

#EUROMACHILDREN

# Breaking the silence

THE RIGHT OF EACH YOUNG ROMA CHILDREN  
IN EUROPE TO DEVELOP AND THRIVE

**EUROPEAN REYN EARLY CHILDHOOD RESEARCH STUDY**  
Exploring the Status of Young Roma Children and their Families



ROMANI  
EARLY YEARS  
NETWORK



INTERNATIONAL  
STEP by STEP  
ASSOCIATION  
An initiative of



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# REYN EARLY CHILDHOOD RESEARCH STUDY AT A GLANCE

## Key findings and challenges

### FAMILY AND LIVING ENVIRONMENTS

Roma families face significant challenges regarding their socio-economic status and living environment. These include low educational levels, high unemployment rates, poor living conditions, and barriers to accessing financial support.

**REYN EVIDENCE:** On average, over **3 out of 10** Roma children live in areas exposed to the harmful effects of air pollution.

On average, **7 out of 10** family members with young children are unemployed or unable to work.

### HEALTH, NUTRITION AND WELL-BEING

The health and well-being of young Roma children and families are affected by such issues as inadequate immunization, poor maternal health awareness, barriers to accessing family and emotional support programs, and poor dietary habits and routines.

**REYN EVIDENCE:** On average, **1 in 5** young Roma children do not get all the required vaccines for their age.

### SAFETY AND SECURITY

Safety and security concerns arise from barriers to accessing social security or social protection, as well as growing up in neighborhoods exposed to crime, violence, and vandalism.

**REYN EVIDENCE:** On average, **3 out of 10** Roma children grow up in unsafe neighborhoods.

### EARLY LEARNING

Early learning opportunities for Roma children are hindered by barriers to benefiting from quality early childhood education services and other learning environment spaces or facilities. Besides the scarce availability of or lack of proximity to services, language barriers stand out as the most common challenge affecting children's access to and full participation in education.

**REYN EVIDENCE:** **6 out of 10** Roma children under 3 do not have access to quality early childhood education services because these services are either unreachable or unavailable.

### RESPONSIVE PARENTING

Challenges related to responsive parenting include Roma mothers being the primary caregivers without sufficient support from other family members and a lack of awareness among caregivers about the power of play for a child's development.

**REYN EVIDENCE:** On average, **3 out of 10** Roma caregivers report not reading enough to their children.

### DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination and antigypsyism are prevalent issues affecting young Roma children and their families. While antigypsyism remains deeply rooted in social and cultural attitudes and institutional practices, ongoing discrimination is experienced in various aspects of life, including access to public services, housing, employment, and education.



**REYN EVIDENCE:** An average of **4 out of 10** young children face discrimination by teachers in early childhood services, according to interviews with early childhood professionals.

\* The study shows that in many cases, parents were not able to identify practices that were discriminatory as such.



# MOVING TOWARDS A FUNDAMENTAL REALIZATION OF THE RIGHTS OF YOUNG ROMA CHILDREN

## A call for coordinated European and national action

**1. FOSTERING CROSS-SECTORAL POLICY COORDINATION AT THE EU LEVEL:** To create lasting and sustainable change for young Roma children and their families, the European Union (EU) must ensure cross-sectoral coordination across its policy initiatives to target the most vulnerable population in Europe. This includes connecting efforts in education, health, social protection, housing, and employment policies and programs, as well as fostering partnerships among public, private, and non-governmental stakeholders. By working across sectors and policy areas, the EU can ensure a comprehensive and cohesive approach to addressing the complex challenges faced by young Roma children and their families, so that young Roma children are provided with equal opportunities to develop and thrive from the start of their lives.

**2. LEVERAGING THE CHILD GUARANTEE POLICY INSTRUMENT:** To effectively address growing concerns around child poverty, the European Union and its Member States should pay specific attention to young Roma children and their families as part of the implementation of the Council Recommendation on Child Guarantee. Member States should focus on addressing the unique challenges faced by young Roma children, who often experience extreme poverty, marginalization, and discrimination in all spheres of life. This would involve developing targeted interventions to ensure young Roma children's access to quality education and learning opportunities, healthcare, housing, and nutrition. It would do so while promoting social inclusion and combating antigypsyism to foster long-term improvements in Roma children's living conditions and opportunities for development and growth. The Child Guarantee would serve as a catalyst for change and sustainable impact, improving the lives and future prospects of young Roma children across Europe.

**3. PRIORITIZING THE MOST VULNERABLE CHILDREN IN ACHIEVING THE BARCELONA TARGETS:** the European Union should continuously call on Member States to introduce and implement ambitious national plans aiming at improving access to and quality of early childhood education and care (ECEC) services, prioritizing the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children, specifically Roma children. Leveraging the Council Recommendations on the Barcelona targets can help bridge the gap between Roma and non-Roma children from an early age. By achieving the Barcelona targets, the EU can foster a more equitable and inclusive society in which all children, regardless of their ethnicity, have opportunities to thrive.

**4. PRIORITIZING CHILD- AND FAMILY-CENTERED NATIONAL ROMA INCLUSION STRATEGIES:** European countries should prioritize the status of young Roma children in a comprehensive and inclusive way by incorporating specific actions and effective measures and programs around key areas impacting child development. These would include improving the status of the family and living conditions, promoting health and well-being, enabling safety and security, prioritizing early learning, and fostering responsive parenting.

**5. COMBATING ANTIGYPSYISM:** European institutions and countries should implement robust policies and introduce effective measures to combat antigypsyism. This should particularly occur in instances of discrimination of young Roma children and their families in relation to child development and family well-being. These policies and measures should focus on access to inclusive education, health, and social services, as well as housing and employment, enabling the full participation of Roma families in democratic society.

**6. MAKING SOUND DATA-BASED DECISIONS FOR REAL TRANSFORMATION:** To ensure a real transformation of young Roma children and the status of their families, all policies and actions affecting their lives should be informed by sound data indicating the nature and magnitude of the major problems to be addressed. European institutions and countries, therefore, should make sure their decisions are well-informed. Key data from the field should be used regarding the multiple aspects impacting a child's rounded and healthy development, from before the child's birth until their entry into primary school. To effectively support the holistic development of every young Roma child, a safe, healthy and nurturing family and community context must be ensured.





## BREAKING THE SILENCE

### The right of young Roma children and their families in Europe to develop and thrive

#### INTRODUCTION

Although there is concern for Roma inclusion at the European level, there is a significant knowledge gap about the status of children under the age of six, particularly the youngest. This lack of data impedes the development of responsive policies and programs to reverse these children's situation.

To address this issue, the Romani Early Years Network (REYN) Initiative is launching the REYN Early Childhood Research Study, which sheds light on young Roma children and their parents throughout Europe. The study brings together unprecedented Roma-related early childhood data from 11 countries, providing solid evidence for urgent and effective policies and programs enabling each young Roma to reach their full potential – to grow and thrive!

The REYN Study showcases a unique way of conducting research on Roma-related topics. Led by Roma researchers, involving Roma and non-Roma country researchers and early childhood experts, it has gathered data in the 11 countries where REYNs operates at the country level.<sup>1</sup>

The lack of data on young Roma children in Europe to illustrate their status and needs makes the REYN Study a unique body of evidence. It reinforces the importance of early years and has the potential to influence how young Roma children can be prioritized and invested in.

The REYN Study, carried out with the support of the Open Society Foundations, was initiated in 2021 and has been carried out in partnership with the Roma Studies Groups (CEG) at CREA – University of Barcelona.

Covering five key areas that impact child's development (health, hygiene and nutrition, safety and security, early learning and living environment) the study analyzes the structural and emerging issues that have deepened inequality during the COVID-19 crisis, leading to increased social exclusion.

Country data is already available ([see infographics](#)), and this report summarizes the results and findings across the 11 countries involved.

This document consists of the following sections: an overview of the research design, an in-depth analysis of the data per key area of child development, key findings and recommendations, and examples of transformative actions (see page 46).

#### PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

The European REYN Early Childhood Research Study, titled “Breaking the Silence: the right of young Roma children and their families in Europe to develop and thrive,” was initiated to highlight the status and early development needs of Roma children under six years old. This undertaking recognizes the crucial role that early childhood development plays in establishing a strong foundation for lifelong learning and health, and the stark inequalities that Roma children face in these crucial years.

<sup>1</sup> For more information about the work of the REYN Initiative at international and national level, see [www.reyn.eu](http://www.reyn.eu).



## A circle around the child: key areas impacting child development

The first thousand days of a child's life are crucial for their optimal development and the realization of their full and unique potential. The lack of adequate conditions such as nutrition, quality healthcare and preventive services, learning activity, responsive parenting and safety have long-term consequences on children's physical and mental development, resulting in social inequalities that affect the rest of their lives.

There is a consensus among the scientific research community, public administrations, and civil society, regarding the key areas that impact child development.

The “Nurturing Care for Early Childhood Development” framework, created in 2018 by the World Health Organization (WHO), World Bank Group (WBG) and UNICEF, highlights five inter-related and indivisible components of nurturing care that young children need to reach their full potential: good health, adequate nutrition, safety and security, responsive caregiving, and opportunities for learning.

The Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University points out **8 Things to Remember about Child Development**:

Even infants and young children are affected adversely when significant stresses threaten their family and caregiving environments.

Development is a highly interactive process, and life outcomes are not determined solely by genes.

