

## ITALY

<b>APPROACH OF THE NATIONAL ROMA STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK (NRSF)</b>	National Roma Strategic Framework (NRSF) in Italy has adopted a mainstream approach combined with explicit but non-exclusive target groups.
<b>ESTIMATED ROMA POPULATION</b>	120,000-150,000
<b>National Roma Contact Point (NRCP)</b>	UNAR - National Anti-Racial Discrimination Office

## HORIZONTAL OBJECTIVES

### 1. FIGHT AND PREVENT ANTIGYPSYISM AND DISCRIMINATION

PROGRESS MADE	AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The main tool and key resources made available to combat antigypsyism are the two weeks of action against antigypsyism organised by UNAR, to promote initiatives aimed at spreading positive values, preventing discrimination and inequality, and countering antigypsyism through educational, cultural and artistic activities<sup>1</sup>. Numerous events were organised across the country, including concerts, photography exhibitions, artistic performances, film screenings, and book presentations that gave voice to Roma and Sinti communities, also highlighting the Romani linguistic heritage. The participation of civil society was significant: in 2024, 28 NGOs participated; in 2025, the number rose to 37.</li> <li>An event organised for the first time by the Municipality of Rome on April 8th to celebrate the International Roma and Sinti Day, aimed at promoting Roma culture and strengthening the commitment to combating antigypsyism.<sup>2</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A widespread and deep-rooted feeling of hostility persists, that prevents relations among the Roma, Sinti and non-Roma communities. It is still essential to encourage the promotion of cultural, political and legislative initiatives aimed at combating antigypsyism, especially considering that no progress has been made at the level of political and legal instruments.</li> <li>Among administrators and often in official documentation, the term ‘Rom,’ referring to communities living in socio-economic poverty (6% of the total), is indiscriminately extended to the entire community. In implementing social policies, actions aimed at supporting Roma and Sinti communities in socio-economic hardship should be semantically de-ethnicised.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> <https://unar.it/portale/settimana-per-la-promozione-della-cultura-romani-e-per-il-contrasto-all-antiziganismo>; <https://unar.it/portale/avviso-pubblico-della-ii-edizione-della-settimana-per-la-promozione-della-cultura-romani-e-per-il-contrasto-all-antiziganismo-3-13-aprile-2025->

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.comune.roma.it/web/it/evento/8-aprile-giornata-internazionale-dei-rom-e-sinti.page#:~:text=Roma%20Capitale,-Menu%20di%20navigazione&text=Appuntamento%20martedi%208%20aprile%2C%20dalle,di%20confronto%2C%20testimonianze%20e%20approfondimenti>

## 2. REDUCE POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION

### PROGRESS MADE

- Support measures promoted by the Italian government to combat poverty – such as the Universal Single Allowance (*Assegno Unico Universale*) and the Inclusion Allowance (*Assegno di Inclusione*) – play a crucial role in providing assistance to vulnerable families. These measures are characterised by relatively accessible procedures and the absence of overly restrictive eligibility criteria or discriminatory conditions, thus fostering broader inclusion and reducing the risk of marginalisation.

### AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- It is necessary to address the lack of structural tools that support individuals in achieving real autonomy, particularly given that poverty is currently tackled almost exclusively through welfare measures. To promote sustainable inclusion, inclusive employment policies should be implemented, specifically targeting groups that face systemic discrimination and social exclusion.
- Organisations are only sporadically involved in supporting Roma individuals in accessing available support measures. It is therefore essential to strengthen the presence and role of civil society associations in these areas of intervention, ensuring consistent guidance and accompaniment throughout the process.

## 3. PROMOTE PARTICIPATION THROUGH EMPOWERMENT, COOPERATION AND TRUST

### PROGRESS MADE

- There has been little to no significant progress in this area. Roma organisations remain few in number, often fragmented and, at times, in conflict with each other. Many of them also lack the technical capacity and expertise required to access funding opportunities and to develop and manage sustainable projects. Overall, organisational capacity remains limited, which hampers their ability to influence policies and implement meaningful initiatives.

### AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Over the past two years, Roma civil society has not been actively involved in the phases related to the definition of funding priorities and financing mechanisms. Instead, UNAR has acted as the sole spokesperson for the communities during this stage. UNAR has not convened Forum meetings aimed at strengthening the body itself or empowering the individual member associations. Established by decree in 2017, the Platform and the Forum were conceived as an operational tool for dialogue between UNAR, civil society, and central and local administrations. The Forum is composed of 25 associations, all with boards where Roma and Sinti members hold the majority. The Platform, on the other hand, also includes pro-Roma organisations and is now composed of 79 associations. However, as already noted, both the Platform and the Forum has not been significantly involved in relevant processes, and their potential remains largely unfulfilled.

