

CIVIL SOCIETY TOOLBOX

ON COUNTERING ANTIGYPSYISM

**"RECLAIMING OUR PAST,
REBUILDING OUR FUTURE:
NEW APPROACHES
TO FIGHTING ANTIGYPSYISM"**



JEKHIPE
RECLAIMING OUR PAST, REBUILDING OUR FUTURE:
NEW APPROACHES TO FIGHTING ANTIGYPSYISM

ERGO
NETWORK

ABOUT ERGO NETWORK

ERGO Network brings together Roma and pro-Roma civil society organisations from across Europe to fight discrimination, promote equality, and strengthen Roma participation in policy-making. Through advocacy, capacity-building, and grassroots empowerment, ERGO Network works to ensure Roma communities are heard at local, national, and European levels.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Civil Society Toolbox on Countering Antigypsyism* was developed under the CERV-funded **JEKHIPE project, *Reclaiming our past, rebuilding our future: new approaches to fighting antigypsyism***, as a practical guide for NGOs, civil-society actors, and practitioners working to address antigypsyism as a structural form of racism in Europe.

Antigypsyism is not a matter of isolated prejudice but a **systemic injustice** rooted in Europe's history and institutions. It shapes laws, policies, media, and now digital spaces. This Toolbox equips organisations with the knowledge and tools to recognise, document, and transform that system through advocacy, education, and participatory governance.

Purpose

To strengthen Roma and allied civil-society capacity to:

- **Expose** structural antigypsyism in law, policy, and narratives;
- **Advocate** for recognition, justice, and reform;
- **Promote** Roma-led participation in public life and digital governance.

Key Messages

- **Antigypsyism is structural** and requires institutional accountability, not only awareness.
- **Truth and remembrance** must lead to reform in education, policy, and justice.
- **Digital rights matter** – online spaces mirror systemic racism and demand Roma participation.
- **Civil society drives change** – evidence, advocacy, and alliances turn rights into reality.

Core Components

1. **Conceptual grounding** – shared definitions from the Alliance Against Antigypsyism and ECRI;
2. **Historical justice** – understanding the Roma Holocaust, remembrance, and transitional justice as foundations for equality;
3. **Country case studies** – lessons from Germany, Spain, Czechia, Romania, and Sweden;
4. **Digital justice and media literacy** – addressing hate speech, misinformation, and algorithmic bias;
5. **Practical tools** – templates for monitoring, advocacy, reporting, and partnership-building.

Impact

The Toolbox enables NGOs to:

- **Monitor** antigypsyism systematically;
- Use **EU and national legal frameworks** effectively;
- Build **cross-movement coalitions** for justice;
- Foster **narrative change** through ethical journalism and digital literacy.

By linking memory, law, and technology, the Toolbox turns remembrance into a tool for reform – empowering Roma civil society to reclaim the past and rebuild the future on equal and dignified terms.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context and Justification

Across Europe, Roma communities continue to experience the long-term effects of **exclusion, dispossession, and racialisation – legacies of centuries of antigypsyism** that remain largely unacknowledged within formal justice systems.

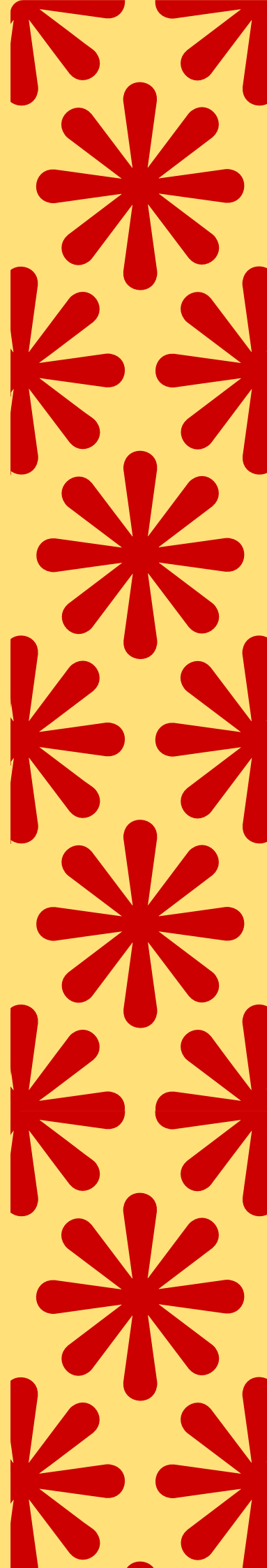
While European and national frameworks have advanced policies for inclusion, they often fall short of recognising antigypsyism as a historical injustice that requires transformative and reparatory responses rather than solely social or economic measures.

The JEKHIPE Project – *Reclaiming our past, rebuilding our future: new approaches to fighting antigypsyism*, funded by the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV) Programme of the European Union, was conceived to bridge this gap. It reframes antigypsyism not only as a contemporary human rights concern but also as a transitional justice challenge – one that requires truth-telling, recognition, reparation, and structural reform.

This approach draws from the growing body of global thought and practice on transformative justice, which recognises that genuine change must address both past violations and their ongoing structural impacts. Transformative justice emphasises participation, redistribution, intergenerational healing, and collective empowerment as essential components of social repair.

At the same time, diverse global perspectives on justice remind us that sustainable transformation must be rooted in community knowledge, cultural memory, and local traditions of dialogue and reconciliation. These insights deeply resonate with Roma struggles for truth, dignity, and representation.

Against this backdrop, the Civil Society Toolbox on Countering Antigypsyism seeks to serve as a strategic and practical resource for civil society organisations (CSOs), NGOs, and practitioners working to counter antigypsyism and promote equality across Europe.





1.2 Rationale

Developed under the JEKHIPE Project – *Reclaiming our past, rebuilding our future: new approaches to fighting antigypsyism*, funded by the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV) Programme of the European Union, this Toolbox serves as a strategic resource to help civil society address antigypsyism as a structural injustice embedded in Europe’s institutions, culture, and public life.

It provides practical and analytical guidance for confronting antigypsyism through policy reform, education, cultural action, and narrative transformation. The Toolbox bridges history and practice – connecting remembrance with contemporary strategies for justice, participation, and equality.

Reclaiming the past means more than correcting historical records. It requires restoring Roma visibility and agency in politics, education, and culture, while acknowledging how historical injustices continue to shape the lives of Roma communities today. In this sense, reclaiming our past is not a backwards-looking act but a forward-looking process: building a future where Roma are not merely consulted after decisions are made, but co-authors of the rules that govern the public sphere.

Yet remembrance alone cannot carry the weight of contemporary challenges. Today, antigypsyism spreads not only through institutions and media but also through digital infrastructures – algorithms, automated moderation systems, and coded language that conceal bias under the guise of neutrality.

This is where digital justice becomes indispensable. It demands transparency in platform governance, access for independent researchers, recommender audits, swift remedies for victims, and Roma-led monitoring capable of detecting implicit hate and algorithmic discrimination.

The *new approaches* proposed by this Toolbox therefore connect law, memory, and technology within a framework of participatory co-governance. The guiding principle is continuity:

A society that understands its history can recognise recycled narratives when they reappear on screens – and institutions that reform their digital infrastructure can make equality tangible in both storytelling and code.

1.3 Objectives

The Civil Society Toolbox on Countering Antigypsyism has been developed to strengthen the knowledge, capacity, and agency of Roma and pro-Roma civil society organisations, educators, and practitioners working toward equality and justice across Europe.

It aims to equip these actors with the conceptual understanding, strategic approaches, and practical tools needed to recognise, challenge, and dismantle antigypsyism in its multiple forms – historical, institutional, cultural, and digital.

The specific objectives of the Toolbox are to:

- Promote a shared understanding of antigypsyism as a structural and historical form of racism, shaping the everyday realities of Roma communities and influencing policy and institutional practices across Europe.
- Support civil society in developing transformative strategies that move beyond inclusion frameworks to address systemic injustice, historical responsibility, and structural change.
- Encourage the use of participatory and intersectional approaches, ensuring that Roma experiences, voices, and expertise are central in shaping policies, narratives, and public discourse.
- Provide accessible tools and methodologies that link research, advocacy, education, and communication – helping organisations translate knowledge into action.
- Foster cooperation across movements and sectors, connecting Roma advocacy to broader struggles for racial, social, and digital justice, and promoting solidarity among equality defenders.
- Advance digital justice and critical media literacy, enabling practitioners to identify, monitor, and counter antigypsyism in online spaces and to engage effectively with emerging technologies and communication platforms.

Ultimately, this Toolbox seeks to support a Roma-led, rights-based, and justice-oriented movement – one that reclaims history, reshapes narratives, and builds the foundations for lasting equality and participation.

1.4 How to use this toolbox

This Toolbox is designed as both a conceptual framework and a hands-on resource. It offers pathways for understanding, analysing, and countering antigypsyism through the combined lenses of historical justice, policy transformation, narrative change, and digital equity.

It can be used flexibly – as a training manual, a strategic planning guide, a policy advocacy reference, or an education and awareness-raising resource. Whether applied by community organisations, educators, activists, or policymakers, the Toolbox is meant to adapt to different contexts and levels of experience.

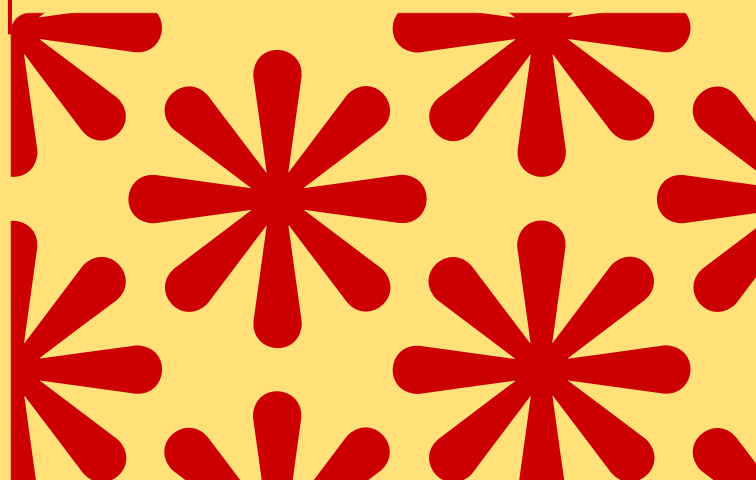
How it is structured

The Toolbox is divided into several sections that build upon one another:

1. **Understanding Antigypsyism** – introduces key concepts, definitions, and analytical frameworks for recognising antigypsyism as a structural form of racism.
2. **Historical Justice and Cultural Recognition** – explores approaches to truth-telling, remembrance, reparatory justice, and the integration of Roma memory into collective European narratives.
3. **Policy Frameworks and National Case Studies** – provides examples of how antigypsyism manifests in practice and highlights effective civil society and institutional responses.
4. **Digital Justice and Media Literacy** – offers tools for monitoring and addressing antigypsyism in online spaces, media, and algorithmic systems.
5. **Tools and Resources for NGOs** – presents checklists, templates, training materials, and case studies to support implementation and advocacy.

How to apply it

- **Adapt, don't adopt:** Each section can be tailored to fit local realities, policy environments, and organisational capacities.
- **Start from your context:** Begin by identifying the forms of antigypsyism most visible in your community or country.
- **Integrate across work areas:** Use the tools in advocacy, education, community organising, or communication projects – they are interconnected.
- **Combine reflection and action:** Each thematic chapter includes conceptual framing and practical exercises that can be applied in training or project design.
- **Collaborate and share:** The Toolbox encourages exchange among practitioners, thereby amplifying its impact through collective learning and adaptation.



Intended audiences

This Toolbox is intended for:

- **Roma and pro-Roma NGOs** and networks engaged in advocacy, community empowerment, or policy dialogue;
- **Civil society organisations and equality bodies** working on anti-racism, digital rights, and social justice;
- **Educators, journalists,** and cultural professionals integrating Roma perspectives into curricula, media, and public institutions;
- **Policy practitioners** seeking to embed justice-based approaches in Roma inclusion and equality strategies.

By combining **theory, practice, and tools**, the Toolbox invites users to see themselves not only as participants in policy processes but as agents of transformation – co-authors of more equitable institutions, public narratives, and digital spaces.

2. UNDERSTANDING ANTIGYPSYISM

2.1 What is antigypsyism?

Antigypsyism is not simply prejudice or hostility against Roma; it **is a systemic and historically rooted form of racism** that has shaped European societies for centuries. It operates as a complex power structure, shaping institutions, laws, and cultural narratives.

It manifests in:

- **Stereotyping and dehumanisation** of Roma identities in public discourse and media;
- **Institutional discrimination** in education, housing, health, and employment;
- **Segregation and exclusion** in access to services and political participation;
- **Cultural erasure and denial** of Roma history, including the Roma genocide (Samudaripen);
- **Criminalisation and securitisation**, where Roma are portrayed as a threat to public order;
- **Online and digital antigypsyism**, perpetuated by algorithmic bias and hate speech.

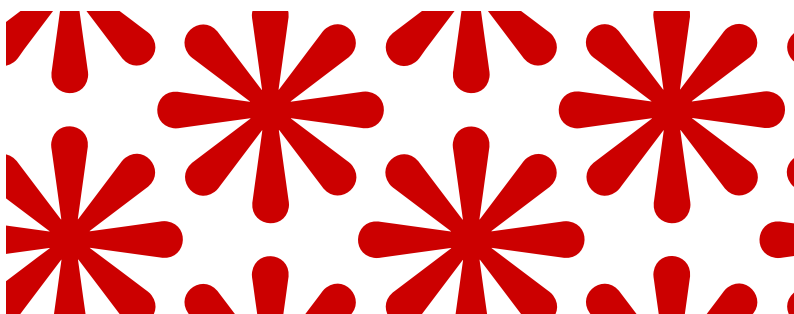
2.2 Policy and expert definitions

To ensure conceptual clarity and coherence across civil society and institutional efforts, this Toolbox builds on the main working definitions adopted at European level.

Alliance Against Antigypsyism (2016)

“Antigypsyism is a historically constructed, persistent complex of racist ideas, behaviours and structural discrimination against Roma, which is rooted in a power imbalance and nourished by deeply ingrained social and institutional practices.”

The Alliance emphasises that antigypsyism is not merely individual prejudice but a mechanism of exclusion and dehumanisation sustained by social hierarchies and institutional systems.



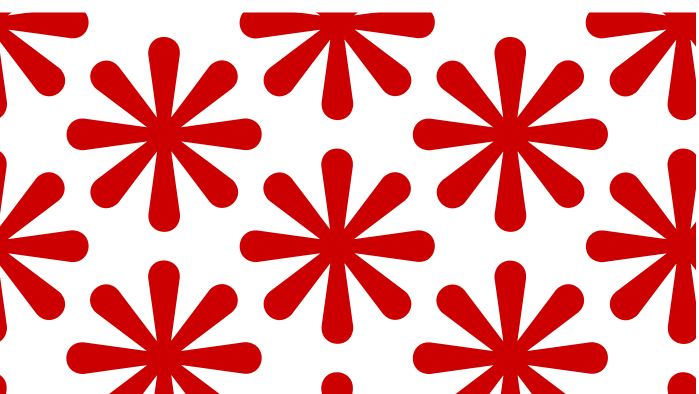
ECRI – European Commission against Racism and Intolerance

(General Policy Recommendation No. 13, 2011)

“Antigypsyism is a specific form of racism, an ideology founded on racial superiority, a form of dehumanisation and institutional racism nurtured by historical discrimination, expressed, among others, by violence, hate speech, exploitation, stigmatisation, and the most blatant kind of discrimination.”

ECRI underlines that combating antigypsyism requires systemic change – addressing its institutional, structural, and cultural dimensions through policy, law, and education.

Together, these definitions form the conceptual foundation of the Toolbox: antigypsyism is systemic, historical, and intersectional, demanding coordinated responses across public institutions and civil society.



