

## JUSTICE, INTERRUPTED

**Revisiting transitional justice, truth  
and reconciliation efforts at the EU  
level and in Germany, Romania,  
Spain and Sweden**

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## SUMMARY

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Where are we on the road towards truth, reconciliation and transitional justice for Roma communities? Following the EU-funded [CHACHIPEN](#) project's in-depth examination of the status quo in four EU Member States – Germany, Romania, Spain and Sweden – as well as at the EU level, this policy brief seeks to conduct a 'reality check' and assess any recent progress.

Over the past three years, new policies have been tabled to pave the way towards meaningful Roma inclusion and to address the many instances of historical injustice faced by these communities. This new analysis shows that beyond big plans and lofty ambitions, the process of achieving systemic justice seems to be threatened by constant interruptions, delays and changing political will.

Most of the measures that would acknowledge past and present injustices fall short of practical implementation. By and large, Roma remain forgotten: political, cultural and linguistic representation is hollow; equitable policies are few and far between, while violence, exclusion and discrimination persist. Justice should not be subject to the whims of those wielding political power – thus, beyond describing the current reality, this policy brief is also a call to action for national governments and the EU alike. The recommendations call for systemic change and a coherent, EU-wide approach, shaped by Roma people and supported by their lived experiences and testimonies.



**JEKHIPE**



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## THE JEKHIPE PROJECT

The JEKHIPE project, *Reclaiming our past, rebuilding our future: new approaches to fighting antigypsyism against Roma*, is a CERV-funded project aimed at improving the lives of Roma by addressing systemic and institutional antigypsyism, promoting transitional justice, fostering knowledge-building and awareness, and strengthening Roma identity and participation.

It is a follow-up to an earlier CERV project called 'CHACHIPEN', officially titled *Paving the way for a Truth and Reconciliation Process to address antigypsyism in Europe. Remembrance, Recognition, Justice and Trust-Building*'. Concluded in 2023, CHACHIPEN introduced an innovative transitional justice-based approach to raising awareness of systemic injustice and ongoing antigypsyism in policymaking, while advocating for a comprehensive truth and reconciliation strategy.

This policy brief revisits the national contexts explored in the CHACHIPEN reports on Germany, Romania, Spain, and Sweden, drawing on follow-up work conducted by national experts. It also assesses progress at the EU level, as the Commission's Roma Strategic Framework reaches its midpoint.

Developments from recent years are examined against the benchmarks set by the 2022 CHACHIPEN synthesis brief.



## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Adopt and strengthen existing transitional justice tools
2. Facilitate broader and inclusive Roma participation
3. Promote a coherent, EU-wide rule of law approach

## PART I – INTRODUCTION: KEY CONCEPTS

### 1. ANTIGYPSYISM

A 2017 reference paper of the [Alliance against Antigypsyism \(AAA\)](#) established a [working definition](#) of the term that underlines the multifaceted, historical character of antigypsyism, which has taken on many forms over time to adapt to changing circumstances:

*'Antigypsyism is a historically constructed, persistent complex of customary racism against social groups identified under the stigma 'gypsy' or other related terms, and incorporates:*

- 1. a homogenizing and essentializing perception and description of these groups;*
- 2. the attribution of specific characteristics to them;*
- 3. discriminating social structures and violent practices that emerge against that background, which have a degrading and ostracizing effect and which reproduce structural disadvantages.'*

For present purposes, the term is [understood](#) as a 'specific form of historically rooted racism', directed against Roma, Sinti, and other societal groups as means to 'dehumanise and oppress those stigmatised as "gypsy"'. Antigypsyism feeds off of the assumption that Roma are '[inferior and deviant](#)' – qualities which are used to justify their [oppression and marginalisation](#). As evidenced by the [contribution](#) of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), antigypsyism goes beyond covert hostility or even violence towards Roma, but manifests through pervasive systemic discrimination and exclusion from access to socio-economic rights including healthcare, education, or decent employment.

### 2. TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE

There is no universally accepted, singular definition of 'transitional justice', as [critical scholarship](#) continues to debate its meaning and [scope](#), particularly regarding its temporal dimensions.

The [CHACHIPEN project](#)'s working definition of the term was based on the one developed by the [United Nations](#) Secretary-General in 2004.

*[Transitional justice comprises] 'the full range of processes and mechanisms associated with a society's attempts to come to terms with a legacy of large-scale past abuses, in order to ensure accountability, serve justice, and achieve*

*reconciliation. These may include both judicial and non-judicial mechanisms, with differing levels of international involvement (or none at all) and individual prosecutions, reparations, truth-seeking, institutional reform, vetting and dismissals, or a combination thereof'*

In general, the concept of transnational justice refers to processes aimed at addressing historical human rights violations, wrongdoing, and injustice committed during conflict or periods of oppression, typically carried out in a later, more democratic political and societal context.

In the context of antigypsyism, the question of temporality is central. Some initiatives framed as transitional justice may focus narrowly on specific instances of past wrongdoing, without adequately acknowledging broader, overarching tendencies (such as colonialism, slavery, and servitude<sup>1</sup>) that span decades or even centuries and offer a more holistic understanding of the injustice.

Likewise, any attempt to comprehensively define transitional justice should refrain from a narrow, 'one size fits-all' approach that fails to properly consider intersectional elements, structural violence, or the international, transnational dimensions of atrocities and the communities impacted.