## SECTORAL OBJECTIVES

### 4. INCREASE EFFECTIVE EQUAL ACCESS TO QUALITY INCLUSIVE MAINSTREAM EDUCATION

#### PROGRESS MADE

- A three-year project (2024-2027) for the inclusion and integration of Roma, Sinti and Caminanti girls, children and adolescents, to be financed under Priority 2 ‘Child Guarantee’.<sup>3</sup> EUR 40 million, managed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, has been set aside for the inclusion and social integration of Roma, Sinti and Caminanti children between the ages of 3 and 18 and their families.<sup>4</sup> 31 project proposals were accepted for funding actions:
  - to promote an intercultural and cooperative school to improve overall well-being.
  - to overcome the fragmentation of services by promoting an integrated and multidisciplinary approach through spaces for discussion and relationships to facilitate dialogue and trust among the various actors.
  - to provide stability to social, social-health and socio-educational interventions.

#### AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Many Roma children do not attend kindergarten and, as a result, by the time they enter compulsory school can show differences from their peers, especially in the areas of language and behaviour management. The tendency is to certify them as having a disability, that risks stigmatising students rather than supporting their inclusion. To counter this phenomenon, it is essential to strengthen teacher training and raise awareness among parents, discouraging the misuse of the law. In some cases, parental support for this practice is influenced by the availability of small financial benefits. There are currently no apparent measures to prevent this practice, which is only now starting to be exposed by civil society.

### 5. INCREASE EFFECTIVE EQUAL ACCESS TO QUALITY AND SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYMENT

#### PROGRESS MADE

- The only employment-related measure implemented in recent years was the 'Acceder-e' pilot project, launched in 2022. Promoted by UNAR with Invitalia and national stakeholders, it was funded through PON 2014–2020 under the previous NRIS and concluded in 2023.
- There are no clear indicators for determining how Roma benefit from the mainstream employment policy. The

#### AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- There are Roma individuals who are de facto stateless or face significant challenges in renewing their residence permits.<sup>5</sup> These legal and administrative obstacles hinder their ability to access basic rights and enter the formal labour market. It is therefore essential to promote targeted actions aimed at facilitating legal regularisation, as a key step toward social inclusion and economic self-sufficiency.

<sup>3</sup> [https://trasparenza.lavoro.gov.it/archivio105\\_procedure-dal-01012024\\_0\\_5\\_984\\_1.html](https://trasparenza.lavoro.gov.it/archivio105_procedure-dal-01012024_0_5_984_1.html)

<sup>4</sup> Statement by Donata Bianchi, expert on Roma and Sinti communities in Italy 2 December 2024.

<sup>5</sup> Associazione 21 luglio, Fantasmi urbani (Urban ghosts), December 2020, <https://www.21luglio.org/2018/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/fantasmi-urbani-edit.pdf>

<p>absence of indicators and data that could estimate how much and in what way traditional employment support policies impact the labour inclusion of Roma is also due to the fact that traditional policies are not ‘ethnically targeted’. Roma can benefit from policies and measures aimed at employment inclusion if they fall into other categories covered by these policies and interventions (e.g., long-term unemployed, NEETs, socially disadvantaged individuals, young unemployed people, etc.), but we cannot determine how many Roma have actually benefited from these policies/interventions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Over 90 percent of Roma living in monoethnic settlements do not have a regular employment contract, compared to a national employment rate of 62.7 percent.<sup>6</sup> Local authorities should actively support the labour market integration of Roma individuals by implementing a range of measures, including: the assessment of both formal and informal skills; the promotion of vocational training programmes; support for small-scale entrepreneurship initiatives; and the facilitation of access to stable and formal employment opportunities.</li> </ul>
<b>6. IMPROVE ROMA HEALTH AND EFFECTIVE EQUAL ACCESS TO QUALITY HEALTHCARE AND SOCIAL SERVICES</b>	
<p><b>PROGRESS MADE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There was no progress in the reporting period on health and social services.</li> </ul>	<p><b>AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As highlighted in the previous monitoring report, NRSF emphasise the need to remove the main obstacles to access to welfare. Proposals include the introduction of cultural mediators to facilitate access to services, the ongoing training of social workers to counter prejudice and stereotypes, the activation of processes aimed at legal regularisation, and the promotion of personalised social policies tailored to individual and family characteristics. However, these actions are mainly formulated as vague proposals, with generic objectives that appear inadequate for addressing the issue and the problems encountered in a structural manner.</li> </ul>
<b>7. INCREASE EFFECTIVE EQUAL ACCESS TO ADEQUATE DESEGREGATED HOUSING AND ESSENTIAL SERVICES</b>	
<p><b>PROGRESS MADE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Municipalities made significant efforts to address residential segregation. For example, the Puglia Region has dedicated EUR 10 million to addressing housing hardship, while Calabria has assigned EUR 95.27 million from the ERDF OP for social inclusion and housing interventions.</li> </ul>	<p><b>AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NRSF does not pay sufficient attention to the ghettoising housing conditions that have been experienced for decades by Roma communities historically settled in working-class settlements, such as in some areas of Abruzzo and Calabria. Research remains insufficient, particularly regarding the formation of segregated, working-class</li> </ul>

