SHADOW REPORT

WESTERN BALKAN

KOSOVO

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1. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

Despite formal commitments to inclusion and equality, Kosovo's institutional framework for protecting the rights of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities remains fragmented and inadequately resourced. While the government has taken steps to strengthen institutional protection, implementation continues to be limited and uneven.

Office for Good Governance (OGG), Human Rights, Equal Opportunities and Gender Issues	**Advisory Office for Communities and Return (AOCR)**	**Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI)**
Despite limited staffing, the Office for Good Governance (OGG) has strengthened coordination with ministries and municipalities across Kosovo. Each ministry has designated officials to liaise with the OGG on implementing policies linked to the Strategy's objectives. These arrangements have improved data collection on progress towards each objective and strengthened cooperation at the municipal level. However, municipalities need to take a more active role, particularly by allocating sufficient funding to implement local action plans.	Operating within the Prime Minister's Office, the Advisory Office for Communities and Return (AOCR) advises on community rights and issues affecting returnees, including Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. Despite its potential strategic importance, its influence remains limited by weak mechanisms for ensuring that its recommendations are implemented.	The Ministry promotes inclusive education through measures supporting Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian learners, including scholarships for secondary and higher education and support for learning centres. However, these programmes remain heavily dependent on donor funding, raising concerns about their long-term sustainability. Significant inequalities in access to quality education persist for children from these communities.
Ministry of Communities and Returns (MCR)	**Kosovo Agency for Statistics (KAS)**	**Ombudsperson Institution of Kosovo**
The Ministry of Communities and Returns (MCR) is responsible for supporting the return and reintegration of displaced persons, including Roma. However, Roma communities continue to face indirect discrimination in access to housing, property restitution and employment. Roma returnees also encounter significant barriers to accessing basic services, hindering their sustainable reintegration.	The Kosovo Agency of Statistics (KAS) collects and publishes statistical data. However, gaps in data disaggregated by ethnicity and socio-economic status limit evidence-based policymaking for Roma communities. Mistrust of institutions, missing identification documents and fear of discrimination contribute to the underrepresentation of Roma in census data.	The Ombudsperson is mandated to investigate discrimination and human rights violations, including cases affecting Roma. Despite its relative independence and active role, the institution's impact is constrained by inconsistent follow-up on its recommendations by public authorities and limited awareness of its mandate among Roma communities.

Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities remain among the most economically marginalized non-majority communities in Kosovo. According to the 2025 European Commission Progress Report for Kosovo, members of these 3 communities continue to experience significant discrimination across multiple areas of life, including in access to and participation in the labor market.

Although Kosovo has established a legal framework for the protection of labour rights and non-discrimination, including the Labour Law (Law No. 03/L-212) and the Law on Protection from Discrimination (Law No. 05/L-021), and has undertaken commitments through the Roma and Ashkali integration policy framework, significant implementation gaps remain. In particular, Roma workers appear to have limited access to labour-rights enforcement mechanisms, including the Labour Inspectorate of Kosovo.

Evidence gathered through QPA's Human Rightivism project, implemented since 2022 with funding from the Swedish Embassy through the Community Development Fund (CDF), indicates that Roma workers rarely submit formal complaints concerning violations of their labour rights across the municipalities covered by the project. This low level of reporting should not be interpreted as evidence that labour-rights violations occur less frequently among Roma workers. Rather, it points to the existence of barriers that may prevent or discourage Roma workers from accessing formal complaint and protection mechanisms. These barriers require further institutional attention, particularly in relation to awareness of rights, accessibility of complaint mechanisms, trust in institutions, and the ability of workers in vulnerable employment situations to seek protection without fear of negative consequences.

The gap between the existence of legal protections and their effective accessibility is therefore a significant concern. Ensuring that Roma workers can exercise their labor rights in practice requires not only an adequate legal framework, but also accessible enforcement mechanisms, effective institutional outreach, stronger awareness among rights holders, and systematic monitoring of discrimination and labour-rights violations affecting Roma communities.

Roma Political Representation, Institutional Crisis and Democratic Participation in Kosovo

Kosovo's political developments during 2025–2026 exposed significant weaknesses in democratic governance and had a direct impact on the political participation and representation of Roma communities. Although Kosovo's constitutional framework guarantees representation for non-majority communities through 20 reserved parliamentary seats, including four seats collectively reserved for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, formal political representation has not translated into meaningful improvements in the socio-economic position of Roma communities.

The prolonged institutional crisis following the 2025 parliamentary elections further weakened public confidence in political institutions. Political disagreements, coalition deadlocks and repeated failures to establish functioning institutions affected budget approvals, municipal financing, infrastructure projects, donor-supported initiatives, social welfare mechanisms and broader government coordination. These consequences were particularly significant for marginalized communities, which depend more heavily on effective municipal and central institutions and on donor-supported programmes.