This policy brief conceptualizes transitional justice not as a one-off inquiry with a narrow focus, but as a broad and ongoing process without a fixed end-point. It embraces a holistic perspective on antigypsyism, recognizing the historical continuities that have culminated in structural violence and genocide. Transitional justice, in this view, must explore how the past defines the present in order to confront, address, and redress past human rights violations in the just pursuit of societal transformation. Crucially, it must also engage with the 'relational' nature of justice (as a spectrum rather than a binary) and take into account the national and trans-national historical contexts, institutional frameworks, and structural conditions that have enabled and perpetuated violence and injustice against Roma communities.

In this context, the EU's role as a coordinator and facilitator is crucial. A comprehensive approach – grounded in a firm commitment to truth and justice for Roma and other minorities – would help fill the gap left by the absence of a common, protective EU-wide

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<sup>1</sup> As noted by Murphy and Zvobgo (footnote xxx, pp. 185-186), '[T]ransitional justice has characteristically focused on temporally discrete wrongs occurred within the living memory of members of a political community (...) To the extent that transitional justice is concerned with redressing widespread violence and abuse for its own sake, it must be concerned with slavery and colonialism. While there are few living direct perpetrators and victims of colonialism and slavery, millions are affected by their unaddressed legacies (...) [The] narrative of a particular time period that emerges from transitional justice is distorted; a full picture of the truth does not emerge when we consider only wrongs that are temporally discrete and temporally close. See also: Nagy, R. (2008), 'Transitional Justice as Global Project: Critical Reflections', *Third World Quarterly* Vol. 29, No. 2, pp. 275-289.

framework. It would also acknowledge the international dimension of truth and reconciliation efforts and allow such processes to continue even where national initiatives are weak or politically suppressed.

Transitional justice cannot be pursued through isolated strategies – neither at the national nor the EU level. It must be a joint and sustained efforts, supported by a range of tools and mechanisms designed to ensure accountability and systemic justice. These include institutional reforms, judicial and non-judicial interventions, reparations, prosecutions and other targeted inquiries.

The measures and policies adopted by the four EU Member States will be evaluated against these benchmarks in their stated pursuit of justice for Roma.

### 3. TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION – RECOGNITION, REMEMBRANCE, ACTION

Interrelated with transitional justice inquiries are 'truth and reconciliation processes' (TRPs), which stem from the principle of an individual's 'right to the truth' – also described as a 'fundamental right to truth and justice' – and the state's corresponding 'duty to remember' past and ongoing human rights violations, particularly those perpetrated by governments and state authorities. At their core, TRPs demand a 'rule of law approach', recognising antigypsyism as a systemic and structural issue, not merely a matter of inequality. This approach requires protecting minorities from institutional forms of racism and discrimination through robust legal and structural reforms, establishing multiple pathways for redress, implementing sustained monitoring, and ensuring institutional accountability for both historical and present-day injustices.

Recent scholarship has highlighted transitional justice mechanisms and truth-seeking processes as critical tools for addressing the deep-rooted history and systemic nature of antigypsyism. In particular, these processes should be grounded in the following principles:

- The '**right to know the truth**' about injustice inflicted upon Roma communities,
- The '**right to justice**' for victims, including the recognition and amplification of their lived experience and voices, and
- The '**right to reparations**' through targeted and meaningful compensation for harms endured.

A central element of transitional justice is the establishment of ‘Truth and Reconciliation’ Commissions at all institutional levels. These bodies provide formal structure to inquiries into wrongdoing, injustice, and systemic violations of rights and dignity. Institutionalising TRPs this way enables more thorough, systematic work that can better [contribute](#) to awareness-raising, the creation and preservation of archives and documentation, and the facilitation of dialogue among victims, communities, and institutions. Notably, Germany and Sweden both established such Commissions. However, as the CHACHIPEN [assessment](#) revealed, neither fully met the [international standards](#) necessary to realize the full potential of a truth and reconciliation process. These standards include, among others: a broad and inclusive consultative process; the operational independence of the Commission; full access to government records; special safeguards for structurally vulnerable Roma; rigorous public reporting; and the issuance of clear and actionable final recommendations.

Ultimately, only through a multi-faceted, institutionalised, and fundamentally accessible and transparent framework can transitional justice efforts lead to meaningful redress for those who (directly or through family history) have been victims of state-perpetrated or state-condoned human rights violations.

## 4. PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON CHACHIPEN RESEARCH

In the framework of the CHACHIPEN project, based on national and EU-level findings, the research team [defined](#) five key recommendations (with three targeted recommendations for the four case studies) for addressing antigypsyism through a truth and reconciliation process, which serve as the benchmarks for the following assessment.

The recommendations addressed to the Member States and the EU can be summarised as:

1. Explore the full potential of transitional justice tools and truth-seeking mechanisms by creating independent Truth and Reconciliation Commissions at all institutional levels
2. Ensure key success indicators are met when designing and implementing TRCs and related mechanisms that prioritise: broad and meaningful participation of Roma communities and civil society; community ownership and inclusive consultation; adequate funding for research, public hearings, outreach, and dissemination; as well as regular reporting on the implementation of recommendations

3. Build a robust knowledge base through the collection of data, testimonies, and first-hand accounts from Roma victims, survivors, and witnesses; establish a fully accessible archive of official and formerly restricted documents; support research that centres on Roma scholars and researchers and; implement sustained monitoring of antigypsyism across institutions
4. Encourage the EU to take an active coordinating role in supporting national and local truth and reconciliation efforts; facilitating the creation and networking of TRCs and; monitoring and following up on the implementation of their recommendations
5. Establish an EU-level Transitional Justice Toolbox to investigate, acknowledge, and redress past and ongoing persecution and exclusion. This should include the establishment of a ‘Commission of Commissions’ to operate alongside and support national, regional, and local TRCs and mechanisms to address both historical wrongs and their present-day manifestations across the EU-27.