2.3 Antigypsyism as structural racism

Understanding antigypsyism as structural racism means recognising that it is embedded in the institutions, policies, and cultural assumptions of European societies.

Just as anti-Black racism or antisemitism shape power relations globally, antigypsyism maintains social hierarchies by marking Roma as “outsiders”, even when they are full citizens. It reproduces inequality across generations through mechanisms such as:

- Segregated schooling,
- Biased policing and judicial practices,
- Spatial segregation and forced evictions,
- Limited political representation,
- Negative media representation and digital echo chambers.

Addressing antigypsyism thus requires systemic transformation – not only awareness-raising or inclusion projects, but reforms in how institutions function, how histories are told, and how justice is defined.

2.4 The continuum of antigypsyism: Past and present

Antigypsyism must be understood as a continuum that links historical persecution with contemporary discrimination.

Centuries of enslavement, forced assimilation, and genocide have shaped persistent structures of inequality. Even after the Holocaust, Roma communities were denied recognition as victims, excluded from reparations, and subjected to continued segregation.

Today’s challenges – educational segregation, hate speech, and the digital amplification of antigypsyist narratives – are not new phenomena. They are the modern expressions of older systems of control that have adapted to new environments.

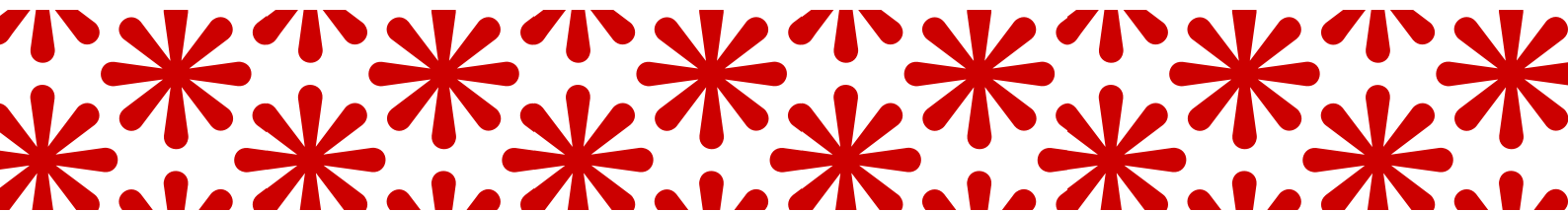
Recognising this continuity is essential to breaking the cycle. Justice for Roma requires not only **combating current discrimination** but also **acknowledging and repairing historical harm**.

2.5 Intersectionality and multiple discrimination

Antigypsyism does not operate in isolation. It **intersects with gender, class, disability, migration status**, and other identity markers, shaping the experiences of Roma individuals and communities in diverse ways.

Roma women, for example, often face multiple layers of discrimination – as women, as Roma, and as members of economically marginalised groups. Young Roma, LGBTQ+ Roma, and Roma with disabilities experience unique forms of exclusion that remain under-acknowledged in mainstream policy debates.

An intersectional approach ensures that strategies to counter antigypsyism respond to the complex realities of Roma lives and avoid reproducing inequalities within Roma communities themselves.



2.6 Why Understanding Antigypsyism Matters for Civil Society

For NGOs and practitioners,

recognising antigypsyism as a structural and historical form of racism is a prerequisite for effective advocacy. It shapes how projects are designed, how partnerships are built, and how impact is measured.

Civil society actors play a critical role in:

- Documenting and exposing antigypsyism through research and monitoring;
- Educating the public and countering stereotypes;
- Supporting victims of hate speech and discrimination;
- Engaging in policy reform and strategic litigation;
- Building coalitions across anti-racist, feminist, and digital rights movements.

By grounding their work in an **understanding of antigypsyism** as systemic, organisations can shift from reactive interventions to transformative, justice-based strategies that address root causes, not just symptoms.

3. HISTORICAL JUSTICE AND CULTURAL RECOGNITION

3.1 Why Historical Justice Matters

Antigypsyism is one of Europe's most enduring systems of racial exclusion. For centuries, Roma, Sinti, and other groups labelled as "Gypsies" have faced enslavement, forced displacement, persecution, and extermination. These were not isolated episodes of prejudice but state-sanctioned systems of control that shaped Europe's social, political, and economic fabric.

Today, their legacies persist in segregated education, discriminatory policing, barriers to housing and healthcare, and deep-rooted social stigma. Confronting these realities requires more than inclusion policies; it calls for a process of historical justice that recognises and addresses the long-term harm caused by systemic antigypsyism.

Historical justice links the acknowledgement of past violence and exclusion with efforts to repair their structural consequences. It challenges societies to move from denial and marginalisation toward accountability, recognition, and reform.

3.2 Defining historical justice

Historical justice begins with truth-telling and acknowledgement. It seeks to document and recognise past injustices – not as symbolic gestures, but as the foundation for repair and transformation.[1]

In this context, historical justice involves:

- Truth-seeking through testimonies, archives, and research on Roma experiences;
- Recognition through public apologies, memorials, and education;
- Reparatory measures addressing material and institutional consequences;
- Structural reform to ensure non-recurrence through inclusive governance and representation.

The objective is **not only remembrance, but justice** that reconfigures power relations – enabling Roma to shape the systems and narratives that affect their lives.

[1] CEPS / ERGO (2023). Paving the way for truth and reconciliation process to address antigypsyism in Europe: Remembrance, recognition, justice and trust-building (CEPS Papers on Liberty and Security in Europe). Centre for European Policy Studies. <https://cdn.ceps.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Truth-and-Reconciliation-Process-to-Address-Antigypsyism-in-Europe.pdf>

3.3 From memory to transformation

Europe's remembrance frameworks have long centred on the Holocaust as the defining moral reference point of the twentieth century.

Yet within this landscape, the persecution and extermination of Roma under Nazi rule remain insufficiently recognised and frequently contested.

The Roma Holocaust – the systematic persecution and murder of Roma and Sinti people under Nazi Germany and its allies – resulted in the deaths of an estimated 500,000 individuals. According to the Council of Europe (2020), it remains “one of the least known aspects of the Holocaust in Europe.”

For Roma communities, this history is a core element of collective identity, trauma, and moral demand for recognition.

However, recognition continues to face political and institutional resistance. Some remembrance institutions – including the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) – generally use the term “*genocide of the Roma*” rather than “*Roma Holocaust*”, reserving the term “*Holocaust*” for the extermination of Jews, as reflected in their official definitions and working documents.

This distinction, while reflecting IHRA's historical focus, has been widely debated in academic and civil-society circles. Scholars such as Karola Fings have argued that limiting the term “*Holocaust*” to Jewish victims risks reproducing the post-war exclusion of Roma from Europe's moral and historical narrative, and obscures the fact that both Jews and Roma were targeted under the same racial ideology and exterminatory logic of the Nazi regime.

This unresolved debate has serious implications for truth, justice, and education. The continuing reluctance to recognise the Roma Holocaust delays establishing historical truth and denies the Roma equal moral standing in Europe's memory culture.

Establishing this truth is therefore an act of justice. It requires full inclusion of Roma in Holocaust education, research, and memorialisation, as well as public acknowledgement of Roma suffering and resistance.

Civil-society and Roma organisations play a central role by:

- Recording survivor testimonies and community histories;
- Advocating for inclusion of Roma victims in national and European remembrance initiatives;
- Confronting denialism and distortion in academia, media, and public institutions;
- Building alliances with Jewish and other victim groups to promote solidarity and shared remembrance.

Both the [European Parliament \(2015\)](#), and the [Council of Europe's Recommendation CM/Rec\(2020\)](#), affirm that remembering the Roma victims of the Holocaust is a European moral and political responsibility. **Recognising the Roma genocide is not a matter of terminology, but of completing historical truth** and addressing one of Europe's persistent blind spots. The recommendation urges member States to include the history of Roma and/or Travellers in school curricula and teaching materials, noting that these communities have lived in Europe for centuries, yet their cultural contributions remain widely undervalued.

It highlights that at least 500,000 Roma, Sinti and other groups were exterminated during the Second World War, and that this genocide continues to be insufficiently acknowledged in education and public memory.

The recommendation calls for balanced teaching that presents both the cultural heritage of Roma communities and the historical and ongoing discrimination they face, including anti-Gypsyism. It also encourages teacher training, cooperation with Roma communities in developing learning materials, and commemorative activities such as **marking 2 August, the European Roma Holocaust Memorial Day**. Overall, the document seeks to foster respect, equality and a shared European identity by ensuring that the Roma Holocaust is properly recognised and taught as part of Europe's collective history.

4. POLICY FRAMEWORKS AND NATIONAL CASE STUDIES

4.1 Understanding Policy Approaches to Antigypsyism

Over the past two decades, [European and national frameworks on Roma inclusion have expanded considerably](#). From early initiatives focused on social integration and poverty reduction, policy discourse has evolved toward recognising antigypsyism as a specific and structural form of racism. Yet this shift in language has not always translated into corresponding institutional reform or accountability.

Most European states continue to address the situation of Roma primarily through inclusion and equality policies, which aim to improve access to education, employment, healthcare, and housing. While these efforts are important, they often treat inequality as a social deficit to be corrected, rather than as the result of systemic injustice and historical exclusion. As a result, antigypsyism remains under-acknowledged as a structural problem embedded within state institutions and public culture.

From inclusion to justice-based approaches

A **justice-based approach** reframes antigypsyism as a matter of rights, responsibility, and repair, not simply participation. It recognises that addressing antigypsyism requires:

- **Institutional accountability** for past and ongoing discrimination;
- **Recognition and redress** for historical injustices such as slavery, persecution, and the Holocaust of the Roma;
- **Structural reform** in law, governance, education, and media;
- **Meaningful participation of Roma** communities as co-authors of policies, not merely beneficiaries;
- **Intersectional analysis** that reflects the diversity of Roma experiences and identities.

While inclusion policies seek to *integrate Roma into existing systems*, justice-based approaches ask *how those systems must change* to dismantle antigypsyism.

The current EU Framework

The **EU Roma Strategic Framework for Equality, Inclusion and Participation (2020–2030)** marked a milestone by explicitly recognising antigypsyism as *“the root cause of exclusion and discrimination faced by Roma.”* This represents a significant shift from previous EU strategies, which largely emphasised socioeconomic integration. The framework calls on Member States to:

- Strengthen **independent equality bodies** and national contact points;
- Collect **disaggregated data** on discrimination and hate crime;
- Adopt **national strategies** addressing antigypsyism as a distinct phenomenon;
- Promote **Roma participation in decision-making** at all levels.

However, implementation remains inconsistent. Many national strategies still frame antigypsyism as a *cross-cutting issue* rather than a central structural problem. Monitoring often focuses on social indicators (education, housing, employment) rather than accountability indicators (representation, hate crime response, institutional reform).

Legal and institutional anchors

At the **European level**, the main legal and policy anchors for countering antigypsyism include:

- **EU Charter of Fundamental Rights** – prohibits discrimination and guarantees equality before the law;
- **Racial Equality Directive (2000/43/EC)** – provides a legal basis for challenging racial discrimination;
- **Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec(2020)2** – explicitly calls on Member States to combat antigypsyism and promote Roma equality;
- **FRA (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights)** – documents evidence on hate crime, discrimination, and social exclusion;
- **ECRI (European Commission against Racism and Intolerance)** – monitors national compliance and provides country-specific recommendations.

These frameworks establish the legal obligations of Member States, but enforcement depends on political will, institutional independence, and civil society oversight. NGOs, therefore, remain central to transforming formal commitments into tangible change.

Challenges and Gaps

Despite progress, major gaps persist:

- **Weak accountability:** Few Member States monitor antigypsyism through independent mechanisms.
- **Limited participation:** Roma communities are often consulted symbolically rather than substantively.
- **Fragmentation:** National strategies vary widely in quality, scope, and funding.
- **Lack of intersectional data:** Policies often fail to reflect the diversity of Roma experiences (gender, age, disability, migration status).
- **Insufficient recognition of history:** Most national plans omit explicit measures for remembrance, reparations, or truth-telling.

The result is a policy landscape that recognises antigypsyism in theory but rarely addresses its systemic roots in power, history, and institutions.

Implications for Civil Society

For NGOs and practitioners, understanding these policy dynamics is essential for effective advocacy. Civil society can:

- **Monitor implementation** of national Roma strategies and equality frameworks;
- **Hold governments accountable** for failing to address structural discrimination;
- **Engage with equality bodies and ombudspersons** to ensure antigypsyism is included in their mandates;
- **Translate historical justice into policy language**, linking remembrance with institutional reform;
- **Build cross-sector coalitions** connecting Roma advocacy with anti-racist, digital, and social justice movements.

By combining evidence, community expertise, and advocacy, NGOs can drive the shift from inclusion rhetoric to transformative justice.

4.2 The European policy landscape

Over the past decade, the European Union and the Council of Europe have both recognised antigypsyism as a central barrier to Roma equality. This represents an important conceptual shift: antigypsyism is no longer framed only as an obstacle to inclusion, but as a form of structural racism requiring systemic reform. However, **translating this recognition into consistent, enforceable policy remains one of Europe’s key challenges.**

4.2.1 The EU Roma Strategic Framework for Equality, Inclusion and Participation (2020–2030)

Adopted in October 2020, this Framework marked a turning point by explicitly identifying antigypsyism as “the root cause of exclusion and discrimination”. It sets seven core objectives for Member States: equality, inclusion, participation, education, employment, health, and housing.

The Framework introduces several innovations:

- **A stronger focus on antigypsyism**, hate crime, and discrimination;
- **National Roma Contact Points** and Roma civil society platforms for coordination;
- An **EU Roma Civil Monitor mechanism**, enabling independent monitoring;
- Guidance for **participation and representation** of Roma at all levels of policy.

Despite these advances, the Framework remains non-binding. Its effectiveness depends on national political will, adequate funding, and genuine participation of Roma organisations.

Civil society entry points:

- **Engage with the European Commission** and national contact points to advocate for the implementation of antigypsyism-related targets;
- **Participate in the EU Roma Civil Monitor** to provide independent shadow reports;
- **Use the Framework’s terminology in advocacy** to hold national governments accountable for addressing structural racism, not just inclusion outcomes.

4.2.2 The EU Anti-Racism Action Plan (2020–2025)

The **EU Anti-Racism Action Plan** complements the Roma Framework by situating antigypsyism within the wider struggle against racial discrimination. It established a Coordinator on Anti-Racism within the European Commission and encouraged Member States to appoint national coordinators to combat racism across sectors.

While the Plan references antigypsyism, **Roma issues are often treated peripherally**, and coordination between anti-racism and Roma inclusion agendas remains limited.

Civil society entry points:

- Advocate for **antigypsyism to be integrated into the mandates** of national anti-racism coordinators;
- Participate in **consultations and policy reviews** related to the post-2025 Anti-Racism Plan, ensuring Roma are visible in the EU's next strategy cycle;
- Promote **alliances between Roma organisations and broader anti-racist networks** (e.g. ENAR, Equinet) to amplify intersectional advocacy.

4.2.3 The Role of the European Parliament

The European Parliament has been a consistent ally in recognising antigypsyism.

Key milestones include:

- The **2015 European Parliament Resolution on Antigypsyism and Roma Inclusion**, which defined antigypsyism as “a special kind of racism” and called for recognition of the Roma Holocaust;
- The establishment of **Roma Week in the European Parliament**, a civil society-driven initiative providing visibility and policy dialogue;
- Continuous work by the **Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup (ARDI)** and Roma-friendly Members of the European Parliament.

However, the **Parliament's influence is political rather than executive**. It can shape discourse and visibility, but relies on the Commission and Member States for implementation.

