Roma inclusion in cities

Mapping of the situation of Roma in cities in Europe

Contents

Introduction

Roma are Europe's largest ethnic minority with an estimated 10-12 million people living on the continent. Their situation remains critical as they continue to face discrimination and unequal access to vital services. Roma people are much more likely to be unemployed and live in poverty than non-Roma. This limits their access to good education and decent housing. They often live in precarious conditions with poor access to basic services.

To improve the situation of Roma, the EU adopted an EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies in 2011 with a view to achieving Roma integration at national, regional and local level by 2020. Despite increased efforts, the situation of Roma remains critical and led to a reinforced call for action in December 2016 when the Council of the EU called for acceleration of the process of Roma integration '*especially at local level*'.

The majority of Roma live in urban areas to increase their chances of finding work. Cities are the first authorities to be in contact with Roma and are in the best position to develop tailored solutions. Getting first-hand information from cities is an effective way to get viable feedback about the situation of Roma. However, statistics regarding Roma are based on the national level and do not include a local or urban dimension. Comparative data about Roma inclusion at local level remains scarce and efforts of local authorities less documented than those at national level.

This EUROCITIES report has been produced to respond to the need to map the situation of Roma inclusion at local level. The report examines the challenges that Roma face in cities with regards to their access to employment, housing, healthcare, education and basic services. The report also explores how cities respond to these challenges, what initiatives they put in place, how they engage with Roma and what support they need to be able to further Roma inclusion.

This report is based on a mapping study covering 22 large cities in Europe (with over 250,000 inhabitants), which have large Roma populations. The cities are spread across all parts of Europe and cover 13 European countries giving the mapping study a good geographical representation:

- Northern Europe: Oslo, Stockholm, Gothenburg, Malmo, Vantaa
- Western Europe: Glasgow, Leeds, Belfast, Sheffield, Grenoble, Nantes, Ghent
- Central Europe: Berlin, Dortmund, Munich, Vienna
- Central Eastern Europe: Budgoszcz, Poznan, Brno, Budapest
- Southern Europe: Barcelona
- Non-EU (Turkey): Beylikduzu (a district of Istanbul)

The study collected evidence about the situation of Roma directly from city authorities through a survey. The questionnaire included both closed and open questions to gather quantitative as well as qualitative data. The responses to the survey fed into a comparative analysis to identify trends across cities and map good practices of initiatives for Roma inclusion at local level.

The findings from this study are a valuable resource for the mid-term review of the current EU framework and shaping post-2020 strategy towards better Roma integration.

Key
Findings

The situation of Roma in cities in Europe remains critical. Roma people are generally disadvantaged compared to the overall population in cities:

Roma face a **higher risk of poverty,** experience more severe forms of poverty and are more likely to be born into poverty.

Roma **are more likely to be unemployed or in precarious jobs** due to having low or no qualifications and due to discrimination from employers.

Roma are less likely to attend secondary or higher-level education and, when they do enroll, they tend to have **higher rates of absenteeism** and are **more likely to drop out.**

Roma have a worse housing situation than most people in cities as they live in **overcrowded, precarious housing** and are discriminated against by landlords.

In some cities, Roma face **more limited access to basic services** (electricity, energy, sanitation and running water) than other residents, especially for Roma living in camps.

Roma are at a higher risk of certain **health conditions** (obesity, heart and lung diseases).

Roma are entitled to **social services** in most cities, but they are often unaware of the services available to them or they distrust them due to prior discriminatory experiences.

Cities **cannot do it all alone**

There is no one homogenous Roma population, but cities host multiple, distinct Roma communities that have different needs. Some cities have a mix of autochthonous Roma, long-term resident Roma and recently arrived Roma from the 2004 EU enlargement. Domestic Roma tend to have a better situation since they have full rights as citizens or residents and are familiar with the city, the labour market and the services available to them. The recently arrived Roma are confronted with the language barrier and need more support to reach the public services available to them and to gain confidence in using them.

City authorities invest continuous efforts to reduce the Roma – non-Roma gap in access to education, employment, housing, healthcare and basic services. They employ targeted measures to address obstacles in specific areas. More than half of cities have a local Roma integration strategy while others cover Roma as part of their mainstream strategies against poverty. Many cities work on improving Roma people's access to public services. Most initiatives are funded from municipal budgets while only a few receive national or EU funding.

Nearly all cities have structures in place to engage with Roma. Local Roma councils and consultation platforms exist in 17 cities while Roma mediators are involved in 11. Support to Roma NGOs and their projects is another way to empower Roma to organise themselves.

A successful city initiative for Roma inclusion typically includes five elements: **an integrated and coordinated approach**; a combination of **area-based and people-based solutions**; a **participatory approach** to engaging Roma from the start; a strong partnership between the **municipality and Roma NGOs**; and s**ecured funding** for implementation post pilot phase.

Cities play a crucial role in tackling social exclusion of Roma, but more needs to be done to address the complex challenges that Roma face and achieve their full inclusion in society. **Cities cannot do it all alone**. They need more support from national and EU authorities in terms of political commitment and more funding for city-led actions on Roma inclusion.

1

Data collection
about Roma in cities

The findings presented in this mapping study about the situation of Roma in cities in Europe are based on evidence reported by city authorities. Therefore, before exploring the findings, it is important to understand how cities collected this evidence and from which sources.

Most cities (74%) do not have an official system in place to collect targeted data about the situation of Roma living in their territories. This is because in many countries it is forbidden by law to collect statistics referring to racial or ethnic origin. However, in some cities (17%), data is collected in some areas such as education and healthcare. Many cities use other means through which they get estimates of the Roma population, either by using proxy indicators (e.g. mother tongue or nationality of newly arrived) or by using evidence collected by Roma organisations or by social workers in their field work.

Data collection systems

Few cities (9%) have a system in place to systematically collect data about the situation of Roma. For example, in Hungary, the national census collects, every 10 years, data on 'national vs. ethnic origin', which is provided on a voluntary basis. The challenge is that Roma people are often reluctant to declare their ethnic origin out of fear of discrimination. For this reason, a more precise method was developed based on neighbourhood surveys that triangulate answers from three sources (respondent, neighbour, interviewer) about 'belonging to a national or ethnic group'.

The neighbourhood survey method was elaborated by sociologist István Kemény in the 1980s. The question whether someone belongs to a national or ethnic community is answered by three people: the respondent, his/her neighbour and by the interviewer. There must be two identical responses for an acceptable answer. Through these surveys, Prof. Kemény set up a time variable estimation for the members of the Roma communities. The method provides an estimate of 100,000 people with Roma background living in **Budapest**, about twice the official census data.

To encourage Roma to embrace their identity and declare their ethnic origin, a campaign was organised in Hungary with the support of Roma intellectuals and Roma NGOs. Following this campaign, there was a noticeable rise in citizens claiming to be Roma; in Budapest alone there was an increase of 20,500 people identifying themselves as Roma. This led to improved data collection through censuses and neighbourhood surveys.

Data from education and healthcare services

In some cities, data on Roma is primarily collected through the education and healthcare services as registration to these services is free and often mandatory. For example, in the UK, cities reported that data from general practitioner doctors provides one of the most reliable source of evidence for the size and settlement patterns of migrant populations (Roma and non-Roma) as newly arrived migrants are required to register their family with a local doctor. Data is collected on age, gender and health indicators. However, not all newly arrived register – EU citizens are not obliged - and the data collected is based on nationality rather than ethnicity.

In schools, data is collected on the number of Roma children enrolled or the number of pupils learning the Romani language. In cities where schools receive state subsidies for enrolment of Roma children, the school records are a good indication of the number of Roma pupils. Some cities, such as Sheffield, have a system in place to monitor the school progress of Roma pupils.

It is important to note that although the data made accessible via healthcare and education services is not representative of the total Roma populations in cities because not all individuals register, it allows for a good overview in the absence of any other statistical data.

Estimations based on nationality or other indicators

Many cities (56%) use estimations of Roma population based on data about the mother tongue and nationality of newly arrived people in the city, collected through censuses or from social welfare agencies. While not all recently arrived EU mobile citizens are Roma, they represent a fair number, according to city reports based on evidence from social workers.

Some cities in France collect data at local level on the number of people living in precarious conditions. While the data collection is not focused exclusively on Roma, it does encompass Roma communities and offers a rough estimate of the Roma population living in the city. In Nantes, there is a monthly census which is carried out by the municipal police departments. An individualised diagnostic of families is done to ensure good living conditions in camps.

It should be noted that cities in Austria, Belgium, France and Germany have taken a conscious decision not to collect ethnic data on Roma, but to focus on poverty data to enable them to help all newly arrived EU mobile citizens in need of support, both Roma and non-Roma. This approach highlights that poverty migration in the EU is a structural problem and not an ethnic one. Some cities (e.g. Ghent) adopted an intra-EU migration strategy instead of a strategy just for Roma. Austria integrates Roma inclusion measures in its Diversity Management Strategy that includes all measures of the city of Vienna related to social inclusion.

Other sources of information on Roma

Cities can obtain information about the situation of Roma through their counselling and social services. Social workers can develop communication and trust with the Roma community, and in doing so, they can identify the specific needs of individuals. For example, in Poznan, social workers collected specific data from Roma, including their names, ages, the documents they have, the number of children and whether they attend school. In Dortmund, social workers conduct an individual survey for each claimant of social benefits on what their needs are and which possible solutions are available to them. In this way, the city has an overview of the unemployment situation and how many families are on state benefits.

Some cities reported using information that was collected informally by associations and NGOs, such as Roms Action, Secours Catholique and Médecins du Monde in France, or the Romanian Roma Community Association Northern Ireland (RRCANI) in Belfast, among others.

Some cities are using data and information gathered through projects. For example, in Ghent, Roma attestations and estimations are collected from fieldwork projects. In Leeds, some data is available through the RICE project (linking schools and Roma communities in Leeds with schools and Roma communities in Brno, Czech Republic).

Collecting data on Roma, a double edged sword

Many cities acknowledge that collecting data about the situation of Roma is important as well as risky. On the one hand, there are many risks and challenges in collecting correct data on Roma that is not perceived as harmful by the Roma people (due to mistrust and bad experiences). The misuse of data through generalising descriptions of the situation of Roma can fuel prejudices causing more discrimination and exclusion.

On the other hand, collecting data can prove useful in the process of ensuring Roma have equal rights and opportunities. Reliable data about the situation of Roma is essential to improving policies by enabling more targeted assistance and more accurate programming of interventions (principle of 'no data, no progress'). Furthermore, the availability of data would be beneficial to support structural improvements in the fight against discrimination and to implement affirmative measures. For example, data proving over-representation of Roma children in special needs schools can serve as basis for education policy change towards better integration of Roma children into mainstream education.

In conclusion, cities need to find a way to collect data about the situation of Roma and use this evidence to improve policy responses to the challenges Roma face, while at the same time protecting Roma against the risk of data misuse. Cities agreed that it is important to collect data in the right way and for the correct reasons while always stating the non-discriminatory purpose of the data collected.

> "Reliable data is to **essential to improving policies** by enabling more targeted assistance and more programming"

2 **Who are the Roma** in our cities?

The majority of Roma in Europe live in large cities. In most cities, however, there are multiple, distinct Roma communities, who represent a mix of autochthonous Roma (settled for centuries), long-term resident Roma (arriving in the 1990s from former Yugoslavia) and recently arrived EU mobile citizen Roma (mostly from new EU member states after the 2004 EU enlargement). Roma is a heterogenous population made of very diverse groups, but on the whole, Roma tend to be young or of working age. Domestic Roma and Roma living in large cities (capitals) tend to have, on average, a better situation than the recently arrived Roma.

One way to distinguish Roma profiles is by their origin, which gives them a different set of rights. Cities reported three different Roma profiles by origin:

1.
Autochthonous Roma who are a national ethnic minority – also known as 'domestic Roma', they are historic communities with the same rights as the majority population

2.
Roma who migrated from former Yugoslavia in the 1990s – non-EU citizens who, in the meantime, became long-term residents
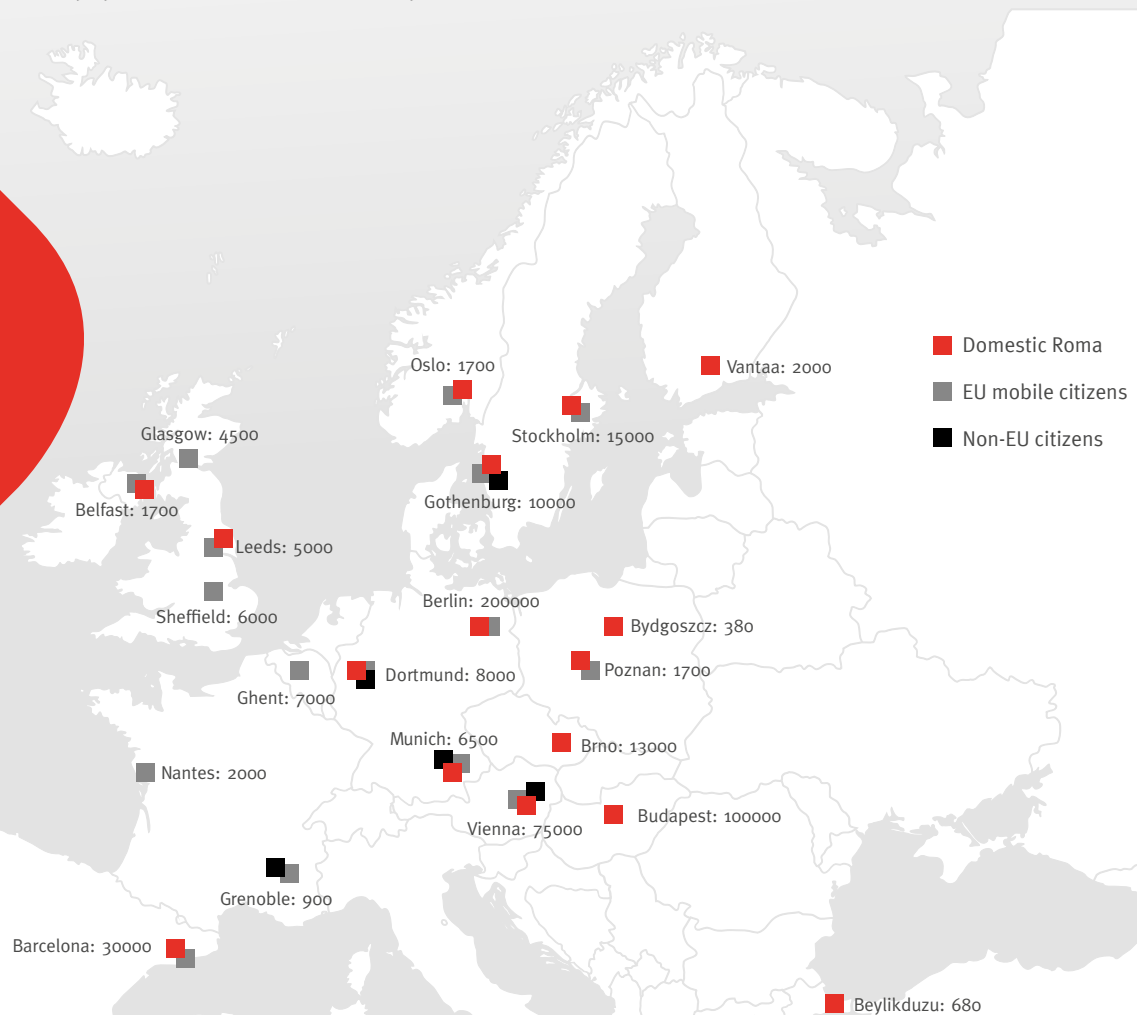
3.
Roma who recently immigrated coming from the new EU member states – 'recently arrived' Roma with EU citizenship rights, also known as 'EU mobile citizen Roma'

Each Roma population has different needs and different sets of rights depending on their origin. As a result, they experience different obstacles and types of discrimination. This requires differentiated policies and actions at city level. Cities with more than one Roma profile by origin typically have different departments of their city administration in charge of policies for different Roma populations (for domestic Roma vs. migrant Roma).