## PART II – SUMMARY OF UPDATES FROM THE FOUR MEMBER STATES AND THE EU

This section discusses progress made in the four CHACHIPEN countries as well as at the EU level. The country reports prepared in the framework of the CHACHIPEN project are referred to as ‘CHACHIPEN reports’, while the follow-up briefings concluded for the JEKHIPE project – based on the work done for CHACHIPEN – as ‘updated briefs’.

### 1. GERMANY

**Germany** established its Independent Commission on Antigypsyism in 2019, following persistent advocacy led by the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma and a coalition of civil society actors. As outlined in the [CHACHIPEN report on Germany](#), the Commission issued a report with a set of key recommendations, one of which – the appointment of a Federal Government Commissioner on antigypsyism – was promptly acted upon. However, the Commission’s impact was limited by time and budgetary constraints, which hampered its ability to fully implement and integrate its findings into the German National Roma Integration Strategy (NRIS).

Among the Commission’s six central demands, two notable actions have since been taken by the German Federal Government. In 2022, Dr. Mehmet Daimagüler was appointed as the [Federal Commissioner for antigypsyism](#), fulfilling the call for dedicated leadership on the issue. Following the [end](#) of his term, the new federal government – led by the centre-right CDU-CSU in collation with the centre-left SPD – originally [declined](#) to fill the vacancy, garnering immediate backlash. In response to the criticism, Michael Brand was [appointed](#) as the new Federal Commissioner in June 2025, a choice that was met with mixed reviews. While some [welcomed](#) the government’s decision to preserve the role, others expressed [concerns](#) over Brand’s long-standing ties to the governing CDU and the lack of direct engagement with the Sinti and Roma communities in Germany.

In 2021, Germany also established a National Roma Contact Point, which serves as a coordinator between EU and national levels and as a bridge to Roma civil society and leadership, strengthening participatory structures for long-term engagement.

Further institutional steps have included the planned creation of a [‘Reporting and Information Office on Antigypsyism’](#) by the end of 2024. Its mandate is to document ‘antigypsyist incidents below the threshold of criminal liability’. A Reporting Centre and case database have already been set up, supported by a wide civil society network. As of now, regional offices exist [six federal states](#), aligning with the federal government’s strategy to empower and support civil society actors.

In line with the EU Roma Strategic Framework, the German government adopted its [National Strategic Framework](#) in 2022, titled *Tackling Antigypsyism, Ensuring Participation*. This strategy builds on earlier initiatives, aiming for deeper Roma inclusion through better access to socio-economic rights and proactive measures to guarantee equal participation. A marked shift can also be seen in Germany's 2020 [National Action Plan on Integration](#) (NAP-I), which reframes Roma exclusion not as a [failure](#) within the community but as a systemic issue requiring cooperative, inclusive solutions across the federal, state, local and civil society levels.

Meanwhile, the German government continues to monitor and evaluate the implementation of its National Strategic Framework, focusing on addressing and understanding the root causes of antigypsyism through dedicated research and with the help of the survey-based ['Racism Monitor'](#) operated by the German Centre for Integration and Migration Research.

However, despite the Truth Commission's emphasis on the structural and institutional dimensions of antigypsyism, persistent discriminatory practices and a general lack of public awareness remain key obstacles. There is the ongoing need for a more robust, transitional justice-informed approach that incorporates both remedial and forward-looking measures. This should include broad awareness-raising efforts that cover education strategies, financial support and funding, assistance and the enforcement of existing legal frameworks and policies. Central to this work should be Truth and Reconciliation Commissions at all levels of government, operating based on transparent and inclusive approaches while facilitating collaborative partnerships with civil society organisations across the country.

## 2. ROMANIA

Efforts to address challenges highlighted in the [CHACHIPEN Report](#) have been underway in **Romania**. Ongoing challenges include the overwhelmingly negative societal perception of Roma, persisting cases of segregation, institutionalised discrimination and injustice, environmental racism, exclusion from knowledge production, and the lack of institutional representation of Roma culture and identity. Indeed, the European Commission noted in its [2023 report](#) that Romania was one of the countries most affected by segregation.

The updated brief acknowledges that several formal steps have been taken to combat segregation and promote inclusivity. A notable recent measure is the renaming and restructuring of the National Commission for School Desegregation in an effort to improve its functionality (it was originally named National Commission for Desegregation and Educational Inclusion). Progress has however proved slow. As the updated brief points

out, the Commission was established in 2019 but is yet to finalise an actionable strategy for monitoring school segregation.

In the area of policing, efforts have been made to provide sensitisation courses and workshops at the Romanian Police Academy, designed to improve cadets' education on human rights and anti-discrimination. A protocol between the Police Academy and the National Agency for Roma (NAR) was introduced to support the recruitment and training of Roma officers, with the goal of improving policing in Roma communities and fostering cultural understanding within law enforcement.