The political crisis has contributed to declining political trust among Roma communities. Many Roma citizens increasingly perceive elections as repeated cycles of political promises without corresponding improvements in employment, housing, education, access to services, protection from discrimination or overall living conditions. Political representatives are often perceived as highly visible during election campaigns but less engaged with communities once elections are over. This has contributed to voter fatigue, political apathy and particularly strong dissatisfaction among younger Roma.

For many young Roma, political participation appears increasingly disconnected from opportunities for social and economic advancement. Migration, temporary employment abroad and disengagement from political processes are increasingly perceived as more realistic pathways to improving living conditions. Political participation cannot be separated from the socio-economic situation of Roma communities. Roma continue to face high levels of unemployment, poverty, educational exclusion, informal employment, discrimination and institutional inequality. These structural disadvantages affect not only living conditions but also the ability of individuals to participate independently in political processes.

Economic dependency can create conditions in which political relationships become linked to access to employment, temporary jobs, municipal support, social assistance, contracts or other institutional opportunities. In such circumstances, political influence may operate indirectly rather than through explicit coercion. Concerns regarding political pressure and voter influence have been reported particularly in vulnerable communities and municipalities where access to employment and public services is closely connected to local political structures. Although systematic empirical documentation remains limited, these concerns warrant stronger monitoring and investigation because economic vulnerability can undermine the principle of free and independent political participation.

The experience of 2025–2026 demonstrates that formal political representation alone is insufficient to guarantee effective participation and equality for Roma communities. The principal challenges are interconnected: political fragmentation, weak accountability, socio-economic marginalization, political dependency, declining public trust and limited substantive influence within national decision-making.

Roma political representation risks becoming primarily symbolic unless parliamentary participation is accompanied by measurable improvements in employment, education, access to public institutions, protection against discrimination and community participation. At the same time, the emergence of younger civic-oriented actors provides an opportunity to develop a more accountable and participatory model of Roma political engagement.

At the local level, implementation remained uneven in 2025. The annual implementation report records approved Local Action Plans in nine municipalities: Rahovec, Prishtina, Podujeva, Novoberda, Kamenica, Vushtrri, Gjakova, Lipjan and Prizren. Draft plans were awaiting approval in Ferizaj, Obiliq, Gjilan and Shtime, while ten municipalities had not drafted a plan: South Mitrovica, North Mitrovica, Leposaviq, Decan, Klina, Peja, Fushe Kosove, Gracanica, Suhareka and Istog. This gap limits consistent municipal budgeting, monitoring and delivery of measures under the national Strategy.

2. EMPLOYMENT

During 2025, Kosovo continued to implement measures aimed at improving the employment prospects and socio-economic inclusion of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. The policy framework includes vocational training, internships, employment mediation, support for small businesses and measures intended to improve access to the labour market. In April 2025, the Government adopted the **2025–2026 Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy for the Advancement of the Rights of Roma and Ashkali Communities**, covering employment alongside education, health, social services, housing and anti-discrimination measures. The Action Plan also foresees an assessment of employment potential in municipalities with Roma and Ashkali populations and promotes the Kosovo Generation Unlimited platform, with a target that 7% of paid internships benefit Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian young people.

At the same time, the **2025 European Commission Report on Kosovo** confirms that significant structural barriers remain. Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities continue to experience barriers to employment, education and public representation, while limited data collection makes it difficult to assess the full extent of

these inequalities. The Commission specifically calls for closer cooperation between central and local authorities in implementing the strategy and notes the continuing need to address barriers to employment and other forms of socio-economic exclusion.

Social protection remained the largest area of reported expenditure. In 2025, the Social Assistance Scheme supported 2,587 families comprising 11,948 members: 973 Roma families with 4,310 members, 1,208 Ashkali families with 5,781 members and 406 Egyptian families with 1,857 members. Expenditure under the scheme was EUR 4,348,800, and all 2,587 beneficiary families received subsidies toward electricity debt. A further 163 children with permanent disabilities received monthly support of EUR 150, with EUR 293,400 spent for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian beneficiaries. Shelters also served 69 victims of domestic violence from the three communities. The Ministry of Justice supported 49 licensed providers of family social services with EUR 2,354,000, including EUR 822,000 for nine domestic violence shelters.

There are also positive developments in 2025 in relation to higher education and the transition from education to employment. The Government continued targeted scholarship support for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students, while a 2025 call provided **€1,000 in financial support to eligible first-year students from these communities enrolled in public universities**, with preference given to women in cases of equal qualification and priority for persons with disabilities. These measures are important because improving educational attainment is closely connected to the long-term employment prospects of Roma youth.