For example, Berlin is known to have a mix of all three profiles, made of autochthonous Roma, long-term non-EU citizen Roma who arrived in the 1990s from former Yugoslavia and recently arrived EU mobile citizens, mostly from Romania, Bulgaria and Poland.

Figure 1.
Map of Roma populations in 22 cities in Europe

Domestic Roma
EU mobile citizens
Non-EU citizens

Vantaa: 2000

Oslo: 1700
Stockholm: 15000
Glasgow: 4500
Gothenburg: 10000
Belfast: 1700
Leeds: 5000
Sheffield: 6000
Berlin: 200000
Bydgoszcz: 380
Poznan: 1700
Dortmund: 8000
Ghent: 7000
Munich: 6500
Brno: 13000
Nantes: 2000
Vienna: 75000
Budapest: 100000
Grenoble: 900
Barcelona: 30000
Beylikduzu: 680

Note: data presented in the map is based on estimations reported directly by city authorities

'Domestic' Roma

About half of the cities surveyed reported that the majority of their Roma populations are a national ethnic minority. The key characteristic of this profile of Roma is that they are autochthonous, meaning that they settled in the territory a long time ago and have raised many generations there. They are therefore nationals, with full citizenship rights, and identify themselves as citizens having a 'Roma background'. Sinti are the most common community amongst the Roma national ethnic minorities in Western Europe (present in Sweden, Italy, Germany) and have been in the respective territories for a long period of time. For example, Sinti have been present in Gothenburg since the 16th century. Similarly, 'los gitanos' arrived about six centuries ago in Barcelona and represent a national community now. Similarly, 'travellers' are native to the UK and Ireland.

In Budapest, Roma are considered a historical community with more than 500 years of common history with Hungary. Four different communities of Roma co-exist in Hungary: Beas, Olah, Carpathian and Romungro, the latter being the largest group with 70-80% of the whole Roma community. Roma from these communities identify themselves as 'Hungarian with a Roma background'.

In Sweden, all Roma who are Swedish citizens are considered as national ethnic minority based on their self-identification as Roma. There are at least five different Roma communities - Lovari, Kelderash, Polish-Roma, Arli, Sinti – who are part of the national ethnic minority.

A wave of Roma arrived in some cities after the second world war. Although more recently established than the historic communities mentioned above, such Roma populations fit the profile of 'domestic Roma' and they are considered as a national ethnic minority.

The wave of Roma migration in the 1990s

More than two in ten cities (22%) reported that Roma arrived to their city in the 1990s, predominantly from the Balkans (Albania, Serbia, Macedonia) in the context of fleeing the war in former Yugoslavia. In some countries, they received the status of refugees. For example, Roma who arrived in Berlin obtained asylum and were treated as refugees.

However, the situation and status of Roma from the 1990s wave of immigration was not the same across European cities. In Beylikduzu, Roma who arrived in the 1990s are considered as a national ethnic minority. In contrast, Roma who arrived in Dortmund, also in the 1990s, are reportedly not considered as a national ethnic minority.

'Recently arrived' Roma

Cities reported receiving a high number of Roma coming from new EU member states in recent years, in particular from Romania, Slovakia and Bulgaria. Some cities also reported having a considerable number of Roma who arrived from Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic. Many city reports indicated a mix of Roma of different origins.

Berlin has seen three different groups of Roma arriving recently: Romanian, Bulgarian and Polish nationals. Their numbers have been on the increase in the last years: the number of Bulgarian nationals increased by 68% between 2012 and 2016 (from 15,933 in 2012 to 26,910 in 2016), while the number of Romanians for the same period has increased by 110% (from 8,843 in 2012 to 18,814 in 2016). Moreover, the number of Polish nationals increased by 19%.

There are no official statistics on different ethnic groups in Germany, hence it is difficult to estimate concrete figures on the population of Roma in Berlin.

The 'recent arrival' of Roma populations from Eastern Europe migrating to the west began mainly after the EU enlargement in 2004. The typical profile is that of Roma families who migrated to the west seeking to permanently settle there in the hope of a better life. However, this trend is not specific to Roma alone, since a big wave of people from various ethnicities, being at risk of poverty in their home country, migrated in the period post-2004. This generated what we know today as 'poverty migration'. Therefore, in many cases, it is difficult to differentiate between the 'recently arrived' Roma and the EU mobile citizens of other ethnicities, especially when statistics on ethnic groups are hardly collected (if at all).

Demographic and socio-economic trends in Roma populations

Roma is a heterogenous population made of very diverse groups. However, three common trends can be identified across cities and communities. Firstly, Roma are generally a young and working-age population. For example, in Beylikduzu, 78% of Roma are aged between 0 and 45, and only 3.5% are 65 years old or more. Similarly, in Dortmund, 25% are under 15 years of age, 74% are in the 15-65 age group, only 1% are aged 65 or more.

Secondly, domestic Roma tend to have a better situation compared to that of the recently arrived Roma. This is understandable given that Roma from the national ethnic minority are accustomed to the given society, the labour market and the services available to them. For example, in Sweden, Sinti tend to have better job prospects, lower levels of poverty and fuller access to services than Roma who have recently arrived in Swedish cities. Therefore, it is important that the recently arrived EU mobile citizens receive extra support and attention to improve their situation and accelerate their integration.

Thirdly, the situation of Roma differs by the geographical location of their communities. Roma people who live in large cities are reported to have a better overall situation than those living in rural areas. This is explained by the economic opportunities available in cities as well as the better access to education and health services. For example, Roma who live in Budapest were reported to have significantly higher employment rates than Roma who live in other areas of Hungary.

3

Key challenges
for Roma and city responses

Across cities, Roma people are generally at greater disadvantage than the average population. They face higher risks of unemployment and poverty, more precarious housing conditions and more difficult access to quality education, healthcare or even basic services. The situation of newly arrived Roma is typically worse than that of domestic Roma.

The top three challenges that Roma people face in cities, as per city reports, are:

■ Difficult access to employment (reported by 20 cities out of 22, representing 87%)
■ Difficult access to decent housing (reported by 14 cities, 61%)
■ Discrimination and anti-gypsyism (reported by 14 cities, 61%)

Other top challenges reported by cities, but less frequently, include unequal access to free and quality education, lack of representation in political and public life, and negative image in the media. Access to healthcare and to basic services were among the least problematic.

All challenges are interdependent, but discrimination was found to be a common factor in all of them. A lack of employment opportunities combined with discrimination makes it hard for Roma to find decent work. The lack of stable income makes it difficult for them to access good housing. In turn, the precarious housing conditions limit their access to basic services, which impacts on their health. Being exposed to regular discrimination and marginalisation, Roma do not trust public services, which hinders their participation in education. This in turn limits their chances to obtain a qualification and a good skill set to get employment.

City authorities have responded to these challenges with targeted measures for Roma inclusion. Initiatives to improve access to employment, education and housing are common among cities.

The following sections examine in detail each of these challenges. Each section analyses the factors contributing to the challenge and the ways in which cities address the challenge.

3.1 **Poverty**

Poverty affects a big part of the Roma populations in cities. Two-thirds of the cities confirmed this situation. However, most stressed that Roma make up just a part (or even a fraction) of their city population living in poverty, which includes many other vulnerable groups who are non-Roma, such as undocumented migrants, refugees, single parent families and long-term unemployed persons. Indeed, city reports converge on the point that poverty is not limited to certain ethnic groups, but is a structural problem that affects many in society.

A high risk of poverty for Roma

In some cities, the poverty rates among Roma are five times higher than in the general population. A higher risk of poverty is indicated by three interrelated trends:
- poverty affects a much larger share of population of Roma than of non-Roma - in some cities, two-thirds of Roma are reported to live below the poverty line as opposed to a quarter, or less, of the general population;
- the degree of poverty Roma face is often more severe than the average population – many Roma are reportedly in deep or extreme poverty;
- the cycle of poverty is often transmitted across generations – Roma are more likely to be born into poverty than non-Roma children.

There is however a difference between the situation of 'domestic' Roma and of newly arrived Roma. Cities where both profiles of Roma co-exist reported that the newly arrived Roma are much more affected by poverty than the Roma who settled there a long time ago. Some cities reported that the majority of newly arrived Roma are poor and live in precarious conditions, although they consider themselves better off than in their country of origin.

The most frequently reported forms and causes of poverty experienced by Roma are:
- Living at or under a minimum level of income (at subsistence level)
- Living on social welfare benefits (predominantly child benefits)
- Living in poor neighbourhoods with high levels of deprivation
- Living in camps
- Experiencing financial hardship due to lack of access to decent jobs
- Lack of access to essential services (water, electricity) or goods (food)

It is important to note that the poverty faced by Roma is not only a matter of lacking sufficient income, but also of lacking decent living conditions (decent housing) and lacking access to services, goods or opportunities (jobs). Therefore, combatting poverty cannot only focus on income benefits, but needs to bring improvements in living conditions (e.g. in terms of quality of housing) and better, equal access to services, goods and opportunities for Roma.

The evidence from cities shows that poverty has a territorial dimension. Every city has some poor or poorer neighbourhoods. Poverty maps of cities indicate that Roma tend to live in the poorest neighbourhoods. For example, Sheffield uses poverty maps based on Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) statistics, which show that Page Hall – an area with a big Roma community - is one of the poorest neighbourhoods in the city. This indicates that a territorial approach is also needed when tackling the challenge of poverty.

City initiatives

Cities have put in place various initiatives to combat poverty. Most initiatives, however, are not specifically set up for Roma, but directed at all people or groups who suffer from poverty. The city initiatives usually address one or more root causes of poverty. For example, the following types of initiatives were reported by cities: food banks; support to find employment; support to get out of financial hardship; and integration of services to make them accessible and inclusive for all ('one-stop-shops'). Some examples of such initiatives are presented on the next page.

Leeds City Council has a Best Council Plan that identifies as a key priority the need to support communities and tackle poverty. The approach is built around 4 key propositions below:

- Helping people out of financial hardship - this proposition has a focus on reducing dependency on local and national benefits, improving access to affordable credit as well as tackling high costs lending, reducing debt levels and increasing financial resilience of the poorest citizens and communities in the city;

- Providing integrated and accessible services and pathways - this proposition has a focus on developing integrated pathways of support that are accessible to local communities and create local partnerships between council-led services and other relevant organisations;

- Helping people get into work - this proposition has a focus on working with those adults who are furthest away from employment and developing programmes of support that meet individual needs and promote citizen engagement;

- Being responsive to the needs of local communities - this proposition has a focus on establishing a voice for local communities within the democratic process that leads to community-supported actions to address local issues.

In **Beylikduzu** (a district of Istanbul), the municipality set up a food bank to provide food, clothing and cleaning products to families and groups most affected by poverty. Many widows, orphans, unemployed people and people unable to work after an accident or who are ill, benefit from the food bank. The food bank is administered by the Women and Family Affairs department of the municipality in association with a local NGO (El Ele Ya am association). The food bank regularly visits poor neighbourhoods to distribute supplies to families in precarious situations. About 1,200 families are actively benefiting from the food bank every month. The amount of food, clothes and utilities provided by the food bank is increasing and the municipality aims to reach 3,500 families per month in the near future. The food bank system has raised awareness among people living in Beylikduzu about the poverty situation and social inequalities caused by income gaps. As a result, donations to the food bank have increased. In return, the bank ensures that those in need can equally benefit from the donations without any discrimination due to language, religion or race.

3.2 **Access to employment**

The large majority of Roma people living in cities are unemployed. Some cities reported that nearly eight in ten Roma people do not have a job, which echoes the data available at EU level.[1] Across cities, the employment rate among Roma is lower than that of other migrant or vulnerable groups and much lower than that of the majority population.

Cities reported a big gender gap in employment rates of Roma. On average men are more likely to be in employment than women in Roma communities. For example, in Budapest, 75% of men from Roma background are in employment versus only 40% of women. Cultural aspects play a role and explain, at least partly, this gender gap in employment levels. When Roma people manage to enter the labour market in cities, they tend to work in 'blue-collar' jobs, mostly in construction, restaurants or housekeeping. This means that their jobs are often low-paid, irregular and short-term, which makes Roma people vulnerable to exploitation by employers or compels them to work on the black market.

There is one city that is an exception to this rule: Vienna. In Vienna, 83% of Roma are employed, which is a similar rate to those from non-ethnic minority groups (87%).[2]

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[1] According to the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (2016). European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey: Roma - Selected findings. Findings in the report show that 30% of Roma are in paid work in the nine EU member states in which the survey was conducted.

[2] L & R Social Research (2014). Roma in Austria: employment, housing, education and other integration aspects.

Main challenges faced by Roma in integrating into the labour market

Cities reported five key challenges and obstacles faced by Roma on the labour market. These are presented in the Figure 2 below.

Figure 2.
Main challenges to Roma integration on the labour market
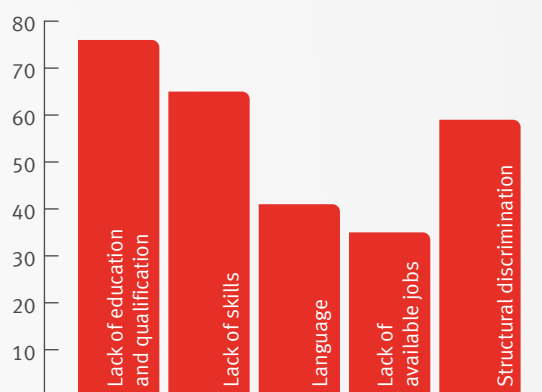
Note: data shows the share of cities that mentioned each factor. Each city reported more than one factor, hence total is over 100%.