However, significant discrepancies remain between formal commitments and tangible outcomes. Despite institutional cooperation, deep-rooted issues of mistrust and discrimination persist. Reports continue to document cases of ethnic profiling, police violence, and misconduct against Roma individuals. Such instances underscore the entrenched, institutionalised antigypsyism still prevalent within the system. These concerns were echoed in a 2023 report published by the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, which concluded that 'no substantial progress' had been made in ensuring professional, non-biased police conduct towards Roma.

Elsewhere, the updated cites a [recent government report](#) assessing the [implementation](#) of the [Romanian Government's Strategy for the inclusion of Romanian citizens belonging to the Roma minority](#), 'convergent' with the EU's Strategic Framework. This report which found only 'limited progress', attributing shortcomings to coordination challenges, insufficient resources, and a lack of political will to meaningfully advance Roma inclusion.

Crucially, the report highlights a lack of measurable change in combating discrimination, hate speech, and anti-Roma sentiment. There is also an absence of data on the implementation of the Romanian law on antigypsyism, and enforcement efforts are hindered by the lack of a 'comprehensive, society-wide approach' that would help meaningfully address 'deeply entrenched prejudices and discriminatory practices'.

Additionally, the brief points to the absence of targeted awareness campaigns and the authorities' failure to meaningfully engage with civil society organisations and grassroots movements. This exclusion of key stakeholders further limits the effectiveness of antigypsyism-related policy.

On the fronts of cultural recognition, research, and historical reconciliation, several key elements of the Government Strategy remain unimplemented. Neither the National Institute for Research and Conservation of Roma Culture and History nor the State Roma Theatre have been established. The former was intended to serve a critical transitional

justice function in ‘documenting, preserving, and studying Roma history and culture’, which could have supported the ‘development of evidence-based policies for Roma inclusion’.

Furthermore, plans for a National Roma Culture Museum have encountered bureaucratic obstacles, inefficiencies, and a ‘lack of genuine inclusivity’. As the report points out, despite a legal obligation to establish the museum nearly two years ago, the government has yet to identify a suitable location.

Taken together, these findings reflect ‘limited progress’. Despite formal commitments, a significant gap between political rhetoric and real-world impact falls short of delivering tangible, positive change for Roma communities in Romania.

### 3. SPAIN

Some developments have been observed in **Spain**, where the 2019-2023 legislature undertook several legislative measures aimed at addressing historical injustices, combat antigypsyism, and promoting truth, reconciliation, justice, and inclusion. Between 2021 and 2023, a multi-partisan Subcommittee for a ‘State Pact to Fight against Antigypsyism and for the Inclusion of the Roma people’ drafted a comprehensive strategy to address antigypsyism and entrenched racism. Their efforts were grounded in extensive consultations with Roma civil society and relevant interest groups.

The resulting recommendations called for a range of cross-cutting measures, including the adoption of new legal frameworks and educational reforms, alongside a critical reassessment of historical anti-Roma laws that contributed to the marginalisation, discrimination, and persecution of Roma communities. As part of the reconciliation effort, the Subcommittee also advocated for the formal abolition of these discriminatory laws, acknowledging the harm they caused.

During this period, Spanish legislators approved the inclusion of a **dedicated article** on the historical persecution and systemic discrimination of Roma people within the National Law on Democratic Memory. This amendment also called for the creation of a Working Commission on Memory and Reconciliation, tasked – by applying the ‘principles of truth, justice and reparation’ – with investigating and documenting cases of historical injustice. The Commission is expected to preserve ‘historical memory’ of Roma experiences in Spain, with active Roma participation and a focus on reconciliation, accountability, education, and public awareness. The same law mandated the recognition of Roma history and its inclusion in national educational curricula.

The government additionally adopted the National Strategy for Equality, Inclusion and Participation of the Roma People (2021-2030), which recognises the systemic nature of antigypsyism and incorporates a transversal approach to addressing it through dedicated laws and policies, education, and capacity-building. Simultaneously, the Spanish Criminal Code was amended to include antigypsyism as a hate crime and identifying it as a specific aggravating factor in criminal proceedings.

In 2023, the European Commission positively highlighted Spanish intersectional labour programs (such as [Acceder](#) and [Cali](#)), which promote Roma women's access to employment, training, and social services. The [Commission's 2024](#) report also highlighted Spain's civil society capacity-building initiatives promoting civic participation as examples of 'promising practice'.

However, the updated brief notes significant delays in the establishment and launch of the Working Commission, which remains non-operations. Despite the ambition of the legislative measures, there remains concern about a lack of transparency in the working methods, organisation, composition and budget of the Commission. There is also apprehension about the Commission's lack of structural independence from the government, which could compromise Roma participation and diminish the credibility or inclusiveness of the final outputs.

In this respect, the authors underline that recommendations made in the framework of the earlier CHACHIPEN report have not been adequately considered. Additional concerns relate to the broad historical scope assigned to the Commission (spanning from the 15<sup>th</sup> century to the present day) combined with a limited one-year timeline, which may undermine critical aspects such as collecting testimonies, creating an open-access archive, and fostering meaningful collaboration with independent researchers.

## 4. SWEDEN

Meanwhile, **Sweden** has experienced a regressive shift in its approach to Roma rights. A shift in the country's political climate – including the formation of a new governing coalition that includes formalised cooperation with a far-right party – has contributed to a deterioration of policies promoting Roma inclusion. This political shift mirrors a growing [rise](#) in antigypsyist public discourse, reinforcing derogatory [stereotypes](#) and influencing public sentiment. At the same time, the updated brief highlights growing distrust among Roma communities towards authorities, making them less likely to report targeted [hate crimes](#).

