



# Roma Child Poverty

An Executive Summary

November 2021

## Who are we?

Eurodiaconia is a network of social and health service providers across Europe, founded in the Christian faith and working in the tradition of diaconia.

Many Eurodiaconia members work to provide access to education, after-school activities, and services for children living in poverty, including Roma children.

## Why this topic?

Roma children are the most deprived group in Europe, with more than 90% of Roma children living at risk of poverty. Despite efforts to remedy the situation, many Roma children and families have remained in poverty due to generations of antigypsyism in governmental institutions and society that have resulted in systemic exclusion. It is necessary to address Roma child poverty through the lens of anti-discrimination and work towards active inclusion, in addition to addressing the typical cycle of poverty/generational poverty.

## What do our Members say?

Eurodiaconia Members say that the COVID-19 pandemic has worsened the situation of Roma children and their families living in poverty, and many have missed a year or more of school due to a **lack of access or inability to use digital devices**.

Members identify **geographical segregation, stigma (antigypsyism) and educational segregation** as key drivers that perpetuate the cycle of poverty. They express the need to tackle the **administrative burden and discrimination** that makes it difficult for Roma families to access services. This can only be accomplished by **building trust** between Roma communities and local authorities and social services.



## Key Recommendations

### EU Recommendations:

-  Prioritise de-segregation and de-institutionalisation as a key issue in Roma inclusion policies and funding priorities
-  Disaggregate data by ethnicity to monitor whether Roma children are adequately prioritised in policy outcomes and funding
-  Ensure an intersectional approach to child poverty by addressing child poverty in other policy areas (include vulnerable children in gender, disability, anti-racism/discrimination legislation)
-  Step up anti-poverty legislation, including adequate minimum income
-  Improve monitoring of Member States' use of EU funds to ensure that projects benefit Roma children; immediately stop funding of discriminatory projects/investments

### National level recommendations:

-  Prioritise active desegregation measures accompanied by inclusion support for Roma children in mainstream schools
-  Meaningfully consult children, especially those in poverty, and their parents and civil society at local, regional, and national level in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of legislation related to child poverty
-  Prioritise active outreach for Roma families to help them to enrol children in early childhood education and address factors preventing children from attending school
-  Allocate funding to provide all school aged children with a digital device and ensure that all children have access to electricity and internet in their homes

Want to find out more? Read our full policy paper! You can also contact our Policy Officer, Abriel at [Abriel.Schieffellers@eurodiaconia.org](mailto:Abriel.Schieffellers@eurodiaconia.org).