Overall, the developments during 2025 demonstrate that Kosovo has strengthened several policy instruments intended to improve employment and socio-economic inclusion of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. However, the evidence also shows a continuing gap between **policy commitments and equal access to sustainable employment in practice**. Future interventions should therefore move beyond short-term training, internships and grants and place greater emphasis on sustainable employment, transition from vocational training to formal jobs, enforcement of anti-discrimination legislation, access to documentation, targeted support for young people and women, and systematic collection of ethnicity-disaggregated employment data. Stronger cooperation between government institutions, municipalities, employers and Roma-led civil society organisations will be essential to ensure that employment programmes result in lasting economic inclusion rather than temporary participation.

The 2025 implementation report identifies persistent gaps in employment measures. Information meetings did not reach the target set in the Action Plan, the effect of wage subsidies on long-term employment was not assessed, and no beneficiaries from the communities entered on-the-job training or self-employment grant schemes. People receiving social assistance were also reluctant to join temporary employment measures because they feared losing their benefits. Reporting on outreach, case-management meetings and employment in public institutions remained incomplete.

Recommendation: Implementation should prioritize targeted outreach with Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian organizations, stronger participation in vocational and on-the-job training, and specific support for women through self-employment and start-up grants. Temporary employment measures should include a clear route back into social assistance when an engagement ends. Institutions should also complete the municipal employment assessment, improve ethnicity-disaggregated reporting and publish annual data on community employment in central and local public institutions.

3. HOUSING

The 2025 implementation report describes progress in social housing, property support and the planned transformation of informal settlements, but implementation remained uneven. The Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure advanced the Adequate Social Housing Project, while several municipalities and civil society organizations supported applications, property documentation and community information. At the same time, municipal use of housing data systems, three-year housing planning and reporting were incomplete, and several activities lacked disaggregated beneficiary data for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities.

Roma neighborhoods often suffer from neglect and lack of public services. The OSCE Mission in Kosovo highlights that municipalities have not always fulfilled their obligations in terms of social housing needs assessment, allocated human and financial resources needed, prepared and approved social housing programs in a timely manner, or requested funding from the central level to monitor and implement these programs. Additionally, there is a general lack of transparency about the background of applicants/beneficiaries and an absence of disaggregated data in relation to gender or non-majority communities, which is essential for identifying vulnerable or disadvantaged groups in need of housing.

Due to discrimination in the housing sector, many Roma lack tenure security and face risks of forced eviction. Legal property ownership is rare among Roma communities, often due to bureaucratic obstacles and discriminatory practices.

Existing housing programs have had limited impact due to insufficient and unsustainable funding. While the government has allocated funds for the renovation and construction of community houses, including those benefiting Roma communities, the overall investment in adequate housing remains inconsistent. Equal access to social housing to all vulnerable communities should be provided, including Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities, to address these disparities.

During 2025, housing information activities in Fushe Kosove reached 55 participants, while 49 families received door-to-door information and approximately 85 families applied to the municipality. Work also continued on the Electronic Registration of Social and Affordable Housing platform through e-Kosova. The platform is intended to simplify applications, improve transparency and support housing decisions, but municipal capacity-building for its use was only partially completed because the planning component was not yet finalized.

A major development was the Adequate Social Housing Project in 27 municipalities. The project has a total value of EUR 37 million, comprising a EUR 25 million low-interest loan from the Council of Europe Development Bank and EUR 12 million from the Ministry. Memoranda of Understanding were signed with the participating municipalities, a central Project Management Unit and municipal implementation units were established, and calls were prepared for new social housing, renovation of existing social housing and renovation or reconstruction of private homes for vulnerable families. The call for expressions of interest for municipal sub-projects opened on 25 July 2025.

Property and legal support also expanded. The Free Legal Aid Agency served 6,797 beneficiaries in 2025, including 816 people from non-majority communities: 104 Roma, 226 Ashkali, 123 Egyptian and 363 members

of other communities. Information sessions connected with mobile property support reached 366 participants. In addition, 670 vulnerable families applied for renovation or reconstruction of individual homes under the social housing project, although the report did not provide a community-disaggregated breakdown of these applications.

Settlement transformation advanced through a pilot building completed by Voice of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in Fushe Kosove, with ten apartments planned for community, municipal and project use. The project also held 33 information sessions with 479 residents, incorporated technical requirements into the Municipal Development Plan and completed a concept for the detailed urban plan in the target neighborhoods. A mobile property office in Fushe Kosove initiated 123 cases, representing about 30 percent of the property cases recorded in the municipality.

Recommendation:" The Ministry and municipalities should complete and report on three-year housing programs, publish disaggregated beneficiary data and maintain stable coordination between central and local implementation units. They should continue the Adequate Social Housing Project, act on the recommendations of the feasibility study and prioritize the legalization and improvement of Roma and Ashkali settlements in line with the Poznan Declaration. Information sessions and mobile legal support should be expanded and reported with clear municipal and community-level results.