By far the most recurrent challenge, reported by over three-quarters of cities (76%), is the lack of qualifications required to access certain jobs. For example, in Dortmund, 66.4% of EU mobile migrants on social welfare benefits (including but not restricted to Roma people) do not have any qualifications. This issue includes the absence of validation systems that recognise qualifications that have been acquired in different countries.

The second largest barrier is the lack of skills (reported by 65% of cities), including literacy and digital skills. The lack of basic or adequate skill levels is a direct consequence of the low levels (or lack) of education and qualifications. The high rate of early school leaving is a key contributor to the issue of lack of qualifications and skills, which is analysed in the next section.

For those who do have sufficient and recognised qualifications and skills, structural discrimination by employers is the main barrier to their labour market access. This barrier was reported by over half of the surveyed city authorities (59%). Roma suffer from mistrust from employers who tend to be reluctant to offer them jobs due to their unclear residential status.

A serious barrier is the lack of jobs available (reported by 35% of cities) for people with low qualifications. Some cities pointed out that the labour market is highly specialised and does not offer many opportunities for those with low or medium-level qualifications. The limited employment opportunities available for them makes it harder for Roma to work legally and pushes them towards self-employment on petty and unstable jobs on the black market.

Language is also a big barrier that further reduces the prospects for Roma people's employment, in particular for EU mobile citizens, Roma who recently immigrated to a new EU member state.

Other barriers and challenges, though less often reported by cities, are the lack of knowledge of the country's or city's labour market and the lack of digital skills to search for jobs and submit applications. These challenges are often more easily addressed by the city authorities than the structural barriers mentioned above. Geographical factors can also come into play; it has been reported in Budapest for example that Roma employment rates in the capital are much higher than those for Roma living further away from the capital.

City initiatives to improve Roma access to employment

City authorities have developed targeted initiatives and projects to better ensure Roma people's access to employment. Most cities have implemented:
- Job-insertion and training schemes
- Workshops to develop skills relevant to the job, practical training on how to write CVs and to get information about the labour market
- Internships or other on-the-job training offered in enterprises
- Language learning modules

A key success factor in implementing these initiatives was found to be the openness of the municipality to reaching out to local businesses for offering jobs and internships or practical work experience opportunities to Roma people. An equally strong factor predicting success is whether and to what extent the Roma community was involved in the design of the project or programme to ensure that it best responds to their real needs.

In **Grenoble**, a job insertion project was started in 2016 with ESF support that focuses on job integration for groups living in precarious conditions, not focused on Roma but they make up a big part of the beneficiaries. A specialised team of two people liaise and follow-up with businesses and employers. As a first step the project focuses on offering language learning sessions, and secondly, on getting familiarised with the labour market. This is done through attending workshops, which allow the participants to improve certain skills, create their CVs and professional profiles. Short internships are also available, which give opportunities to get familiarised with a work environment and even practice for future interviews. The Roma community was consulted on how the project should function. In the future, this city would like to develop a 'one day, one job' concept. This would allow participants to get a first-hand experience of a professional context. At the end of the day's work, the individual would receive payment in cash.

In **Stockholm**, the public employment services work with representatives from the Roma community to create an employment and training programme for the long-term unemployed. The city stresses that a key element is that Roma people are part of both the policy design and the implementation process. Roma representatives know the needs of the Roma community members and are thus a vital part of the process and of ensuring its success.

3.3 Access to education

Across cities, the participation of Roma in education is characterised by weak learning outcomes, high absenteeism, leaving school early and with minimum or no qualifications, and an overrepresentation in special education.

The level of education of Roma people is generally low across cities. While a big share of the Roma population complete elementary education (primary school), only few go to and complete vocational or secondary level education and just a small fraction go into higher education. In general, Roma are less likely than the rest of the population to attend secondary or any higher level of education. Therefore, Roma typically hold minimum or no qualifications, which limits their chances on the labour market.

In all cities, Roma have the right to attend public education free-of-charge and their access to education is facilitated in various ways. However, the real challenge remains with their school attendance. While enrolment rates have improved over the years due to compulsory schooling, the absenteeism and school dropout rates among Roma pupils remains very high in most cities. The common trend across cities is that the rates of absenteeism and school dropout are much higher among Roma children, often more than double the average rate. There are however some important differences between trends of attendance in primary and secondary level education.

While school attendance of Roma children in **primary schools** tends to be rather high and is improving in most cities – in some being broadly in line with the rates for non-Roma – their participation drops considerably in **secondary schools** and has even been declining in recent years in some cities. In 60% of the city reports it was confirmed that attendance at secondary level is much lower than at primary level.

School attendance data from cities illustrates these trends of participation of Roma in education. For example, Sheffield keeps a record of absences for all pupils in primary and secondary schools. The records consistently show that over the years 2013-2017, the rates of absence among the Roma pupils are more than twice as high as the average rate for all pupils, in both primary and secondary schools. However, what is notable is that the absence rate for Roma pupils in primary schools (10.3%) is at its lowest level in the 5-year period while for Roma in secondary schools it is at its highest (14.8%) in the same period.

Hindering factors

Cities reported a variety of factors that can hinder the participation of Roma in education. The most frequently reported factors were:

- cultural factors including the Roma culture (marriages at early ages, high mobility) as well as to the school culture in the country of origin (school-starting age)

- socio-economic difficulties due to high risk of poverty means that some Roma cannot afford to pay for transportation to school or for school supplies
- distrust in the school education system
- discrimination and segregation in schools
- language barrier for newly arrived Roma

Other key factors highlighted in city reports, although less often, are the limited access to early childhood education, which puts Roma children at a disadvantage in their early development compared to other children, and the lack of parental involvement in education in general, both representing big obstacles to better education chances of Roma children. Figure 3 above shows the number of cities that mentioned each factor.

More than a third of cities (37%) identified cultural factors, such as early marriages and pregnancies or high mobility (moving to other cities or going back to the country of origin), to be the main obstacle to the participation of Roma in education. For newly arrived Roma, the gap in school culture between the country of origin and the host country, such as the different school-starting age, can explain some of the difficulties in school. Parents either take a conscious decision to follow the age requirement in the country of origin or are unaware of the school-starting age in the host country. The latter case shows the lack of knowledge about the host country's educational system. This ties in to the other main reason for low school attendance, reported in 28% of cities, which is a general distrust in the formal education system.

Prior negative experiences of discrimination make parents reluctant to see the importance of education and of regular school attendance. On the other hand, distrust is also generated by the under-representation of Roma in the education system, namely of teachers from Roma communities who can act as role models.

One in five cities (21%) reported that the socio-economic deprivation of Roma families (many living in or at risk of poverty) is a key factor hindering the chances to obtain an educational qualification. For many Roma families, the main concern is fulfilling basic needs and education is considered of secondary importance. For this reason, many Roma children lack support from their parents with school work. Moreover, many young Roma are forced to leave school earlier, without obtaining a qualification, in order to take up work to help out their family. Dropping out of school (usually at secondary level) to get into work at an early age is a common trend among members of Roma communities across cities.

Other challenges reported by cities were the language barrier faced by the newly arrived Roma, the schools' inability to adapt to the needs of Roma children and logistical challenges like the distance to school or availability of transport to school. In general, having a school in or near their neighbourhood and sufficient places to put all their children in the same school (otherwise it is difficult to get the children to different schools in time) is an important factor for Roma families when it comes to schooling their children.

Figure 3.
Main reasons for low school attendance and high drop-out rates
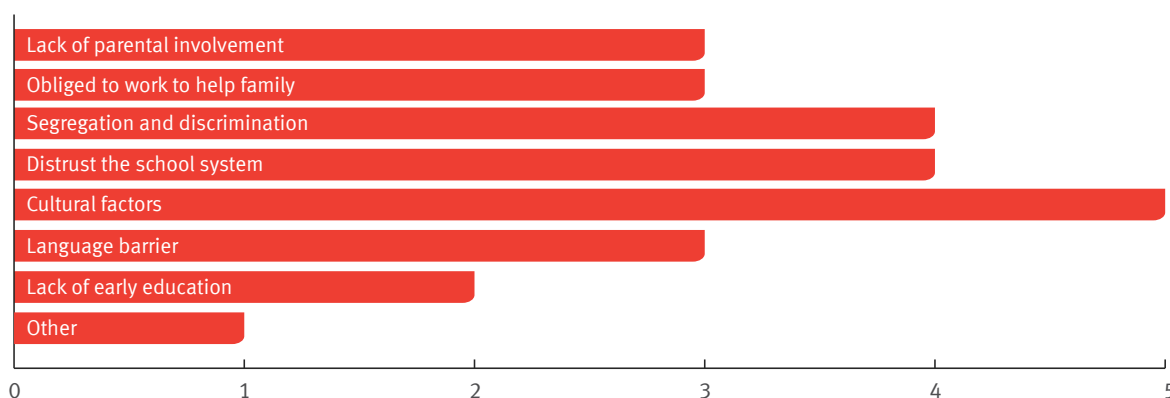
Note: data in the table shows the number of cities that mentioned each factor. Each city reported more than one factor.

City initiatives to improve Roma educational outcomes

City reports show that the participation of Roma children in education is improving and the rates of absenteeism are declining, notably at the primary level of education, thanks to the many initiatives taken at local level to give educational support to Roma. The common trend is that most city initiatives aim at increasing participation in education by preventing absenteeism and school dropout. They do so through different types of actions as follows:

- School mediators (also known as 'educational promoters') recruited from Roma communities to work with Roma children, their parents and their teachers and to serve as Roma role models to offer the tailored learning support Roma youth need;

- After school learning support to help children with homework or school work;
- Creating safer, more inclusive learning environments for Roma by promoting their history and culture in schools;
- Intensive language learning support for newly arrived Roma children to enable their smooth integration into the host country's school system;
- Guidance support from social workers reaching out to Roma families to raise their awareness of the importance of education and mediate between them and schools;
- Tailored programmes to prepare young Roma children for entering mainstream school;
- Non-formal education programmes tailored to the learning needs of Roma children (e.g. activities related to music, film, dancing, photography etc.).

In **Bydgoszcz**, an 'integration activity centre' was set up in 2008. In addition to leisure activities, after-school learning support is offered to Roma children to help them keep up with their school work. The success of this initiative results in the Roma community feeling supported and having increased confidence in local public services, including education.

In **Barcelona**, educational promoters work with all parties that are involved in child education (teachers, parents' associations, directors), and with Roma families to prevent absenteeism and school dropout. They also work towards promoting Roma history and culture in schools. The initiative is part of the local strategy for Roma inclusion and was developed in collaboration with the Municipal Council of the Roma people. The strategy is locally funded both through the Municipal Council and through municipal grants. So far, the success factors are improved tolerance towards Roma in schools, lower absenteeism rates and improved learning outcomes for Roma children.

In **Vienna**, a 'learning aid' initiative was developed to provide disadvantaged Roma children with Roma role models. The role models teach learning techniques and methods to the children to help them improve their learning outcomes at school. Rome models also mediate between schools and parents in order to promote dialogue around children's education.

In **Leeds**, the municipality has a team responsible for reaching out and supporting Roma pupils to enrol in education from an early age. The team provides support and guidance to gypsy, Roma and traveller families to ensure their children are ready for learning and to raise their standards of educational attainment. The team works with any Roma family with children and young people aged 0-19 with the purpose of achieving the outcomes set out in the Leeds City Council Children and Young People's Plan, namely that all children and young people do well at all levels of learning and acquire life skills. It does this by providing specialist support and activities that complement the Children and Families Service. In addition to referrals they receive, some of the regular initiatives of this team include school-based group work (6-week sessions in schools to support Roma young people in raising their aspirations) and weekly programmes designed for young people awaiting school placements (Fresh Start).

3.4 **Access to housing**

Access to housing is a considerable challenge for a big share of Roma living in cities. Nearly all cities in this study (86%) reported that the housing situation of Roma is far worse than that of the general population. The common trend across cities is that Roma families are often living in precarious conditions in overcrowded, poor quality housing. This is all the more problematic given that having permanent, decent accommodation is an essential prerequisite to finding employment, getting children to attend school regularly and having access to basic services, which are all key components of social inclusion and integration.

City reports show that there is no common trend in spatial location of Roma communities. In some cities, the Roma communities are concentrated in certain neighbourhoods while in other cities they are spread across various districts. In some cities, the districts in the centre are most dense in Roma populations while in others, Roma communities are concentrated in the peripheral areas of the cities. The reports show that Roma families predominantly live in private rentals in about 52% of cities, mostly in public housing in 30.5% of cities against 17.5% of cities having Roma people mostly living in temporary settlements (mobile homes, camps or caravans). Newly arrived Roma tend to be more vulnerable to poor housing conditions than domestic Roma who have been settled there for many years.
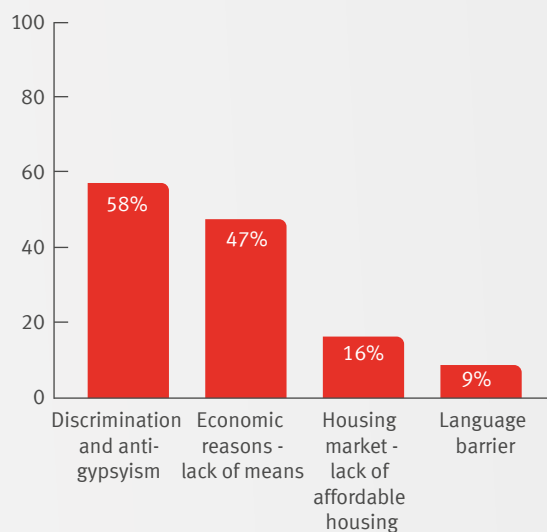
Reasons for poor housing conditions of Roma

The reasons why housing is a challenge for many Roma families are:
- Discrimination and anti-gypsyism
- Economic reasons – lack of means due to unemployment
- Housing market – lack of affordable housing in cities
- Language barrier

Figure 4.

Reasons reported by cities for difficult access of Roma to quality housing

Note: data shows the share of cities that mentioned each factor. Each city reported more than one factor, hence total is over 100%.

City reports confirmed that the housing situation is determined by the socio-economic conditions of individuals rather than their ethnicity. Anyone who is (long-term) unemployed or in a precarious job, who relies on state benefits and/or is not eligible for public housing, will find themselves at the bottom-end of the housing market. This is true for Roma as well as for non-Roma. However, Roma people are more likely to be in this situation due to the difficulty for them to get into work and to obtain a stable source of income. Indeed, close to half of the city reports (47%) indicate that the insufficient income due to lack of or precarious employment is the main barrier for Roma to accessing decent quality housing. For many Roma families, the state benefits are their only source of income. However, in some countries (e.g. in France), Roma are not entitled to social security benefits because of the requirement to have previously worked for a given duration. The lack of means forces Roma families to resort to alternatives such as living in camps, mobile homes or caravans with limited access to basic services.