While attachments to their parents are primary, young children can also benefit significantly from relationships with other responsive caregivers both within and outside the family.

A great deal of brain architecture is shaped during the first three years after birth, but the window of opportunity for development does not close on a child's third birthday.

Severe neglect appears to be at least as great a threat to health and development as physical abuse —possibly even greater.

Young children who have been exposed to adversity or violence do not invariably develop stress-related disorders or grow up to be violent adults.

Simply removing a child from a dangerous environment will not automatically reverse the negative impacts of that experience.

Resilience requires relationships, not rugged individualism.

## SCOPE

The research offers a comprehensive view of the status, challenges, and opportunities of young Roma children under the age of six and their families across 11 European countries. These countries include Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Italy, the Republic of Kosovo, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Ukraine. The research analyzes the key domains affecting child development and family well-being.



## METHODOLOGY

The research adopted a mixed-methods approach applying the Communicative Methodology,<sup>2</sup> which focuses on addressing social inequalities. This method involves the analysis of existing scientific literature,<sup>3</sup> first-hand data collection through questionnaires, in-depth interviews, focus groups, and the identification of best practices and policies promoting successful early childhood development (see page 46).

## SAMPLE

A broad cross-section of over 900 participants contributed to the study. This includes over 500 Roma families, offering a grassroots perspective, 368 early childhood professionals, and 47 policymakers providing an institutional viewpoint. These participants span 11 European countries, each contributing valuable insights based on their specific contexts.

## LIMITATIONS

The findings from the REYN Early Childhood Research Study are of an indicative nature. They flag the challenges and barriers that need further investigation in order to inform transformative approaches and policy actions aimed at improving the status of young Roma children in Europe. The research brings a holistic perspective over the various intertwined factors impacting a child's development. It goes beyond a reductionist approach, stimulating a broader discussion of how the complex issue of fulfilling the rights of young Roma children should be addressed for significant positive outcomes.

While looking at country-specific data, it is necessary to emphasize the specificity of the data from the following countries.

**BELGIUM:** Due to issues with sample accessibility, no quantitative data was obtained from Belgium. Although qualitative data was collected, it is critical to note that the insights generated should not be equated to or compared with quantitative data from the country.

**CROATIA:** While the majority of the anticipated fieldwork in Croatia was completed, it was not possible to conduct focus group discussions with Roma families.

<sup>2</sup> Gómez, A., Padrós, M., Ríos, O., Mara, L.C. & Pukepuka, T. (2019). "Reaching Social Impact Through Communicative Methodology. Researching With Rather Than on Vulnerable Populations: The Roma Case," *Frontiers in Education*, 4(9). doi: 10.3389/feduc.2019.00009

<sup>3</sup> Scientific databases (ERIC, Web of Science, PsycINFO, and Latindex), using the keywords "Early Childhood", "Roma People", "Children", "development", "nutrition", "antigypsyism", "family environment", "security", "safety", "responsive parenting", among others; Reports of competitive research projects financed by public calls (Framework Program, Horizon 2020, National RTD Plan, etc.; Programs and actions developed by different organizations and administrations, evaluated and with evidence of results, especially the World Health Organization (WHO), World Bank Group (WBG), UNICEF, and the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University.





**ITALY:** The sample from Italy is notably small, localized solely at the municipal level of Rome. Due to various circumstances, the research carried out in country was unable to fulfill all expected quantitative fieldwork, and no qualitative techniques were employed.

**UKRAINE:** The data collection was carried out just prior to the outbreak of the war. Consequently, the findings do not reflect the current challenges many young Roma children are facing in Ukraine. However, the pre-war data indicates several areas of concern regarding the status of young Roma children, which may have been exacerbated due to the war.

## OVERVIEW OF DATA COLLECTED BY TECHNIQUES

Countries	Documentary analysis	Questionnaires		In-depth interviews		Focus groups families
		Families	Professionals	Professionals	Policymakers	
Belgium	1	0	0	7	2	3
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1	50	30	6	6	3
Bulgaria	1	50	30	7	6	3
Croatia	1	50	29	5	5	0
Hungary	1	50	42	6	4	1
Kosovo	1	50	30	4	6	3
Italy	1	20	5	0	0	0
Slovakia	1	50	44	6	6	3
Slovenia	1	40	42	6	6	3
Serbia	1	50	30	8	5	6
Ukraine	1	50	30	1	1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>26</b>



## REYN EVIDENCE

### Analysis of data from 11 European countries on key areas impacting children's development



The European REYN Early Childhood Research Study (the REYN Study) provides an examination of the status of young Roma children and their families across Europe. It is grounded in a comprehensive understanding of the multi-layered and intersectional nature of the challenges faced by young Roma children and their families. The REYN Study presents key findings from a thorough analysis of data on key areas of the lives of young Roma children and their families. These areas include family status and living conditions, health and well-being, safety and security, early learning, responsive parenting, and discrimination.

The findings of the REYN Study (see page 6 for a summary) highlight the significant hurdles faced by young Roma children and their families. From low educational levels and high unemployment rates to poor living conditions and barriers to accessing essential services, the challenges are both diverse and interconnected. Alarming, the pervasive nature of antigypsyism<sup>4</sup> further exacerbates these challenges, adding a layer of bias that impacts every aspect of the lives of young Roma children and their families.

This section is structured around the six key areas mentioned above and is based on the data gathered in 11 countries deriving from questionnaires for families and early childhood professionals, in-depth interviews with professionals and policymakers, and focus groups with Roma families. Each section highlights selected data (see Annex 1, page 50) illustrating the status of young Roma children at the national and European levels, accompanied by testimonies from parents, professionals, and policymakers.

<sup>4</sup> Antigypsyism (a form of racism against Roma) is a historically rooted structural phenomenon that appears at institutional, social and interpersonal levels. It has its origins in how the majority views and treats those considered 'gypsies'. It is rooted in a process of 'othering' that builds on negative as well as positive, exoticising stereotypes. Source: [https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/document.cfm?doc\\_id=55652](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/document.cfm?doc_id=55652)

# FAMILY AND LIVING ENVIRONMENT

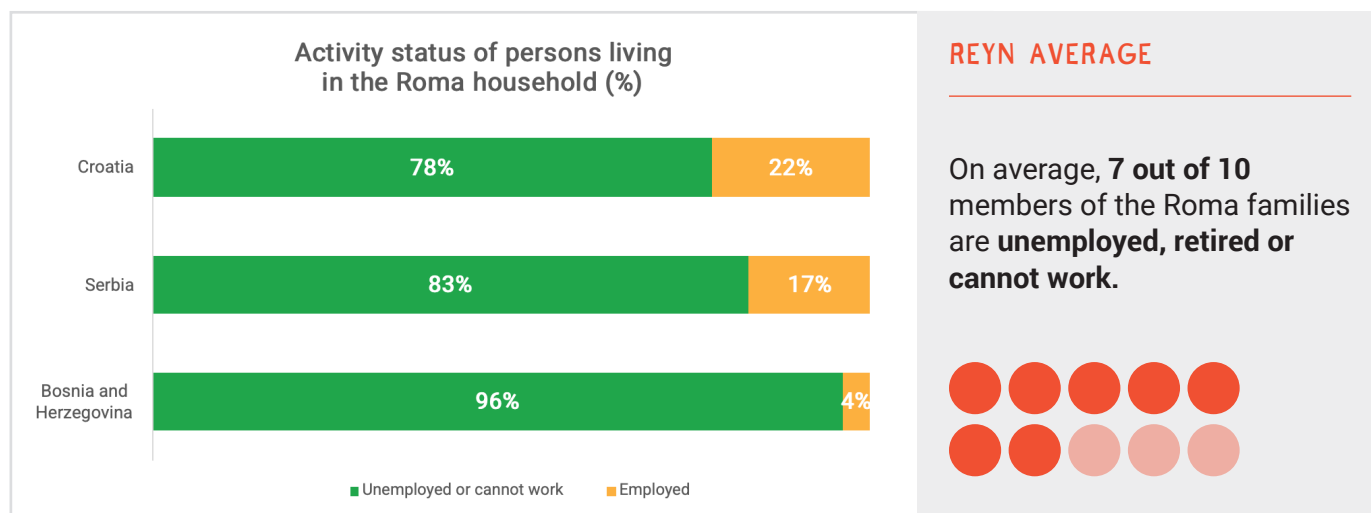
Related to the topic of Family and Living Environment, the research explores the living conditions and household environments of young Roma children and their families, as well as their educational level, with a focus on factors affecting Roma families and, consequently, their children. Various aspects, including the physical size and layout of homes, the availability of utilities, and the presence of potential household and neighborhood concerns, were examined. The study also delves into the specifics of living conditions for young children and adult cohabitation, as well as the affordability of certain essentials like home facilities, leisure time, food, and energy availability and affordability.

## FAMILY STATUS AND ECONOMY

In the heart of Europe, the Roma people live a life far removed from the bustling economic activity that surrounds them. Their households are marked by a striking disparity in employment opportunities. On average, a mere 27% of the Roma population is employed, while a staggering 73% remain inactive. This inactivity manifests itself in various forms, with 39% unemployed and 34% facing other obstacles to employment, such as retirement, illness, or disability.

Three countries in particular stand out for their alarmingly low employment rates among Roma households. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, only 4% of the Roma population has steady employment. Serbia and Croatia perform slightly better, with employment rates of 17% and 22% respectively. In these countries, searching for work is a fruitless endeavor for many Roma.