In terms of policy, an [anti-racism 'action programme'](#) launched in 2021 made explicit reference to antigypsyism. While a new iteration of the programme was announced in

2024, assessments have deemed it impact '[insufficient](#)', with evident challenges in improving representation and fostering historical acknowledgment. Despite the [apparent lack](#) of 'concerned efforts against antigypsyism', the government has no plans to bring out a revised inclusion strategy in line with the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies (NRIS). Expert interviews cited in the updated brief highlight that public consultations with Roma communities remain superficial, while inclusion strategies fail to duly consider antigypsyism or enable genuine Roma participation.

In 2021, the government tasked the Swedish National Historical Museums (NHM) with developing a proposal for a new Holocaust Museum, which was [inaugurated](#) in June 2022 and [opened to the public](#) in 2023. While the museum formally [acknowledges](#) the need to educate about the genocide of Roma people during the Holocaust, the updated brief criticises the institutional alignment with International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), definitions, which continue to [exclude](#) Roma communities as victims of the Holocaust. No state funding has been allocated to research on antigypsyism. Roma continue to be the '[forgotten victims](#)' of not only the Holocaust, but of broader historical atrocities.

Finally, as highlighted in the original [CHACHIPEN report](#), Sweden's earlier Swedish attempt at operationalising a Truth Commission (for a period of 2 years) did not qualify as a 'proper' TRC 'aligned to international transitional justice standards'. The updated brief confirms that progress on the establishment of a proper, independent, and long-term Commission remains stalled, underscoring a fundamental lack of political will to fully recognise Roma as victims of past and present injustice, address wrongdoings, and combat systemic exclusion.

## 5. THE EU

At the EU level, the Roma strategic framework remains the central output – a package that mostly sees the Commission in a coordinating, supporting role, with the burden of implementation largely on the shoulders of Member States. In addition, the [Council Recommendation on Roma quality inclusion and participation](#), adopted in March 2021 sets out detailed expectations for Member States to provide broad access to socio-economic rights, cooperate with a wide range of Roma stakeholders, ensure participation and appropriate funding, and commit to thorough monitoring and reporting obligations. Notably, both the Commission's Framework and the Council's follow-up recommendations emphasise the need to take decisive action against structural discrimination, to promote multi-cultural awareness, establish supporting mechanisms for victims, and support an intersectional approach to antigypsyism.

Following the initiative of the European Parliament, the Commission launched the [Roma Civil Monitor](#) (RCM) for a four-year term (2021-2025), which aims to strengthen the capacity of Roma civil society to monitor national frameworks, engage in advocacy, and hold Member States accountable. In parallel, the [European Roma Platform for Roma Inclusion](#) (EPRI) hosts an annual meeting that brings together national and EU authorities, international organisations and Roma civil society to foster dialogue on Roma inclusion.

Notably, a [mid-term evaluation](#) of the Roma Strategic Framework is anticipated likely before the end of 2025, though no firm deadline has been provided. The Commission has committed to releasing biennial monitoring reports, [noting](#) that Member States are required to submit implementation updates every two years, starting in 2023.

By January 2023, the Commission [communicated](#) its first assessment report of national Roma strategic frameworks. The Communication references the Fundamental Rights Agency's (FRA) *Roma Survey* (last published in [2021](#)), with a new edition expected in 2024 but not yet published. The Commission's report noted that Member States' desegregation plans in education and housing were insufficient to successfully address the 'full scale of the problem'. However, it also acknowledged the Commission's role in offering tailored guidance to Member States and recognised the enabling impact of EU funding instruments such as the [European Social Fund+](#) and the [Recovery and Resilience Facility](#) in facilitating Roma inclusion measures.

In September 2024, the Commission published a [updated report](#) assessing national implementation efforts under both the EU Framework and the Council Recommendation. The Commission acknowledged positive progress made in multiple Member States that adopted targeted measures to combat antigypsyism and even designated dedicated officials to oversee Roma inclusion policies. However, it also identified limited progress in incorporating independent truth and reconciliation approaches, and slow progress in providing Roma equal access to socio-economic rights, with segregation and poverty persisting.

Overall, the non-binding nature of both the EU Framework and accompanying action plans continues to present a major structural weakness. In practice, the success of national action strategies is often contingent on the strength of civic coalitions and non-governmental actors who can apply pressure and promote accountability where governments fall short. As detailed below, the Commission could consider linking Roma inclusion more explicitly to broader EU values, such as compliance with Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) (which enshrines the rule of law, equality, and respect for human rights) as a means to strengthen enforcement and encourage meaningful implementation.

## 6. COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT AND KEY FINDINGS

### 6.1. IMPLEMENTING TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE APPROACHES BASED ON TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

The CHACHIPEN project's central recommendation underscores the need to pursue transitional justice for Roma communities affected by both historic and ongoing institutional violence, systemic discrimination, and state-sanctioned injustices. This includes establishing structurally independent Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRCs) at national, regional, and local [levels](#). Such mechanisms are not only vital for public acknowledgment of past harms but also for driving comprehensive redress and dismantling the root causes of continued marginalisation and exclusion.