4. HEALTH

Roma communities in Kosovo face substantial inequalities in health outcomes. Infant mortality among Roma children is estimated at 26 deaths per 1,000 live births, compared with a national average of 15. Full immunisation coverage among children aged 24–35 months from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities stands at 38%, considerably below the national rate of 73%. Furthermore, 14.6% of children under five from these communities experience stunting, an indicator of chronic malnutrition. Limited access to mental health services and a higher prevalence of chronic diseases among adults compound these inequalities.

Access to healthcare is restricted by overlapping financial, geographical and institutional barriers. Healthcare costs are particularly burdensome for uninsured individuals and families living in poverty, while residents of informal or segregated settlements often face difficulties reaching clinics and hospitals. Discriminatory treatment, dismissive attitudes and institutional neglect further discourage Roma patients from seeking care. Services also frequently fail to accommodate their linguistic, cultural and social needs.
UNICEF's 2024 report highlights the limited reach of health insurance among children in Kosovo. Within Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, only 4% of children under five and 4% of those aged 5–17 have health insurance. Nationally, the corresponding figures are 6% and 4%. The report also notes that insured children are predominantly found in households headed by a person of Serbian ethnicity at the national level, and by a person of Roma ethnicity within the three communities. These findings underline the need for broader and more equitable insurance coverage.[1]

[1] UNICEF, *Breaking Barriers: An Analytical Report on Roma Children and Women* (2024).

Gaps in accessible health information further undermine prevention and timely treatment. Information on immunisation, maternal health, hygiene and chronic disease management does not consistently reach Roma communities in appropriate languages and formats. Misinformation and longstanding mistrust of public institutions compound these shortcomings. Public health campaigns often have limited reach in Roma neighbourhoods, while materials in Romani remain scarce. These barriers contribute to delays in seeking care and difficulties following medical advice.

Missing personal documentation presents another significant obstacle, particularly for returnees and people living in informal settlements. The absence of identity cards or documents required to establish healthcare entitlements can prevent access to services. Even where individuals are entitled to treatment, complex administrative procedures and discriminatory practices may delay or obstruct care, reinforcing the relationship between poor health and social exclusion.
Although Kosovo's national health strategies include Roma and other vulnerable groups, implementation remains uneven. Targeted outreach is limited, and mechanisms for monitoring health outcomes among Roma are absent or insufficiently used. The lack of systematic health data disaggregated by ethnicity makes it difficult to assess progress and adapt interventions to identified needs. Continued reliance on donor-funded programmes, alongside insufficient sustained public funding and institutional commitment, raises concerns about the durability of results and accountability for implementation.

A door-to-door vaccination campaign led by the National Institute of Public Health, with municipal vaccination teams and UNICEF support, visited 4,405 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian families in 2025. The campaign identified 1,202 unvaccinated children aged 0-6, who were subsequently vaccinated in 11 municipalities, and engaged 20 community-based volunteers. In Gjakova, five community vaccination cycles reached 231 children and delivered 693 vaccine doses, accompanied by four information sessions on regular childhood vaccination.

Health education and home-visiting activities were also reported across municipalities. The National Institute of Public Health held 46 awareness lectures for 701 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian participants in Fushe Kosove, Obiliq, Lipjan, Mitrovica, Gjakova, Peja and Prishtina. Topics included vaccination, nutrition, tobacco, alcohol and drugs, family planning, tuberculosis, HIV and chronic disease prevention. Municipal services reported substantial outreach to mothers and children, including 763 children and 47 pregnant women visited in Gjakova, 336 children visited in Fushe Kosove, 429 visits in Lipjan and 48 Roma beneficiaries among 281 visits in Obiliq.

Training on equal treatment and non-discrimination reached health staff in several regions. Three regional sessions supported by the Accessible Quality Healthcare project included 50 senior health professionals, Ferizaj reported training about 70 staff, Fushe Kosove held four sessions on anti-Gypsyism, and Obiliq reported training 66 doctors and 89 nurses. Patient councils included community representation in Lipjan and Obiliq, while councils were absent or still being established in several other municipalities. These activities were assessed as only partially completed because coverage and reporting were inconsistent.

Mobile mammography was also only partially implemented. Gjakova reported 82 mammograms for women from the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, while other municipalities reported smaller numbers or did not provide community-disaggregated results. Promotional materials in Romani were generally unavailable, apart from brochures in Gjakova concerning the selection of a family doctor. The report also found

that coordination meetings were rarely dedicated specifically to these communities and that institutions often did not report exact health expenditures.

The 2025 results demonstrate effective community outreach where national institutions, municipal health centers, UNICEF, donors and local organizations worked together. The vaccination campaign, home visits and awareness lectures reached large numbers of families and children. Progress was less consistent in preventive screening, community participation in patient councils, access to complaint mechanisms, Romani-language information and the collection of ethnicity-disaggregated health and budget data.