At the other end of the spectrum, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Ukraine exhibit higher rates of Roma employment. Bulgaria leads the pack with 38%, closely followed by Hungary and Ukraine (before the war) at 36%. Even with these higher percentages, there is a huge gap between the employment rates of the total population (70%) and the Roma community. These 30-35 points significant gap<sup>5</sup> indicates that unemployment contributes to low economic status, deepening poverty and limits the capacity of the financial autonomy of the Roma community.



<sup>5</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/images/6/65/Employment\\_rate\\_by\\_sex\\_and\\_country%2C\\_2021\\_%28in\\_%25\\_of\\_the\\_total\\_population\\_aged\\_20-64%29.png](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/images/6/65/Employment_rate_by_sex_and_country%2C_2021_%28in_%25_of_the_total_population_aged_20-64%29.png)





*"It's very difficult if you don't have work in Belgium. I'm having real problems with my bills. If you have job security here in Belgium, everything is OK. Then you can provide everything for your children – everything they need and you can also pay your bills and make ends meet. But recently, I have had no income and we are so behind with everything. My children feel that very much and I really do not know how to continue. I'm happy to be back working on an interim basis and the respect I get there. I just need work. If I have a good job and have job security, then I can provide everything for my children."*

ROMA FAMILIES | BELGIUM

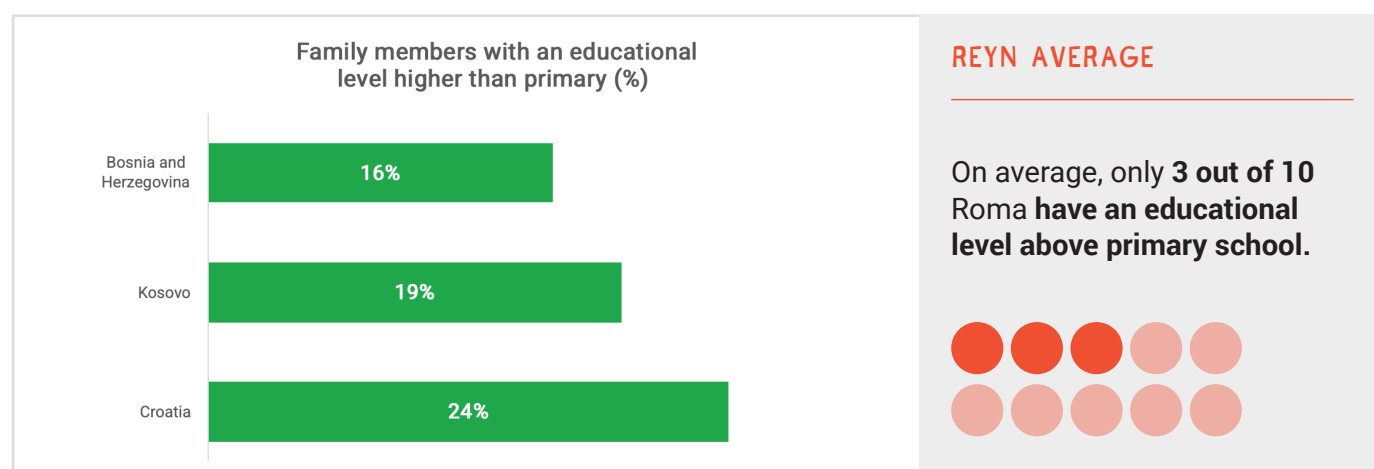
## EDUCATION LEVEL OF FAMILIES

As we delve into the educational landscape of Roma families across Europe, it becomes increasingly evident that their struggles extend far beyond the realm of employment. On average, 23% of family members left school without completing their studies, with 36% attaining only a primary level of education. Furthermore, just 18% managed to attain a lower secondary education.

The data reveals some alarming trends, with 9% of family members never having stepped foot in a school, and being unable to read or write. Meanwhile, the percentage of those with a bachelor's degree or higher remains below 2%. In Hungary, the situation is particularly worrying, as more than 60% of family members only have a primary level of education and 33% attended school without completing their studies.

Similar patterns emerge in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Croatia, where the number of family members with a lower secondary level of education or higher is remarkably low, at approximately 16%, 19%, and 24%, respectively. In comparison, Bulgaria, Ukraine, and Slovenia show slightly more promise, with, respectively, around 55%, 36%, and 30% of family members having achieved an educational level above primary.

Despite marginal improvements in certain countries, the educational rates for Roma families in Europe remain strongly inadequate. A vast gap separates them from the broader European population.<sup>6</sup>



<sup>6</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Educational\\_attainment\\_statistics#The\\_populations\\_in\\_the\\_EU\\_Member\\_States\\_have\\_different\\_educational\\_attainment\\_levels\\_in\\_2022](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Educational_attainment_statistics#The_populations_in_the_EU_Member_States_have_different_educational_attainment_levels_in_2022)

*“Often, it’s the parents themselves who cannot read and write in Bulgarian, which makes it difficult for them to help their children. They have low levels of motivation for sending their children to school because they have not seen good examples of Roma who have become successful because they were educated.”*

PROFESSIONALS | BULGARIA

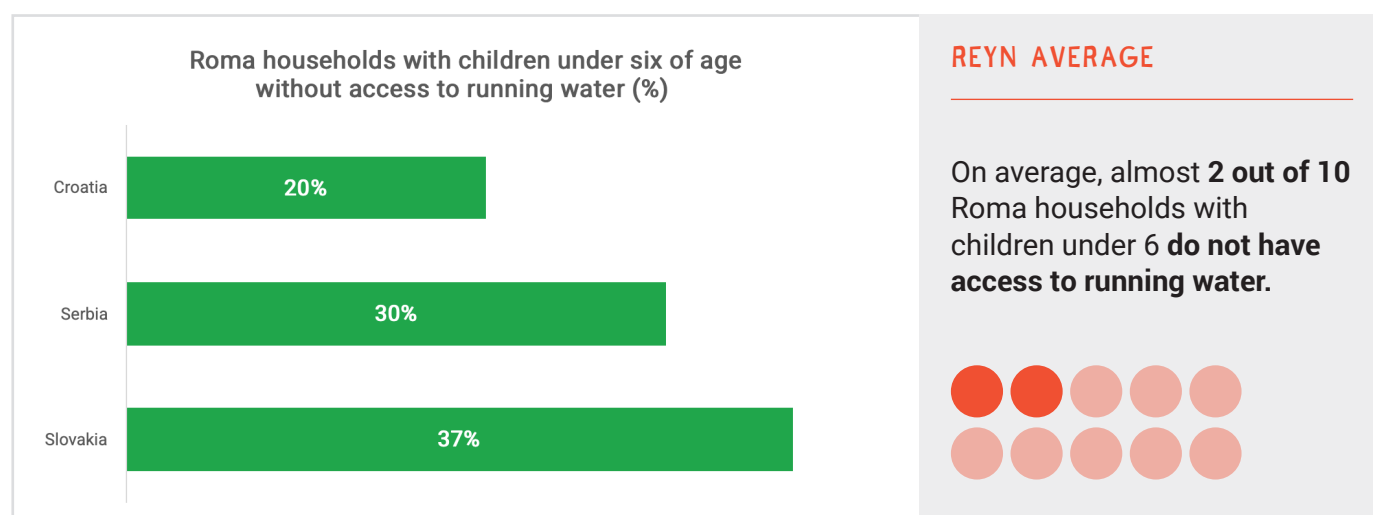
## ACCESS TO WATER, POWER AND ENERGY

The barriers faced by Roma children aged under six and their families continue to mount, with this study exposing the harsh realities of their living environments. Many Roma families across Europe lack essential facilities, such as access to running water, hot water, or sanitary facilities inside the house for their own use, further exacerbating the daily challenges they face.

The study shows that accessing running water remains a challenge for many Roma families with young children in Europe. The case of Slovakia is particularly alarming, as 37% of Roma families still do not have access to running water. The issue is similar in Serbia and Croatia, with, respectively, 30% and 20% of Roma families lacking access.

This dire situation underscores the deep-rooted disparities that persist in the living conditions of Roma families. For instance, in Serbia, 28% of Roma families with young children also report a lack of access to electricity, while 68% of families in Hungary and 32% in Bosnia and Herzegovina are unable to maintain a suitable temperature in their homes during the winter months, which with climate change, are seeing more extremes in temperature.

These inadequacies in essential services not only pose a significant obstacle to the healthy development of young Roma children but also highlight the systemic issues that continue to adversely affect the Roma community at large.