Civil society entry points:

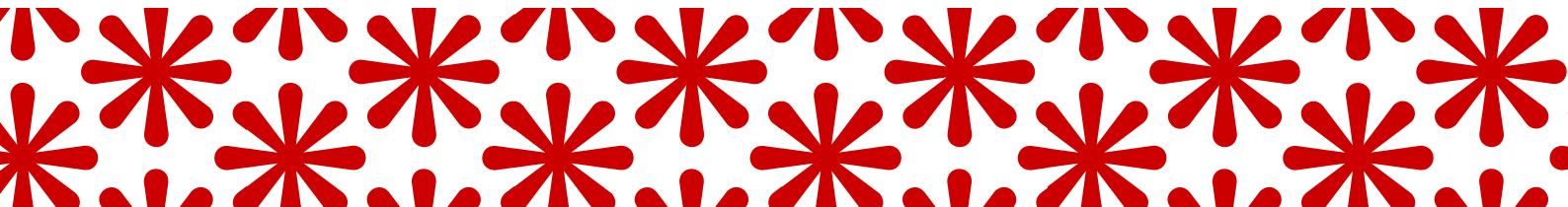
- **Collaborate with MEPs** supportive of Roma rights to host events, debates, and public statements;
- Use **Parliament resolutions as advocacy tools** when engaging with national governments;
- Provide **evidence and testimonies during public hearings** or consultations to strengthen political accountability.

4.2.4 The Council of Europe Framework

The Council of Europe (CoE) has played a leading normative role in shaping the understanding of antigypsyism. Its Recommendation CM/Rec(2020)2 on the Inclusion of the History of Roma and Travellers in School Curricula and the Declaration on the Rise of Antigypsyism and Hate Speech (2020) recognise antigypsyism as a human rights violation and a threat to democracy. The CoE also monitors Member States through the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), which issues country-specific recommendations on Roma equality and antigypsyism.

Civil society entry points:

- **Engage with ECRI's national monitoring cycles** by submitting NGO shadow reports;
- **Advocate for follow-up on CM/Rec(2020)2** through partnerships with education ministries and the CoE Education Department;
- **Collaborate with the CoE Roma and Travellers Division** on initiatives around remembrance, truth-telling, and cultural rights.



4.2.5 The Role of the FRA (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights)

The FRA provides critical evidence on discrimination, hate crime, and social exclusion. The Roma and Travellers Survey (2025) confirmed that over 80% of Roma across Europe continue to experience poverty, and 41% report discrimination in daily life. The agency also produces comparative data and legal analyses that NGOs can use to strengthen advocacy.

Civil society entry points:

- **Use FRA statistics** in shadow reports and funding applications to substantiate claims;
- Contribute to **FRA's data collection** through community-based surveys or partnerships;
- **Reference FRA data** in national advocacy to demonstrate policy gaps.

4.2.6 The Role of Equality Bodies and Ombudspersons

Equality bodies established under the Racial Equality Directive (2000/43/EC) are vital for legal enforcement. However, their mandates, resources, and independence vary significantly across Member States. Few explicitly address antigypsyism as a structural issue, and Roma often face barriers in accessing these institutions.

Civil society entry points:

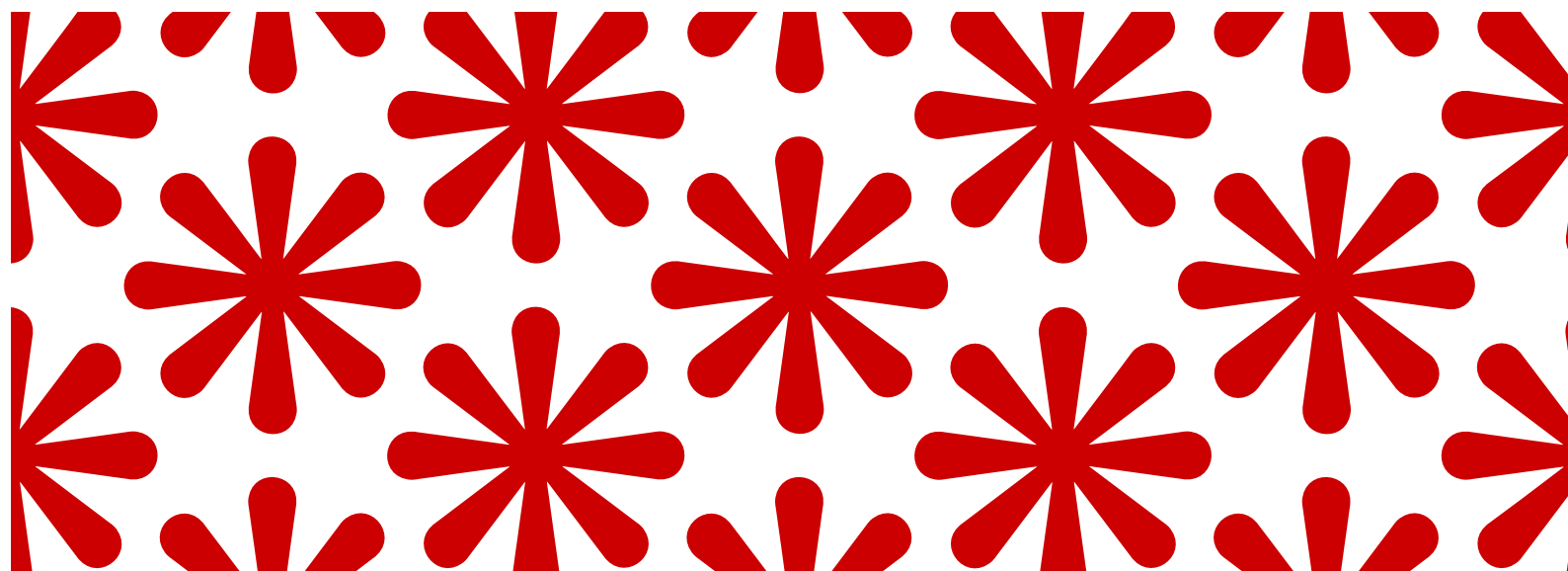
- **Advocate for equality bodies** to collect data on antigypsyism and include Roma among priority groups;
- **Partner with equality institutions** on training, awareness campaigns, and victim support;
- **Monitor and report cases of institutional discrimination** or misconduct to strengthen accountability mechanisms.

4.2.7 Moving from Recognition to Implementation

At the European level, the conceptual groundwork has been laid: antigypsyism is now widely recognised in official discourse. However, the challenge lies in implementation, coordination, and political ownership. Policies often remain fragmented across anti-discrimination, social inclusion, and education sectors, with limited cross-cutting accountability.

This gap between recognition and enforcement offers civil society both a challenge and an opportunity:

NGOs can serve as monitors, knowledge producers, and bridge-builders – transforming symbolic commitments into practical change.



4.3 National Case Studies

In recent years, several European states have taken important first steps toward addressing antigypsyism, using a mix of **truth-seeking initiatives, legal reforms, and anti-discrimination policies**. Progress, however, remains uneven, and in many cases, symbolic gestures have not yet produced the structural transformation that Roma communities have long demanded.

These initiatives are crucial for assessing institutional responses, measuring the gap between political commitments and implementation, and generating evidence for stronger policymaking. Just as importantly, they can create spaces for Sinti and Roma participation in shaping Europe's future.

The following sections examine four national experiences – Spain, Sweden, Germany, and Romania – where memory commissions, legislative measures, and policy initiatives have been established to confront antigypsyism, highlighting their achievements, challenges, and persistent limitations.

4.3.1 Spain

In 2007, Spain established the **Instituto de Cultura Gitana** (Institute of Roma Culture), a public foundation under the Ministry of Culture tasked with promoting the history, culture, and language of the Roma community through research, publications, educational programs, and cultural events.^[1] Its role includes serving as an advisory body to public institutions on Roma heritage, awarding grants to Roma creators, and facilitating cultural and educational dialogues to counter antigypsyism. In 2016, the **Spanish Government officially recognised 2 August** as the Day of Remembrance for the Roma Genocide – the Samudaripen in Romani – aligning Spain with broader European remembrance initiatives.^[2] This recognition helped institutionalise Roma genocide remembrance in Spain's national calendar and reinforced the symbolic and educational visibility of Roma suffering under Nazi persecution.

[1] Orden CUL/1842/2007, de 31 de mayo, por la que se inscribe en el Registro de Fundaciones la Fundación Instituto de Cultura Gitana. https://www.boe.es/diario_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2007-12275

[2] Ministerio de Sanidad. Memorial del Samudaripen (2016). El Gobierno rinde homenaje a medio millón de personas gitanas que fueron víctimas del exterminio durante la II Guerra Mundial. 21 de julio de 2016. <https://www.sanidad.gob.es/gabinete/notasPrensa.do?id=3995>



Recently, Spain has taken a historic step forward in the fight against antigypsyism through a **landmark criminal-law reform** adopted in July 2022. With the passage of Organic Law 6/2022,^[1] which complements Law 15/2022 on Equal Treatment and Non-discrimination,^[2] Parliament amended two key provisions of the Criminal Code. Under Article 22.4, **antigypsyism was added to the list of discriminatory motives that aggravate criminal liability**, alongside racism, antisemitism, religion or beliefs, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, and other grounds. This means that when an offence is motivated by antigypsyism, courts must take this bias into account to increase the penalty within the legal range. Similarly, Article 510 was updated to include antigypsyism as a specific motive in hate crimes, criminalising public incitement to hatred, hostility, discrimination, or violence against Roma individuals or communities. These offences carry prison sentences of one to four years, ensuring that antigypsyism is explicitly recognised and prosecuted. By explicitly naming it, Parliament strengthened the State's punitive capacity, provided legal clarity, and enabled the collection of disaggregated data that can inform more effective public policies.

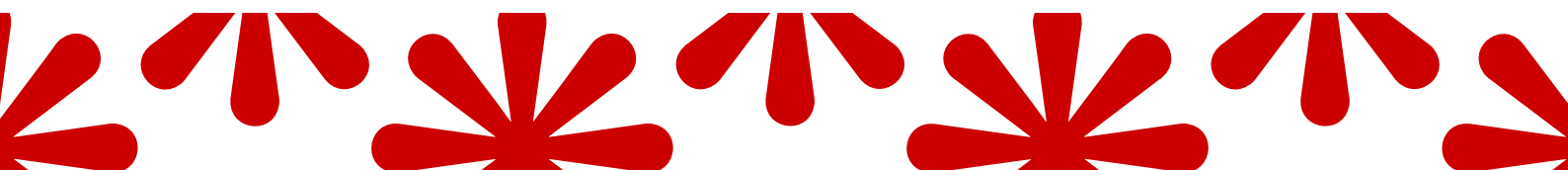
The criminal-law reform formed part of a broader institutional effort to address antigypsyism. Parliament created a Subcommittee to develop a State Pact to Fight Antigypsyism and Promote Roma Inclusion,^[3] which brought together MPs from across the political spectrum and organised extensive hearings with Roma civil society. Roughly 80% of the 30 experts consulted in public hearings were Roma themselves, including scholars, activists, and community leaders. The Subcommittee's work resulted in a comprehensive report with 158 proposals spanning eight thematic areas: horizontal measures, sectoral policies, intersectionality, gender equality, research, financing, monitoring, and governance.

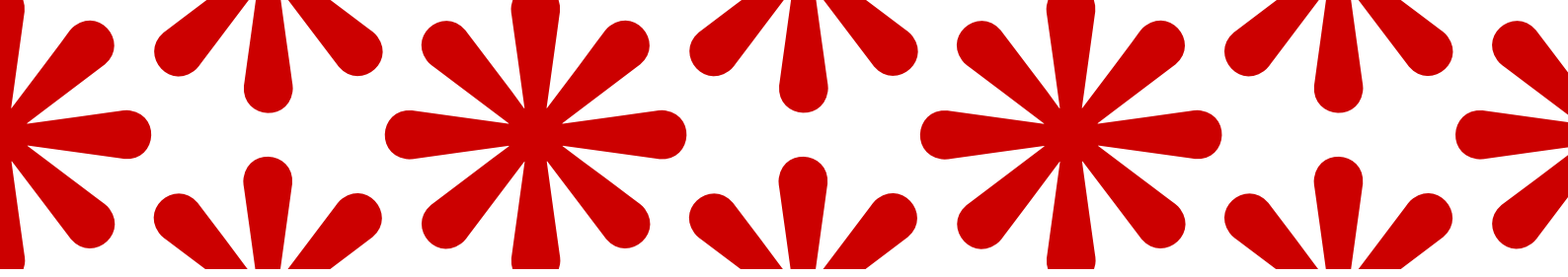
Key recommendations included the **symbolic repeal of centuries-old anti-Roma laws**, the creation of a **permanent monitoring body**, and the establishment of a **High Commission for Roma Equality**. This participatory process ensured that legislative reforms—such as the Criminal Code amendments—were grounded in Roma perspectives and co-designed with those most affected. Despite these advances, several implementation challenges remain. Police, prosecutors, and judges require tailored training and operational protocols to identify indicators of bias and correctly apply the new provisions. Proving motive in court often relies on digital evidence, witness testimony, and community context, which calls for investment in specialised investigative units and closer cooperation with anti-discrimination observatories. Moreover, transparent and disaggregated statistics are needed to track how often antigypsyism is recorded, prosecuted, and results in convictions, allowing policymakers to evaluate the reform's real impact.

[1] Organic Law 6/2022 Spain. (2022, July 12). Ley Orgánica 6/2022, de 12 de julio, complementaria de la Ley 15/2022, de 12 de julio, integral para la igualdad de trato y la no discriminación. Boletín Oficial del Estado, 167, 98068–98070. <https://www.boe.es/eli/es/lo/2022/07/12/6>

[2] Law 15/2022 Spain. (2022, July 12). Ley 15/2022, de 12 de julio, integral para la igualdad de trato y la no discriminación. Boletín Oficial del Estado, 167. <https://www.boe.es/eli/es/l/2022/07/12/15/con>

[3] State Pact Subcommittee Report (BOCG) Congreso de los Diputados. (2023, March 30). Informe de la Subcomisión para un Pacto de Estado de Lucha contra el Antigitanismo y de Inclusión del Pueblo Gitano. Boletín Oficial de las Cortes Generales, Serie D, Núm. 290. https://www.congreso.es/public_oficiales/L14/CONG/BOCG/D/BOCG-14-D-290.PDF





Spain has made **significant progress in acknowledging the historical persecution of Roma** by incorporating it into law through the 2022 Democratic Memory Law,^[1] which formally recognises antigypsyism as a historical injustice and mandates the creation of a truth and reconciliation commission. This body is tasked with gathering testimonies, issuing recommendations for reparations, and embedding Roma history within the nation's collective memory. Its ability to bring about real change will depend on whether it is granted independence, adequate resources, and sufficient time to fulfil its mandate; without these, its contribution risks remaining symbolic rather than transformative.

Complementing this initiative, Spain has also moved to address antigypsyism through education reform. The Organic Law 3/2020 on National Education (LOMLOE) strengthened the State's role in defining the minimum content of school curricula, prioritising the teaching of democratic values, historical memory, and diversity.^[2] Building on this foundation, the Royal Decree on National Education 157/2022 established the national curriculum for Primary Education and explicitly included the history and culture of minorities – including Roma – within the required content.^[3] Together, these measures **link legal recognition with education policy**, ensuring that the story of Roma persecution is not only officially acknowledged but also taught to future generations, helping dismantle stereotypes and promoting a more inclusive understanding of Spanish history. Remarkably, in 2025, Spain marked 600 years of Roma presence with a State commemoration at the Congress of Deputies on 8 April, presided over by King Felipe VI and Queen Letizia.^[4] The ceremony—within the government's designation of 2025 as the Year of the Roma people—honoured Roma history and contributions while calling for inclusion and recognition across Spanish society.