***Recommendation:** Health institutions should extend targeted coordination with community organizations and donors, provide promotional materials in Romani and continue staff training on non-discrimination and equal treatment. Municipal health centers should establish representative patient councils, strengthen mammography and preventive screening, and record community participation consistently during home visits and other outreach. Future reports should include complete expenditure data and comparable results by municipality, gender and community.*

5. EDUCATION

According to the Kosovo Agency of Statistics and the Ministry of Education's Education Statistics 2025/2026, Roma children remain significantly underrepresented across the education system, particularly at the early childhood and upper-secondary levels. The data record only 10 Roma children in preschool education and 78 in pre-primary education, compared with 854 Roma pupils in primary and lower-secondary education and only 59 in upper-secondary education. In total, 1,001 Roma children and pupils were recorded across public pre-university education. Roma participation in private pre-university education was extremely limited, with only 21 Roma children and pupils recorded. At the same time, only 14 Roma teachers were reported among 22,600 teachers in public educational institutions. The statistics therefore point to persistent inequalities in educational participation and progression, particularly in the transition from compulsory to upper-secondary education. Furthermore, the absence of ethnicity-disaggregated data on Roma students in higher education limits the ability to assess Roma access to and completion of university education and represents an important gap in evidence-based monitoring of Roma inclusion.

Table 1: Roma pupils by education level: 2023/2024 and 2025/2026

Education level	**2023/2024**	**2025/2026**	**Change in pupils**
Preschool	5	10	+5
Pre-primary	86	78	−8
Primary and lower secondary	1,025	854	−171
Upper secondary	38	59	+21
Total	**1,154**	**1,001**	**−153**

The education statistics for the 2025/2026 school year show that Roma children remain significantly underrepresented in early childhood education in Kosovo. Only **10 Roma children** were recorded in public preschool education, representing approximately **0.13%** of all children enrolled at this level. At the pre-primary level, the number increased to **78 Roma children**, or approximately **0.47%** of total enrolment. Most Roma children at these levels were concentrated in municipalities with larger Roma populations, particularly Prizren, Peja and Gjakova. While these figures reflect reported enrolment rather than the total number of Roma

children of the relevant age, they point to continued challenges in ensuring Roma children's access to education from the earliest stages. Limited participation in early childhood education is particularly concerning because early learning provides an important foundation for children's later educational development and successful integration into the school system.

The largest number of Roma pupils was recorded in primary and lower-secondary education, where 854 Roma pupils were enrolled in Grades 1–9. However, this number drops sharply at the upper-secondary level, where only 59 Roma pupils were recorded. This difference should not be interpreted as a direct cohort progression rate, but it nevertheless highlights a significant concern regarding the continuation of Roma children's education beyond compulsory schooling. The data also show a strong geographical concentration: Prizren, Peja and Gjakova together account for almost three-quarters of all Roma pupils in primary and lower-secondary education. Overall, 1,001 Roma children and pupils were recorded across public pre-university education, with the overwhelming majority enrolled in compulsory education. Participation in private education was extremely limited, with only 21 Roma children and pupils recorded. Taken together, the figures indicate that improving Roma educational inclusion requires particular attention to early childhood enrolment, successful transition to and completion of upper-secondary education, and targeted support in municipalities with significant Roma populations. At the same time, the absence of comparable Roma-specific data in some areas, particularly higher education, limits the ability to fully assess educational progression and identify where further intervention is needed.

The Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (MEST) has continued implementing affirmative measures aimed at reducing socio-economic barriers and improving access to education for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. For the 2025/2026 academic year, the MES Scholarship Programme planned 500 scholarships worth €200,000. Following verification, 477 pupils were selected and received scholarships of €400 for the period September 2025–June 2026. The programme increased the annual scholarship amount from €300 to €400, with €190,800 allocated for this purpose.

Table 2: Secondary-school scholarship recipients by community

Community	**2023/2024**	**2025/2026**
Roma	77	73
Ashkali	202	198
Egyptian	188	206
Total	**467**	**477**

Table 3: Scholarship programme funding and coverage

Indicator	**2023/2024**	**2025/2026**
Planned scholarships	500	500
Planned budget	€150,000	€200,000
Annual scholarship per pupil	€300*	€400
Actual recipients	467	477
Share of planned scholarships awarded	93.4%	95.4%

The MEST has also introduced the **Early Childhood Education Voucher Programme**, designed to increase enrolment of children from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in licensed preschool institutions. The programme provides direct financial support to eligible families, particularly those benefiting from the Social Assistance Scheme, enabling them to enrol their children in private, public-private or community-based

preschool institutions. The measure aims to address the cost barrier to early education, expand access to preschool services, encourage more licensed providers to participate, and improve children's preparation for primary education. In addition, affirmative measures under Administrative Instruction 09/2016 provide reserved places and other opportunities for candidates from non-majority communities in higher education.

For the 2025/2026 academic year, affirmative measures under Administrative Instruction 09/2016 reduced the average-grade criterion for elite scholarships to 8.0 for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian applicants. Through an agreement between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Local Government Administration, 49 students from the three communities who enrolled in higher education for the first time received scholarships, with EUR 49,000 spent for this purpose. The framework also continued financial support for learning centers serving children from these communities.

