

# FACT SHEET

## Roma Minority in Albania



### Overview

The Roma community is one of the largest Communities Discriminated based on Work and Descent (CDWD) in Europe. In Albania, Roma population is estimated to be between 8,301 and 120,000. Roma minority was recognized as national minority on October 2017 based on the, Law No. 97/2017 “On the Protection of National Minorities in the Republic of Albania. They face significant socio-economic challenges that affects the quality of life and access to opportunities which are deeply interconnected with multiple UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goals 1 (No Poverty), 4 (Quality Education), 10 (Reduced Inequalities), and 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions). Albania committed to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in September 2015 and began implementation in 2017 with the establishment of key committees. The focus areas include reducing poverty, improving social inclusion, enhancing education, and empowering women.

### Key

### Indicators

### 2017

	National	Roma	Non-Roma
<b>Demographics</b>			
Households with 4+ members [%]	33	38	17
Dependency ratio: Children [0-14]/Working-age [15-64] household members	0.36	0.59	0.25
Dependency ratio: Elderly 65+/Working-age [15-64] household members	0.18	0.08	0.13
Share of households with female head [%]	12	21	20
Average household size	3.88	4.04	3.23
<b>Education</b>			
Adjusted net pre-primary enrolment rate [% of population, ages 3-6]	N/A	35	67
Adjusted net compulsory education enrolment rate [% of population, ages 7-15]	N/A	66	96
Completion rate in compulsory education [% of population, ages 18-21]	N/A	44	98
Completion rate in upper secondary education [% of population, ages 22-25]	N/A	15	74
Completion rate in tertiary education [% of population, ages 26-29]	N/A	1	27
Students attending segregated schools [% of students, ages 7-15]	N/A	17	9
Students attending special schools [% of students, ages 7-15]	N/A	1	1
<b>Labour Markets</b>			
Employment [% of population, ages 15-64]	56	18	27
Labour force participation rate [% of population, ages 15-64]	66	41	44
Unemployment [% of total labour force, ages 15-64]	16	55	38
Not in education, employment or training [% of population, ages 18-24]	N/A	78	42
<b>Health</b>			
Health insurance coverage [% of population aged 16+]	N/A	27	45
Self-reported unmet need for medical care [% of population aged 16+]	N/A	36	23
Self-perceived health [% of population reporting good or very good health]	N/A	59	69
Use of preventive care [% of population aged 16+]	N/A	44	68
<b>Housing</b>			
Access to piped water inside the dwelling [% of population]	72	48	90
Access to public sewerage or waste water tank [% of population]	N/A	63	74
Access to toilet inside the dwelling [% of population]	89	50	92
Access to electricity [% of population]	100	84	95
Electricity used to heat dwelling [% of population]	N/A	12	25
Solid fuels (coal or wood) used to heat dwelling [% of population]	N/A	69	52
Mobile phone or landline [% of population]	95	87	97
Computer [% of population]	N/A	7	41
Overcrowding rate [% of population]	N/A	66	30
<b>Documentation</b>			
Birth certificate [% of population]	N/A	98	99
ID card [% of population aged 16+]	N/A	90	97
Returned from abroad during the past 12 months [% of population]	N/A	3	1

## INEQUALITY



- **Social Exclusion:** Roma communities face systemic social exclusion, impacting their access to public services, housing, healthcare, and employment (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights)
- **Discrimination:** Approximately 46% of Roma in Albania report having experienced discrimination in the last five years while seeking employment, and 24% have faced discrimination in the workplace
- **In the annual report** of the Commissioner against Discrimination for 2023, 32 complaints based on race were addressed, where the Roma and Egyptian minorities were identified as the discriminated groups. These complaints were directed towards public institutions for not providing certain services.

## EDUCATION



- **Enrollment Rates:** Roma children have lower enrollment rates in primary and secondary education compared to the national average. Early school dropout rates are high due to economic pressures and discrimination (UNICEF, 2018).
- **Literacy:** Literacy rates among Roma is 65% significantly lower than the national average 95%. Educational attainment is limited, further restricting economic opportunities

## Antigypsyism in Albania

- The vision for 2021-2025 of Albania's government is to ensure the equality, participation, and inclusion of Roma and Egyptian minorities across all social sectors. By 2025, the plan aims for 100% access to essential services, increased educational completion rates, enhanced cultural promotion, significant employment opportunities, and a comprehensive approach to combating anti-gypsyism, ensuring these minorities are fully integrated and have improved quality of life.
- Taking a significant step towards Roma and Egyptian inclusion, Albania's National Action Plan for Equality, Inclusion, and Participation of Roma and Egyptians (2021-2025) incorporated a dedicated policy area to combat antigypsyism. This initiative aligns with the goals of the EU Roma Strategic Framework (2020-2030) and the CoE Strategic Action Plan for Roma and Travellers Inclusion (2020-2025).