Spain has laid a solid legal and institutional foundation by criminalising antigypsyism, establishing participatory mechanisms for Roma inclusion, and embedding Roma history in education. The challenge now is to operationalise these reforms through sustained training, robust monitoring, and adequate resources, while maintaining active participation by Roma civil society. Only through this comprehensive approach can Spain transform legal recognition into tangible progress toward equality, justice, and dignity for the Roma people.

[1] Ley 20/2022, de 19 de Octubre, de Memoria Democrática. Boletín Oficial del Estado, 20 Octubre 2022. <https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2022-17099>

[2] Ley Orgánica 3/2020, de 29 de diciembre, de modificación de la Ley Orgánica 2/2006, de Educación. Boletín Oficial del Estado (BOE). <https://www.boe.es/eli/es/lo/2020/12/29/3>

[3] Real Decreto 157/2022, de 1 de marzo, por el que se establecen la ordenación y las enseñanzas mínimas de la Educación Primaria. Boletín Oficial del Estado (BOE). <https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2022-3296>

[4] Casa de S.M. el Rey. (2025, April 9). Los Reyes presiden en el Congreso el acto del Día Internacional del Pueblo Gitano 2025, un homenaje a 600 años de historia y un llamamiento a la inclusión. <https://casarealdeespana.es/2025/04/09/los-reyes-presiden-en-el-congreso-el-acto-del-dia-internacional-del-pueblo-gitano-2025-un-homenaje-a-600-anos-de-historia-y-un-llamamiento-a-la-inclusion/>

4.3.2 Sweden

Sweden's 2015 **White Paper on Abuses and Rights Violations of Roma in the 20th Century**,^[1] stands as one of the most **significant national efforts to confront historical injustice**. The report documented forced sterilisations, police surveillance, and systemic exclusion – practices justified at the time through racial hygiene doctrines and social-control rationales – creating an official public record that can no longer be denied. It marked a landmark moment in truth-telling, yet its transformative potential remains incomplete. Subsequent research has confirmed that Roma women were among those subjected to sterilisation under eugenics policies, underscoring the severity of these abuses. Without sustained follow-up – including reparations, curriculum reform, and independent monitoring – The White Paper risks becoming a powerful but ultimately symbolic gesture rather than a catalyst for lasting structural change.

The White Paper inspired the creation of the **Commission against Antiziganism**, a government-appointed body tasked with following up on its findings. However, the commission's mandate was narrow, its term limited to two years, and its resources insufficient to conduct the kind of comprehensive investigation associated with international standards for Truth and Reconciliation Commissions.^[2] Advocates have noted that the process lacked sufficient independence and did not establish a sustainable infrastructure for addressing antigypsyism.^[3] Following shifts in political priorities, the commission was quietly discontinued, leaving no permanent monitoring mechanism or reparations framework in place.

The opening of **Sweden's Holocaust Museum in 2022** was a step forward for national memory culture. Still, the Roma genocide remains underrepresented in its exhibitions, leaving a significant gap in public education and collective remembrance. In an International Conference on the Genocide of the Roma and Combating Antigypsyism,^[4] former MEP Soraya Post emphasised her disappointment that truth commissions and recognition efforts have not translated into concrete action, and urged more institutional recognition and educational integration of Roma history.

[1] Government Offices of Sweden. (2015, March 17). The Dark Unknown History: White Paper on Abuses and Rights Violations Against Roma in the 20th Century (Ds 2014:8).

<https://www.government.se/legal-documents/2015/03/ds-20148/>

[2] Selling, J. (2022). CHACHIPEN National Research Report on Sweden. CEPS / ERGO.

https://antigypsyism.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/CHACHIPEN_-_D2_2_CHACHIPEN-National-Research-Report-on-Sweden_final_formated_MODIF.pdf

[3] Roma Civil Monitor. (2023). Assessment of the Implementation of the National Roma Integration Strategy in Sweden. <https://romacivilmonitoring.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/RCM2-2022-C3-Sweden-CATALOGUE.pdf>

[4] Government Offices of Sweden. (2023). Summary Report – International Conference on the Genocide of the Roma and Combating Antigypsyism. <https://www.government.se/contentassets/d3a84f4818d04e59a0b81be3d0bac960/summary-report--international-conference-on-the-genocide-of-the-roma-and-combating-antigypsyism.pdf>

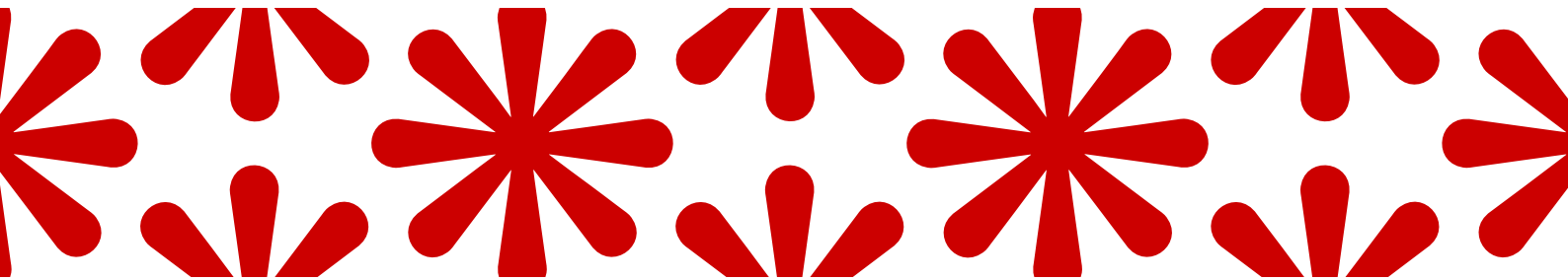


Previous disclosures regarding police maintenance of ethnic registries of Roma families, including minors, without criminal justification, highlight ongoing concerns about racial surveillance within state institutions.^[1] Additional research indicates that policing practices in Sweden may perpetuate structural racism and suggests these systems of control and classification are integrated into broader penal policies.^[2]

Taken together, **these developments suggest a dangerous loss of political will to confront antigypsyism in a sustained and systemic way**. Sweden risks reducing its earlier achievements to a symbolic gesture rather than a catalyst for change. Meeting the obligations set by EU human rights frameworks requires renewed political commitment: reinvestment in truth-seeking, curriculum reform, Roma-led accountability structures, and structural measures that guarantee non-repetition. Only through such sustained action can Sweden transform its early steps toward recognition into a genuine process of justice and reconciliation.

[1] Hartmann, A. (2020). What Justice for Sweden's Roma? The Swedish Foundation for Human Rights. Retrieved from <https://mrfonden.se/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/what-justice-for-swedens-roma-final.pdf>

[2] Nafstad, I. (2025). Tracing structural racism in Swedish policing: Laws and practices. European Journal of Criminology. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14624745241284530>



4.3.3 Czech Republic

Following 1989, the transition to democracy brought legal equality but little recognition of historical wrongs. The failure to address past injustices – such as forced sterilisation and the operation of a **pig farm on the site of the former Roma concentration camp in Lety u Písku** – has remained a symbol of the state's reluctance to confront its own legacy of antigypsyism.

The Czech Republic's **policy architecture combines formal equality with limited structural accountability:**

- The Government Council for Roma Minority Affairs serves as an advisory body, but has no enforcement powers.
- The National Roma Integration Strategy (2021–2030) aligns with EU guidelines, mentioning antigypsyism but primarily focusing on inclusion indicators (education, employment, housing).
- The Public Defender of Rights (Ombudsperson) monitors discrimination but has limited capacity to address systemic antigypsyism.
- The Agency for Social Inclusion operates under the Ministry of Regional Development, focusing on local-level projects rather than structural reform.

Recent years have seen small steps forward – including the removal of the industrial pig farm at Lety in 2022 and plans for a memorial – but these came only after decades of civil-society pressure and international criticism.

Promising Practices:

- **Lety Memorial:** After decades of advocacy by Roma activists and NGOs, the Czech government transferred ownership of the Lety site to the Museum of Romani Culture, establishing the first national memorial to Roma victims of the Holocaust.
- **Recognition of Forced Sterilisation:** In 2021, Parliament adopted a compensation law for Roma women sterilised without consent between 1966 and 2012 – a landmark victory driven by civil-society advocacy.
- **Roma Civil Society:** Organisations such as ROMEA, Vzájemné soužití, and Amaro Foro have become key actors in policy monitoring, public education, and independent journalism.

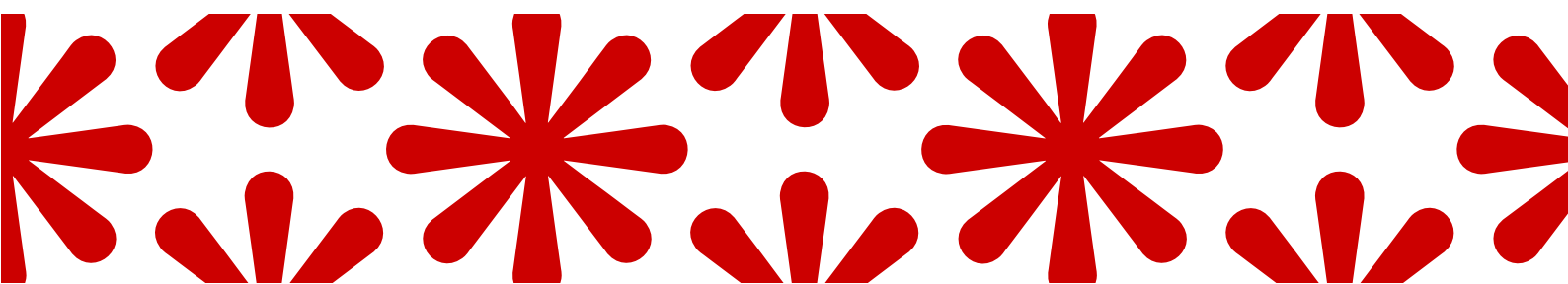
Gaps and Challenges

Despite these advances, antigypsyism remains deeply institutional:

- **Segregation in education continues**, with Roma children overrepresented in “practical schools” for pupils with mild disabilities;
- **Housing exclusion persists**, with local authorities using zoning and evictions to displace Roma families;
- **Policing and criminalisation** reflect discriminatory practices, including ethnic profiling;
- **Political discourse increasingly tolerates anti-Roma rhetoric**, especially at local level.

These patterns reveal how formal equality without structural reform perpetuates antigypsyism.

Transitional justice measures – such as reparations for forced sterilisation – are important, but remain isolated acts rather than part of a broader state reckoning with institutional racism.



Lessons for Civil Society

The Czech case illustrates the limits of technocratic inclusion in the absence of truth and accountability.

Civil society can:

- **Use transitional justice frameworks** to connect historical injustices (sterilisation, forced labour, wartime persecution) with current discrimination;
- **Document structural antigypsyism** through monitoring and shadow reporting to international mechanisms (EU, CoE, UN);
- **Advocate for institutional reform** in education, policing, and local governance;
- **Promote community media** and civic participation, ensuring Roma perspectives shape public narratives;
- **Engage memory institutions** such as the Museum of Romani Culture to preserve and disseminate Roma history.

4.3.4 Germany

Germany's path toward historical justice for Sinti and Roma begins with a watershed in March 1982, when **Chancellor Helmut Schmidt officially recognised the Nazi crimes against Sinti and Roma as genocide**. This acknowledgement—after decades of denial and fragmented reparations—established the moral and political baseline for subsequent memory work, policy, and civil-society mobilisation.^[1]

Just weeks later, Romani leaders consolidated national representation through the **Central Council of German Sinti and Roma (Zentralrat)**, founded in 1982 in Heidelberg and chaired by Romani Rose. The Zentralrat has since become the key interlocutor with the state, advancing claims to recognition, reparations, and education, and later establishing in 1997 a Documentation and Cultural Centre that anchors research and pedagogy, becoming the world's first permanent exhibition dedicated to the Nazi genocide of the Sinti and Roma.^[2]

A second major milestone in the memorial landscape came on **2 August 2001 with the opening of the permanent exhibition on the genocide of Sinti and Roma at the Auschwitz State Museum** (Block 13). Led by the Heidelberg Documentation Centre with the Auschwitz Memorial and Roma organisations, the exhibit institutionalised public history about the Roma Holocaust at the most emblematic site of the Nazi.^[3]

[1] Dokumentations- und Kulturzentrum Deutscher Sinti und Roma. (2022, March 21). 40 Years of Recognition of the Nazi Genocide against the Sinti and Roma of Europe. <https://dokuzentrum.sintiundroma.de/en/40-years-recognition-nazi-genocide-sinti-roma-europe>

[2] Zentralrat Deutscher Sinti und Roma. (1997, March 16). Documentation and Cultural Centre of German Sinti and Roma. Retrieved September 25, 2025, from <https://zentralrat.sintiundroma.de/en/central-council/dokumentation-centre/>

[3] Documentation and Cultural Centre of German Sinti and Roma. (2001, August 2). Permanent Exhibition Auschwitz – documentation of the Nazi genocide of the Sinti and Roma. Retrieved September 25, 2025, from <https://dokuzentrum.sintiundroma.de/en/education/exhibitions/permanent-exhibition-auschwitz/>

Public remembrance reached the federal capital on 24 October 2012, when **Berlin inaugurated the Memorial to the Sinti and Roma** of Europe murdered under National Socialism, designed by Dani Karavan near the Reichstag. With top state officials present, the memorial inscribed Roma memory into Germany's national commemorative canon alongside monuments to Jewish victims and other persecuted groups.^[1]

In addition to memorialization efforts, Germany has developed **comprehensive reporting mechanisms and policy frameworks**. In October 2021, civil society established MIA e.V. (Reporting and Information Centre on Antigypsyism), which began as a project under the Zentralrat before becoming an independent association with federal funding in 2023. MIA systematically documents incidents, provides support to victims, and offers evidence-based recommendations, thereby strengthening the foundation of reliable data in this field.^[2]

In March 2022, the German federal government established the office of the Commissioner against Antigypsyism and for the Life of Sinti and Roma, implementing a key recommendation of the Independent Commission on Antigypsyism. Dr Mehmet Gürcan Daimagüler became the first to hold this position. His mandate included coordinating policy across federal ministries, issuing recommendations, and catalysing structural reforms to combat antigypsyism. Under Daimagüler's tenure, a Federal-Länder commission was created in June 2024, institutionalising joint action between the federal and state governments. In March 2025, he presented his first activity report to the Bundestag.^[3]

However, by mid-2025, the **office's fragility became clear**. Roma advocacy organisations reported that the federal government would not renew the commissioner's mandate after Daimagüler's term, leaving the position vacant and prompting calls from civil society to reinstate an independent and specialised office. Instead, the government appointed Michael Brand, a Bundestag member and Parliamentary State Secretary in the Ministry of Family Affairs, to assume the responsibilities.^[4] This move ensured that antigypsyism remained on the federal agenda but effectively folded the commissioner's portfolio into a broader ministerial role, reducing its autonomy, independence, and political weight. Critics argue that this integration weakens the office's independence, risks diminishing visibility for Sinti and Roma concerns, and illustrates how recent gains can be reversed without legal entrenchment and sustained political will.^[5]

[1] Stiftung Denkmal. (2012). Memorial to the Sinti and Roma of Europe murdered under National Socialism. <https://www.stiftung-denkmal.de/en/memorials/memorial-to-the-sinti-and-roma-of-europe-murdered-under-national-socialism/>

[2] Sträter, T., Sowa, C., & Imamoğlu, H. (2024). Antiziganismus in Deutschland melden: Abschlussbericht der Evaluation der Melde- und Informationsstelle Antiziganismus (MIA) (DeZIM Project Report 13). Deutsches Zentrum für Integrations- und Migrationsforschung (DeZIM).