Newly arrived Roma families often do not qualify for public social housing due to the conditions of residency status in some cities. They thus need to find solutions on the regular housing market. However, due to the lack or shortage of affordable housing options in many cities (e.g. in Germany), access to the regular housing market is very difficult for Roma who often live on low or very low incomes from precarious jobs or state benefits. This means that they can thus only access the low-end of the housing market and need to go to areas where cheaper private rental is available, but this often implies poorer quality housing than in other areas. Even in such areas, getting a flat is very difficult for Roma given that private owners require guarantors and deposits (e.g. in cities in the UK), which Roma often do not have or cannot afford.

Furthermore, Roma tend to live with many family members under the same roof. Apart from the fact that culturally Roma families are generally large, many Roma families are forced to move in with their relatives because they cannot afford houses on their own. This means that several Roma families may live in the same household.

This leads to overcrowding, which was reported in 37% of the cities in this study. Overcrowding is a problem because it can lead to unsafe and unsanitary living conditions.

However, by far the biggest barrier for Roma to accessing housing is the discrimination they face on the housing market from landlords and neighbouring tenants. More than half of the cities in the study (58%) reported discrimination and anti-gypsyism to be the biggest obstacle to housing for Roma. Some reports indicate that private landlords are reluctant to rent their properties to Roma families. When they do rent to Roma, private landlords tend to rent out run-down houses and refuse to repair or refurbish when asked to do so. Roma people are reluctant to make complaints about their housing conditions out of fear of losing their tenancy. When this happens, several generations lose their homes at once. The discrimination faced by Roma on the private housing market involves the risk of exploitation by landlords, some of whom act in criminal networks to take advantage of newly arrived Roma and other migrants. Such criminal groups claim to offer help to vulnerable people by offering run-down accommodation and then charging large sums of money for this supposed 'help'. Finally, the language barrier makes it difficult for newly arrived Roma to seek help when they are victims of such criminal groups and of discrimination from landlords. The language barrier also leaves Roma unable to access information around housing entitlement rights and tenants' protection.

City initiatives

Many initiatives have been put in place in cities in view of regularising the housing situation of Roma. The following types of city initiatives were most frequently reported:

- Shelters for Roma coupled with social services support (short-term stay solutions)
- Legal counselling on options on the regular housing market and on tenants' rights
- Housing acquisition and renovation projects (municipality buying private properties)
- Housing projects to rehabilitate unused or abandoned public spaces (social housing)

In **Berlin,** 'Nostels' have been set up to provide a first shelter for homeless Roma families with children. This is intended as a short-term solution for up to 28 days but the stay can be extended if necessary. The families are placed in an adequately-sized and fully equipped flat where their basic needs are met. During their stay the families receive support to apply for social benefits and to access social services in an effort to find a long-term solution for their situation. The initiative is funded by the Berlin Senate (local funding) and the project is run by an NGO together with a communal housing organisation. Since 2014, 18 families have found new homes on the housing market in Berlin.

Another successful initiative in **Berlin** is the concept of neighbourhood management. To facilitate access of newly arrived to the regular housing market, combined residential projects were initiated where newcomers and long-term residents live together. One such NGO-supported project exists in the Reinickendorf district. Roma also receive legal advice concerning German tenancy law in order to fight against unlawful rental practices.

In **Glasgow,** the housing acquisition programme was initiated to tackle poor housing conditions in the private rental sector in Govanhill, a neighbourhood with a high density of newly arrived Roma. The two-year programme involves acquiring and refurbishing properties that are mostly occupied by Roma and owned by private landlords. Glasgow City Council and the Scottish Government allocated £13 million for the pilot scheme. Upon the success of the pilot, the scheme was extended for additional, 4 years with funding of £40 million. The funding for acquisition is managed by the local social rented housing provider who agrees the purchases with the city council and then buys the properties. The result has been improved property management with a strong engagement of the residents leading to better living conditions for all in the neighbourhood.

Dortmund has put in place a strategy for improving access to good housing. A programme was set up by the Stiftung Soziale Stadt (social city trust) together with the department for social affairs and the department for economic development. Through this programme, derelict houses were bought and renovated. Newly arrived EU migrants, some of whom are Roma, assist in the renovation of their new homes and receive support from the social housing management.

Nantes is carrying out a pilot project called 'Woodstock' to experiment and innovate in social housing. The project aims to apply new solutions to the housing needs of people in a precarious situation. The pilot was created in the framework of a contest for 'new house for better days' organised by Nantes Metropole in collaboration with many local partners. On 29 June 2017, one family was already welcomed in one such new housing unit.

3.5 Access to basic services

Energy, electricity, sanitation and running water are not always available in the homes of Roma families in nearly half of cities (47%). The challenge of accessing essential services is bigger for Roma families living in camps than for Roma living in houses. Hence, access to basic services is closely linked to the housing and the economic situation of Roma.

City reports shed light on the access of Roma people to basic services (water, sanitation, electricity and energy). As illustrated in figure 5 below, the situation in the cities is as follows:
- in the majority of cities (53%), Roma people have the same access to basic services as the general population
- in a third of cities (33%), access to basic services depends on where Roma live
- in 14% of cities, access to basic services remains a challenge for most Roma families

Figure 5.
Situation of Roma access to basic services by share of cities

| Normal access | Partial access | Access is an important challenge |
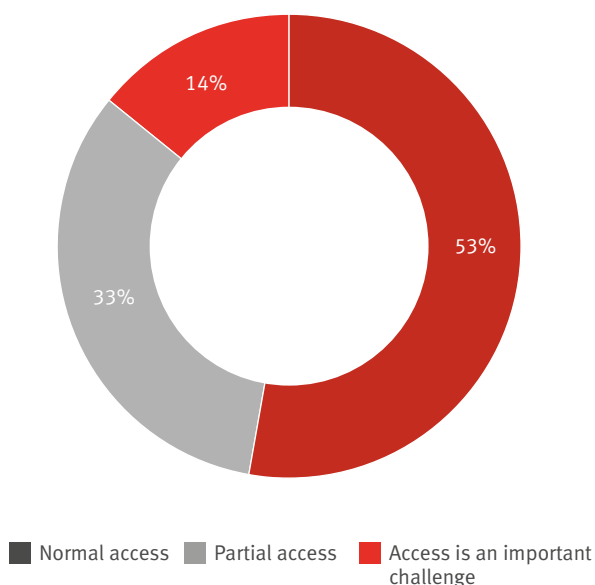
The housing situation of Roma may determine their living conditions and whether they have access to water, sanitation, electricity and energy. Roma families who live in houses (social housing, rented houses or illegally-occupied houses) are more likely to have access to basic services than Roma families living in camps. For the latter, the precarious conditions in camps make access to water and electricity challenging. In response to the critical situation in camps, some cities (e.g. in France and Poland) supply electricity and water as well as portable toilets, dustbins, garbage containers and garbage collection.

However, not all Roma families living in houses have guaranteed access to water, electricity or energy. Roma families are sometimes unable to pay the bills for water and electricity. In some cases, in particular in the case of Roma families that rely mostly or only on child benefits, they cannot afford to sign up to a water or electricity contract or, if they do, they accumulate debts. This means that Roma is one of the groups most affected by energy poverty. Some cities have included social clauses in the contracts with service providers to ensure basic services are also provided to people who cannot afford them or who are in debt. Furthermore, Roma may face cases when they do pay for the services but some dishonest landlords keep the money for themselves. To prevent such cases, some cities work towards improving the tenants' situation as part of their housing strategy.

Notably, in the cities in Western Europe, the situation of the domestic Roma is much better than of the newly arrived Roma. Domestic Roma are people who have settled for many generations and have acquired the same access to basic services as the general population. Conversely, the newly arrived Roma tend to live in more precarious conditions and have limited financial resources, which makes their access to basic services very challenging.

City initiatives

The responses from cities to improve this situation show a clear link between access to basic services and the housing situation of Roma. Many city initiatives that contribute to improving access to basic services are part of housing strategies. Most city initiatives aim to improve the conditions in the camps or to renovate houses where Roma live or to ease the burden of energy bills by supplying cheaper alternatives through municipal providers. In some cities, non-profit organisations (e.g. Caritas) complement the municipal support by reaching out to the most in need and helping them get access to basic services.

In **Barcelona,** the municipality has put in place the 'Energy Assessment Service', which is a public service that helps all people at risk of energy poverty to get access to energy.

Since November 2016, the municipality in **Poznan** has improved access to basic services for the Roma living in camps. It has provided access to water by installing a water connection on the adjacent plot of land to the Roma camp. This was at the cost of a major water supplier and distributor in Poznan; however, this service is no longer available until the people living in that area register as residents, which illustrates the administrative barriers experienced by Roma.

In **Beylikduzu**, since 2014, the city department of Public Works and Engineering has done renovations in the deprived neighbourhood of Yakuplu which has a big Roma population. The renovations included renewal of all wastewater pipes as well as repairs of all roofs and painting or plastering of some of the buildings. In addition, the municipality has developed 'solution centres' that provide municipal neighbourhood services to all 10 neighbourhoods of the city. Thanks to this, all residents can have equal access to basic services and no one suffers from the absence of essential services.

3.6 **Access to healthcare**

Access to healthcare remains a challenge for Roma people in many cities. The residency status of Roma may determine their right to healthcare, for example newly arrived Roma may not qualify for health insurance in some cities. Compared to the average population, Roma are at a higher risk of certain health conditions (obesity, heart and lung diseases) while being less likely to benefit from the healthcare system due to multiple 'access issues', such as language barriers, discrimination, mistrust in public services and poverty.

The situation of Roma access to healthcare reported by cities is as follows:

- 45% of cities have a free, universal public healthcare system where Roma people have the same rights to access primary healthcare services as the general population (e.g. registration with a local doctor, access to hospital, access to dental care etc.)
- in 30% of cities, access to healthcare depends on the residency status, which gives entitlement to health insurance. Roma who are nationals or long-term residents have health insurance while newly arrived Roma can only access emergency care
- in 25% of cities, most Roma people have a limited access to healthcare and their situation is far worse than for non-Roma

Access to healthcare depends on the health insurance status, which in turn, depends on the residency status of Roma in nearly a third of cities. This means that in these cities, the newly arrived Roma populations are faring worse than the autochthonous Roma communities. It is worrisome that in a quarter of cities, Roma only have a limited access to healthcare, which amounts to emergency care in many cases. Nevertheless, even in the cities with a universal public system, the fact that Roma have the right to free healthcare does not mean that they do access healthcare services. In fact, Roma tend to access healthcare services far less frequently than non-Roma given their 'access challenges', which are detailed in the next section.

Figure 6.
Situation of Roma access to healthcare by share of cities

■ Free and universal public healthcare system   ■ Access to healthcare depends on residency status

■ Access to healthcare is limited
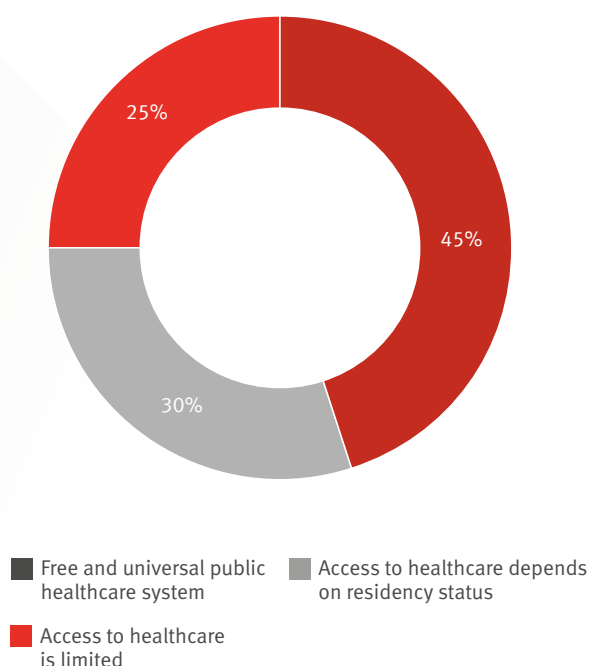
Health assessments conducted in several cities (in Sweden and the UK) found high incidences in Roma communities of long-term conditions such as high blood pressure, obesity, heart and lung disease. Mental health conditions are also present and worsen with the extent of discrimination that Roma people face in their everyday lives. One city reported that Roma tend to have higher rates of addiction to medical drugs, which they often use to escape psychological trauma because of marginalisation and discrimination.

Evidence provided by some cities indicates that young Roma are more inclined to use health services that are available to them than older Roma people. For example, in Sheffield, data taken from seven general practitioners shows that 54% of Roma patients are in the 0-17 age group and 30% in the 18-36 age group compared to 13% of patients in the 37-55 group and 2% in the 56-74 age group. The findings suggest that the younger age groups of Roma populations are in a better position to access healthcare than the older groups due to a better awareness of health issues and not distrusting the system as much.

# Barriers to accessing healthcare

The main barriers or challenges Roma typically face to accessing healthcare services are:

- language barrier
- discrimination
- mistrust towards health services
- poverty / lack of means

As figure 7 shows below, these challenges are equally as present in different cities. Other factors pointed out in the city reports include cultural differences, conditions of residence status, formalities that the healthcare services entail (e.g. following up on appointments, prescriptions etc.) and limited knowledge or awareness of healthcare issues (lack of 'health literacy').

Sheffield has recently undertaken a detailed assessment of the health and wellbeing needs of the Roma population and identified several access issues that, on the whole, are related to the language barrier and to low levels of health literacy, which were reported to be similar for other groups of newly arrived migrants. Other significant barriers were found to be past experiences of stigma and exclusion that make some Roma distrust healthcare services.

Figure 7.
Main challenges of Roma to accessing healthcare
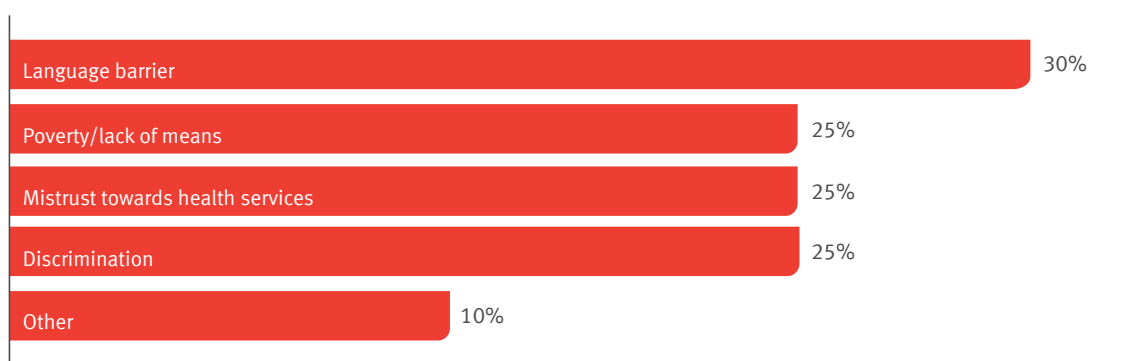
Note: data shows the share of cities that mentioned each factor. Each city reported more than one factor, hence total is over 100%.

