing families to hide their ethnicity. This pattern of concealment reinforces mistrust toward public authorities and perpetuates the invisibility of housing discrimination in statistics. • Concentration in marginalised areas: Most Roma families remain confined to socio-economically vulnerable suburban areas, often characterised by high unemployment, crime, and social deprivation. Children living in these areas face increased risks of exposure to drugs, gang recruitment, and violence. This segregation has escalated over the past decade, reflecting both socio-economic barriers and structural discrimination.³⁷
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PARTNERSHIPS AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

Roma participation was intended to be a cornerstone of the NRSF, and a Government Roma Reference Group was established. Some progress has been made—particularly through annual consultations by the County Administrative Board of Stockholm (CABS), where Roma civil society has contributed to reporting and agenda-setting.³⁸ However, these platforms are often seen as lacking inclusiveness and real influence.³⁹

There is no formal mechanism for monitoring NRSF implementation, and Roma NGOs are not systematically involved in its evaluation. While CABS and the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil

³⁴ City of Malmö. 2024. *Yearly Report on the work of the Municipal Roma Council*. Available at: <https://motenmedborgarportal.malmo.se/welcome-sv/namnder-styrelser/kommunstyrelsen/mote-2024-08-14/agenda/arlga-rapport-2023-fran-malmo-stads-rad-for-den-nationella-minoriteten-romerpdf?downloadMode=open>

³⁶ The Swedish Public Employment Service. 2023. *Equality for Roma in the Labour Market*. Available at: <https://arbetsformedlingen.se>

³⁷ National Board of Housing and Planning. 2024. *Development of Segregation 2024:18*. Available at: <https://www.boverket.se/globalassets/publikationer/dokument/2024/boendesegregationens-utveckling.pdf>

³⁸ County Administrative Board of Stockholm. 2024. *Annual Roma Inclusion Report*. Available at: <https://www.lansstyrelsen.se/stockholm/>

³⁹ Roma Civil Monitor (2022) *Civil society monitoring report on the quality of the national strategic framework for Roma equality, inclusion and participation in Sweden*. <https://romacivilmonitoring.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/RCM2-2022-C3-Sweden-CATALOGUE.pdf>

Society (MUCF) have initiated promising consultations and training (e.g. bridge-builder programmes), efforts remain fragmented and short-term.

Roma civil society is also not institutionally engaged in hate crime monitoring or victim support, although some Police regions, like West Sweden show promising initiatives in setting up councils for dialogue on improving hate crime prevention and monitoring.⁴⁰

To move from symbolic to meaningful partnerships, Sweden must strengthen structural participation through binding consultation frameworks, sustained funding, and civil servant training on Roma inclusion and rights.

PROMISING PRACTICES

Several initiatives stand out as promising practices for Roma inclusion in Sweden, despite their often project-based and limited scope.

- Bridge-builders (Roma mediators): the *bridge-builder model*—such as in cities like Gothenburg and Helsingborg—has shown potential when implemented with local commitment. Bridge-builders have helped translate institutional responsibilities into accessible information for Roma families, improved cultural competence among school staff, and supported Roma children in navigating the education system. Although unevenly applied across the country, where implemented well, the model contributes to early intervention, dropout prevention, and community empowerment. In Malmö, cooperation between the Roma Information and Knowledge Centre (RIKC) and local schools reduced absenteeism through home visits, family outreach, and introducing Roma history in classrooms. The National Board of Health and Welfare and The Swedish National Agency for Education, in collaboration with Södertörn University, launched two training rounds (2022–2024) for Roma mediators in social services, improving trust and communication with Roma families.⁴¹
- Youth empowerment: The Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society *Roma Youth Ambassadors Programme* (2022–2024), which empowered young Roma to develop and lead awareness-raising campaigns, participate in consultations with local government officials, and promote minority rights through social media and public events. This project strengthened youth leadership, improved institutional awareness, and fostered trust-building between Roma communities and public authorities.⁴²
- Local research-policy cooperation: The City of Malmö and Malmö University’s *2023 study on antigypsyism*, commissioned by the County Administrative Board, exemplifies an inclusive and participatory research process. The study combined interviews with Roma residents and municipal workers to analyse structural discrimination in schools and proposed actionable policy recommendations. This initiative not only highlighted the value of co-produced knowledge but also served as a model for local diagnosis and institutional learning.
- Education on antigypsyism: The Living History Forum’s 2023 assignment resulted in teacher guidelines and digital tools to increase knowledge of Roma history and antigypsyism. Pilot schools reported positive feedback.⁴³

⁴⁰The Swedish Police Authority. 2024. Available at: <https://polisen.se/utsatt-for-brott/polisanmalan/sakerhet-och-ordning-i-samhallet/paverkansbrott-mot-demokratien/>

⁴¹National Board of Health and Welfare (NBHW). 2024. *Training Programme for Roma Bridge-builders*. Available at: <https://www.socialstyrelsen.se>

⁴²MUCF. 2024. *Youth Ambassador Programme Final Report*. Available at: <https://www.mucf.se>

⁴³Living History Forum. 2023. *Antigypsyism in School – a Government Commission*. Available at: <https://www.levandehistoria.se>

These practices show that Roma inclusion is possible when efforts are sustained, Roma-led, and institutionally supported. Their success underscores the importance of embedding participation, accountability, and trust-building into future Roma inclusion strategies.