<https://www.dezim-institut.de/en/publications/publication-detail/antiziganismus-in-deutschland-melden/>

[3] Deutscher Bundestag. (2025, March 26). Vorstellung des 1. Tätigkeitsberichtes des Bundesbeauftragten gegen Antiziganismus und für das Leben der Sinti und Roma, Dr. Mehmet Daimagüler.

<https://www.antiziganismus-melden.de/2025/03/26/vorstellung-des-1-taetigkeitsberichtes-des-bundesbeauftragten-gegen-antiziganismus-und-fuer-das-leben-der-sinti-und-roma-dr-mehmet-daimagueller/>

[4] Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend (BMBFSFJ). (2025, June 18). Michael Brand wird neuer Beauftragter gegen Antiziganismus [Press release].

<https://www.bmbfsfj.bund.de/bmbfsfj/aktuelles/alle-meldungen/michael-brand-wird-neuer-beauftragter-gegen-antiziganismus-265840>

[5] Taz. (2025, May 29). Neue Regierung verzichtet auf Antiziganismus-Beauftragten.

<https://taz.de/Schutz-von-Sinti-und-Roma/%216087369/>

Together, these milestones transformed recognition into institutions: **a representative national body (Zentralrat), embedded sites of memory (Auschwitz Block 13 and Berlin 2012), a national reporting mechanism (MIA), and a federal coordinating office (the Commissioner), complemented by a federal-state commission.** They have produced durable archives, curricula resources, and policy proposals, and raised the visibility of 2 August as a European day of remembrance.^[1]

Yet the **central gap remains education.** While Holocaust education—focused primarily on the persecution of Jews—is firmly institutionalised across German secondary schooling through Kultusministerkonferenz (KMK) guidance and international partnerships, teaching about Sinti and Roma history and contributions is still not mandatory nationwide. A 2022 Joint Declaration by the KMK and the Zentralrat urges schools to strengthen content on Sinti and Roma and to provide teacher training, but implementation remains discretionary at the Land level, leading to uneven coverage and persistent invisibility.^[2] The Council of Europe has likewise pressed Germany to ensure pupils learn about national minorities, including Sinti and Roma, across all Länder: “The advisory committee finds ‘little progress’ in coordinated teaching for all Länder about Sinti and Roma ... and urges the authorities to ensure that pupils throughout Germany learn about the history and contribution of Frisians, Danes, Sinti and Roma and Sorbs to German society.”^[3]

From 1982 to 2025, Germany has moved from symbolic recognition to **a multi-layered architecture of memory, representation, monitoring, and coordination.** Yet without binding curricular requirements on Sinti and Roma history—and without a stable federal commissioner—the promise of historical justice risks depending on political will and project funding cycles. Strengthening legal bases, securing long-term resources for MIA and the Zentralrat, refilling the Commissioner’s office, and entrenching Roma history (including the Holocaust) in mandatory curricula are the next necessary steps to turn remembrance into durable non-repetition.

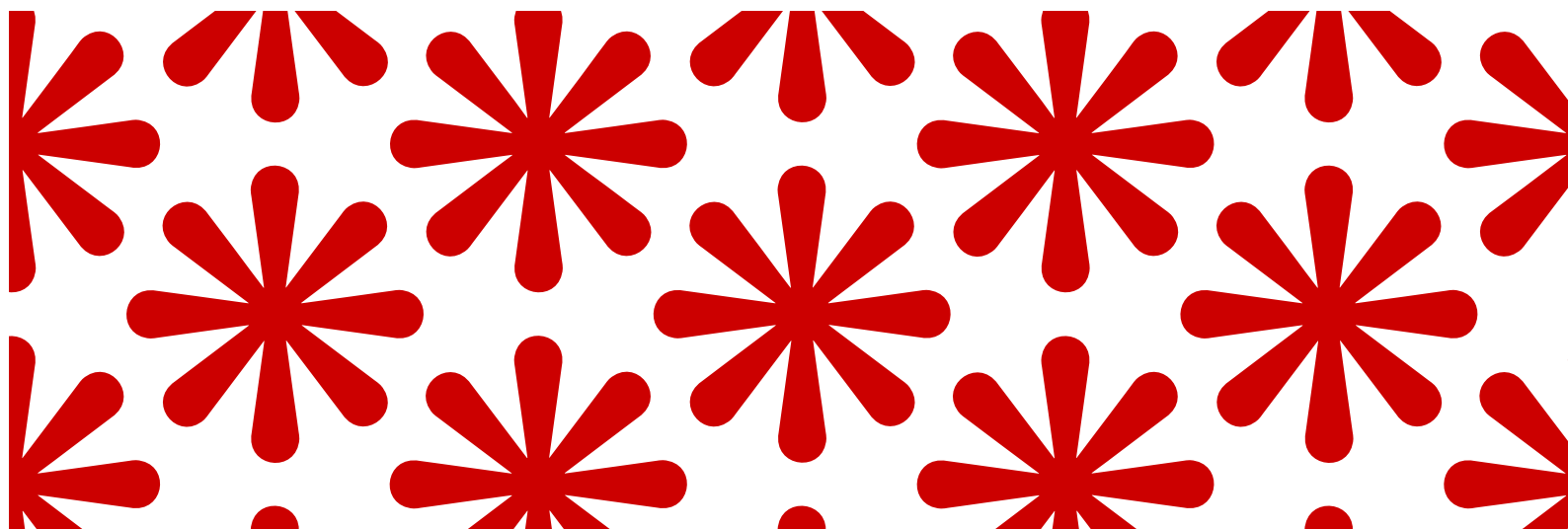
[1] Zentralrat Deutscher Sinti und Roma. (2024, August 2). Commemoration of the European Holocaust Memorial Day for Roma and Sinti on 2 August 2024. <https://zentralrat.sintiundroma.de/en/commemoration-of-the-european-holocaust-memorial-day-for-roma-and-sinti-on-2-august-2024/>

[2] Zentralrat Deutscher Sinti und Roma. (2022, December 12). Joint declaration: More history and culture of the Sinti and Roma to be taught in schools.

<https://zentralrat.sintiundroma.de/en/joint-declaration-more-history-and-culture-of-the-sinti-and-roma-to-be-taught-in-schools/>

[3] Council of Europe. (2022, June 14). Germany: Improve education about national minorities and support for Sinti and Roma, says Council of Europe committee.

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/-/germany-improve-education-about-national-minorities-and-support-for-sinti-and-roma-says-council-of-europe-committee>



4.3.5 Romania

Romania's contemporary framework begins with an **evidence-based reckoning**. On 22 October 2003, the presidency established the International Commission on the Holocaust in Romania (the "Wiesel Commission"), chaired by Elie Wiesel, to investigate state responsibility for crimes against Jews and Roma.^[1] The Commission met through 2004 and submitted its Final Report on 11 November 2004, documenting the deportation of over 25,000 Roma to Transnistria and approximately 11,000 Roma deaths, and issuing forward-looking recommendations on remembrance, education, and access to archives. These findings fixed state responsibility under the Antonescu regime and set a durable policy agenda.

Early follow-up **paired commemoration with institution-building**. The government declared 9 October the National Holocaust Remembrance Day by Government Decision,^[2] linking the date to the start of deportations. In parallel, the state created a permanent research and education arm: the "Elie Wiesel" National Institute for Studying the Holocaust in Romania (INSHR-EW), in August 2005.^[3]

Parliament proceeded to further enhance the commemorative framework through Law 174/2019, enacted on 9 October 2019, which established the National Museum of the History of the Jews and the Holocaust in Romania,^[4] operating under the coordination of INSHR-EW. Subsequently, Law 124/2020, passed on 10 July 2020, designated 2 August as the National Day of Commemoration of the Roma Holocaust (Samudaripen),^[5] thereby aligning national observance with European remembrance initiatives.

[1] International Commission on the Holocaust in Romania. (2004). Final report. Bucharest: INSHR-EW. https://www.inshr-ew.ro/ro/files/Raport%20Final/Final_Report.pdf

[2] Guvernul României. (2004, May 5). Hotărârea Guvernului nr. 672/2004 privind declararea zilei de 9 octombrie „Ziua Holocaustului” [Government Decision No. 672/2004 declaring 9 October “Holocaust Day”]. Monitorul Oficial nr. 436/17.05.2004. <https://legislatie.just.ro/public/DetaliiDocument/51917>

[3] Guvernul României. (2005, August 4). Hotărârea Guvernului nr. 902/2005 privind înființarea Institutului Național pentru Studierea Holocaustului din România “Elie Wiesel” [Government Decision No. 902/2005 establishing the Elie Wiesel National Institute]. Monitorul Oficial nr. 758/19.08.2005. <https://legislatie.just.ro/public/DetaliiDocument/64344>

[4] Parlamentul României. (2019, October 9). Legea nr. 174/2019 privind înființarea Muzeului Național de Istorie a Evreilor și al Holocaustului din România [Law No. 174/2019 establishing the National Museum of the History of the Jews and the Holocaust in Romania]. Monitorul Oficial nr. 820/09.10.2019. <https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/218772>

[5] Parlamentul României. (2020, July 10). Legea nr. 124/2020 pentru instituirea zilei de 2 august ca Ziua națională de comemorare a Holocaustului împotriva romilor – Samudaripen [Law No. 124/2020 establishing 2 August as the National Day of Commemoration of the Roma Holocaust]. Monitorul Oficial. <https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocumentAfis/227758>

Education policy has shifted from ad-hoc projects to mandatory curricula. Law 276/2021 of 25 November 2021 requires the high-school subject “History of the Jews. The Holocaust,”^[1] creating the curricular and teacher-training scaffolding into which teaching about the Roma genocide is increasingly integrated through allied modules, museum programming, and examinations. The Ministry implemented this through Minister of Education Order 5344/2023 (9 August 2023),^[2] which approved the national curriculum for the 2023–2024 school year and provided guidelines for teachers. However, this resulted in an imbalance, as the teaching of the Roma Holocaust remains excluded from the curriculum and teacher training, mainly relegated to non-formal and informal education.

On the **cultural-memory side** specific to Roma, Parliament created the National Museum of the History and Culture of Roma by Law 238/2023 of 19 July 2023.^[3] As of 2024–2025, authorities have developed a narrative concept, but no building has yet been assigned; parliamentary interventions and government communications continue to call for the allocation of a facility to operationalise the museum’s mandate.^[4]

Monitoring by international bodies underscores the gap between formal commitments and everyday protection. In its Fifth Opinion on Romania,^[5] the Council of Europe Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities welcomed the legal and memorial architecture but noted “no substantial progress” in ensuring consistently professional, bias-free policing toward Roma, with recurring allegations of profiling and excessive force. These findings echo domestic concerns about uneven curriculum uptake, limited capacity for teacher training, and the slow materialisation of Roma-focused cultural institutions.

[1] Parlamentul României. (2021, November 25). Legea nr. 276/2021 privind unele măsuri pentru studierea istoriei evreilor și a Holocaustului [Law No. 276/2021 on measures for studying the history of the Jews and the Holocaust]. Monitorul Oficial nr. 1127/25.11.2021.

<https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/248729>

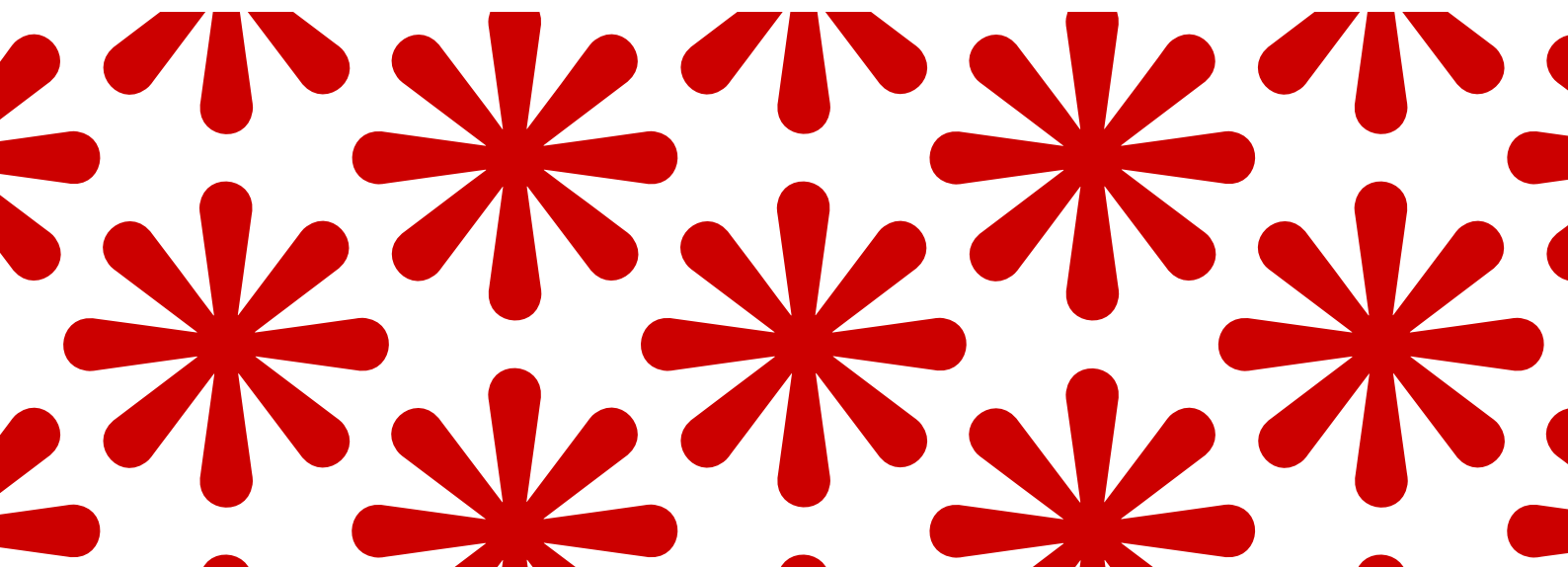
[2] Ministerul Educației. (2023, August 9). Ordinul ministrului educației nr. 5344/2023 privind aprobarea programei școlare pentru disciplina “Istoria Evreilor. Holocaustul”, clasa a XI-a/a XII-a, învățământ liceal și profesional [Order No. 5344/2023 approving the national syllabus “History of the Jews. The Holocaust”]. Monitorul Oficial nr. 734/09.08.2023. <https://legislatie.just.ro/public/DetaliiDocument/273645>

[3] Parlamentul României. (2023, July 19/20). Legea nr. 238/2023 privind înființarea Muzeului Național de Istorie și Cultură a Romilor din România [Law No. 238/2023 establishing the National Museum of the History and Culture of Roma]. Monitorul Oficial nr. 670/20.07.2023. <https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocumentAfis/272317>

[4] Rostas, I., & Nodis, C. (2022). Antigypsyism in Romania: Lessons (not) learned (CHACHIPEN National Research Report D2.2). CHACHIPEN consortium (led by CEPS). <https://antigypsyism.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/D2.2.CHACHIPEN-National-Research-Report-on->

[5] Council of Europe, Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. (2023, September 5). Fifth Opinion on Romania (ACFC/OP/V(2023)001).

<https://rm.coe.int/5th-op-romania-en/1680ac3917>



Five Shifts NGOs Can Drive

1. From inclusion outputs to justice outcomes.
2. Tie every inclusion metric (school attendance, jobs, housing) to accountability indicators (segregation reduction, anti-hate enforcement, representation).
3. From consultation to co-governance.
4. Push for Roma-led roles in committees, monitoring boards, school councils, media regulators, and police advisory bodies – with mandates and minutes.
5. From remembrance events to reparatory policy.
6. Link ceremonies and curricula to budgeted measures: teacher training, memorial upkeep, targeted scholarships, restitution/compensation schemes.
7. From isolated wins to institutional architecture.
8. Advocate for permanent mechanisms (Antigypsyism Commissioner/Unit, independent observatories, trusted-flagger status for online hate).
9. From national silos to cross-movement coalitions.
10. Partner with anti-racism, digital rights, women's, disability, and youth networks to mainstream antigypsyism as a democracy-and-rule-of-law issue.