The Roma health assessment undertaken in Leeds between 2013 and 2014 (published in 2016) also found that language was a key barrier in accessing healthcare. While the majority of respondents (91.4%) were registered with a doctor and just over a half (55.7%) were registered with a dentist, more than 77% said language was 'always' or 'most of the time' an issue.

Poverty affects the health conditions of Roma people because many of them do not have the means to take out health insurance (in the cities without a free, universal system), to pay the costs of consultations, get to consultations (e.g. transport costs) or pay for medicine prescriptions. In addition to poverty, discrimination and traumatic past experiences of stigma and exclusion, precarious employment or under-employment and housing issues were also found to create risks for health and mental health conditions.

Roma people's access to healthcare is severely undermined by the discriminatory treatment they receive from healthcare personnel (e.g. doctors, nurses, receptionists in hospitals etc.). Experiences of discrimination reinforce the distrust Roma people have towards public services.

City initiatives

To improve access to healthcare for Roma, some cities reach out to Roma communities and carry out medical examinations in the neighbourhoods where they live. Other cities encourage Roma people to register free-of-charge with a local family doctor. Interpreters are also made available in certain practices and longer consultation slots are given to Roma. Resources are also being secured by the health and education authorities in certain cities to work specifically on access to healthcare for Roma, such as by dedicating specific clinics or appointing specific workers as facilitators. Conducting regular health assessments is another way through which cities monitor the health conditions of Roma.

In **Belfast**, the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust have two Roma health workers who have been supporting Roma access to healthcare for several years. They are based in the Romanian Roma community centre. One worker is Roma and another has Roma background.

In **Beylikduzu**, to ease the access to certain health services, a practice was built in Yakuplu Roma Neighbourhood by the municipality's department for health affairs. The initiative helped Roma gain access to healthcare services more easily. Moreover, a 'Mouth and Dental Health Education' programme was organised by the municipality for people living in the area. A total of 758 people have undergone medical screening since then.

3.7 Access to public social services

Access to public services is an essential component of the integration process and in feeling included in the city. Therefore, improving access to public services is a continuous priority of cities in order to make services available to all residents, with specific emphasis on people in vulnerable situations such as Roma.

Most of the cities in this study (70%) reported that their services are available to Roma people as they are to all residents. Only a minority of cities (10%) reported that access to services depends on the legal status (citizenship / resident status). In these cities, domestic Roma and long-term residents have the same access to services as other citizens do, but newly arrived Roma have only limited access and rely mostly on the support offered to them by charities and NGOs (e.g. food banks etc.). A number of cities (20%) did not specify any problems with the availability of services to Roma, but they did report various challenges Roma people face when accessing (or trying to access) services.

The trend observed across cities is that despite being entitled to access public social services, members of Roma communities tend not to use the services (not often) and thus do not benefit from them as much as other people in the city do.

Challenges in accessing public social services

City reports point to four main challenges that Roma face in accessing public social services:
- discrimination and distrust towards public services
- language barrier
- lack of information or knowledge about the services available to them
- location of services

While some Roma are well-informed of the services available to them – mostly domestic Roma - lack of awareness is often the first constraint that Roma face in accessing services, in particular in the case of newly arrived Roma who also face the language barrier. For this reason, cities have put in place various mechanisms to reach out to Roma communities with information about the services available to them and offer them tailored guidance support to access those services (where to go, how to apply, etc.). For example, many cities have allocated social workers to work specifically with Roma communities. Many cities support community-based organisations to visit the neighbourhoods or camps where Roma live to inform them of the services available to them. Indeed, NGOs play a key role in facilitating the information flow between municipalities and Roma communities, which was highlighted in most of city reports.

Figure 8.

Obstacles in accessing public social services, per number of cities reporting each obstacle
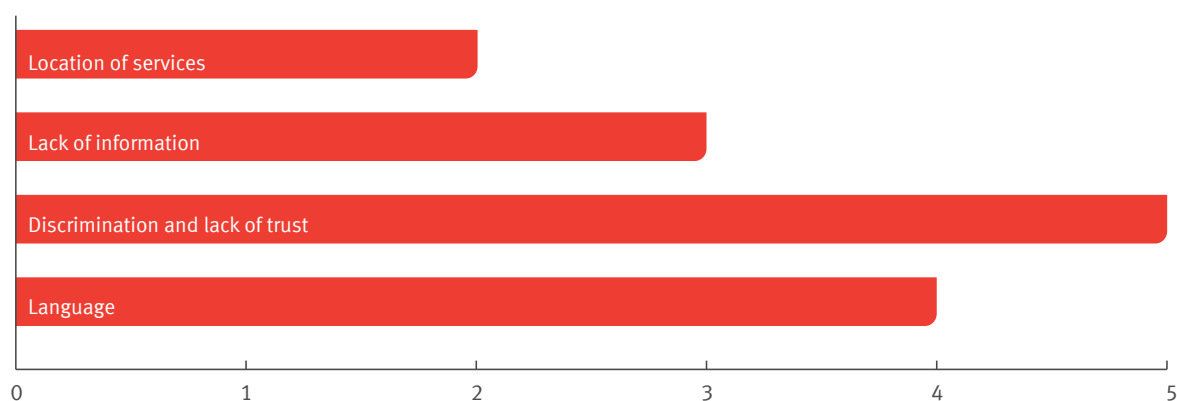
Note: data in the table shows the number of cities that mentioned each obstacle. Each city reported more than one obstacle.

The most frequent barrier that cities reported concerning Roma people's access to services was discrimination and distrust. In some cities, there are cases where Roma face discrimination when referring to social services, which then translates into their distrust towards the services. In other cities, it is rather the fear of discrimination and the distrust generated from past experiences in the country of origin, which keeps Roma people away from contacting or using public services.

Language is often a big barrier for newly arrived Roma to understanding what services are available to them and how to best access them. Some city authorities put in place interpretation services to communicate to Roma people who do not speak the local language.

Another challenge for Roma to accessing social services is their location, or in other words, the distance they have to travel to reach the services. The more remote the areas where Roma live are, the more difficult it is to access mainstream services. This was reported to make Roma feel abandoned by the city. In response, cities are making an effort to bring their services to the Roma communities closer to them, as explained in the next section.

City initiatives

Cities have taken various initiatives to improve Roma people's access to services. They have done so by setting up 'one-stop-shops' in the neighbourhoods with a big Roma population, creating mobile contact points and working with Roma mediators to reach out to their communities. Many cities have established information centres where Roma can receive information on what services are available to them and guidance on how to navigate the services. A big number of cities also invested in social centres (e.g. 'family support centres' or 'integration activity centres') where members of Roma communities can participate in socio-cultural activities, sports, vocational courses and workshops to enhance their sense of belonging to the city and to feel included.

The two key factors ensuring the success of city initiatives are related to the collaboration with NGOs and the direct engagement of Roma in developing and running the initiatives. A big part of the work is done by NGOs, associations and community-based organisations which reach out to Roma people, inform them and raise their awareness about what services they can access and guide them through the process in liaising with the municipal services. Most cities offer support to NGOs to facilitate Roma people's access to municipal services. Cities that engaged Roma in their initiatives reported a two-fold success: ensuring that the needs of Roma are met effectively and that they gain confidence and trust in municipal services.
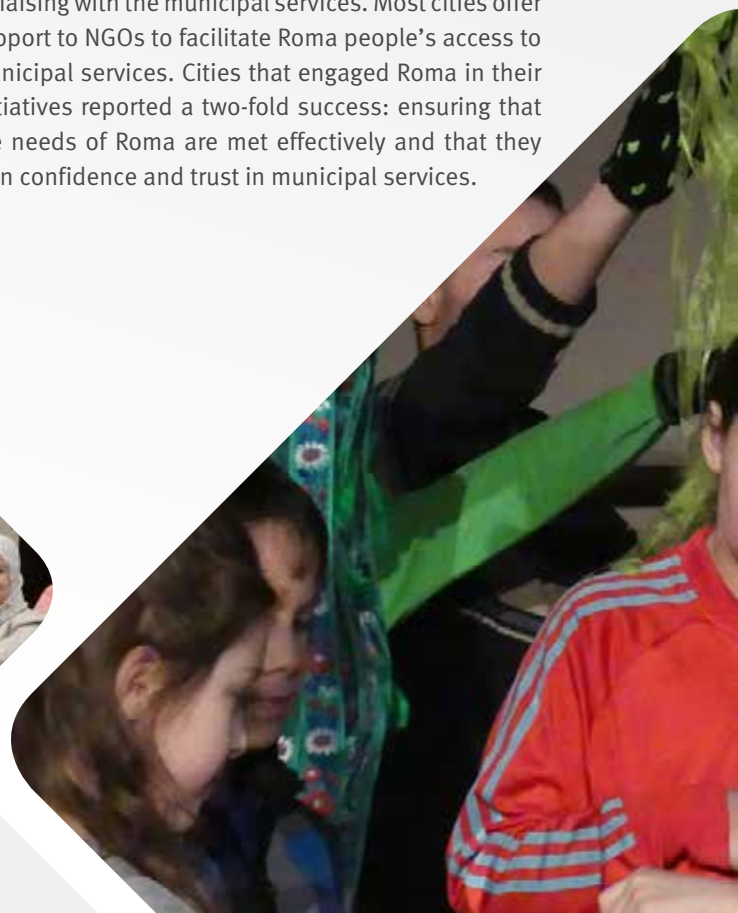
'Neighbourhood Stewards' in **Ghent** provide support to families in precarious situations by addressing their social needs. Six fieldworkers work towards promoting living together in diversity, tackling complaints such as anti-social behaviour by creating bridges between Roma families and local services and organisations. Their work aims to address societal issues and help EU mobile families to get a better future.

The Migrant Access Project (MAP) is successful in **Leeds** and helps newly arrived migrants, including Roma, to understand how public services work in the city and ensure they are directed to the right services from the start. Training is provided to members of the community, which enables the community to learn how to help itself, but also eliminates language barriers meaning migrants can better understand how public services work. This strengthens relations between migrants and settled communities but is also cost-effective. Another successful initiative is the POMOC (Help) drop-in session held weekly at two community hubs (in a Polish and a Roma community from Slovakia and the Czech Republic). The sessions support people to overcome barriers such as language and improve access to services. They are run by volunteers from the respective communities, who receive training from the city council. A small amount of funding is provided to cover the expenses of the volunteers. The result is that more Roma are accessing services at the hub through the POMOC route. The city is now considering replicating the initiative in other parts of the city.

The city of **Dortmund**, together with four NGO partners, set up a single point of consulting service - 'Anlaufstelle Willkommen Europa' - in the Innenstadt-Nord-district where many newly arrived migrants live. This consulting service provides information to newly arrived migrants, including Roma, who seek advice on how to navigate the different services. The service includes outreach social work, validating people's skills, language and literacy courses, social centres and support from student integration helpers. The project is funded with EU and national funds and is integrated in the local strategy against poverty and social exclusion. The service is run in collaboration with a Roma NGO and with the involvement of Roma mediators.

Gothenburg has recently set up a Roma information and knowledge centre for the domestic Roma in the city. The centre is embedded in the existing structures of the municipality. The idea came directly from the Roma community and involved Roma in the entire process of setting it up. As reported by the city council, Roma participation has been a key success factor of the project.

4

City approaches
to Roma inclusion

Cities reported a variety of ways in which they approach Roma integration efforts at local level. Depending on the resources (mostly human and financial) they have available, cities may adopt holistic or targeted approaches to the challenges faced by Roma. Across cities, a common trend is to put in place multiple and complementary initiatives for Roma inclusion at local level.

The most common approach among city authorities is to adopt targeted policies to improve Roma people's lives in specific areas, such as education, employment or housing. This approach (detailed in chapter 3) is used by 16 of the 22 cities. A majority of cities (52%) also have in place a local strategy or action plan for Roma integration. More than a third of cities carry out initiatives or projects to improve Roma people's access to public services. Measures to inform and raise awareness about the situation of Roma and their culture have also been reported in several cities. Training of Roma mediators and of social workers or staff in the city administration to work with Roma is common in some cities. Only a few cities reported as main approaches their anti-discrimination measures or mainstreaming a Roma dimension in their local policies, which shows there is room for improvement in these areas.

Figure 9.

Types of city initiatives for Roma inclusion, by frequency in city reports
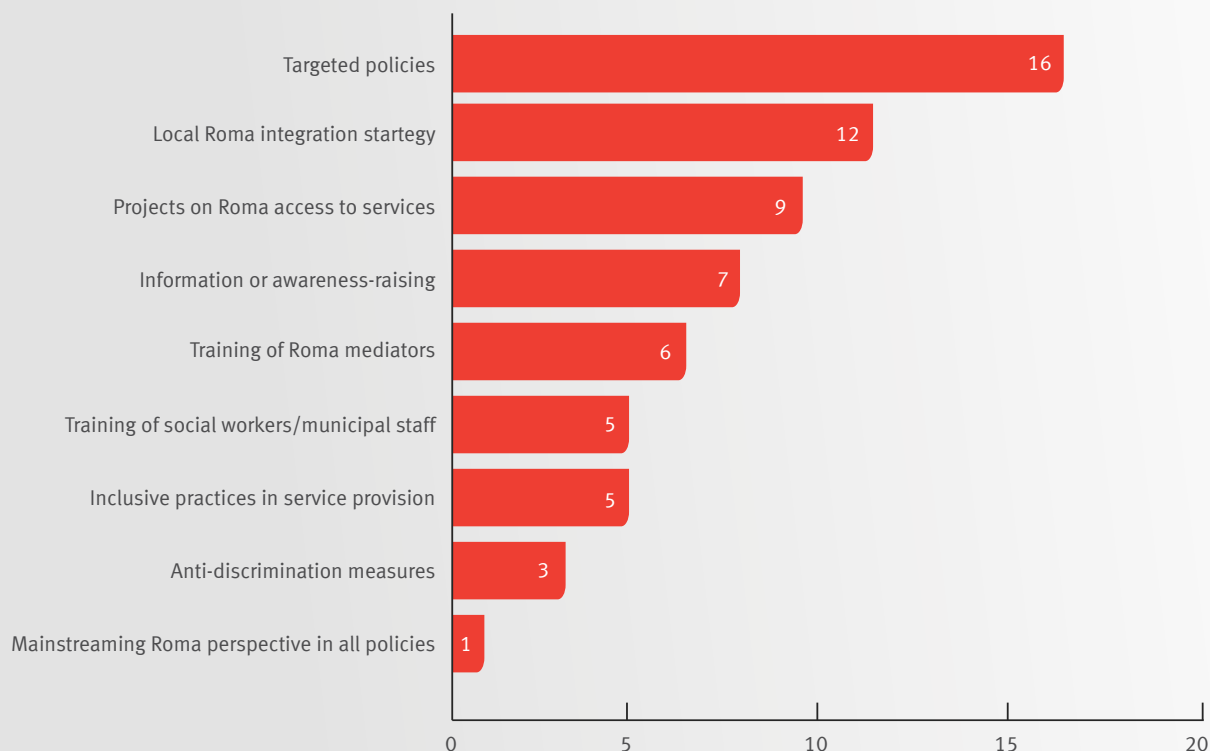
Note: numbers indicate how many cities reported each type. Each city reported multiple types of initiatives.