According to the Kosovo Agency of Statistics and the Ministry of Education, the total number of children and pupils enrolled in pre-university education decreased from 306,104 in 2024/2025 to approximately 296,672 in 2025/2026. The decline was particularly pronounced in primary and lower-secondary education, where enrolment decreased by almost 10,000 pupils. In contrast, participation in preschool and pre-primary education increased during the same period. This overall decline reflects the broader demographic and population trends affecting Kosovo's education system and should be considered when assessing access to education among Roma children. For Roma communities in particular, the continued concentration of Roma pupils in compulsory education, combined with very low participation in early childhood and upper-secondary education, highlights the need for targeted measures to support educational participation and progression across all stages of education.[2]

Table 4. Pupils who left school during the 2024/2025 school year

Grade	**Ashkali**			**Roma**			**Egyptian**			**Total**		
	M	**F**	**T**	**M**	**F**	**T**	**M**	**F**	**T**	**M**	**F**	**T**
Grades 1–9	26	26	52	1	2	3	5	0	5	32	28	60
Grades 10–12	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	3	5	2	4	6
Total	**26**	**27**	**53**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**7**	**3**	**10**	**34**	**32**	**66**

Table 5. Scholarship recipients from the Ministry of Education

	Roma			**Ashkali**			**Egyptian**			
Academic year	**F**	**M**	**Total**	**F**	**M**	**Total**	**F**	**M**	**Total**	**Total**
2023/2024	46	31	77	99	103	202	99	89	188	**467**
2025/2026	46	27	73	107	91	198	113	93	206	**477**

Source: Annual report on implementation of the Strategy for the Advancement of the Rights of Roma and Ashkali Communities for 2025

[2] Source: Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation

Additional education measures were implemented in 2025. The Ministry allocated EUR 250,000 to 11 organizations operating 34 learning centers that served 2,011 children. Supplementary Romani-language classes in four schools in Prizren reached 120 pupils, including 68 boys and 52 girls. Motivational mentoring was provided to 100 students, while Open Doors Week promoted vocational education to ninth-grade pupils. The Ministry also subsidized textbooks for 5,362 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian pupils in compulsory education, with EUR 428,960 spent for this purpose.

The implementation report nevertheless records several education gaps. Municipalities initially reported no requests for the kindergarten-fee subsidy before the voucher program was introduced, dropout-prevention teams were not consistently functional, and the planned assessment of adult education needs was not completed. Participation in vocational education remained limited, the number of adults attending literacy programs was not reported accurately, and school awareness campaigns did not achieve consistent coverage.

Education institutions should strengthen dropout-prevention teams, complete research on adult education needs and expand vocational education and training for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian learners. Municipalities and community organizations should provide sustained information to parents about early childhood education and the voucher program. Monitoring should track enrolment, attendance, dropout, progression and completion by community and gender, and should connect scholarships, learning-center support and mentoring to measurable educational outcomes.

6. DISCRIMINATION

Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo face persistent barriers to employment, education, healthcare and housing. Reported difficulties accessing public-sector jobs, including among university graduates, raise concerns about equal opportunities and recruitment transparency. Reported segregation of Roma pupils in Peja and Gjilan also highlights challenges in ensuring inclusive education.
Efforts to strengthen anti-discrimination legislation and expand social assistance require effective implementation and monitoring. Meanwhile, the legacy of lead exposure in Mitrovica's contaminated camps, inadequate living conditions in informal settlements and limited access to affordable housing continue to undermine Roma communities' rights and well-being.

The National Platform for Protection from Discrimination recorded 17 new cases in 2025, 25 percent more than in 2024. All cases reported during the year were addressed and received institutional responses, and only one was submitted anonymously. The Platform also registered 36 new accounts and 1,535 visitors during the year. Since its launch in June 2022, it has recorded 69 cases, of which 33 were fully addressed by institutions, six remained in procedure and 27 could not be pursued effectively because of insufficient information, missing evidence or lack of jurisdiction. The annual report also records the first court judgment confirming indirect discrimination in a case handled through this mechanism.

Roma Versitas Kosovo (RVK) has continued its advocacy efforts to promote the recognition and use of the Roma language in the Municipality of Obiliq, with the broader objective of strengthening the inclusion, participation and equal access of Roma and other non-majority communities to municipal services. As part of

this process, RVK engaged with a range of relevant institutions, including the Language Commissioner, the Ministry of Communities and Return, the Ministry of Local Government Administration, the Office for Good Governance, the EU Office in Prishtina and representatives of the Council of Europe. The institutions consulted expressed their willingness to support the initiative and recognized the importance of advancing language rights and inclusive local governance. At the municipal level, RVK formally raised the issue with the relevant authorities and emphasized the role of the Consultative Council as an important mechanism for facilitating dialogue and ensuring that the concerns of Roma communities are reflected in municipal decision-making.