Minimum policy package NGOs can push nationally

- **Legal:** Explicitly recognise antigypsyism in equality/penal codes; guarantee data collection on hate crime and discrimination.
- **Institutional:** Create/secure a national Antigypsyism Commissioner or Unit with investigative powers and annual reports to parliament.
- **Education & Memory:** Mandate Roma history (including the Roma Holocaust) in curricula; fund teacher training; support museums/memorials led by Roma experts.
- **Desegregation:** Enforce time-bound school and housing desegregation plans with sanctions and incentives.
- **Media & Digital:** Adopt editorial guidelines against ethnicised crime framing; secure trusted-flagger status and transparency with platforms.
- **Participation:** Ensure Roma co-decision in all relevant bodies; fund Roma-led CSOs sustainably.

How to use this synthesis

- As a benchmark: map your country against the table and identify gaps.
- As a roadmap: pick 2–3 shifts to lead in the next 12–18 months.
- As a coalition tool: align allies around the minimum policy package and shared indicators.

Practical advocacy checklist

- Define the problem structurally: use the language of institutional racism, redress, non-recurrence, and inclusion.
- Name the standard: cite the EU Roma Framework 2020–2030, the Racial Equality Directive, the CoE/ECRI country recommendations, and the national equality laws.
- Demand indicators that bite: request targets for desegregation, hate-crime prosecution, Roma representation, and curriculum change with public reporting.
- Install the watchdogs: campaign for an independent antigypsyism observatory and parliamentary reporting obligations.
- Resource the work: link reforms to multi-year funding lines (education, policing, media regulators, remembrance institutions).
- Close the loop: pair every reform with training + SOPs + complaint pathways + audits (schools, police, municipalities, broadcasters).

5. DIGITAL JUSTICE AND MEDIA LITERACY

5.1 The Digital Turn in Antigypsyism

Antigypsyism, once spread through print, schools, and political speeches, now circulates through networked platforms where images, memes, and coded language amplify old prejudices at unprecedented speed.

Digital spaces have become a new frontier of structural antigypsyism – a sphere where hate speech, misinformation, and algorithmic bias reproduce the same hierarchies that exist offline.[1]

Online antigypsyism operates through:

- **Explicit hate speech**, dehumanising Roma as criminals, parasites, or threats;
- **Implicit narratives**, using proxies such as “problem neighbourhoods,” “nomads,” or “illegal camps”;
- **Algorithmic amplification**, where outrage-driven engagement boosts racist content;
- **Disinformation campaigns**, especially during elections or crises, linking Roma to crime, welfare abuse, or disease;
- **Erasure and underrepresentation**, where Roma voices are absent from digital storytelling, journalism, and public memory.

For Roma and allied NGOs, the digital environment is therefore both a risk and an opportunity – a site of exclusion, but also a powerful arena for counter-narratives, civic participation, and truth-telling.

The concept of digital justice connects these two realities. It calls for transparency, accountability, and participation in the governance of online spaces, ensuring that digital systems do not reproduce the inequalities they claim to transcend.

[1] Munoz, I., Kim, P., O’Neil, C., Dunn, M., & Sawyer, S. (2023). Platformization of inequality: Gender and race in digital labour platforms. arXiv. <https://arxiv.org/abs/2309.16887>



5.2 Mapping Digital Antigypsyism: Forms and Patterns

Digital antigypsyism takes diverse and evolving forms that demand different responses.

Understanding them allows NGOs to design targeted interventions – from reporting and advocacy to education and narrative work

Form of digital antigypsyism	Example	Impact	NGO response
Overt hate speech	Slurs, threats, calls for violence in comments or videos	Fear, silencing, normalisation of hate	Monitor, report to platforms and authorities, document patterns
Coded or proxy hate	"Nomad problem," "welfare fraud," "public safety" tropes	Reinforces stereotypes while evading moderation	Train monitors to detect implicit bias; advocate for recommender audits
Disinformation and moral panic	Viral stories linking Roma to crime or disease	Fuels mob violence and exclusion	Fact-check, partner with journalists, push for rapid response protocols
Algorithmic bias and invisibility	Roma content underpromoted, racist memes boosted	Structural underrepresentation	Demand transparency reports; engage with digital regulators
Cultural appropriation and erasure	Use of Roma culture without attribution	Loss of cultural agency	Promote Roma-led media, partnerships with creators and educators
Surveillance and data profiling	Predictive policing, welfare monitoring	Institutional discrimination	Advocate for ethical AI, privacy rights, and Roma oversight mechanisms

- Digital antigypsyism operates not only through content, but through infrastructure – recommendation systems, moderation algorithms, and advertising incentives that reward sensationalism.
- Addressing it, therefore, requires a systemic approach that links human rights advocacy with digital governance reform.
- NGOs play a vital role as watchdogs, mediators, and educators: documenting abuses, supporting victims, and promoting digital literacy grounded in Roma perspectives.

5.3 Legal and Policy Frameworks: Turning Rights into Digital Accountability

Digital antigypsyism is not only a question of speech, but of **rights and governance**.

Online spaces fall under the same human rights obligations as offline ones – including the right to dignity, equality, privacy, and participation. European institutions have gradually recognised that online hate speech, disinformation, and algorithmic bias are not neutral by-products of technology, but forms of structural discrimination that require regulation and oversight. This section outlines the main EU and national policy instruments relevant to combating digital antigypsyism, and explains how NGOs can use them for advocacy and accountability.

5.3.1 EU Digital Services Act (DSA)

The Digital Services Act (2022)[1] is the EU's most comprehensive framework for platform accountability. It applies to all major online platforms, search engines, and intermediary services operating in the EU.

Key obligations that NGOs can leverage:

- **Transparency and due diligence:** Platforms must assess and mitigate systemic risks, including the dissemination of hate speech and disinformation.
- **Notice-and-action mechanisms:** Users and NGOs can flag illegal content, and platforms must promptly remove it or justify their moderation decisions.
- **Trusted flagger status:** Certified NGOs and equality bodies can obtain a “trusted flagger” designation, giving their reports priority handling by platforms.
- **Transparency reports:** Platforms must publish regular reports detailing moderation practices, algorithmic systems, and risk mitigation measures.
- **Access for researchers:** The DSA mandates data access for vetted researchers to study systemic risks – a major opportunity for Roma-led research and monitoring.

Practical use for NGOs:

- **Apply** for trusted flagger status via the national Digital Services Coordinators.
- **Collect and submit** evidence of antigypsyist hate for inclusion in risk assessments;
- **Partner** with academic institutions to access DSA data for Roma-focused research;
- **Advocate** for Roma participation in national DSA implementation bodies.

[1] European Union. (2022). Regulation (EU) 2022/2065 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 October 2022 on a Single Market for Digital Services and amending Directive 2000/31/EC (Digital Services Act). Official Journal of the European Union, L 277, 1–102. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32022R2065>

5.3.2 EU Code of Conduct on Countering Illegal Hate Speech Online

Launched in 2016 between the European Commission and major tech companies (Meta, X/Twitter, YouTube, TikTok, etc.), the EU Code of Conduct on Countering Hate Speech^[1] commits platforms to remove illegal hate speech within 24 hours of notification. While participation is voluntary, it provides a direct channel for NGOs to cooperate with platforms and test response rates.

How NGOs can use it:

- Join national or EU-level NGO monitoring networks coordinated by the Commission or partner organisations;
- Submit evidence reports to track how platforms respond to antigypsyist content;
- Advocate for Roma-specific indicators in future evaluations of the Code;
- Publicly expose inconsistent enforcement through shadow reporting and media outreach.

This mechanism can complement the DSA by providing rapid response capacity and public visibility for Roma-related online hate.

[1] European Commission. (2016, May 31). Code of Conduct on Countering Illegal Hate Speech Online [Voluntary commitment]. Brussels: European Commission. Retrieved from https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/racism-and-xenophobia/eu-code-conduct-countering-illegal-hate-speech-online_en

5.3.3 The EU Framework on Racism and Hate Crime

Under the Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA,^[1] Member States are required to criminalise hate speech and hate crime, including those based on race or ethnic origin.

This applies to online environments as well.

Despite this, enforcement remains inconsistent. Few states systematically record or prosecute antigypsyist hate crimes or online hate.

NGO entry points:

- Train Roma communities to report online hate through official channels;
- Collaborate with law enforcement and prosecutors on hate-crime training and evidence collection;
- Advocate for disaggregated data on Roma-related cases in national hate-crime statistics;
- Use EU monitoring mechanisms (FRA, CoE-ECRI) to highlight enforcement gaps.

[1] Council of the European Union. (2008). Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law. Official Journal of the European Union, L 328, 55-58. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32008F0913>

5.3.4 Artificial Intelligence and Algorithmic Bias

The EU's Artificial Intelligence Act (2024)[1] introduces obligations to prevent discriminatory outcomes in AI systems used for law enforcement, education, recruitment, and digital platforms. This opens new space for addressing algorithmic antigypsyism – from predictive policing to biased content moderation.

Key opportunities for NGOs:

- Advocate for Roma representation in AI ethics and regulatory boards;
- Demand bias audits and transparency on datasets used by public and private institutions;
- Partner with digital rights groups to test algorithmic systems for discriminatory patterns;
- Promote Roma-led community digital literacy projects that combine advocacy with user education.

Algorithmic accountability is a frontier issue where Roma organisations can link antigypsyism, privacy, and human rights under a shared digital justice agenda.

[1] European Parliament & Council of the European Union. (2024, June 13). Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down harmonised rules on artificial intelligence and amending Regulations (EC) No 300/2008, (EU) No 167/2013, (EU) No 168/2013, (EU) 2018/858, (EU) 2018/1139 and (EU) 2019/2144 and Directives 2014/90/EU, (EU) 2016/797 and (EU) 2020/1828 (Artificial Intelligence Act). Official Journal of the European Union, L ____, -. Retrieved from <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1689/oj>

5.3.5 National Regulation and Equality Bodies

At national level, enforcement of these frameworks depends on Digital Services Coordinators, equality bodies, and data protection authorities. Roma civil society should establish contact with these institutions to ensure antigypsyism is recognised within their mandates.

Action points for NGOs:

- Request meetings with Digital Services Coordinators to discuss antigypsyist content and systemic risks;
- Collaborate with equality bodies on training about online racism and digital discrimination;
- Use data protection laws (GDPR)[1] to challenge surveillance, profiling, or data misuse affecting Roma;
- Monitor national AI and media laws for potential impacts on Roma visibility and rights.

[1] European Union. (2016). Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (General Data Protection Regulation). Official Journal of the European Union, L 119, 1–88. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32016R0679>

5.4 NGO Tools and Tactics: Monitoring, Reporting, and Response

Antigypsyism in digital environments demands both systematic documentation and rapid response capacity. NGOs are uniquely placed to act as watchdogs, educators, and bridge-builders between Roma communities, regulators, and online platforms.

The effectiveness of this role depends on having clear tools, procedures, and partnerships that combine credibility with speed.

5.4.1 Building a Monitoring System

A structured monitoring system allows NGOs to gather evidence, analyse trends, and engage authorities or platforms based on verified data.

Core steps:

1. Define scope and categories:

- Hate speech (explicit or coded);
- Disinformation or moral panic;
- Institutional or algorithmic bias;
- Online harassment or doxxing;
- Underrepresentation or erasure.

2. Collect evidence ethically:

- Use screenshots, timestamps, and URLs;
- Avoid sharing personal data of perpetrators;
- Ensure compliance with GDPR and privacy rules;
- Secure consent from victims when publishing cases.

3. Classify and code data:

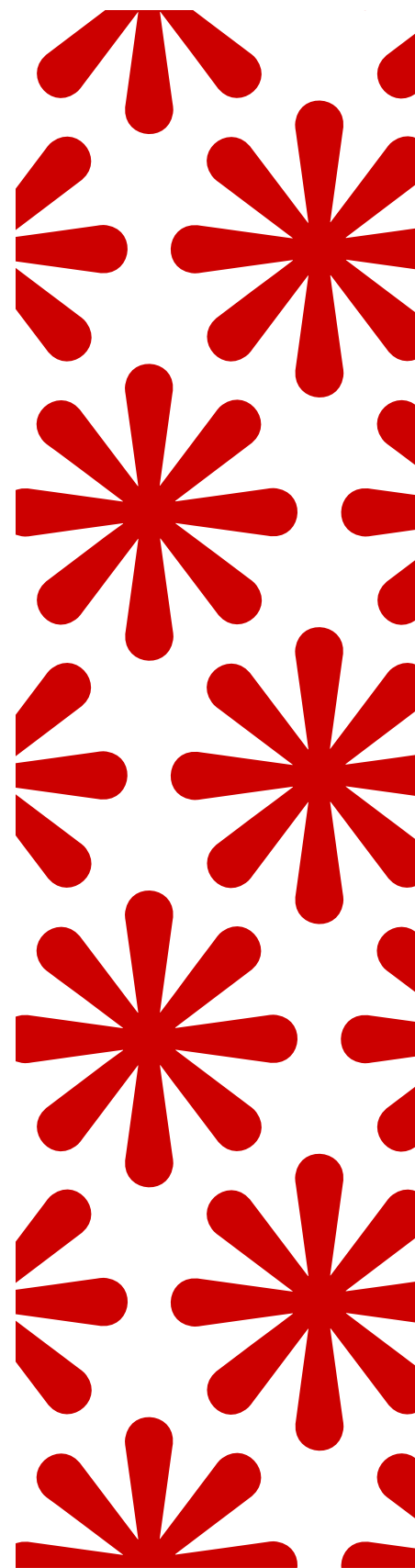
- Use consistent labels (e.g. "explicit hate speech," "coded bias," "media distortion");
- Track frequency, platforms, and engagement metrics;
- Store data securely and update periodically.

4. Analyse trends:

- Identify spikes linked to events (elections, crimes, policy debates);
- Map recurring stereotypes or misinformation tropes;
- Compare national findings with EU-wide data (FRA, Equinet).

5. Publish and share findings:

- Issue periodic reports or dashboards for policymakers and journalists;
- Feed results into the EU Roma Civil Monitor, ECRI reviews, or Digital Services Coordinators.



5.4.2 Establishing Rapid Response Workflows

Online hate requires speed, coordination, and clarity of roles.

Develop a standard operating procedure (SOP) for responding to incidents. Suggested workflow:

Stage	Action	Responsible actor	Timeframe
Detection	Identify hateful or false content	Monitoring staff / volunteers	Within 1 hour
Verification	Confirm accuracy, assess risk	Coordinator	Within 2 hours
Reporting	Submit to platform or trusted flagger portal	Designated contact	Within 4 hours
Support	Contact affected person/group, offer psychosocial or legal help	Outreach officer	Within 24 hours
Follow-up	Track response, archive documentation	Coordinator	Weekly review

Include contact lists for platforms, equality bodies, and law enforcement.

Prepare response templates for both public communication (social media statements) and official reports.

5.4.3 Partnering with Platforms and Regulators

NGOs can increase their influence by formalising relationships with digital intermediaries and oversight bodies.

Actionable partnerships:

- Trusted flagger status under the Digital Services Act (DSA) – allowing priority review of reports;
- Civil-society advisory groups with national Digital Services Coordinators;
- Memoranda of understanding with tech companies for regular review meetings;
- Joint training for platform moderators on antigypsyism;
- Annual audits comparing platform removals vs. Roma NGO reports.

Such cooperation transforms Roma NGOs from complainants into co-governance actors in the digital rights ecosystem.

5.4.4 Supporting Victims and Communities

Behind every online hate incident is a person or community facing emotional and reputational harm. Civil-society responses must combine advocacy with care.