There are five success factors common to most city initiatives for Roma inclusion:

1.
Adopting an integrated approach to Roma inclusion and implementing it via a multi-agency coordination. This implies a joined-up approach to services through cross-departmental collaboration (employment services, schools, doctors, social workers).

2.
Combining area-based and people-based solutions. Improving the lives of Roma means improving conditions in the areas where they live and addressing their individual needs.

3.
Engaging Roma in the design, implementation and evaluation of initiatives. The more engaged the Roma are from the start, the more effective the initiative will be.

4.
A strong partnership between the municipality and Roma organisations in the field.

5.
Securing funding for implementation post pilot-project. Projects are often too short to impact lives. Unless accompanied by longer-term funding, measures can't drive sustained interventions nor gain the trust of the Roma community.

4.1 Good practice examples of city initiatives

Local Roma integration strategies

More than half of cities reported having a local strategy for Roma integration in place, which in many cases follows the framework set at EU level. Other cities do not have a strategy specific to Roma, but they cover Roma in their local strategy against poverty and exclusion.

Barcelona has a 'Local Strategy with the Roma people' in place since March 2015. The strategy was developed together with the Roma community through the Municipal Council of the Roma People. It sets out 88 actions in six main fields, out of which four are the same as in the EU Roma Framework (education, employment, housing and healthcare) and two are new (training of professionals in non-discriminatory practices and empowering Roma culture). Implementation started in 2016/7, with municipal funding of €420,000.

In **Berlin**, the Senate adopted the Berlin Strategy for the Inclusion of Foreign Roma in 2012. The strategy established an inter-departmental Steering Group in which representatives from Roma communities were involved. Working groups on specific issues were formed and developed proposals for measures to improve the situation of Roma people in Berlin. The proposals fed into the Berlin Action Plan for the Inclusion of Foreign Roma, adopted in July 2013. The action plan sets tailored measures in four areas: education, healthcare, housing, poverty alleviation and fighting discrimination on the labour market. Implementation of these measures started in 2014 and is ongoing, funded by federal and municipal budgets.

Integrated programmes for Roma inclusion at local level

Some cities have adopted an integrated approach for the inclusion of Roma in their city. They implement transversal programmes to address the multi-faceted challenges of poverty and exclusion. In doing so, they partner with many different stakeholders on the ground.

Grenoble has put in place an integrated approach to the inclusion of Roma and migrants. An experimental project was first implemented in 2012. It became an official programme at the end of 2013. People living in precarious conditions, most of whom are Roma, receive support with housing, healthcare, education and job insertion. For example, families are provided with temporary housing along with support to get into work and to obtain their own, non-temporary accommodation. Since 2012, 29 families (132 people) have been integrated through this project, 83% of them gaining access to their own flat after 20 months. In 2016, a job insertion project, funded through the European Social Fund, was added to the programme. Support for job insertion includes French language classes, internships and work placements, one-day job testing experiences, and workshops on preparing CVs and interviews.

Training of social workers and professionals to work with Roma

Several cities have put in place programmes for training staff in administrations to work with Roma. A big focus of the training is often on non-discriminatory access to services.

In **Dortmund**, the municipality together with the University of Applied Sciences developed a dual bachelor's degree programme on 'social work, focus on poverty and migration'. Students are trained to deliver social work with refugees and migrants, such as Roma, and to become 'integration helpers'. It follows the model of dual training with 50% of time spent studying in university courses and 50% on-the-job learning while working in public, private or NGO-led social work. At the end of the programme, students can obtain a qualification for social work in the specific field of accompanying newly arrived migrants, including Roma, to get into education or work. Since 2014, a total of 46 student integration helpers were employed in public institutions and local NGOs.

Training of Roma mediators and facilitators

Some cities invest in training people from Roma communities as mediators or community workers and then involve them directly in the work of the city council for Roma inclusion. Many become Roma role models and contribute to other Roma gaining trust in public services.

As part of its city initiatives for Roma inclusion, **Leeds** trains volunteers from Roma communities to deliver information and guidance on access to public services. The training builds Roma volunteers' capacity to act as multipliers and advocates of their communities. By volunteering in projects like the Migrant Access Project or POMOC, Roma volunteers build skills, knowledge and experience that can lead to employment. So far, two Roma volunteers have set up their own enterprises (a café and an advocacy platform). Both were successful in obtaining funding. The city provides them with administrative support.

Actions to improve Roma people's access to services

A common trend across cities in Western Europe is to put measures in place for 'welcoming' newly arrived migrants, including Roma, by informing and consulting them on the services available to them and making language classes immediately accessible to them.

In **Berlin**, mobile contact points have been in place since 2012 to provide first-hand information to recently arrived migrants as well as to Roma residents who still face inclusion challenges. Employees of these contact points are mobile, meaning that they go to visit people in need and accompany them to appointments at public services, such as the employment service or social security office. The mobile contact points offer free advice and legal counselling about residence rights, housing, health insurance, employment orientation, education and training opportunities, among others. The initiative is supported from the municipal budget and is run in cooperation with two NGOs. Since 2016, the project has also received funding from the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD).

Information and awareness raising

Informing and raising awareness on the situation of Roma and their human rights is essential in fighting discrimination and anti-gypysism. Some cities have set up Roma knowledge centres.

In **Malmo**, a Roma information and knowledge centre (RIKC) was established in 2009 as an integrated part of the municipality and financed from the municipal budget. At RIKC, Roma and non-Roma work together to address challenges in line with Roma human rights. The Roma minority has been involved in the setup of the centre from the very beginning and continues to be involved in shaping the work of the centre. At first, 300 Roma individuals living in Malmo were interviewed about how they experienced inclusion and participation in society, and what they wanted the new centre to work on. Their answers, along with inputs from previous research and the legislation on national minorities, fed into developing the centre. The participatory approach lies at the core of the centre.

4.2 Budget allocation for Roma inclusion initiatives at local level

Most initiatives for Roma inclusion at local level are funded from municipal budgets while a minority also receive some national or EU funding. The city reports provide an overview of how initiatives for Roma inclusion at local level are funded:

- 22 cities (all cities covered in this study) allocate municipal funding
- 6 cities have received national funding
- 6 cities have received EU funding
- 2 cities have received funding from regional authorities

Nearly half of cities (10 out of 22) have a budget specifically allocated to Roma inclusion. This allows them to finance their own city initiatives to respond to the challenges faced by Roma as well as to grant support to the activities carried out by the Roma organisations. Some cities give an annual operating grant to Roma Councils for their work as a consultative body to the municipality on Roma issues. In general, cities that have a local Roma integration strategy also have an allocated budget to support its implementation.

The other 12 cities finance their work on Roma inclusion from their municipal budget allocation for the inclusion of vulnerable groups or their general budget for social services or even the specific budgets for education or health. National resources for Roma integration at local level are being used in only six cities. The same number of cities reported the use of EU funding, mostly from the European Social Fund while one city reported the use of EU funding through FEAD.

4.3 Cooperation between cities

Cooperation with other cities is a valuable means for city authorities to advance their work on Roma inclusion at local level. By learning from other cities about new tools, practices as well as bottlenecks, the cities build their capacity to better analyse the needs of their Roma communities, plan their policy responses and implement their initiatives effectively. Three quarters of cities reported they collaborated with other cities on joint projects or initiatives on Roma inclusion in the last three years. Many pointed at national and EU structures that facilitate their interaction and cooperation. At EU level, all 22 cities from this study are active in the EUROCITIES working group on Roma inclusion and meet at least twice a year. Many have collaborated with other cities in the framework of EU projects, such as ROMACT, URBACT II Roma-NET or ROMA-MATRIX. A few cities have also reported their specific collaboration with cities in countries of origin, such as through the Norwegian grants linking Norwegian and Romanian cities. Through a decentralised cooperation between France and Romania, Nantes has developed a structured collaboration with Romanian cities, towns and villages.

City authorities are open to future opportunities to further cooperate with other cities on Roma inclusion at local level. Some show a specific interest in working directly with countries of origin to improve the situation of Roma people there and to combat their discrimination.

5

Dialogue
and **cooperation**

A common factor enabling the success of initiatives for Roma inclusion across cities is engaging Roma in the design, implementation and evaluation of these initiatives. This approach is known as 'nothing about Roma without Roma'. The more engaged the Roma communities are from the very start of the process, the more effective the initiative can be in fostering their integration and social inclusion. To engage with Roma communities, city authorities have developed instruments for dialogue and cooperation with them.

Nearly all cities (20 of the 22 cities covered in this study) reported that they have structures or mechanisms in place to engage with Roma communities. The main instruments city authorities use to dialogue and engage with Roma communities are the following:
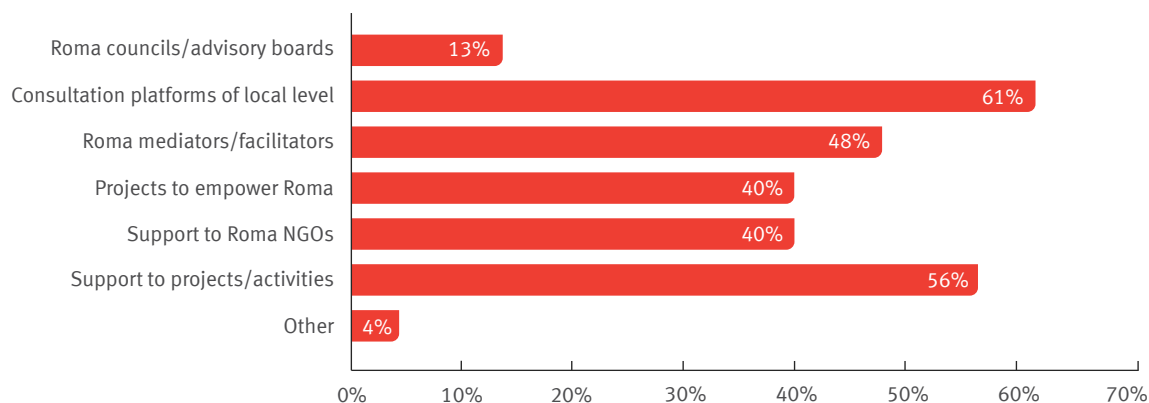
- Roma consultation platforms at local level (in 14 cities)
- Support to grassroots projects or activities developed by Roma people themselves (in 13 cities)
- Roma mediators and facilitators employed by the city council (in 11 cities)

- Projects to empower Roma to participate (in 9 cities)
- Support given to Roma organisations (in 9 cities)
- Roma councils or advisory boards (explicitly mentioned in 3 city reports)
- Other: engaging in the national platform for Roma dialogue and with the national contact point for the national Roma integration strategy (reported by 1 city)

It is important to note that most of the cities reported using more than one instrument for dialogue and cooperation with Roma communities. Many city authorities do in fact use a mix of structures and mechanisms to engage with Roma both at individual level (e.g. via projects) as well as at the level of their representatives, mediators and/or associations.

Figure 10 illustrates the different instruments used by city authorities to dialogue and engage with Roma, based on the number of city reports that mentioned each instrument.

City methods for dialogue and cooperation with Roma, by share of cities using each method

Method	Share
Roma councils/advisory boards	13%
Consultation platforms of local level	61%
Roma mediators/facilitators	48%
Projects to empower Roma	40%
Support to Roma NGOs	40%
Support to projects/activities	56%
Other	4%

Supporting Roma representation and participation in local policy-making

Supporting Roma people's rights to associate and represent their views to the city council is vital to empowering them to participate in the local policies that affect them, and thus to promoting the dialogue between the city and Roma communities. Several cities set up formal Roma councils for strategic dialogue between the Roma communities and the city council (Barcelona, Gothenburg and Malmo). For instance, Barcelona has a Municipal Council of the Roma People (CMPG), constituted of 20 Roma organisations that meet at least once a month. The municipal council functions as an advisory board on Roma issues. In Malmo, too, a Roma council was recently established, gathering 11 Roma representatives and 9 city politicians. This Roma council meets four times a year to discuss and decide upon policies that concern them. This is an important space for Roma to discuss their needs directly with city politicians and to exercise their right to participation in public life. In Budapest, the city council employs a Roma representative as a councillor on Roma issues.

Supporting self-organisation of Roma

A key element of empowerment and engagement processes is the self organisation of groups in a way that enables them to voice their needs and priorities. Cities can support self organisation through community-building. In Leeds, the city council supported the setup of a network of recently arrived Eastern Europeans, many of whom were Roma. Another example is in Sheffield where the city council has funded a community organisation to create the Sheffield Roma Network; this is an independent network supported by a local charity that works mainly in the Page Hall neighbourhood, where many Roma people live. In Beylikduzu, the Yakuplu Roma Neighbourhood Association is also an example of a gateway for people who wish to take part in the decision-making process of their neighbourhood and of their city.

Roma consultation platforms at local level

Nearly two-thirds of cities have put in place platforms to consult regularly with Roma on policy issues affecting them. The platforms serve as a space for dialogue between Roma communities, city administration and other relevant actors at local level. The key factor to ensure their effectiveness is a cross-departmental approach to engaging with Roma on a variety of issues. For example, Berlin established an inter-departmental Steering Group on Roma in 2012 that involved Roma organisations and NGOs on proposals for new measures to respond to challenges such as housing, childcare and healthcare of Roma, among others. The proposals formed the basis for the Berlin Action Plan for the inclusion of foreign Roma, adopted in July 2013. To support the implementation of measures in the Action Plan and monitor their progress, the Steering Group holds regular meetings and plans the external evaluation of the Action Plan in 2018.