*“We do not even have basic living conditions – we do not have running water, not even an external toilet. We have one 50-liter tank of water. The water isn’t safe to drink, but it’s the only water we have.”*

ROMA FAMILIES | SERBIA



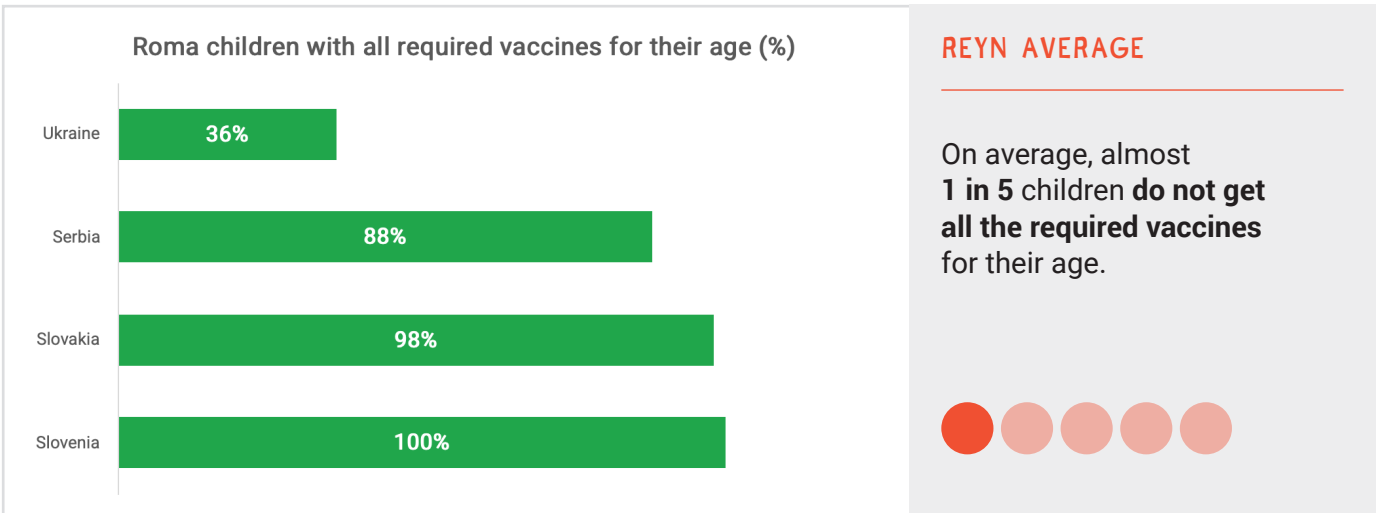
# HEALTH, NUTRITION AND WELL-BEING

The key research area of health, nutrition, and well-being explores the health and care status of young Roma children and their families. It delves into topics such as chronic diseases and disabilities among family members, prenatal and postnatal health practices, as well as patterns of substance use. The REYN Study evaluates the frequency and ease of access to healthcare services, including regular check-ups, nutrition, and immunization status, and addressing children’s health issues. It also investigates the availability and utilization of support systems for mental health needs. In this section, by evaluating these factors, we aim to present a comprehensive picture of health conditions, nutrition, care accessibility, and wellness practices within the surveyed Roma communities.

## IMMUNIZATION

Building upon the exploration of health and well-being disparities, our attention turns towards immunization patterns within the Roma community, an essential indicator of healthcare access and early childhood health status. Our data illustrate a wide geographical disparity in vaccination rates among Roma children across different countries. Most notably, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Ukraine display concerning levels of under-vaccination, with a staggering 68% and 64% of Roma children, respectively, not receiving age-required vaccines. In contrast, countries like Slovenia, Hungary, and Slovakia have successfully ensured higher vaccination rates: only 4% of Roma children are not adequately immunized.

Roma families are often legally invisible and without health insurance. They also report having a lack of trust in family doctors due to insufficient information about the importance of immunization. For example, a testimony from Ukraine elaborates further: *“I don’t let my child have all the vaccines. When I see that the doctor is not confident or unsure and not taking responsibility, I refuse to vaccinate my child.”* Meanwhile, in Bulgaria, which has a better vaccination rate among Roma, an interviewed professional pointed out *“We also work in the direction of improving the scope of vaccinations of children aged 0–8 in accordance with the national vaccinations calendar. We talk to mothers about the importance of the respective vaccines.”*





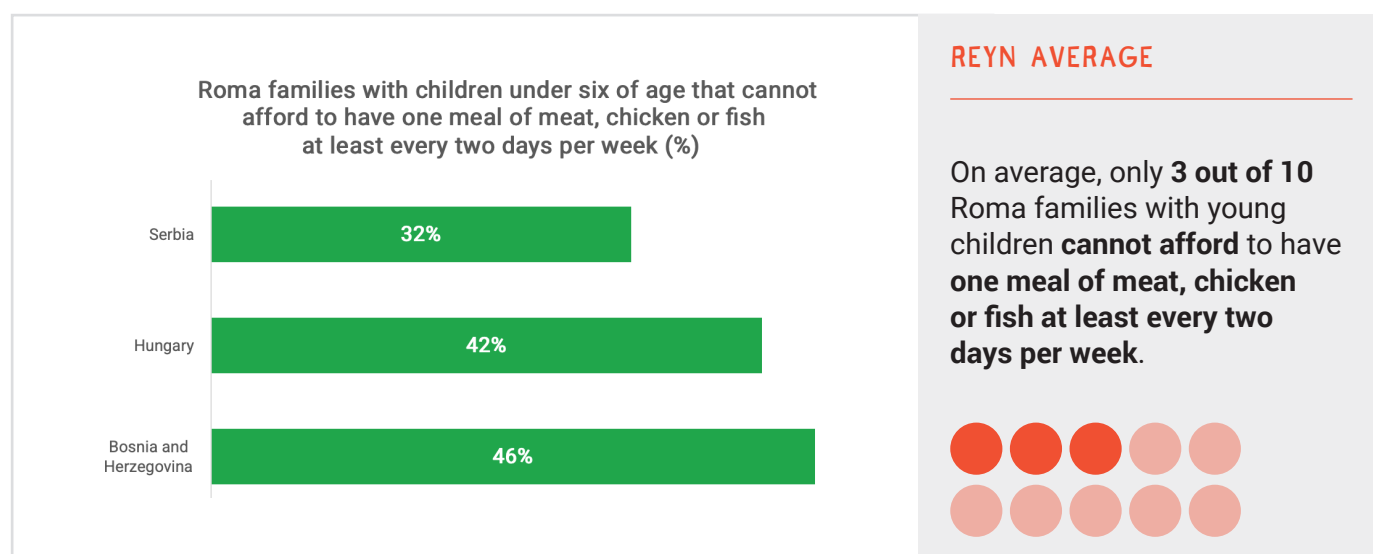
*“Lack of access to health care (due to being legally invisible or having no health insurance) means that they often lack access to even the most basic services.”*

PROFESSIONALS | BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

## NUTRITION

The barriers and difficulties faced by Roma families with children under six years of age can also be observed by examining their financial status and constraints which prevent them from fulfilling their basic needs.

For many Roma families across Europe who participated in the research, the affordability of nutritious food remains a challenge. An average of 30% of Roma families are unable to provide their children with one meal of meat or fish at least every two days. Most countries report that 26% of families (or fewer) lack access to nutritious food, while Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary, and Serbia stand out with 46% and 42% and 32% respectively. Professionals from Bosnia and Herzegovina elaborate further: *“Parents believe that their income is not enough to provide their children with a normal and healthy diet. They point out that they are barely surviving and that an additional problem is the recent rise in the cost of living.”*



*“To have good nutrition, you have to be financially stable to afford healthy food. That is not the case with Roma. We eat whatever we can. On a typical day, we can earn 2–3 euros, so with that money you can only buy bread and potatoes.” What prevents us from creating a quality environment at home are the living conditions. There is no food, heating or running water. In such situations, it is difficult to promote education because there are more urgent needs.”*

ROMA FAMILIES | SERBIA

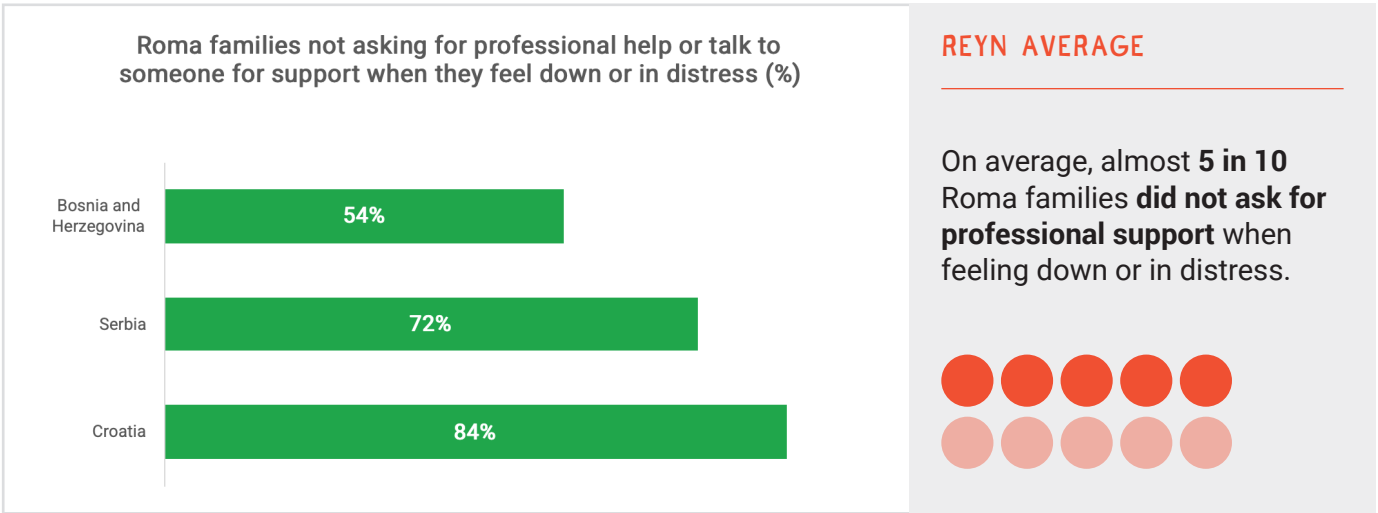


## FAMILY AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

The psychosocial well-being of Roma children and their families isn’t often emphasized enough, despite the known challenges these communities face. Evidence shows that Roma are disproportionately affected by factors such as social exclusion and discrimination, coupled with difficulties in securing employment, education, housing, and social support. These conditions can significantly influence their overall emotional and psychological resilience and well-being, as well as life prospects.