Good practice elements:

- Provide confidential reporting channels for Roma individuals and organisations;
- Offer peer support networks or referral to legal aid and counselling;
- Publish guides on digital safety (how to secure accounts, document abuse, report content);
- Develop solidarity protocols – e.g. coordinated public statements by allied organisations when targeted attacks occur.

5.4.5 Narrative Countermeasures and Campaigns

Beyond moderation, NGOs can change the information environment itself by producing alternative narratives.

Approaches:

- Digital storytelling: Create Roma-led media content (short videos, blogs, podcasts) that highlight culture, resilience, and contribution;
- Counter-hate campaigns: Use humour, creativity, and solidarity messages to challenge stereotypes;
- Media partnerships: Collaborate with journalists for fact-checking and feature stories;
- Influencer engagement: Work with Roma and non-Roma influencers to amplify positive narratives;
- Youth participation: Train young Roma activists as digital advocates and content creators.

Consistent, visible Roma presence online is the most sustainable form of counter-speech.

5.4.6 Building Coalitions

Tackling online antigypsyism requires alliances across movements.

Roma NGOs should collaborate with:

- Anti-racism and human rights networks (e.g. ENAR, Equinet);
- Digital rights organisations (e.g. Access Now, European Digital Rights – EDRI);
- Academic partners for evidence-based advocacy;
- Journalists and fact-checkers to counter misinformation.

Such coalitions expand expertise, visibility, and policy reach – turning isolated monitoring into collective digital justice action.

5.5 Media Literacy and Narrative Change

5.5.1 Why Media Literacy Matters

Media literacy is not only about understanding information – it's about power and representation. For centuries, Roma people have been portrayed through external lenses: romanticised as exotic outsiders or vilified as social threats.

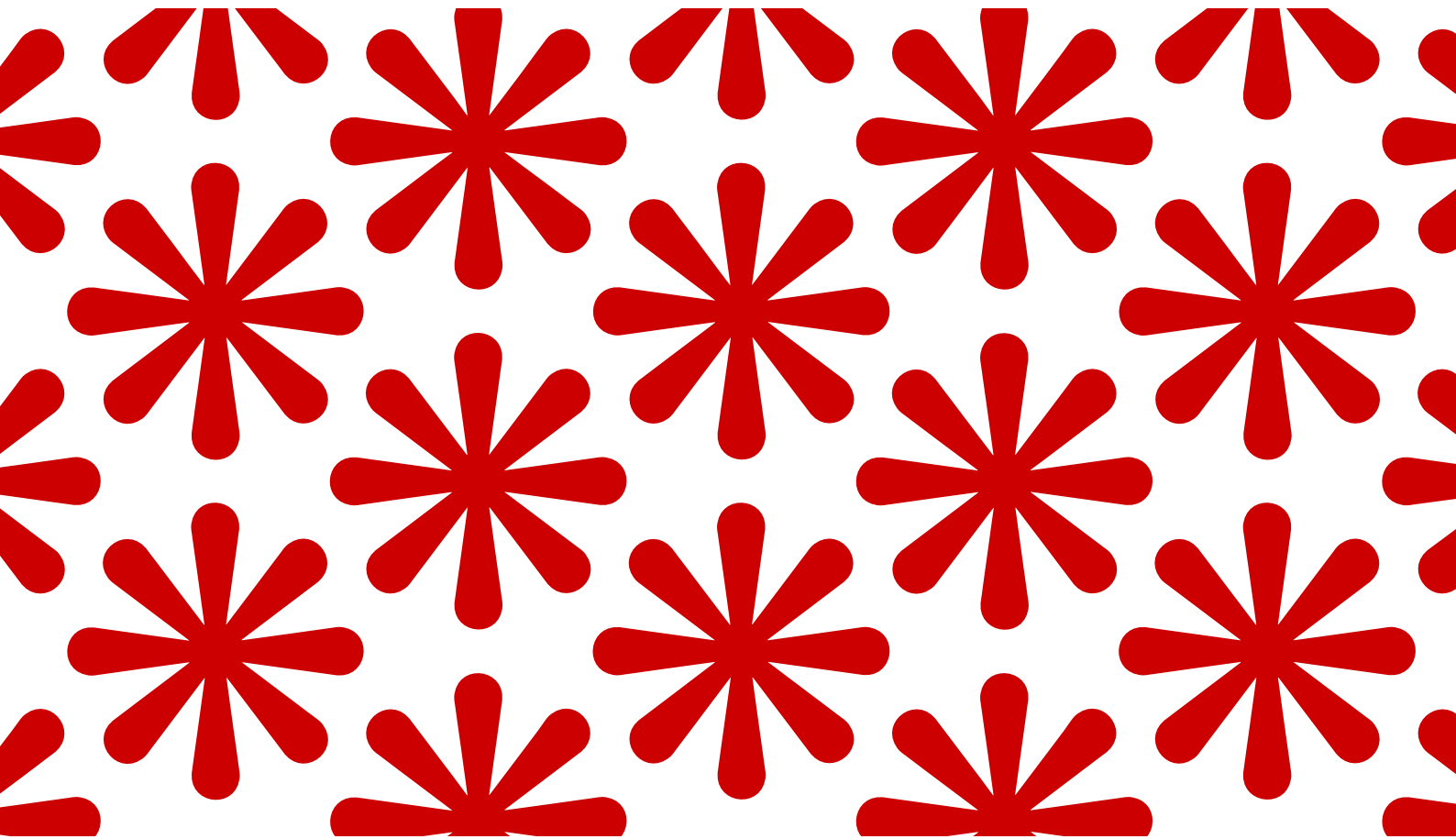
In digital spaces, these stereotypes mutate into new forms: crime-linked clickbait, moral panics on social media, or cultural erasure through algorithmic bias.

Building media literacy within Roma communities and the wider public is therefore a strategic tool for justice.

It allows citizens to:

- Detect stereotypes and misinformation;
- Understand how media narratives shape social hierarchies;
- Challenge bias through informed counter-speech;
- Produce authentic, community-driven content that reclaims the narrative.

For NGOs, media literacy connects the struggle against antigypsyism with the broader fight for democratic resilience and truth in public life.



5.5.2 Recognising Media Antigypsyism

Media antigypsyism operates through patterns that often appear “neutral” but carry harmful implications.

Common patterns include:

- **Crime linkage:** Disproportionate association of Roma with criminal behaviour in headlines or imagery;
- **Stereotyped visuals:** Use of stock photos depicting poverty or marginalisation without context;
- **Absence and silence:** Exclusion of Roma voices from mainstream reporting;
- **Tokenism:** Featuring Roma only in cultural or festive contexts, not as experts or professionals;
- **Moral panic:** Sensationalist reporting around housing, migration, or welfare;
- **Linguistic bias:** Subtle othering terms (“the Roma problem,” “integration issues”) instead of systemic analysis.

Identifying these patterns is the first step toward transforming media practices.



5.5.3 Building Media Literacy Skills

NGOs and educators can cultivate critical media skills in both Roma and non-Roma audiences.

Practical activities:

1. **Deconstruct headlines:** Analyse how word choice and framing affect perception.
2. **Compare coverage:** Examine how similar events are reported when Roma and non-Roma are involved.
3. **Fact-check collaboratively:** Teach participants to verify information through open-source tools and credible sources.
4. **Image literacy:** Discuss how photos and visuals can reinforce or challenge stereotypes.
5. **Algorithm awareness:** Explain how social media feeds and search engines personalise content – and how this can amplify bias.

Workshops, school modules, and online campaigns can embed these skills in communities and classrooms.

5.5.4 Promoting Ethical and Inclusive Journalism

Transforming narratives also requires engaging journalists, editors, and journalism schools.

Advocacy and partnership approaches:

- **Develop media ethics guidelines** on reporting about Roma, co-created with journalist associations;
- **Offer training and resources on antigypsyism**, terminology, and ethical interviewing;
- **Encourage inclusion of Roma perspectives** as expert voices in news, culture, and policy reporting;
- **Support Roma journalists** and media creators through fellowships, mentorship, and funding;
- **Create award schemes** or recognition programmes for fair and inclusive journalism.

5.5.5 Community Media and Counter-Narratives

Roma-led media are essential for reclaiming voice and agency.

Independent outlets, blogs, radio programmes, and social platforms allow Roma communities to tell their own stories and challenge structural invisibility.

Examples of good practice:

- **Community storytelling labs:** local projects where Roma youth produce short videos or podcasts about their lives and heritage;
- **Digital heritage archives:** initiatives preserving oral histories, photographs, and music;
- **Cross-community collaborations:** Roma and non-Roma journalists working together on investigative or feature stories;
- **Social media campaigns:** coordinated efforts highlighting Roma contributions to society (#RomaResistanceDay, #RomaPride).

Such content humanises Roma experiences and rebalances the narrative landscape.



5.5.6 Integrating Media Literacy into Education

Formal and non-formal education systems are critical spaces for media literacy.

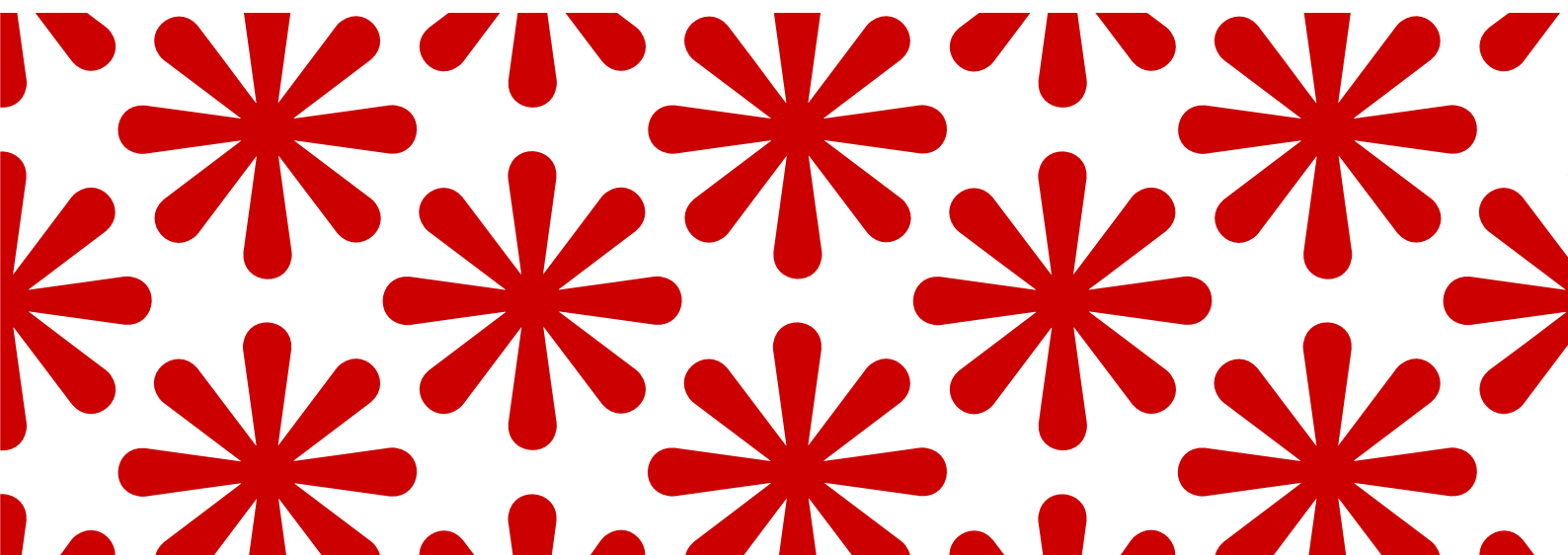
Integration pathways:

- Include antigypsyism and representation analysis in **civic education curricula**;
- **Partner with teacher-training institutes** to provide lesson plans and classroom resources;
- **Promote peer education programmes** where Roma students co-facilitate workshops on stereotypes and digital citizenship;
- **Collaborate with Ministries of Education** and the Council of Europe's Digital Citizenship Education framework for policy alignment.

By embedding critical media literacy into school systems, states can foster a generation capable of questioning and reshaping harmful narratives.

5.5.7 For Practitioners: Quick-Start Checklist

Goal	Practical Action
Detect bias	Run monthly "headline audits" in local and national media
Strengthen capacity	Partner with journalism schools for antigypsyism training
Amplify Roma voices	Support Roma journalists, bloggers, and content creators
Collaborate	Engage media regulators and press councils to include antigypsyism in ethics codes
Educate	Develop classroom materials on Roma representation and digital literacy
Influence culture	Organise awards or exhibitions highlighting positive Roma narratives



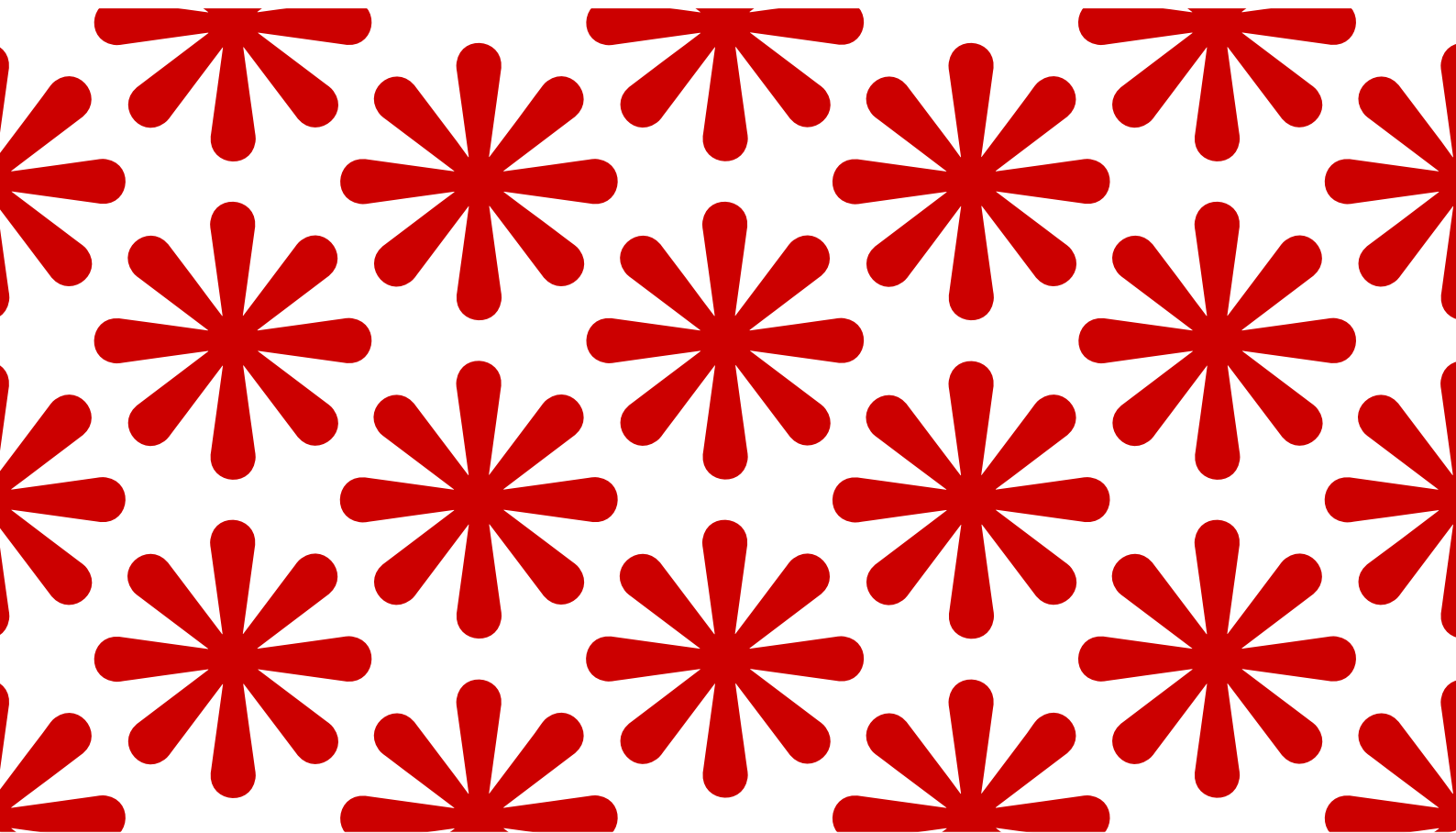
5.6 Key Messages and Action Checklist

Digital spaces are now among the main arenas where antigypsyism operates – and where it can be challenged.