## Economic Status

- **Poverty Rate:** 78% of Roma minority lives under the poverty line where 39% of them are living in extreme poverty
- **Many Roma families lack** stable employment, which contributes to cyclical poverty.
- **Unemployment rate** for marginalized Roma females was 62 percent compared to 51 percent of males.
- **Employment:** Roma individuals often work in informal sectors with precarious working conditions and low wages. Employment discrimination and lack of job opportunities exacerbate their economic vulnerability.



## Access to Justice

- **Legal Barriers:** Roma often encounter difficulties in accessing justice due to lack of documentation, awareness, and financial resources.
- **Only 5% have knowledge** about the law on Access to Justice
- **Institutional Discrimination:** There is evidence of institutional discrimination against Roma, including within the justice system and law enforcement agencies (KMD, 2023).
- **Human Rights:** Violations of Roma rights are prevalent, and efforts to address these issues are often inadequate or poorly implemented.

## National and International Efforts

- **Albanian Government Initiatives:** The Albanian government has adopted various strategies and action plans aimed at improving the socio-economic status of Roma, including the National Action Plan for the Integration of Roma and Egyptians
- **EU and UN Support:** The European Union and United Nations provide support through funding and programs targeting Roma inclusion and addressing socio-economic disparities.
- **Council of Europe and the Joint EU/CoE ROMACTED Programme,** assisted to develop the policy in antigypsyism.
- **NGO Activities:** Numerous NGOs work on the ground to support Roma communities through education, health, legal aid, and advocacy initiatives .

# Conclusion

## & Recommendations

Addressing the socio-economic challenges faced by the Roma minority in Albania requires a multifaceted approach that aligns with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Collaborative efforts between the Albanian government, international organizations, NGOs, and the Roma community are vital to achieving sustainable and equitable development for all. Below are key recommendations:

### 1 Update and Maintain Comprehensive Data

The Albanian government, in collaboration with Roma NGOs, must prioritize updating and maintaining accurate and comprehensive data on the Roma population. This will ensure that policies and programs are based on current and reliable information, facilitating more effective targeting of resources and interventions.

### Enhance Access to Education

Implement targeted programs to increase enrollment and reduce dropout rates among Roma children. This could include providing financial support, addressing discrimination in schools, and offering adult education and literacy programs to improve educational attainment within the Roma community.

### 3 Improve Employment Opportunities

Develop and promote initiatives that create stable and fair employment opportunities for Roma individuals. This includes offering vocational training, supporting entrepreneurship, and enforcing anti-discrimination laws in the workplace to ensure equal opportunities.

### Strengthen Social Inclusion

Implement policies that enhance social inclusion for Roma communities. This involves improving access to public services such as healthcare, housing, and social protection. Programs should be designed to reduce systemic social exclusion and promote integration.

### 5 Address Poverty and Economic Vulnerability

Develop comprehensive poverty alleviation programs specifically targeting Roma families. These programs should provide economic support, access to affordable housing, and opportunities for stable employment to break the cycle of poverty.

### Increase Legal Awareness and Access to Justice

Conduct awareness campaigns for Roma communities about their legal rights and the available avenues for justice. Provide legal aid services to help Roma individuals navigate the justice system, and work to eliminate institutional discrimination within law enforcement and judicial processes.

### 7 Enhance Government Accountability and Implementation

Strengthen the implementation and monitoring of existing strategies and action plans aimed at Roma inclusion. Ensure that government initiatives are adequately funded and that their impact is regularly assessed. Improve accountability mechanisms to ensure that commitments translate into tangible benefits for the Roma community.

### Promote Community Engagement and Empowerment

Encourage the active participation of Roma individuals in decision-making processes at local and national levels. Empower Roma communities through leadership development programs and support for grassroots initiatives that address their specific needs and challenges.