The REYN Study delves into the significant aspect of emotional and mental health support for Roma families. As for the number of Roma families who seek help or talk to someone when feeling down or in distress, the data is alarming in most countries involved in the research, with 50% of Roma families not seeking help in such situations. Croatia, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina exhibit the most worrisome data, with 84%, 72%, and 54% of Roma families, respectively, not seeking help when needed. Slovakia and Slovenia show slightly better rates, with 32% and 25% of Roma families refraining from seeking support in such situations.

These findings emphasize the importance of addressing the complexity of the health and well-being of Roma families with young children, as well as encouraging larger investment and comprehensive strategies to ensure the availability and accessibility of mental health support services.



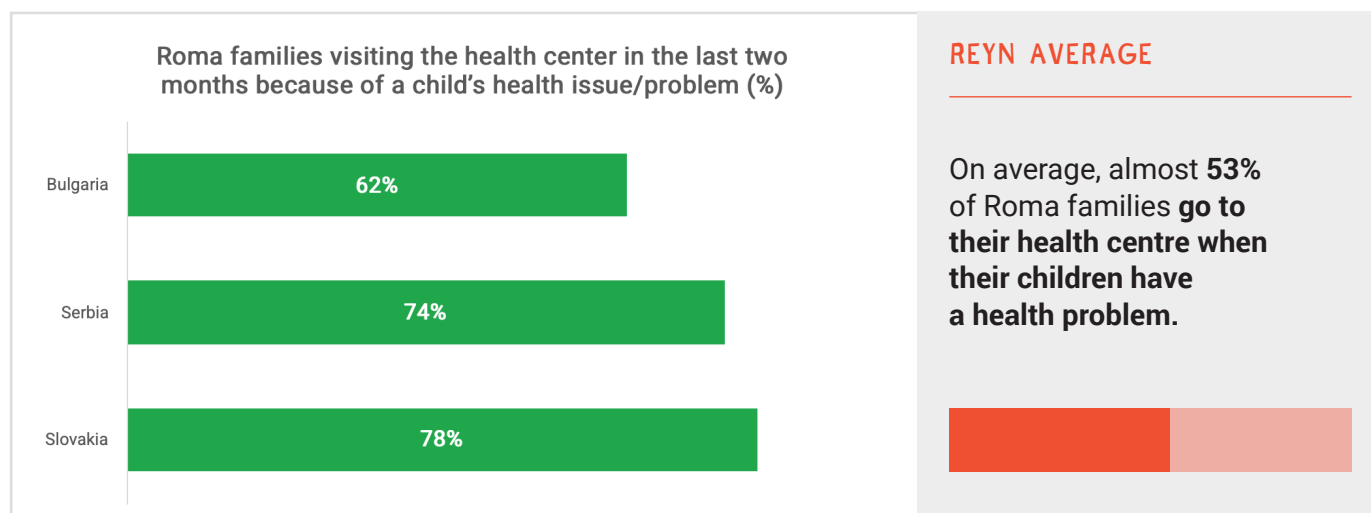
*“I’ve been under a lot of stress and pressure lately. It helped me to talk to my aunt, who I trust the most, and who was going through a similar situation in the same period. I’ve never sought professional help.”*

ROMA FAMILIES | SLOVENIA

## SEEKING MEDICAL HELP

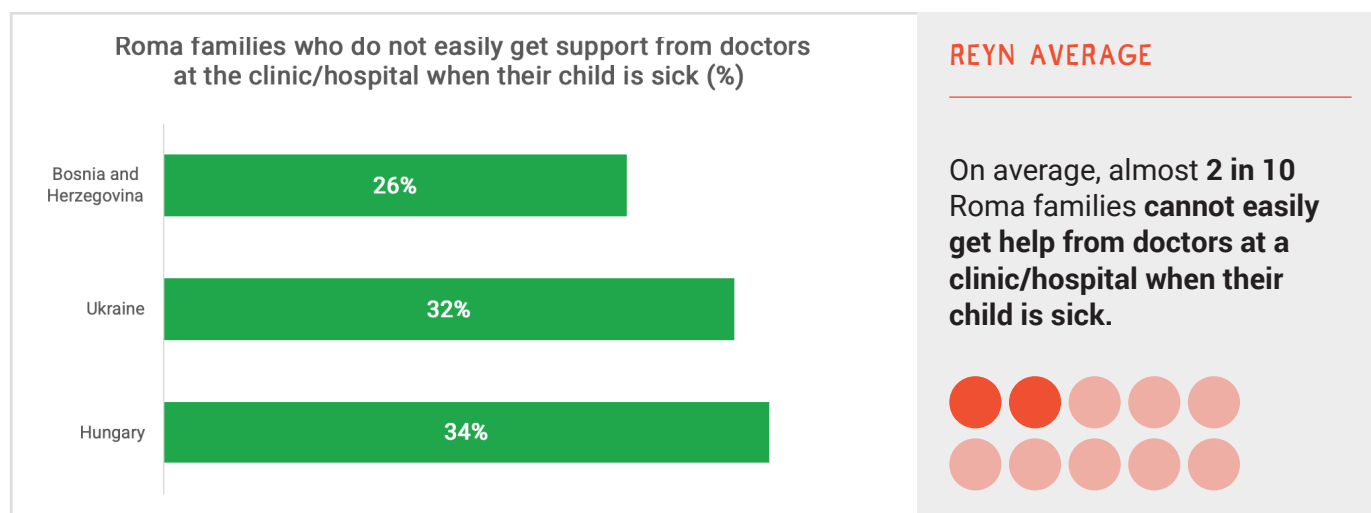
When examining data regarding health-related difficulties and barriers faced by Roma children under six years of age and their families, we observed a high level of parental awareness about when their children need medical care. Data shows that in the last two months, due to a health issue or problem concerning their children, on average, one in every two Roma families in Europe sought medical attention. Taking into account the number of Roma families who visited a health center specifically for Slovakia, Serbia, and Bulgaria, this figure increases to 78%, 74%, and 62%, respectively.





While it is promising that a significant number of Roma families are accessing healthcare services, not all families receive the necessary care and medical attention for their children when visiting a health center.

The study reveals that in Slovakia, Serbia, and Bulgaria, 4%, 10% and 12% of parents, respectively, report struggling to get medical attention at a health center when their child is sick. Even higher rates can be observed in Hungary, Ukraine, and Bosnia and Herzegovina: 34%, 32%, and 26%, of Roma families, respectively, face difficulties in getting help for their children from doctors at hospitals.



*“Yes, it is indeed true that the doctor refuses to treat us, and what’s worse, he is the only doctor available in the entire area. Additionally, when we try to request a home visit, he claims to be unable to come due to a lack of fuel in his vehicle.”*

ROMA FAMILIES | UKRAINE



## SAFETY AND SECURITY

Concerning the safety, security, and social rights of Roma households with young children, the key areas that this research investigates is the accessibility of social security and social assistance, and safety in general.

The study seeks to understand household conditions regarding access to safe water, and the safety of the neighborhood for children. Additionally, it looks into issues such as birth registration, advice on positive child behavior without punishment, and awareness of domestic violence within the settlement. This data serves to provide a comprehensive understanding of the social and safety-related experiences within the Roma community.

### FAMILY FINANCIAL SUPPORT

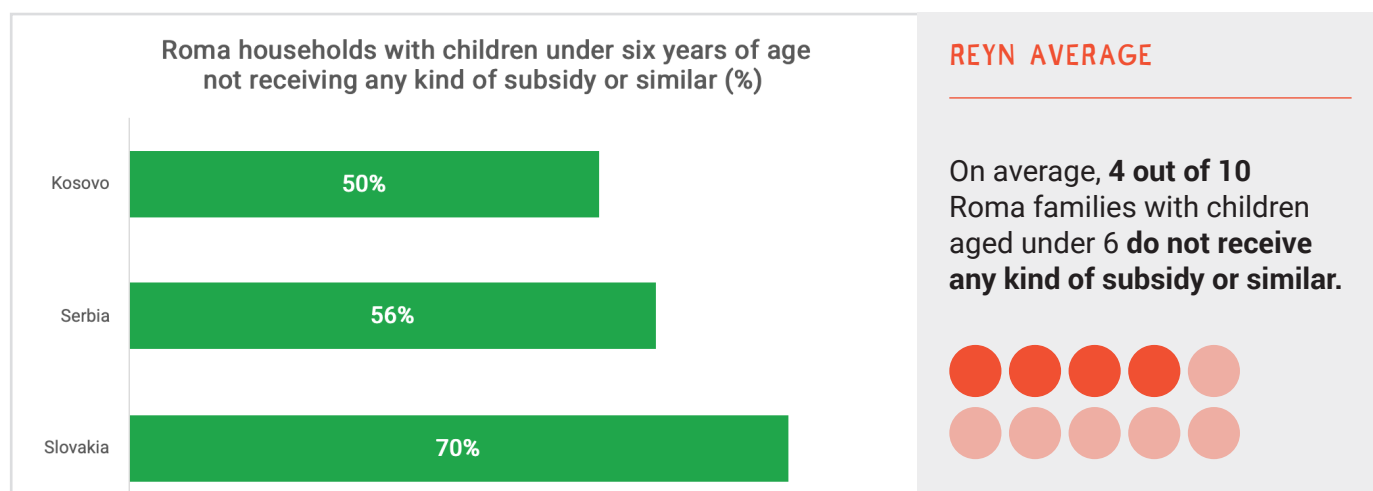
According to the data collected, the number of Roma households without any kind of subsidy or similar support is particularly alarming in countries such as Slovakia, Serbia, Kosovo, and Ukraine, where the percentages reach 71%, 56%, 50%, and 40%, respectively. These figures emphasize the need for stronger social safety nets and financial support systems for vulnerable Roma families with young children. The current situation does not help them overcome financial barriers to secure a more stable living situation.