For NGOs, journalists, and educators, digital justice means turning technology from a tool of exclusion into an instrument of equality, accountability, and empowerment.

5.6.1 Core Insights

1. **Digital antigypsyism is structural, not accidental.** It thrives on algorithms, platform economies, and historical bias – not just individual prejudice.
2. **Law, policy, and technology intersect.** Tools like the Digital Services Act, Code of Conduct on Hate Speech, and AI Act create obligations that NGOs can use to demand transparency and reform.
3. **Civil society is a digital rights actor.** Roma NGOs are not only beneficiaries of protection but key partners in monitoring, co-regulation, and education.
4. **Narrative change is prevention.** Promoting Roma-led storytelling, ethical journalism, and media literacy attacks the root causes of online hate – ignorance and distortion.
5. **Digital care equals digital power.** Supporting victims, protecting privacy, and building safe online communities strengthen Roma resilience and trust in technology.



5.6.2 Action Checklist for NGOs

Objective	Practical Steps
Monitor online antigypsyism	Develop a structured monitoring database; track trends; issue quarterly briefs.
Respond rapidly to hate	Create an internal response protocol (detect–verify–report–support–follow-up).
Use legal frameworks	Apply DSA “trusted flagger” mechanisms; reference EU Code of Conduct in advocacy; submit data to equality bodies.
Build partnerships	Join national or EU digital-rights coalitions; collaborate with Digital Services Coordinators and ombudspersons.
Support victims	Provide confidential reporting, counselling, and safety resources.
Promote counter-narratives	Train Roma youth and influencers; run creative online campaigns; engage journalists.
Embed media literacy	Offer workshops in schools and communities; partner with educators and local media.
Advocate for reform	Demand algorithmic transparency, hate-crime data, and Roma representation in digital policy processes.

5.6.3 Building a Sustainable Digital Justice Ecosystem

A digital justice approach requires long-term structure and funding, not ad hoc campaigns.

Key sustainability measures include:

- **Institutionalising monitoring:** Create or join national observatories on online hate and discrimination.
- **Embedding Roma expertise:** Involve Roma professionals in platform policy, media councils, and research institutions.
- **Securing resources:** Include digital rights and media literacy in EU, CERV, and ESF+ funding streams.
- **Evaluating progress:** Develop indicators on representation, online safety, and institutional response.

Digital justice is not a separate issue – it’s an extension of the struggle against antigypsyism into the new public sphere.

6. TOOLS AND TEMPLATES FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

6.1 Purpose and Use

1. This section provides operational tools to support NGOs, Roma organisations, educators, and policy practitioners in addressing antigypsyism at multiple levels – from documentation and advocacy to education and digital justice.
2. Each template can be adapted to local contexts, translated into national languages, or integrated into project work plans and funding proposals.
3. Wherever possible, the tools align with EU and Council of Europe standards to ensure policy relevance.

6.2 Core Toolkit

Tool 1. Policy and Accountability Tracker

Objective: Monitor how antigypsyism is addressed (or ignored) in national strategies, equality frameworks, and EU commitments.

Policy Area	Indicator / Question	Data Source	Status (Yes/No/Partial)	NGO Follow-up Action
National Roma Strategy	Does it include antigypsyism as a defined objective with measurable targets?	Official strategy		
Equality Law	Is antigypsyism recognised as a specific form of racism?	National legislation		
Institutional Mechanism	Is there a Commissioner, Unit, or Contact Point on antigypsyism?	Government structure		
Education Policy	Does the curriculum include Roma history and the Roma Holocaust?	Ministry of Education		
Policing & Justice	Are hate crimes against Roma monitored and prosecuted?	Police / Justice Ministry		
Digital Regulation	Are Roma NGOs involved in DSA implementation?	Digital Services Coordinator		

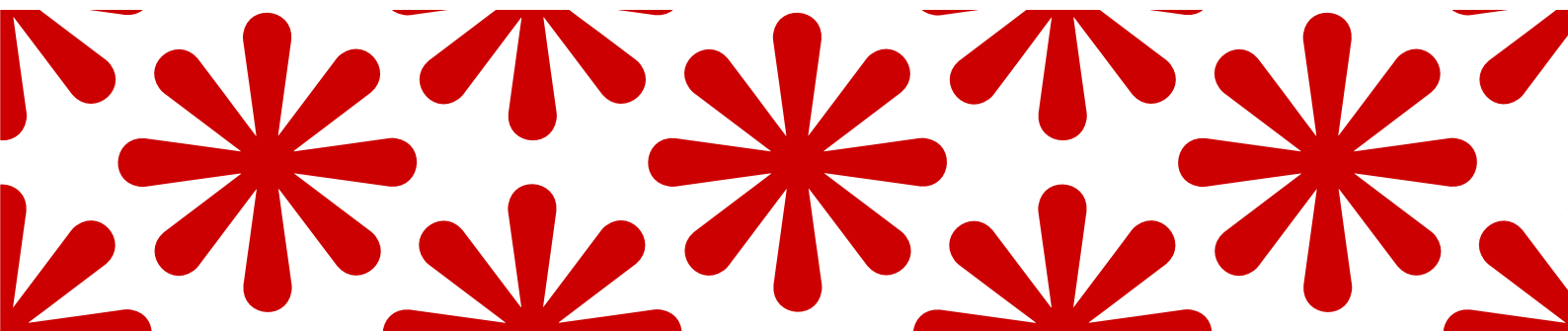
How to use: NGOs can fill this table annually to identify gaps, prepare shadow reports, or feed into EU monitoring (e.g. FRA or Civil Monitor).

Tool 2. Rapid Response Template for Online Hate

Objective: Enable NGOs to respond consistently to digital antigypsyism.

Step	Action	Responsible Person	Timeframe	Notes / Outcome
Detection	Log URL, date, and platform	Monitoring officer	Immediate	
Verification	Confirm authenticity, capture evidence	Coordinator	Within 2 hrs	
Reporting	Submit to platform and equality body	Digital rights focal point	Within 24 hrs	
Support	Contact victim and offer resources	Outreach / Legal team	Within 48 hrs	
Public Response	Decide on statement or silence	Director / Comms	Case-by-case	
Follow-up	Archive and evaluate platform reaction	Coordinator	Weekly	

How to use: Integrate into organisational procedures; include contacts for trusted flaggers, police, and digital coordinators.



Tool 3. Media Representation Audit

Objective: Track and analyse antigypsyist bias in traditional and digital media.

Outlet	Date / Topic	Tone (positive / negative / neutral)	Type of Bias	Roma Voices Quoted?	Follow-up Action
Example: National TV	News on local housing dispute	Negative	Crime linkage	No	Send complaint; propose training
Example: Online portal	Feature on Roma culture	Positive	None	Yes	Share on social media

How to use: Run quarterly audits; share findings with press councils and journalists' associations.

Tool 4. Community Testimony and Memory Collection Form

Objective: Gather Roma oral histories or testimonies on past and present antigypsyism, ensuring ethical handling and accuracy.

Interviewee Name / Alias	Age / Location	Event or Experience	Year / Period	Impact on Family / Community	Consent for Publication (Yes/No)	Archive Reference / Link
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How to use: Ideal for community museums, youth projects, or transitional justice documentation. Always store data securely and with informed consent.

Tool 5. Advocacy Planning Matrix

Objective: Turn analysis into strategic action.

Goal / Change Sought	Decision-maker / Target	Allies / Partners	Advocacy Activities	Timeline	Success Indicator
Introduce antigypsyism in national equality law	Parliament Committee on Human Rights	Equality body, anti-racism coalition	Briefing paper, public hearing, media op-ed	6 months	Bill amendment tabled
Integrate Roma history in school curriculum	Ministry of Education	Teachers' unions, Roma scholars	Roundtable, pilot lessons, press campaign	12 months	Pilot curriculum approved

How to use: Ideal for community museums, youth projects, or transitional justice documentation. Always store data securely and with informed consent.

Tool 6. Partnership Mapping Sheet

Objective: Identify and visualise potential allies in digital justice and antigypsyism advocacy.

Sector	Potential Partner	Added Value / Expertise	Contact Point	Next Step
Government	Equality body	Policy leverage		
Media	Journalists' union	Access to editorial standards		
Academia	University human rights institute	Research collaboration		
Civil society	Digital rights NGOs	Technical monitoring capacity		
Private sector	Platform policy team	Transparency and moderation dialogue		

How to use: Update biannually; build it into coalition management.

Tool 7. Evaluation and Reflection Grid

Objective: Assess progress, learning, and sustainability.

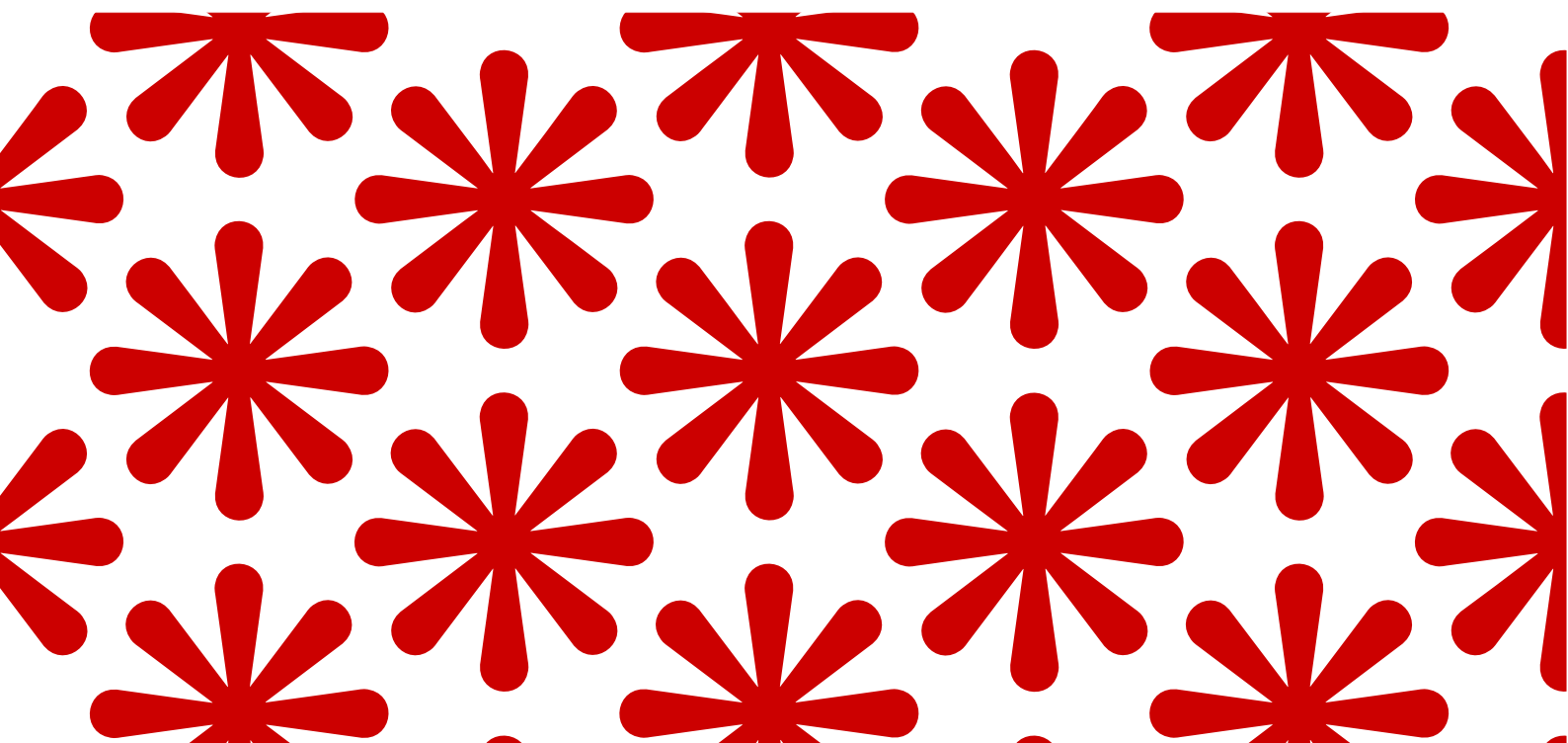
Area	Question	Assessment (Low/Medium/High)	Evidence / Example	Next Action
Impact	Have our actions changed policy or practice?			
Participation	Are Roma voices central in planning and delivery?			
Visibility	Have media narratives improved?			
Partnerships	Are we working effectively with allies?			
Sustainability	Do we have long-term funding and capacity?			

How to use: Apply at project close or annually to guide learning and planning.

6.3 Integration and Adaptation

To maximise impact:

1. **Integrate tools across projects** – link monitoring data (Tool 1) with advocacy planning (Tool 5).
2. **Localise language and terminology** to fit national legal and cultural contexts.
3. **Train staff and volunteers** regularly on digital safety, ethics, and data management.
4. **Share templates within Roma civil-society networks** to ensure consistency in evidence and advocacy.



7. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

Antigypsyism is not a single event or prejudice – it is a **system of power** sustained across time, institutions, and narratives. This Toolbox, developed under the CERV-funded JEKHIPE project, Reclaiming our past, rebuilding our future: new approaches to fighting antigypsyism, recognises that dismantling such a system requires new tools, new alliances, and new imagination. Over the previous chapters, we have seen how remembrance and transitional justice, digital accountability, and participatory governance interconnect.

We have traced antigypsyism **from the silences of history to the codes of digital platforms**, and from local activism to European policy frameworks. Each section has built toward a central truth: civil society is not an observer of justice – it is its engine.

7.1 Reclaiming the Past, Rebuilding the Future

Reclaiming the past means affirming historical truth: the enslavement, persecution, and exclusion of Roma are not marginal episodes but central to Europe's modern history.

It also means **restoring agency** – ensuring Roma communities tell their own stories, define their own needs, and lead in shaping remedies.

Rebuilding the future, then, is the natural continuation: confronting institutional racism, transforming education, reforming digital infrastructures, and reimagining equality as co-governance.

Transitional justice for Roma is not about closure; it is about continuity – linking memory with reform, remembrance with accountability.



7.2 A Shared Agenda for Civil Society

The lessons across this Toolbox converge into a shared civil-society agenda:

1. **Make antigypsyism visible** – through evidence, reporting, and education.
2. **Transform remembrance into reform** – integrate history into institutions and policy.
3. **Protect digital rights** – ensure equality and dignity online and offline.
4. **Invest in Roma-led participation** – move from consultation to decision-making.
5. **Forge alliances across movements** – link Roma justice to broader struggles for racial, gender, and digital equality.

No single NGO can do this alone. But **together**, Roma and allied organisations can build a European civil-society architecture that confronts antigypsyism as a structural issue – in law, media, education, and governance.

7.3 Sustaining the Work

This Toolbox is meant not as a final product but as a living resource.

It can grow through:

- National adaptations and translations;
- Training modules for youth, journalists, and activists;
- Regular updates on EU policy developments (e.g., DSA, AI Act, EU Anti-Racism Action Plan);
- Shared databases and monitoring platforms linking NGOs across Europe.

Future iterations of the Toolbox can also expand on:

- Climate and environmental justice dimensions of antigypsyism;
- Intersectionality with gender, disability, and migration;
- Cross-border solidarity in digital and policy spaces.