Despite this progress, the formal recognition of the Roma language in Obiliq has not yet been finalized**.** The Municipality has not adopted an official decision recognizing Roma as a language in official use or for official municipal purposes. The process is currently at the stage of consultation, discussion and institutional review and therefore can be characterized as formally initiated through advocacy and institutional consultation, but not yet institutionally completed**.** The initiative has nevertheless succeeded in bringing the issue onto the municipality's agenda and creating greater awareness among relevant stakeholders regarding the importance of language rights and equal access to municipal services.

RVK considers continued institutional engagement essential to moving the process from consultation towards a formal municipal decision. The next steps require continued dialogue with the Mayor, the Municipal Assembly and other relevant municipal structures, as well as the active involvement of the Consultative Council. The recognition of the Roma language should also be viewed within the broader context of improving local policies and institutional practices addressing the needs of Roma and other non-majority communities in Obiliq. RVK will therefore continue advocating for concrete institutional follow-up, stronger implementation of community rights and the establishment of sustainable mechanisms that ensure Roma residents can access municipal services and participate in local public life without language-related barriers.

7. CIVIL REGISTRATION

Civil registration and the risk of statelessness remain significant concerns for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo. Complex administrative procedures, documentation requirements, discrimination and limited access to legal aid prevent affected individuals from obtaining personal documents, restricting their access to social assistance, healthcare, formal employment and birth registration for their children. Individuals born abroad, displaced persons and those with undetermined nationality face additional barriers, while lengthy proceedings and inconsistent implementation further delay resolution.

No progress in addressing these barriers was documented in the information available for this report for 2025. Previously reported reform initiatives have yet to demonstrate improvements in the evidence provided. Priorities include simplifying registration procedures, ensuring access to legal aid regardless of documentation status, resolving pending cases and collecting reliable data on unregistered people and those at risk of statelessness.

8. BUDGET

The 2025 Action Plan comprised 85 activities across 16 specific objectives. Institutions reported completing 68 activities, partially completing nine and leaving eight uncompleted, equivalent to approximately 80%, 11% and 9%, respectively. Total reported expenditure amounted to approximately EUR 6.51 million, with social welfare accounting for EUR 4,954,400 and education for EUR 1,196,460. However, expenditure data were not provided by all institutions, preventing a comprehensive assessment of implementation spending.

The reported 80% activity completion rate should therefore be interpreted cautiously. Completion of activities does not demonstrate improvements in the socio-economic conditions of Roma and Ashkali communities. Reported expenditure was concentrated in social welfare and education, while institutions such as the Academy of Justice and the Agency for Gender Equality reported comparatively small amounts. Although institutional responsibilities and costs differ, this distribution warrants closer examination of whether other strategic priorities receive adequate funding.

Future monitoring should include complete expenditure data, broken down by institution, strategic objective and funding source, alongside measurable outcome indicators. This would enable a clearer assessment of how implementation contributes to sustained improvements in employment, education, social inclusion, equality and access to rights.

Table 6. Budget Reported for Implementation of the 2025 Action Plan

Responsible institution	**Reported budget spent (€)**
Ministry of Education and Science	**1,196,460.00**
Employment Agency of the Republic of Kosovo	**70,150.00**
Ministry of Labor, Family and Social Welfare – Sector for Social Welfare	**4,954,400.00**
Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning + donors	**100,000.00**
Ministry of Culture and Tourism	**129,900.00**
Academy of Justice	**700.00**
Agency for Gender Equality	**559.70**
Office for Good Governance / Office of the Prime Minister + donors	**60,000.00**
Total reported	**6,512,169.00**

9. CONCLUSION

The findings of this report indicate that Kosovo continued to implement measures for the inclusion of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, but progress remained uneven across policy areas and municipalities. Support for education, vaccination, social assistance and housing demonstrates that institutions have undertaken activities addressing community needs. However, persistent discrimination, limited access to employment and services, and weaknesses in institutional accountability continue to restrict the effective exercise of rights. The available evidence shows progress in implementing individual measures, while improvements in the overall socio-economic position of the communities remain less clearly demonstrated.
Under the 2025 Action Plan, institutions reported completing 68 of 85 activities, equivalent to 80%, with reported expenditure of approximately EUR 6.51 million. This implementation rate should be considered alongside incomplete budget information and limited reporting on outcomes. Expenditure was concentrated in social welfare and education, but missing financial data prevent a complete assessment of funding across

strategic priorities. Coordination through the Office for Good Governance improved, although municipal implementation remained inconsistent. Nine municipalities had approved Local Action Plans, while ten had not drafted plans, revealing gaps in translating national commitments into local planning and delivery. These implementation gaps also reflect the political and institutional context described in the report. The institutional crisis during 2025–2026 affected government coordination, financing and public confidence. Although constitutional arrangements guarantee community representation, formal participation has not consistently translated into meaningful influence over decisions or improvements in living conditions. Reported dissatisfaction among Roma citizens, particularly young people, points to a continuing gap between political representation and accountability. Concerns about political pressure further highlight the vulnerability associated with economic dependency, although the report acknowledges that systematic evidence remains limited.