For example, in the case of Hungary, a policymaker describes the situation as follows.

*“Family financial support is mostly given to better-off families. Disadvantaged families are not entitled to a range of benefits, e.g. financial support from the government available to parents who had at least two years of continuous full-time employment. Also, the monthly family support has not been increased significantly for 30 years.”* Policymakers | Hungary

Meanwhile, a kindergarten professional from Slovakia points out the financial constraints of Roma families in securing their children a meal.

*“Until we sort out the state subsidies [for children’s food], we have a problem. For those who pay, the food allowance comes to €40 per month. That’s a big problem for them. Even if we create the conditions in the kindergarten [technical, inclusive team, etc.], parents don’t have the money to pay the basic fees.”* Professionals | Slovakia.

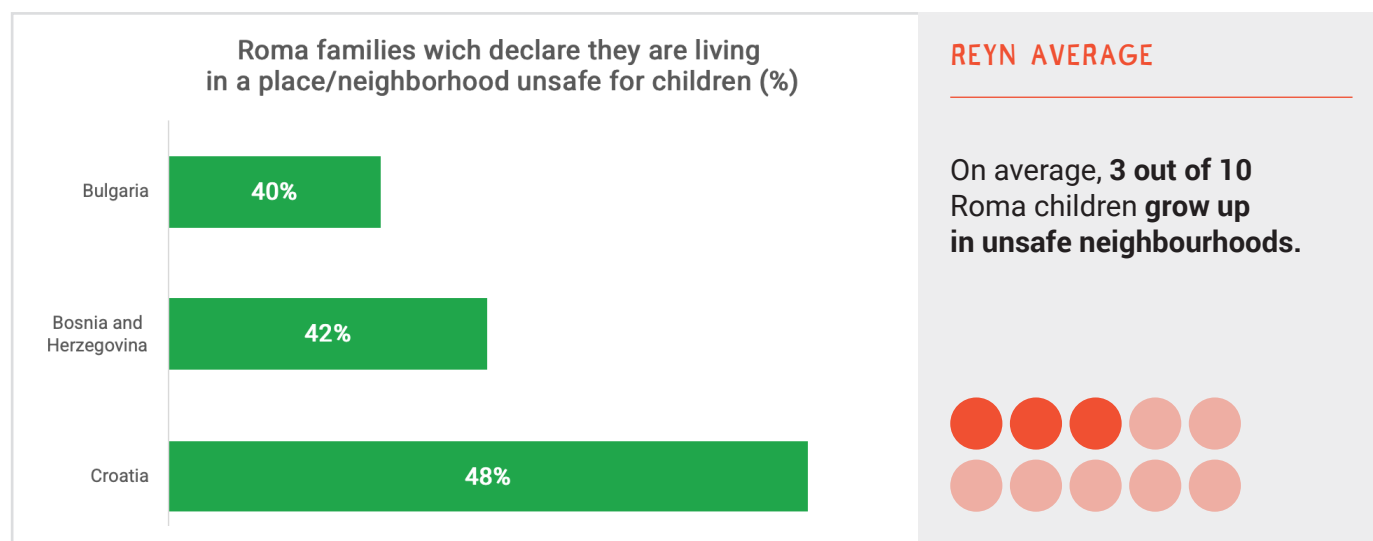


*“Economic conditions are the main obstacle to children continuing with school. Parents cannot provide school supplies or clothing. Another barrier that also hinders children is the lack of transportation, and that schools are far from home. In the area where they live, it is dangerous, due to stray dogs. Often, the parents have to take them to school, or they have to cover all the expenses themselves because the municipality has never taken any such action to help in this regard.”*

PROFESSIONALS | KOSOVO

## SAFETY

Highlighting the challenges faced by Roma families with respect to safety and security, our study reveals a stark reality regarding the living conditions of Roma children. On average, 30% Roma children are growing up in areas deemed to be unsafe. The data presents an unsettling trend of insecurity in neighborhoods inhabited by Roma families, with 5 countries out of 10 above that average. For instance, in Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, a staggering 40%, 42%, and 48% of Roma families, respectively, report living in neighborhoods considered unsafe for their children. This illustrates a pressing issue that severely impacts the quality of life and future prospects for young Roma children. Safety and security concerns arise from barriers to social security or social protection as well as growing up in neighborhoods exposed to crime, violence, and vandalism. On average, 70% of Roma families with young children view their area/zone where they live as safe.



*“Usually, there is low security in the Roma settlements unless the community members create it for themselves. Roma mothers believe that small children feel safe when they are in their arms, or close to them all the time.”*

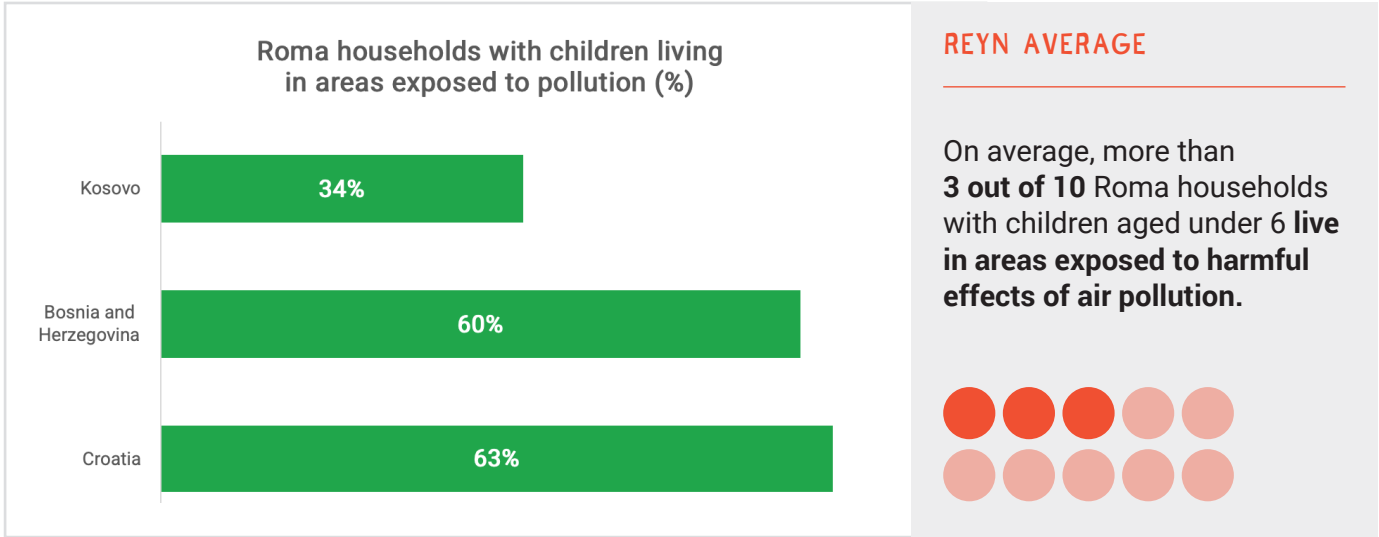
FAMILIES | HUNGARY





POLLUTION

Exploring further the complexity of factors impacting the health status and well-being of Roma families with young children, the REYN Study raises the issue that pollution affects many Roma communities across Europe. The percentage of households facing pollution from nearby factories or other sources exceeds 30%. Particularly alarming data comes from Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, with 63%, 60% and 34%, respectively, of Roma households with children under six being exposed to pollution from nearby factories or other sources such as waste landfills.