<sup>6</sup> Istat data, April 2025, <https://www.istat.it/comunicato-stampa/occupati-e-disoccupati-dati-provvisori-aprile-2025/#:~:text=Su%20base%20mensile%2C%20il%20tasso.effettuata%20al%20secondo%20paragrafo%20introduttivo.>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several Italian Regional Administrations have allocated resources to support the housing inclusion of Roma and Sinti communities, with the support of civil society organisations in the respective territories, especially during the implementation phase of the projects.</li> <li>• While challenges related to shantytowns persist, particularly in regions like southern Italy, there is a clear trend toward structured housing solutions.</li> </ul>	<p>neighbourhoods predominantly inhabited by Roma populations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Naples and its hinterland have the highest rate of ethnic Roma living in emergency housing and it contains the largest slums in Italy where a quarter of the Roma and Sinti present in Italian settlements live. The major critical issues are a paralysed public administration, a lack of political vision, a Roma community in particularly deprived conditions, an associationism crushed on mere emergency, and a strong presence of organised crime.<sup>7</sup> Currently, Associazione 21 luglio is working to overcome the Giugliano in Campania settlement.</li> <li>• It is needed that UNAR take a role in promoting and organising interventions to permanently overcome mono-ethnic settlements.</li> </ul>
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## PARTNERSHIPS AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

In the first monitoring cycle of the National Strategy, involvement of Roma and pro-Roma associations was noted in the drafting phase of the National Strategy.<sup>8</sup> However, thereafter, no further structured actions for the inclusion of civil society in the implementation process are apparent.

Currently, Association 21 July is the only organisation involved in monitoring the implementation of the Strategy. This is done through an activity carried out by monitors, which is based on analysis of the press, sending formal requests to the relevant administrations and periodic visits to the territories concerned. No other associations are reported to be involved in similar monitoring activities.

## PROMISING PRACTICES

In July 2023, the Municipality of Rome approved, after a process of co-programming and co-planning that also involved several CSOs, municipal social services, Capitoline Departments and Local Health Authorities, the ‘City Action Plan for overcoming the “Camp System” 2023-2026’,<sup>9</sup> being currently being implemented.

The co-planning procedure, with the participation of 16 CSOs and the support of experts from UNAR, CNR and the Italian Society of Human and Social Sciences, organised the work into thematic subgroups. These subgroups, consistent with the NRSF, addressed complex issues to define actions aimed at overcoming the governmental planning and management process related to ethnic ghettos reserved for citizens identified as Roma or Sinti,

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.21luglio.org/comunicato-stampa-napoli-figli-abbandonato/>

<sup>8</sup> Roma Civil Monitor (2023) Civil society monitoring report on the quality of the national strategic framework for Roma equality, inclusion, and participation in Italy. Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, p.10.

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.comune.roma.it/web-resources/cms/documents/Piano\\_dAzione\\_Cittadino\\_per\\_il\\_superamento\\_del\\_Sistema\\_campi\\_2023-2026.pdf](https://www.comune.roma.it/web-resources/cms/documents/Piano_dAzione_Cittadino_per_il_superamento_del_Sistema_campi_2023-2026.pdf)

EUR 12.9 million were allocated for the implementation of this Plan, with the aim of overcoming the six ‘equipped villages’ of Roma Capitale, where, at the end of 2023, 2,261 Roma and Sinti people lived.

In September 2024 the camp in Via Cesare Lombroso, was closed.<sup>10</sup> The 33 families living there were involved in an accompaniment process aimed at finding adequate housing solutions.

Efforts must align with EU guidelines, prioritising long-term strategies and inclusive policies over temporary measures. Sustainable integration requires ongoing support in housing and social placement, ensuring that former camp residents receive the necessary assistance to transition into stable and dignified living conditions.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.comune.roma.it/web/it/notizia/chiuso-campo-nomadi-di-via-lombroso.page>