#### **Key finding #1: (Very) limited implementation of truth and reconciliation processes, and transitional justice measures**

Despite the four EU Member States studied formally announcing or even adopting measures aimed to address antigypsyism, there remains a considerable lack of cohesive and holistic strategies to address to duly address the systemic roots of antigypsyism. Without integrated approaches, institutional reforms, and a comprehensive strategy, implementation is marred by delays, inefficiencies, and a lack of clarity. Crucially, most initiatives focus narrowly on present-day inequalities, without recognising that historical injustices are central to current structural disparities.

While several governments have formally committed to pursuing truth and reconciliation, these promises have not yet produced meaningful outcomes. The establishment of truly independent TRCs at the local, national, or even EU level remains an unfulfilled demand. Even in EU Member States that have adopted national frameworks or strategies seeking to open inquiries into past grievances, have been to operate with limited transparency, independence, or capacity; yielding no significant results or outputs.

#### **Key finding #2: Antigypsyism, systemic discrimination, and violence persist**

As the updated briefs on Romania and Germany reveal, systemic antigypsyism remains deeply entrenched, with minimal policy interventions to eliminate segregation in education and housing. Actions aimed at facilitating social inclusion and incorporate targeted lessons to address the history and legacy of antigypsyism in school curricula are also lacking.

Across all four countries, no structural transformation has occurred to ensure Roma communities can enjoy equal access to rights and opportunities. In fact, levels of poverty,

exclusion, and stigma reported today remain largely unchanged from earlier assessments. Indeed, Roma experiences of exclusion, stigmatisation, and poverty on the ground remain comparable to what was reported a few years ago.

#### **Key finding #3: No systematic collection of data and testimonies**

Across the four countries examined, the systematic collection of data and testimonies, the accessible archiving of evidence and comprehensive monitoring of fundamental rights continues to be insufficient, inaccessible, or even non-existent.

While some initiatives have sought to commemorate Roma history or showcase cultural contributions, these often fail to adequately reflect the scale of Roma victimhood, particularly in the context of state violence and historical atrocities. None of the four Member States has a fully accessible archive of all relevant documents – included restricted, formerly classified ones – despite being essential components of any credible transitional justice framework.

Despite the need for an open-access, comprehensive archive of data, testimonies – from Roma victims of violence, their families and witnesses – and research, no such repository has been made publicly available. Only Germany has taken steps toward consistent national monitoring and documentation, leaving a significant implementation gap in the other Member States.

## **6.2. PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION OF ROMA IN TRUTH-SEEKING PROCESSES**

#### **Key finding #4: Lack of meaningful Roma political participation and cultural representation**

There remains a long way to go when it comes to facilitating broad participation and inclusion of Roma in the drafting of legal instruments on anti-discrimination, as well as in broader policymaking. Existing efforts have failed to centre antigypsyism as an institutionalised phenomenon that has spanned centuries, and Roma continue to be marginalised in remembrance efforts as the 'forgotten victims' of the Holocaust and other atrocities.

All of the briefs underline the need for centring and amplifying Roma voices in the truth and reconciliation process, as well as in scholarship through the funding of research and educational programmes. Likewise, the Roma continue to be underrepresented in key decision-making bodies, in the media, academia, and virtually across all facets of society. Existing advocacy groups and civil society organisations are underfunded.

Meanwhile, cultural participation and representation is equally important but similarly lacking. Public museums, or even permanent exhibitions, preserving, exhibiting and

teaching Roma art and history do not exist. Memorials and remembrance sites solely dedicated to commemorating the injustices faced by Roma throughout the centuries – particularly the Holocaust – are [few and far](#) between. Other than a few [inclusive examples](#), national recognition of the [Romani language](#) as a minority language – as a matter [of linguistic rights](#) for national minorities – let alone policies to support its teaching across all educational levels remains an unfulfilled promise in the [majority](#) of EU Member States.

The overall results from newly adopted incentives for Roma participation reveal that while a rhetoric of inclusion exists, actual opportunities for Roma to engage in genuine, sustained consultation, and to inform and co-design policy, remain minimal, fragmented, and often symbolic.

### 6.3. ROOM FOR EU ACTION, COORDINATION AND ENFORCEMENT

#### **Key finding #5: Necessity of a coherent, EU-level rule of law approach**

While the EU has played a growing role in advancing the agenda against structural discrimination of Roma and promoting transitional justice mechanisms, its role rarely goes beyond making recommendations and then reporting on Member States' progress. As detailed in the first section, transitional justice is an inherently transnational and international endeavour that demands cross-border solutions acknowledging the interconnected roots of antigypsyism, historical injustice, and exclusion. However, the Commission continues to treat the equality portfolio as a siloed area separate from its rule of law efforts.

As long as the protection of minorities is handled in isolation from rule of law mechanisms, the Commission's influence will remain peripheral. For now, it continues to rely on the Roma Strategic Framework, monitoring Member States' steps under national strategies and issuing periodic assessments. Nevertheless, there is substantial scope for the Commission to adopt a more assertive role as coordinator and enforcer, ensuring that the Member States enact genuine structural reforms to deliver truth, justice, and reconciliation for Roma across Europe.

## PART III – POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE EU AND THE MEMBER STATES

### #1 Adopting and strengthening existing transitional justice tools

#### *Legal, institutional, and policy frameworks*

Transitional justice requires a comprehensive set of legislative and non-legislative measures that confront and redress past and present wrongdoing. Member States should ensure that existing legislation and policies are duly enforced and implemented.