*“There have been more mayors, but nothing has changed.  
The EU should at least help with some money so that the roads,  
sewage systems and water infrastructure can be built better.  
I would like to see that done as well, because it would certainly  
improve the quality of life in the village.”*

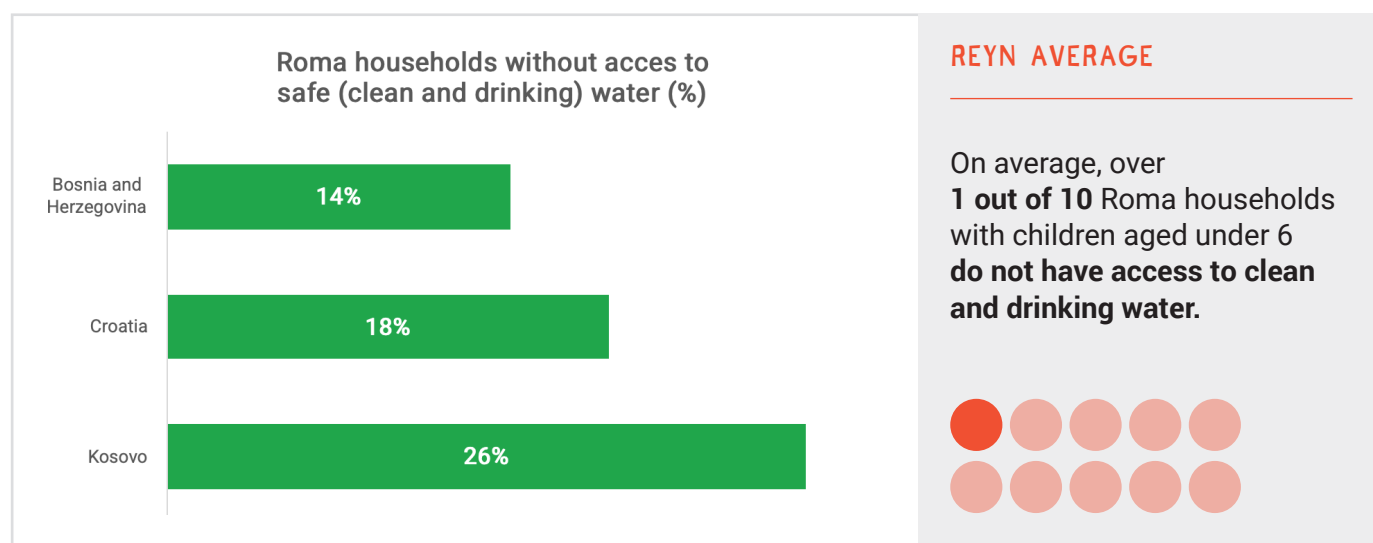
FAMILIES | SLOVAKIA



## CLEAN, DRINKING WATER

In addition to the harmful effects of different kinds of sources of pollution, which Roma families with young children are exposed to, the study further examines the access to safe water – water that is considered clean and drinkable. While the REYN average of 89% of Roma families with young children have access to safe water, country data reveals that Kosovo (26%), Croatia (18%), and Bosnia and Herzegovina (14%) still lack access.

A professional from Croatia describes the complexity of factors determining access to safe water (see quote below).



*“The problem is drinking water and the fact that the surroundings of Roma settlements are usually waste deposits or agricultural land treated with different herbicides. Roma people stick water pumps into the ground, but not usually deep enough, and the water gets contaminated.”*

PROFESSIONALS | CROATIA



## EARLY LEARNING

The REYN Study reveals numerous difficulties and barriers for Roma children and their families which adversely affect children's development in relation to early learning opportunities.

The study focuses on early learning contexts and experiences of Roma children under six years old. It delves into the details of enrollment in early childhood education and care (ECEC) services and the demographics of their educational/learning environments in connection with their experiences of potential discrimination in these settings. Additionally, the study assesses the availability of public spaces suitable for young children and families, including playgrounds, city parks, libraries, and similar.

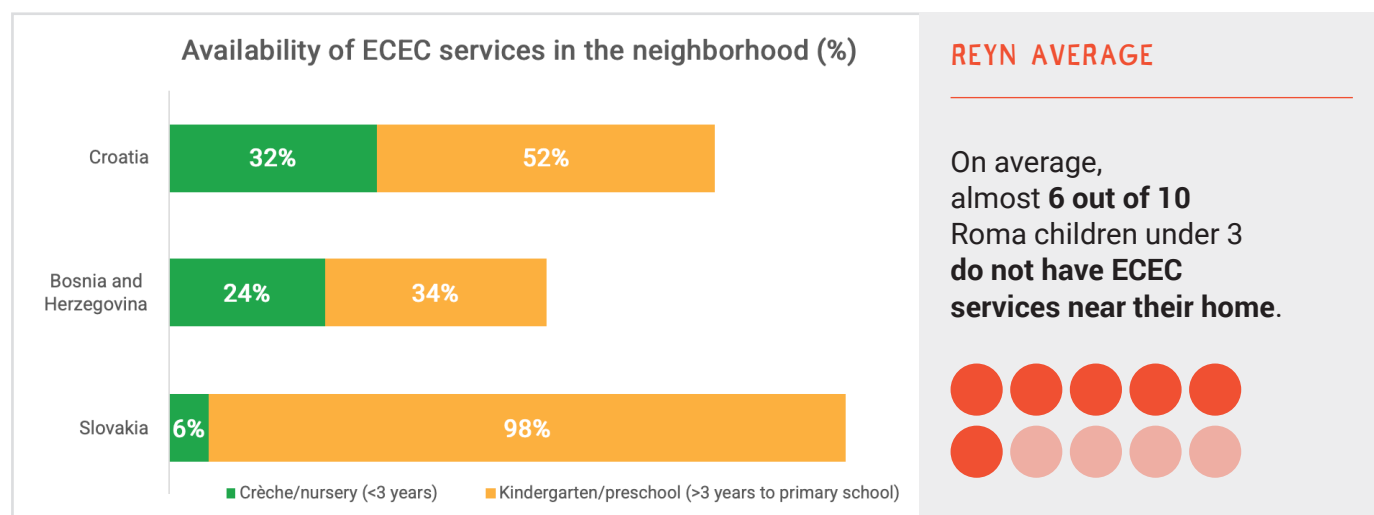
### AVAILABILITY OF ECEC SERVICES

The barriers and challenges for Roma children in Europe under six years of age and their families become evident when looking at the availability of ECEC services and other essential facilities in their neighborhood or nearby (not more than two kilometers away from their home).

Although the availability of services in the neighborhood does not automatically imply enrollment, their availability still provides an opportunity for prospective enrollment, attendance, and inclusion.

On average, 53% of parents report that ECEC services are available in their neighborhood or are near their home. Analysis of the data on the availability of ECEC services in the vicinity shows that particularly for children under the age of three, this is an area of concern. On average, while 68% of parents confirm the presence of kindergartens or pre-primary facilities for children aged between three and the starting age of compulsory education, only 41% indicate the availability of such services for their children.

Looking at the country-specific data, the study records that in Bosnia and Herzegovina, only 29% of parents report the availability of ECEC services (34% kindergartens from age three to the age for starting of compulsory education, and only 24% services for children under the age of three). In contrast, in Slovakia, 98% of parents report the availability of kindergarten or pre-primary services for children aged three until the starting age of compulsory education, and only 6% report the availability of services for children under three years of age.