In Belfast, there is a roundtable that coordinates the Roma Tension Monitoring Group, which works on local solutions to challenges faced by Roma communities. In Vienna, there is a local platform for Roma associations to ensure regular exchange between the city administration and Roma organisations. In Budapest, a consultation platform was set up through the URBACT II Roma-Net project.

Roma mediators

Mediators, facilitators or champions recruited from the Roma communities can act as gateways of communication and trust-building between the Roma population and the city. They often also bridge the gap between Roma and non-Roma communities. In the UK, cities employ Roma mediators to help reach out and engage Roma people especially in health and education services. For example, Sheffield city council supports Roma 'learning champions' as well as Roma 'health champions' who are in charge of helping Roma people to participate in education and health services. In Belfast, two Roma 'health facilitators' are employed through the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust while the education authority also employs a Roma 'education welfare officer'. In Dortmund, the city council appoints Roma mediators in the consulting structure of the 'Willkommen Europa' initiative [Welcome Europe].

Supporting Roma organisations

Cities value highly their collaboration with Roma civil society to reach out and engage Roma people. Many cities support the activities or projects of Roma organisations through municipal grants. These grants to Roma associations have become, in many cities, an important tool to empower Roma communities and transform them into valuable local actors, hence promoting the dialogue between the city and Roma people.

For example, Ghent has a grant system through which it supports grassroots projects and activities for inclusion of newly arrived migrants. The city subsidises a service that supports self-organisation of communities and helps with grant applications. For instance, the city helped a Roma NGO to apply for the municipal grant and supported the NGO to organise activities for the international Roma day. Another example is Glasgow where the city collaborates with two NGOs that have 'conversation platforms' with Roma communities. The city is about to launch a major engagement programme through the six schools in the area where both Roma children and parents will be involved. Belfast also mainly engages with its Roma communities through Roma NGOs and the Roma Pentecostal Church. This was reported to be an effective way to ensure good working relationships between the Roma community, the municipality and other groups in the local community.

Vienna also works together with Roma NGOs to organise events on human rights which raise awareness of the situation of Roma regarding discrimination. Vienna supports Roma civil society by financing projects which deal with rights-based approaches to Roma inclusion and their participation to the national platform dialogue for the Roma strategy.

Challenges

Cities acknowledge that the dialogue with Roma communities is at times challenging and progress in Roma engagement is often slow. The challenges most frequently reported are:

- budget constraints
- limited competences at city level
- lack of volunteering culture among Roma communities
- lack of awareness of Roma about the opportunities to get engaged

Several cities reported budget cuts and funding issues that prevent the continuation of successful initiatives for dialogue and collaboration with Roma communities. This is problematic for the sustainability of the initiatives and their results. Without an adequate budget, the proposals raised by Roma people cannot be implemented; with no concrete results from the dialogue, the members of Roma communities may lose motivation. This can ultimately lead to frustration manifested in their decreased participation and reinforced distrust in the public sector. However, cities alone cannot budget all initiatives needed for Roma inclusion at local level, hence national and EU funding are of utmost necessity to complement municipal budgets, as highlighted in many city reports.

Some cities pointed out the challenge of having only limited competences to work on Roma integration as this is in the power of the national or regional authorities in their country. Their recommendation is that national authorities should delegate more competences to municipalities since the local level authorities know best the vulnerable groups in their territory and how to support them effectively to get integrated and feel included in society.

Volunteering to participate in community projects or activities is not appealing to the Roma population, who are often confronted with difficult life situations that require their full attention (e.g. employment and housing issues). Therefore, it is often difficult to motivate Roma people to participate in voluntary activities as part of local initiatives. Lack of immediate results may also demotivate Roma who were initially interested in activities.

Lack of awareness of opportunities for Roma to get engaged is another key challenge. Despite the structures available for Roma communities to connect and get involved with city initiatives, they are not always aware of the initiatives that could promote dialogue. For example, many cities have participatory budgeting in place, which means that all citizens can propose projects to be funded from the municipal budget and the selection is done based on a general vote. However, such initiatives are not easily accessible for Roma who often do not have the knowledge or tools to participate. This is an example that shows that not all instruments available are effective for Roma participation or engagement. To facilitate dialogue and cooperation with Roma, initiatives need to be tailored to their situation in terms of ensuring easy access and employing Roma as mediators or multipliers.

Despite these challenges, cities are eager to continue investing efforts towards Roma engagement at local level knowing that trust-building and Roma empowerment takes time.

6 **Support cities** need for Roma inclusion

The preceding sections of this mapping study show the extent of the work undertaken by city authorities to respond to the challenges faced by Roma people in their territories. Cities have adopted local strategies for Roma integration, have put in place targeted policy initiatives for Roma inclusion and have developed means for dialogue and cooperation with Roma communities. However, city authorities acknowledge that more needs to be done to achieve real progress towards Roma integration. Indeed, the demand for local measures to improve the situation of Roma in cities remains high.

When asked to assess the response of their city to the challenges faced by Roma, a vast majority of cities (83%) indicated that some work has been done but is not sufficient to address the complex challenges, vulnerability and discrimination that Roma people face. Only a few cities (4 out of 22) indicated that sufficient work has been done to address the challenges of Roma at local level. Cities stressed the need to constantly evaluate, extend and further develop the integration measures at local level to adapt them to the changing situation on the ground (e.g. continuous influx of newly arrived Roma).

What support is needed for Roma inclusion in cities?

Most cities reported that they are willing to do more for Roma integration at local level, but they cannot do it alone. Cities need support from other levels of government, especially from national and EU level, and stronger engagement from Roma communities.

The type of support that most cities identified as necessary to enable them to continue and improve their work on Roma inclusion at local level involves:
- more funding (highlighted in 15 city reports)
- more dialogue and cooperation with Roma (reported by 13 cities)
- more support from national and EU levels (reported by 12 cities)

Other type of support that cities reported as needed, yet not as frequently, includes:
- more human resources (reported in 7 city reports)
- more political willingness from authorities (in 6 city reports)
- more tools to deal with existing challenges (in 5 reports)
- more support from countries of origin (highlighted in 1 report)

Figure 11.

Type of support that cities need, by share of cities reporting each type

Horizontal bar chart:
- More support from country of origin: 4%
- More support from the national and/or EU level: 52%
- More tools to deal with existing challenges: 22%
- More political willingness from authorities: 26%
- More cooperation/dialogue with Roma: 56%
- More funding: 65%
- More human resources: 4%
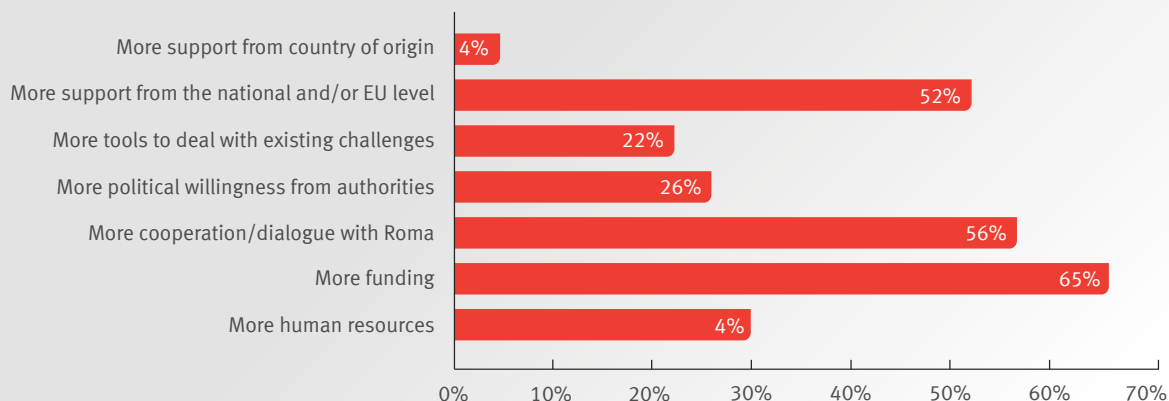
Need for increased funding for Roma inclusion actions at local level

Nearly two-thirds of the cities identified insufficient funding as the number one challenge to implementing effective responses to the inclusion needs of Roma people. Many cities pointed to their tight municipal budgets which faced cuts in financing social services in recent years in the aftermath of the economic crisis. City authorities know that integration takes time, but they often find it difficult to secure the necessary resources to sustain successful initiatives on a longer-term basis due to the many pressures on municipal budgets. Hence, there is a need to complement municipal funding with increased national and EU funding directed to support city initiatives for Roma inclusion at local level.

Need for increased dialogue and cooperation with Roma

City authorities admit that the complex vulnerability and discrimination that Roma people face are challenging the way they work on social inclusion. Some city reports suggest that it is often difficult to understand the specific needs of different Roma communities. This is even more difficult in the case of newly arrived Roma who do not speak the local language and are not accustomed to the local services, which makes it hard for municipalities to find timely solutions to their vulnerable situations. For this reason, the continuous efforts of city authorities to develop ways to dialogue and engage with Roma need to be further supported, as highlighted in over half of all city reports.

Need for support and political will from authorities at local, national and EU level

Several cities pointed out that not all authorities responsible for Roma integration uphold their responsibility. In particular, EU institutions, national governments and the authorities in the countries of origin need to support local integration efforts more intensely.

At local level, keeping Roma integration as a long-term priority of the city is challenging in the context of new emerging and conflicting priorities for social inclusion (e.g. reception and integration of refugees and asylum-seekers). Given that integration takes time, a long-term commitment is needed to secure processes and resources leading to integration, but political commitments are susceptible to election cycles. This means that Roma issues may be prioritised in different ways at different times in each city. Political will to invest sustainable efforts (via long-term Roma strategies) is thus key to achieving progress on the ground.

Sometimes it comes down to where the competence on integration issues lies. While in some countries the competence lies with local authorities, in others it is the responsibility of regional or national authorities. Some cities have seen their municipal competences move to national level during the process of public sector reform. This has limited the means the city has at its disposal for Roma integration since state resources for implementation of measures are now at national level and the city needs to rely on project-funding from external sources. This shows how important it is to adopt a multi-level governance approach to Roma inclusion with increased support from EU level to sustain local actions.

7

Conclusions and recommendations

The situation of Roma in cities in Europe remains critical. Roma people are generally at a greater disadvantage than the overall population in cities. They face higher risks of unemployment and poverty, more precarious housing conditions and more difficulty in accessing quality education, healthcare or even basic services. In addition, Roma people are often unaware of the support services available to them or they distrust them due to their past discriminatory experiences.

Roma are often caught in a vicious circle that is powered by discrimination and a lack of employment opportunities. The situation of newly arrived Roma is generally worse than that of domestic Roma in cities where both profiles of Roma co-exist. Their specific needs to overcome the language barrier and distrust in public services require tailored support from the city administration.

City authorities play a crucial role in tackling social exclusion of Roma and fostering their integration at local level by developing and implementing initiatives to respond to their needs:

- Support for equal access to social housing, employment, health and basic services through targeted measures, local Roma integration strategies and integrated projects
- Apply area-based solutions to improve the conditions in the areas where Roma live
- Train providers of public services on how to work with Roma to ensure Roma are not discriminated against and that there is equity in accessing mainstream city services
- Work with people from Roma communities as mediators or community workers
- Fight discrimination and anti-gypsyism by informing and raising awareness about the human rights of Roma as well as their rich culture and history
- Establish local platforms to regularly consult Roma communities and encourage their meaningful participation in the development and implementation of inclusion policies
- Support the self-organisation of Roma communities through community-building (e.g. Roma networks) and resources allocated to Roma organisations and their projects.

There are five factors that can ensure the effectiveness of a city initiative for Roma inclusion:

- an **integrated and coordinated approach** involving multiple agencies and stakeholders
- a combination of **area-based** and **people-based** solutions
- a **participatory approach** to engaging Roma from the very start and throughout the project
- a strong **partnership between the municipality and Roma NGOs**
- **funding secured** for implementation post pilot phase

While there are many good examples of city-led initiatives that contributed to Roma inclusion at local level, cities are aware that much more needs to be done to address the complex challenges that Roma people face. However, **cities cannot do it all alone.** They need more support from national and EU authorities in terms of political commitment and more funding for city-led measures that offer tailored responses to the specific needs of Roma communities.

To further improve the situation of Roma people in cities, we recommend the following actions:

1. Tackle the root cause of all obstacles Roma face, which is discrimination.

All challenges that Roma people face have in common discrimination as the main cause and contributing factor. More needs to be done at all levels to enforce anti-discrimination measures and to raise awareness about the rights of Roma as well as to empower Roma to report discrimination cases and unfair treatment to the offices for non-discrimination in cities. For example, Roma Information and Knowledge Centres at local level are a good way to coordinate both individual and strategic integration activities and promote the human rights of the Roma minority.

2. Improve allocation and channeling of EU and national funding to city-led measures for Roma inclusion at local level.

While there is a lot of funding from the EU level for Roma integration, it often does not reach the local level, let alone urban areas, where the funding can be best used to target the individual needs of the Roma communities. Even funding that does reach local level is often for projects of short duration, hence not adequate for sustaining longer-term interventions. Municipal funding needs to be complemented with increased national and EU funding. EU funds should be accessible to city authorities to implement local Roma-integration strategies.

3. Empower the participation of Roma people in the policies that directly affect them.

The most successful initiatives for Roma inclusion at local level are those that engage Roma directly in the shaping and running of the initiative. A participatory approach in all projects for Roma inclusion should be made a mandatory requirement as part of EU grant applications. Involving Roma organisations in developing strategies for Roma inclusion should be further encouraged. The exchanges between cities should be further supported to enable them to learn from each other's innovative tools and methods on how to engage with Roma communities in an inclusive and effective manner.

4. Improve evidence and knowledge about the situation of Roma.

Data on numbers of Roma living in Europe and their profiles remain scarce and are, at best, estimations. However, data is much needed to support evidence-based policy-making. The EU and its agencies (Eurostat and the FRA) should work together with city authorities to develop a methodology for collecting data about the situation of Roma people from local level.

5. Include Roma integration as part of a broader strategy to address intra-EU poverty migration.

Intra-EU poverty migration is a reality. Many of the needs of the recently arrived Roma are similar to those of other EU mobile citizens in vulnerable situations. Indeed, poverty is not limited to certain ethnic groups, but is a structural problem that affects many in society. Due to the necessity of being a resident to access certain public services, some inclusive measures only apply to domestic or resident Roma and not to recently arrived Roma. More attention should be paid to the situation of newly arrived Roma. For this reason, an EU framework on intra-EU poverty migration is much needed.

The findings of this study paint a clear picture of the situation of Roma in European cities. However, to complete the picture, the mapping could be extended in the future to include more cities from countries of origin with large Roma populations, such as Romania and Bulgaria.