Where gaps remain, new measures must be developed and specifically tailored to counter antigypsyist racism, prohibit school segregation, create affirmative action programmes and – where not yet established – create Truth and Reconciliation Commissions at all institutional levels. The structural independence of these Commissions must be guaranteed, and their work must be led by and in consultation with Roma and the civil society organisations representing them.

Any inquiries into past or present atrocities must consider the legacy of the Holocaust, slavery, and colonialism, while also acknowledging the intersectional interplays of antigypsyism with sexism, classism, and white supremacist ideologies.

#### *Support for knowledge-building, data collection and research*

As detailed in the introduction, the right to know the truth is a crucial element of all truth and reconciliation efforts. Without a sound and extensive knowledge base, the uncovering and understanding the truth is impossible. Member States should thus commit to funding research on antigypsyism, historical injustice, democratic memory, and critical studies. This includes promoting Roma-led artistic expression and wide-ranging educational initiatives, including scholarships, awareness-raising campaigns, and outreach efforts.

Governments at all levels must also support consistent monitoring of legal and policy implementation, especially regarding transitional justice mechanisms. This should encompass the collection and publication of data on antigypsyism and Roma inclusion. In a similar vein, mechanisms for collecting the testimonies of Roma victims and their families should be established and made publicly accessible, alongside an open-access archive of all available documentation on Roma history, injustices, atrocities, and other forms of evidence.

This underscores the urgent need for comprehensive truth and reconciliation initiatives to fully address the legacy of oppression and its present-day consequences.

## #2 Facilitate broader and inclusive Roma participation and cultural representation

As established in the key findings, the active inclusion of Roma voices and experiences is essential to any attempt to study, address, and combat antigypsyism. Both at the national and local levels, Roma must be meaningfully consulted as part of the truth and reconciliation process. Their lived experiences of structural violence, discrimination and injustice must be documented and inform all outcomes, including in the drafting and adoption of new legal frameworks and policies, as well as all actions taken by governments.

Civil society plays an indispensable role in this process. Non-governmental actors are well-positioned to promote accountability, fill regulatory gaps through advocacy and data collection and step up to encourage dialogue and reconciliation despite governmental unwillingness to get involved.

National governments, alongside regional and local authorities should strive to provide accessible channels for proactive engagement with Roma communities. In the spirit of 'nothing about us without us', they must make space for Roma representatives at tables where political decisions are made, while also creating inclusive spaces for intersectional, civic inclusion and participation. For instance, setting up citizens' assemblies would provide platforms for the engagement and direct empowerment of Roma individuals who tend to be excluded from political discussions, while creating space for witnessing, memory preservation, and exposing the ongoing realities of antigypsyism and systemic racism. Likewise, participation should be accompanied by broad support for the teaching and studying of the Romani language – alongside other minority languages – in schools, cultural spaces and academic institutions across Europe.

In a similar vein, permanent institutions, such as museums, should be established to promote Roma arts and culture beyond ad hoc exhibitions, provide public educational opportunities and to preserve traditions. To this end, memorials to acknowledge, recognise and remember the victims of the Roma Holocaust and other instances of systemic violence would go a long way towards supporting the quest for truth and reconciliation.

### #3 Role of the EU: a rule of law approach

The European Commission should commit to acting as both watchdog and coordinator in the transnational, European effort to address and redress antigypsyism. At its core, this commitment should mean recognising the fight against antigypsyism as integral to upholding the rule of law across all institutional levels.

As the Guardian of the Treaties, it is the Commission's responsibility to protect minorities from discrimination, but also to address the structural injustices that have prevented their full participation in democratic endeavours.

Like civil society, the EU is uniquely positioned to help close regulatory gaps and ensure that all Member States do their part in addressing the persisting challenges of antigypsyism at both national and local levels.

At the EU level, the Commission should respond to ongoing [calls](#) to expand the scope of its [annual Rule of Law monitoring](#) exercise, recognising the inextricable links between the rule of law and [fundamental rights](#). A dedicated pillar on non-discrimination and structural justice for marginalised communities, including the Roma, should be incorporated. To that end, the Report should not only map instances of discriminatory policies and access to judicial remedies, but also evaluate how governments at all levels are confronting historical injustices.

Simultaneously, the Commission should institutionalise this work through the creation of a standalone monitoring exercise for the implementation of all action under the '[Union of Equality](#)' Program. This mechanism could engage the network of Ombudspersons and/or Equality Bodies to monitor national and local progress. The CHACHIPEN-recommendation to establish a 'Commission of Commissions' remains a key institutional innovation to enable cross-border cooperation and collective action in the spirit of transitional justice. As part of this effort, the EU should set up a comprehensive mechanism for collecting more data, testimonies and research on past and present antigypsyism, to be made available in an open-access archive.