In this context, social protection remains essential, but pathways towards economic independence are insufficiently demonstrated. During 2025, social assistance supported 2,587 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian families. At the same time, the implementation report recorded no beneficiaries from these communities in on-the-job training or self-employment grant schemes, while the long-term effects of wage subsidies were not assessed. Fear of losing social assistance discouraged participation in temporary employment measures. These findings illustrate difficulties in connecting immediate income protection with sustainable employment. Low reporting of labour-rights violations also raises concerns about access to protection mechanisms, rather than demonstrating an absence of violations.

Education and healthcare show the benefits of targeted support alongside continuing barriers. In 2025, publicly supported learning centres served 2,011 children, and vaccination outreach resulted in 1,202 previously unvaccinated Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children aged 0–6 receiving vaccination in 11 municipalities. Nevertheless, Roma participation in early childhood and upper-secondary education remained limited in 2025/2026, while dropout-prevention mechanisms functioned inconsistently. In healthcare, gaps remained in preventive screening, Romani-language information and community participation. These interventions therefore demonstrate concrete access to support, but available data do not establish the extent to which wider educational and health inequalities have narrowed.

Housing insecurity and civil registration barriers further reinforce exclusion. The advancement of the Adequate Social Housing Project in 27 municipalities and the provision of property assistance represent positive developments. However, incomplete beneficiary data limit assessment of the benefits reaching Roma households. Inadequate housing conditions and insecure tenure coexist with documentation barriers affecting access to healthcare, social assistance and formal employment. No progress on civil registration was documented in the information available for 2025; this limits assessment without establishing that no action occurred.

Protection from discrimination also presents a mixed picture. Institutional responses through the discrimination platform and the reported judgment confirming indirect discrimination demonstrate progress in accountability. However, reported segregation, employment barriers and difficulties pursuing complaints show that effective protection remains uneven. Similarly, advocacy for the Romani language in Obiliq secured institutional attention, but formal recognition remained pending.

Overall, Roma inclusion in Kosovo continues to be characterised by documented implementation efforts alongside persistent inequalities. Incomplete and inconsistently disaggregated data limit conclusions about the scale of change. The report demonstrates that policy commitments and completed activities have not yet been matched by sufficiently documented, sustained progress in equal access to rights and opportunities.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Municipalities should finalise pending Local Action Plans and prepare missing plans, specifying the budget, responsible department and completion date for each measure. Roma organisations, women and young people should participate in selecting priorities and reviewing implementation. The Office for Good Governance should publish annual progress and outstanding commitments.
- The Employment Agency should organise application support for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian jobseekers who are not accessing on-the-job training and self-employment grants, with targeted outreach to women and young people. Each participant should receive employment counselling, clarification of social assistance eligibility and follow-up at six and twelve months to assess employment retention.
- Municipalities and housing project implementation units should identify priority households through updated needs assessments, help applicants resolve property-documentation barriers and publish transparent selection criteria. Reporting should show how many households received completed renovations or housing, including access to water, sanitation and secure tenure, with results broken down by community.
- Municipal health centres should establish regular outreach schedules for vaccination, maternal healthcare and preventive screening in underserved Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian neighbourhoods. Community organisations should help inform residents in relevant languages, while health centres should track completed services, referrals and follow-up appointments.
- Municipal education authorities should require dropout-prevention teams to assign a responsible staff member to each identified child at risk, contact the family and arrange support through schools, mentoring or learning centres. Follow-up should record whether the child returns to school, attends regularly and progresses to the next grade.
- The Ministry of Education and municipalities should organise assisted preschool voucher applications in communities with low enrolment and confirm scholarship and learning-centre funding before the school year, tracking actual attendance and completion among beneficiaries.
- Relevant education authorities should investigate reported segregation in Peja and Gjilan and, where established, require corrective plans with responsible officials and completion dates. Institutions handling discrimination complaints should assist with missing evidence and report on remedies implemented, including follow-up to Ombudsperson recommendations.
- Civil registration authorities, municipalities and legal aid providers should organise mobile case-resolution sessions for undocumented people. Each case should have a designated contact person, a list of missing documents and a recorded next step. Annual reporting should show cases resolved, processing times and remaining barriers.
- There should be a common reporting format linking each Action Plan measure to its budget, actual expenditure, beneficiaries and results. Reports should identify missing institutional submissions and distinguish completed activities from outcomes such as retained jobs, school completion and improved housing. Community and gender breakdowns should respect privacy and voluntary self-identification.