Annex 1

Mapping of Roma in cities, their profiles and challenges

City	Estimated population	Profile of Roma	Main challenges	Data sources
Barcelona	Between 25,000 and 45,000 Roma in the city	■ National ethnic minority of domestic Roma (gitanos) ■ EU mobile citizen Roma from Hungary, Romania and Portugal	■ Difficult access to employment ■ Discrimination in society ■ Lack of representation in political and public life	■ No official statistics on ethnic groups ■ Data from social services and resident registrations
Belfast	About 2,000 ■ 1,500 Roma ■ 500 travellers	■ EU mobile citizen Roma from Romania, Hungary and Slovakia ■ Autochthonous community of Irish travellers	■ Difficult access to employment ■ Difficult access to decent housing ■ Language barrier	■ Data from Roma community association (data collected informally directly from Roma communities)
Berlin	N/A	■ National ethnic minority of domestic Roma (Sinti) ■ Long-term resident Roma from non-EU ex-Yugoslavian states (mostly Serbia and Macedonia) ■ Recently arrived EU mobile citizen Roma from Romania, Bulgaria and Poland	■ Difficult access to employment ■ Difficult access to decent housing ■ Discrimination in society	■ No official statistics on ethnic groups ■ Data on nationality from social services and resident registrations
Beylikduzu	680	■ National ethnic minority of Roma who arrived from other districts of Istanbul in the 1990s	■ Difficult access to employment ■ Difficult access to decent housing ■ Discrimination in society	■ Database at neighbourhood level with data mostly from social services operating in the Roma neighbourhood

City	Estimated population	Profile of Roma	Main challenges	Data sources
Brno	13,000 (3.5% of total population of the city)	■ Domestic Roma who arrived from Slovakia and Hungary after World War II	■ Difficult access to decent housing ■ Discrimination in society ■ Unequal access to quality education	■ Data from social services, mostly social housing support services
Budapest	100,000	■ National ethnic minority of domestic Roma	■ Difficult access to employment ■ Unequal access to free and quality education ■ Discrimination in society	■ National census (voluntary answer to question on belonging to national or ethnic minority) ■ Neighbourhood surveys
Bydgoszcz	380	■ National ethnic minority of domestic Roma, mostly from Bergitka Roma communities	■ Difficult access to employment ■ Lack of representation in political and public life ■ Discrimination and stigma	■ No system to collect systematic data ■ Data from social services
Dortmund	8,000	■ Recently arrived Roma from Romania and Bulgaria ■ Long-term resident Roma arriving from non-EU ex-Yugoslavian states in 1990s	■ Difficult access to employment ■ Unequal access to education ■ Difficult access to decent housing	■ No official statistics on ethnic groups ■ Data on nationality from resident registrations ■ Data from social services (e.g. individual face-to-face surveys by social workers with Roma applicants for social state benefits)
Ghent	Around 7,000 – 10,000	■ Recently arrived EU citizen Roma from Bulgaria, Slovakia, Poland and Romania	■ Difficult access employment ■ Difficult access to decent housing ■ Discrimination in society	■ No official statistics on ethnic groups ■ Data on nationality from resident registrations ■ Data on Roma from fieldwork projects and school attendance (Roma attestations)
Glasgow	4,500	■ Recently arrived Roma from Slovakia and Romania	■ Difficult access to employment ■ Difficult access to decent housing ■ Language barrier	■ Data from registrations to healthcare services (collected monthly)

City	Estimated population	Profile of Roma	Main challenges	Data sources
Gothenburg	10,000 domestic Roma	■ Mainly domestic Roma (Sinti) ■ Long-term resident Roma who came from ex-Yugoslavia in 1990s ■ Recently arrived EU citizen Roma from Bulgaria and Romania	■ Difficult access to employment ■ Difficult access to decent housing ■ Discrimination in society	■ No official statistics on ethnic groups ■ Data from schools on number of children who apply to study Romani language ■ Data on nationality from resident registrations
Grenoble Alpes Metropole	Around 800 – 1,000 recently arrived Roma	■ Recently arrived EU mobile citizen Roma from Romania ■ Non-EU Roma from Balkan states (Macedonia, Albania)	■ Difficult access to decent housing ■ Discrimination in society ■ Lack of representation in political and public life	■ Data system at local level to collect statistics on persons living in precarious conditions (Roma and non-Roma) ■ Data from the social action community centre that collect information from NGOs (Roms Action, Médecins du Monde) ■ Data from fieldwork projects (MOUS)
Leeds	5,000 Roma, Gypsy and Travellers	■ Recently arrived EU citizen Roma from Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland and Romania	■ Difficult access to employment ■ Difficult access to decent housing ■ Discrimination in society	■ Data on nationality of newly arrived from registrations to doctor practices and National Insurance registrations ■ Data on Roma pupils from school census
Malmo	Around 10,000 – 12,000 (domestic Roma)	■ Mostly national ethnic minority of domestic Roma (Sinti) ■ Recently arrived EU nationals	■ Difficult access to employment ■ Difficult access to decent housing ■ Discrimination in society ■ Negative image in the media	■ No official statistics on ethnic groups ■ Data from school attendance registries and from social services and health agency
Munich	Around 6,000 – 6,500	■ Mainly domestic Roma (Sinti) ■ Recently arrived Roma from EU countries (Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia) and non-EU (Kosovo) ■ Long-term resident Roma who came from ex-Yugoslavia in 1990s	■ Difficult access to employment ■ Discrimination in society ■ Negative image in the media	■ No official statistics on ethnic groups ■ Some information from social work

City	Estimated population	Profile of Roma	Main challenges	Data sources
Nantes	Around 2,000	■ Recently arrived EU citizen Roma mainly from Romania	■ Difficult access to employment ■ Difficult access to decent housing ■ Language barrier	■ Data from municipal police reports at neighbourhood level (collected monthly)
Oslo	Around 1,500 – 2,500	■ National ethnic minority of domestic Roma ■ Recently arrived EU citizen Roma mostly from Romania	■ Difficult access to employment ■ Lack of representation in political and public life ■ Negative image in the media	■ No official statistics on ethnic groups ■ Some data from municipal police reports ■ Some data from NGOs in the field
Poznan	1,500	■ Mostly national ethnic minority of domestic Roma from Poland ■ EU-citizen Roma from Romania and Bulgaria in 1990s and in 2012	■ Difficult access to employment ■ Negative image in the media ■ Discrimination in society	■ No official statistics on ethnic grounds ■ Data on citizenship from social services ■ Data from Roma NGOs (Romani Bacht)
Sheffield	6,000	■ Recently arrived Roma, mostly from Slovakia	■ Difficult access to employment ■ Problematic access to basic services ■ Difficult access to decent housing	■ Records from schools (Schools Data Service) and from primary healthcare (GP practices) where codes for Roma were recently added
Stockholm	15,000	■ National ethnic minority of domestic Roma (Sinti) ■ Recently arrived EU nationals	■ Difficult access to employment ■ Discrimination in society ■ Lack of representation in politics / public	■ No official statistics on ethnic groups ■ Some information from social work and NGOs in the field
Vantaa	2,000	■ National ethnic minority of domestic Roma	■ Difficult access to employment ■ Discrimination in society ■ Lack of representation in politics / public	■ No official statistics on ethnic groups ■ Some data from census on mother tongues spoken at home
Vienna	Estimations vary from 20,000 to 100,000	■ 40% are domestic Roma ■ 60% are migrated Roma from ex-Yugoslavia and from EU countries (Hungary, Slovakia and Romania)	■ Difficult access to employment ■ Difficult access to decent housing ■ Discrimination in society	■ No official statistics on ethnic groups ■ Estimations based on census data on mother tongues spoken at home ■ Informal data collected by Roma NGOs

Annex 2

Mapping of city initiatives for Roma inclusion

City	Top 3 types of initiatives that cities use for Roma inclusion	City initiatives for Roma inclusion at local level
Barcelona	■ Local strategy for Roma integration ■ Information and awareness-raising campaigns about the Roma situation and their culture / history in view of promoting their contribution to the society	**Education promoters** work with teachers and parents to promote absenteeism and school dropout. They also promote the teaching of Roma culture and history in schools. It is part of the local integration strategy in collaboration with the Municipal Council of the Roma people.
Berlin	■ Local strategy for Roma integration ■ Projects to improve Roma's access to services ■ Targeted measures to improve situation of housing	**'Nostels'** offer a shelter for homeless Roma families with children. Initially, the families are allowed to stay for up to 28 days, but the stay can be extended if necessary. During their stay the families get support and counselling from the NGO running the Nostels concerning paper work and the application for services and benefits. This support aims at finding stable long-term solution for the integration of Roma families.
Beylikduzu	■ Targeted policies on the challenges faced by Roma in the city ■ Projects to improve access to services ■ Promotion of inclusive practices in public service provision	**The Rhythm Band Project** puts in place youth and non-formal learning activities specifically organised for Roma children. 30 children benefit from the project, they get picked up from their homes, served lunch and taken back by shuttles after the activities. **Beylikduzu Food Bank** aims to supply food to families and groups most in need. Household items (e.g. cleaning products) and clothes are also distributed, mainly to children and widows.
Brno	■ Local strategy for Roma integration ■ Targeted initiatives to improve housing conditions for Roma ■ Projects on social housing	**Housing project** is developed based on the Housing First model which aims at providing social housing for homeless individuals, including Roma.

City	Top 3 types of initiatives that cities use for Roma inclusion	City initiatives for Roma inclusion at local level
Budapest	■ Information and awareness-raising campaigns about the Roma situation and their culture / history ■ Local strategy for Roma inclusion ■ Projects to improve Roma's access to services	The milestone has been leading the Roma-Net network in **URBACT II.** It resulted in the setting up of 'local action plans' (LAP) to address the specific problems in the participating cities, and assisting the follow-up and implementation of the LAPs. A platform to consult Roma was set up.
Bydgoszcz	■ Information and awareness-raising campaigns about Roma ■ Targeted initiatives to improve access to education ■ Projects to improve access to services	**Integration activity centre** (social centre for access to social services) was set up with national funding. The purposes are integration, providing care, after school learning support, fostering development and cultivating national traditions.
Dortmund	■ Training of social workers, Roma mediators and staff of the city administration that work with Roma ■ Promotion of inclusive practices when carrying out public services for all	**Advice service 'Welcome Europe'** is a project for welcoming newly arrived migrants, including Roma. The service includes outreach social work, validation of skills, language and literacy courses, social centres and the deployment of student integration helpers.
Ghent	■ Local strategy for Roma integration ■ Targeted policies for improving the housing situation of Roma ■ Projects to improve access to services	**Housing project 'Entry living'** provides temporary housing to give EU migrants stability to work, help children to go school and learn Dutch. The housing service is combined with guidance and life planning for all adults. '**Neighborhood stewards'** is a project where six fieldworkers address societal issues and work with precarious families. The main tasks are tackling complaints of social nuisance (anti-social behavior) and bridging the access of newly arrived Roma to services and opportunities. The goal is to promote living together in diversity and improve communication between newly arrived Roma and public services.
Glasgow	■ Housing programme	**The housing acquisition programme** was initiated to tackle the poor housing conditions in the private rented sector in a neighbourhood where new Roma migrants settle. The programme consists of acquiring and refurbishing properties in which the majority occupation are Roma and the majority owner are private landlords.
Gothenburg	■ Local strategy for Roma integration ■ Training of Roma mediators ■ Information and awareness-raising about Roma	A Roma **information and knowledge centre** has been set up recently. The centre is embedded in the existing structures of the municipality. The idea came directly from the Roma community and involved Roma in the entire process of setting it up, which is a key success factor of the initiative.
Grenoble Alpes Metropole	■ Local strategy for Roma integration ■ Information and awareness-raising campaigns about Roma ■ Targeted policies for improving employability of Roma	**The job-insertion project (MOUS)** is addressed to persons living in precarious conditions. The first step in support offered to any individual is in learning the French language and then in attending job integration workshops which enable Roma to improve their skills through internships and to become familiar with the labour market.

City	Top 3 types of initiatives that cities use for Roma inclusion	City initiatives for Roma inclusion at local level
Leeds	■ Including Roma dimension in mainstream policies ■ Promoting inclusive practices in the provision of public services ■ Projects to improve access to services	**POMOC drop-in sessions** aim to support people by overcoming barriers such as language and improve access to services. The city council supports Roma volunteers to run the sessions. **The GRT Outreach and Inclusion Workers** provide support and guidance to Gypsy, Roma and Traveler families to ensure their children are ready for learning and to raise their standards of educational attainment.
Malmo	■ Local strategy for Roma integration ■ Training of social workers and staff in the city administration to work with Roma ■ Anti-discrimination measures ■ Information or awareness-raising campaigns about Roma	The Roma information- and knowledge centre (RIKC) works to increase the inclusion of the Roma minority in society. Both Roma and non-Roma work together both with individual and structural solutions to poverty.
Munich	■ Targeted policies for improving the education of Roma ■ Projects to improve access to services	**'Khetni' school** use mediators from the German Sinti community who receive special training and participate actively in the implementation of Roma inclusion initiatives of the city council.
Nantes	■ Local strategy for Roma integration	A project with integrated approach was set up to improve the situation of Roma living in camps. **'MOUS'** is the first component of the project and encompasses four missions: after identification of the illegal campsites, opportunities for inclusion are also identified, a general and individual assessment of all Roma families are carried out and finally, general and individual social long-term support is provided, such as for job insertion.
Oslo	■ Targeted policies in housing ■ Training of Roma mediators ■ Projects to improve Roma people's access to services	**Night shelters** were set up for migrant Roma to improve their living conditions.
Poznan	■ Targeted policies on education and job insertion of Roma people ■ Training of Roma mediators and training of social workers and staff of the city administration to work with Roma	**'Together in the city – integration of migrant Roma children'** is an initiative that focuses on integration of Roma children in school through the use of non-formal education and leisure-time activities.
Sheffield	■ Local strategy for Roma integration ■ Targeted policy initiatives on housing ■ Projects to improve access to services	**Integration project** with funding from national government to integrate Roma Slovak residents in four neighbourhoods of the city. **Selective licencing scheme** in Roma neighbourhoods to improve the quality of private sector housing and reduce overcrowding.

City	Top 3 types of initiatives that cities use for Roma inclusion	City initiatives for Roma inclusion at local level
Vantaa	■ Targeted policies for job insertion ■ Training of Roma people ■ Promotion of inclusive practices in provision of social services	**The Nevo Tiija** project carries out education and employment services that are directly integrated into the city employment services.
Vienna	■ Anti-discrimination measures ■ Targeted policies on education ■ Project for promotion of Roma models to help Roma children with learning ■ Training of social workers and staff of city administration to work with Roma and diversity management approach in place	**The Learning aid** initiative establishes Roma role models for Roma children from socially disadvantaged groups and teaches learning techniques to improve their learning success in school and to mediate between schools and parents.

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