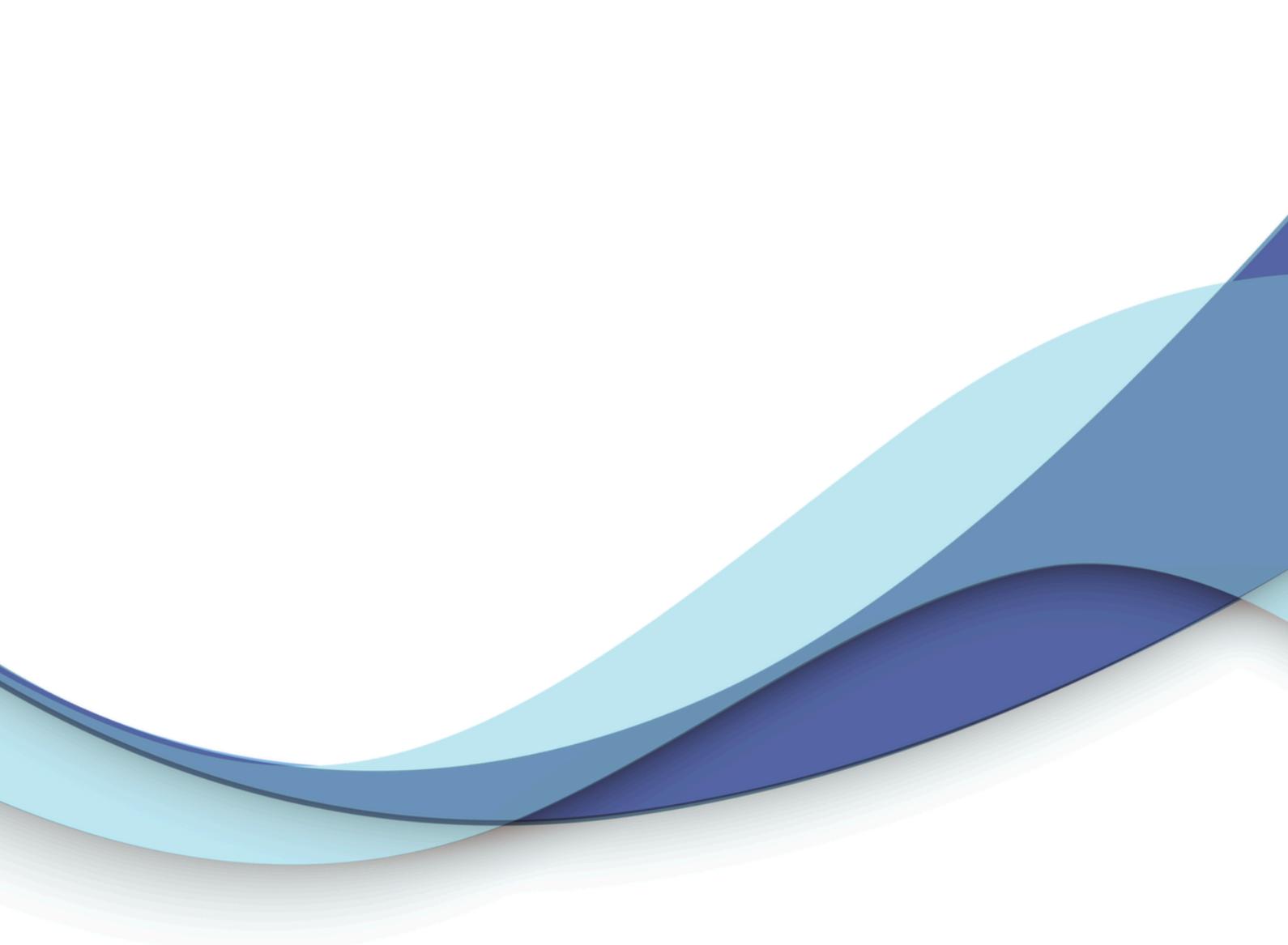
Moreover, the EU should explore linking the comprehensive implementation of National Frameworks (alongside other strategies under '[Union of Equality](#)') to the Conditionality Regulation. In doing so, the EU could consider restricting the flow of funds if a Member State is continuously failing to enforce equality and non-discrimination measures. This would considerably elevate equality and non-discrimination efforts beyond soft law and non-binding recommendations.

This approach should also include increased funding for critical scholarship and cross-border research projects. The findings from such research must inform any and all new policies and action plans.

Finally, the EU should consider establishing a European Citizens' Assembly focused on addressing historical injustices faced by Roma and other racialised minorities. This Assembly should be accompanied by a regular consultation process with civil society actors on the progress and implementation of transitional justice tools and policies. Modelled after initiatives such as the [Conference on the Future of Europe](#) and the [European Citizens' Panels](#), this forum would operate on a more permanent basis, encouraging not only civic participation, but the amplification of Roma voices, the issuance of actionable recommendations, and the witnessing of testimonies.

## LIST OF NATIONAL REPORTS

Case study	Report	Year	Author	Title
Germany	CHACHIPEN report	2022	Anja Reuss	German Independent Commission on Antigypsyism 2019 – 2021: Experiences, lessons learned and recommendations
	JEKHIPE updated brief	2025	Dezső Máté	Strategies and Recommendations to Combat Antigypsyism in Germany Reclaiming the Past, Rebuilding the Future
Romania	CHACHIPEN report	2022	Iulius Rostas Ciprian Nodis	Antigypsyism in Romania: Lessons (not) learned
	JEKHIPE updated brief	2025	Iulius Rostas	Antigypsyism in Romania: A Persistent Challenge
Spain	CHACHIPEN report	2022	Pedro Casermeiro Cortés Anabel Carballo-Mesa	Antigypsyism in Spain: Democratic memory and accountability of Franco's regime
	JEKHIPE updated brief	2025	Anabel Carballo-Mesa Ismail Cortés	Latest Developments, Strategies and Recommendations to Combat Antigypsyism in Spain
Sweden	CHACHIPEN report	2022	Jan Selling	Considering the Swedish Commission against Antiziganism 2014-2016: experiences, lessons learned and recommendations
	JEKHIPE updated brief	2025		Latest Developments, Strategies and Recommendations to Combat Antigypsyism in Sweden



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