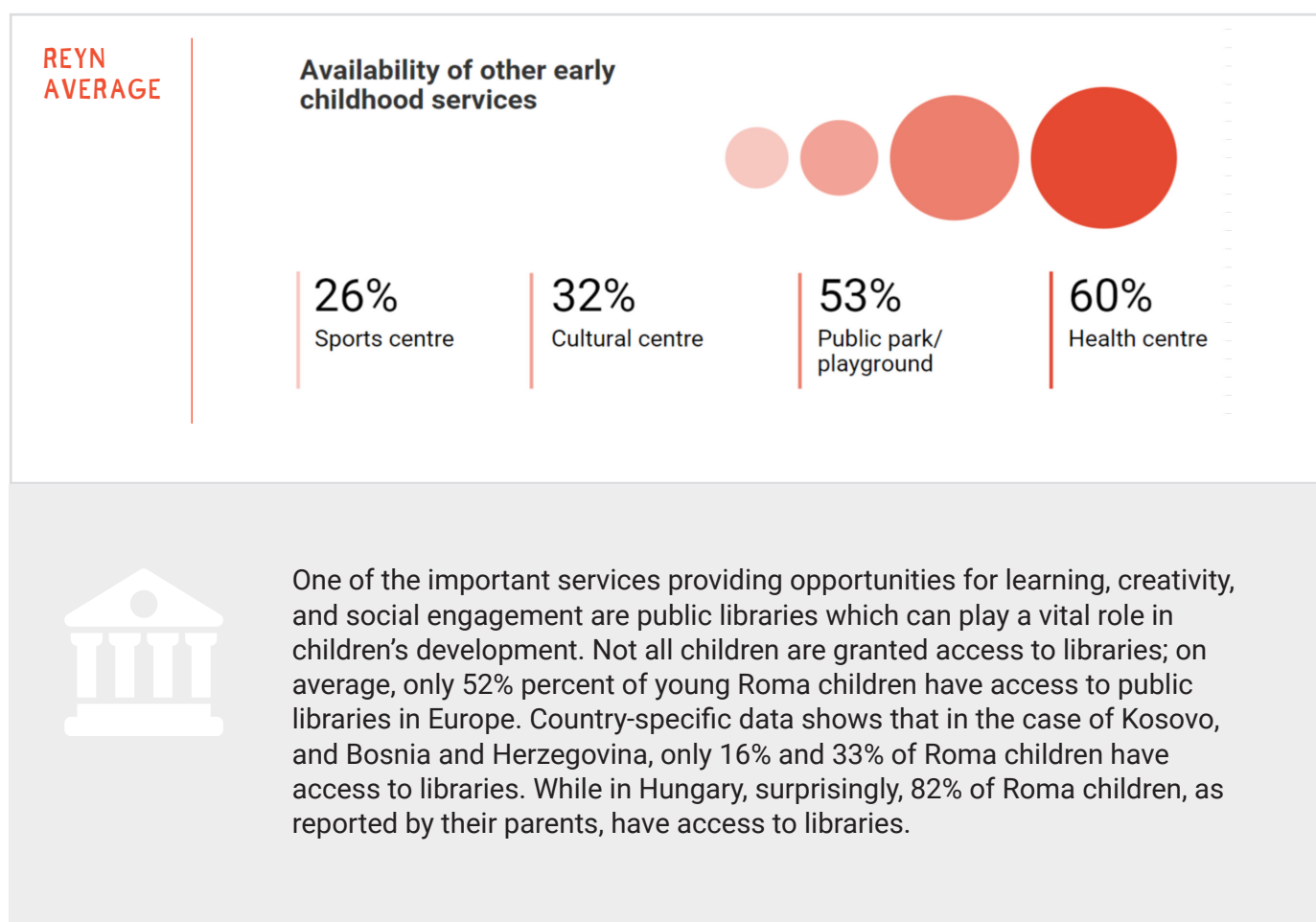
## AVAILABILITY AND PROXIMITY OF OTHER SERVICES

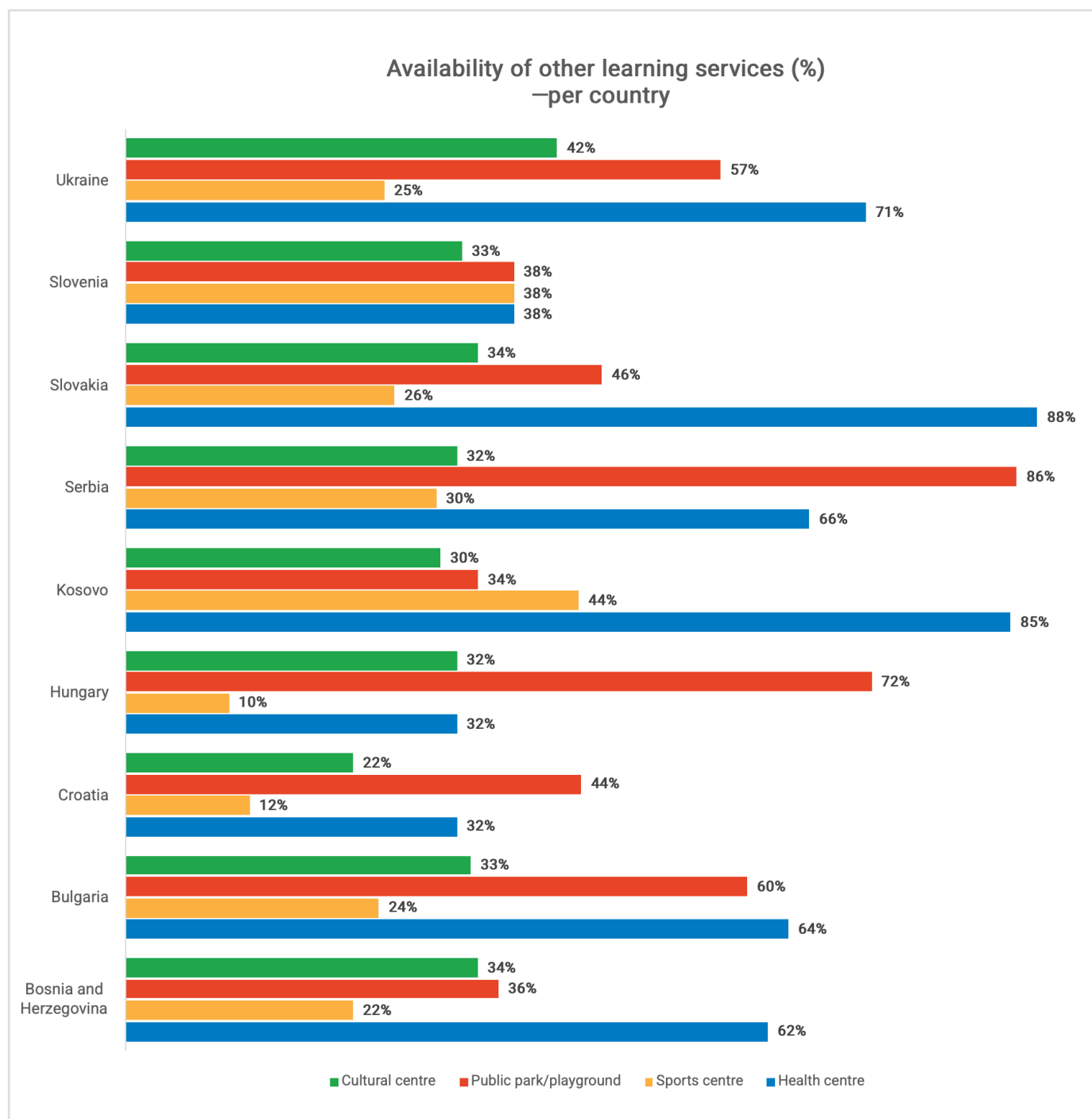
Looking at other essential services that are available in the neighborhood or are not more than two kilometers away from the place/homes where Roma families with young children live, the study reveals that, on average, only five out of ten Roma children live near public parks or playgrounds, and only two out of ten have sports facilities in their neighborhood.

While six out of ten Roma children have health facilities near their home, only three out of ten Roma children benefit from cultural services and facilities. This limits the variety of learning opportunities to explore, develop and thrive.

When looking at the country-specific data related to other essential services providing a variety of opportunities for early learning and development, the study reveals that in the case of Kosovo and Slovenia, on average, only 34% and 38% of children, respectively, live near public playgrounds or parks.

When examining the proximity of services in Hungary and Croatia, the study reveals the limited availability of health, sport, and cultural facilities and services in the vicinity of places where Roma families live with their young children. For instance, health services are close at hand for only 32% of Roma families with young children in both Hungary and Croatia, while only 10% (Croatia) and 12% (Hungary) of children grow up in neighborhoods/areas where sports facilities exist. Equally concerning are the figures related to the proximity of cultural spaces and facilities that remain unavailable for 78% and 68% of children in Croatia and Hungary, respectively.





Lack of accessibility to essential services like libraries, parks, sports facilities, health services, and cultural amenities significantly constrains the learning and developmental opportunities for young Roma children across Europe. The REYN study highlights stark disparities.

*“They visit the doctor in the city. It’s 25–30 minutes on foot and mostly, they walk. They carry the child in a carriage, or in their arms. We also have a hospital with a polyclinic here, it’s about four kilometers away.”*

PROFESSIONALS | SLOVAKIA





## ENROLLMENT AND PARTICIPATION IN ECEC

The disparities between the attendance rates in early childhood education of Roma children and children from the general population are significant. While nine out of ten children from the general population attend the ECEC services, the rate for Roma children is as low as **four out of ten** (FRA, Roma Survey 2021).<sup>7</sup> To tackle these disparities and reduce the gap, the European Commission has introduced several recommendations to Member States in the Child Guarantee and “Barcelona Targets”.<sup>8</sup>

### Early childhood education attendance rates

#### ROMA CHILDREN



#### GENERAL POPULATION



*“Kids in Banja Luka don’t usually go to kindergarten before school. While children living in the city go to school, those without an official city address don’t get much support. There’s no organized system to check on these kids or share information about them. Even if there are rules to help Roma families, it’s unclear if they’re really working.”*

POLICYMAKERS | BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

The challenge of availability and accessibility of ECEC services has already been discussed in this study by pointing out that early childhood services are often not easily accessible for many Roma families.

<sup>7</sup> FRA, Roma Survey 2021, Roma in 10 European countries. Main results - ROMA SURVEY 2021 (europa.eu).

<sup>8</sup> COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION on early childhood education and care: the Barcelona targets for 2030: <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14785-2022-INIT/en/pdf>

The REYN Study delves further into exploring and understanding the factors impacting young Roma children's participation and enrollment in ECEC. Parents highlighted some of the factors determining their children's enrollment and participation in early childhood services. The majority of those interviewed pointed out the financial constraints, lack of transport, and distance to facilities, while a considerable number of parents also highlighted the lack of spaces in kindergartens, the presence of discrimination, documentation requirements, and a lack of trust.

In the table below, we summarize the factors determining young Roma children's enrollment and participation in ECEC services and programs. See Annex 2 (page 52) for a more detailed list.

BARRIERS FOR YOUNG ROMA CHILDREN TO ENROLL IN ECEC SETTINGS	
Affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of financial resources</li> <li>• Costs of ECEC services</li> <li>• Contract employment as a requirement for enrollment</li> </ul>
Availability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waiting lists</li> <li>• Lack of ECEC services</li> </ul>
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long distances</li> <li>• No means of transportation available</li> <li>• Lack of information about documentation for enrollment</li> <li>• Lack of flexibility in parents' work schedules</li> </ul>
Discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being Roma as a barrier to enrollment</li> </ul>
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of trust and information</li> </ul>

In cases when ECEC services are available, affordable, and accessible, and parents are supported to enroll their children through reach-out programs or similar, the REYN Study records that parents value preschool and emphasize positive point.

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*"I feel really good at school. I just trust the school, and I know when I leave my children in preschool, I will definitely find them here again. It's very different than in Bulgaria. I get a lot of respect here, both from the teachers and from the bridging figure. Also, a lot of understanding."*

ROMA FAMILIES | BELGIUM



## DISPARITIES, BARRIERS, AND OPPORTUNITIES

Following the enrollment and participation of young Roma children in ECEC services, the REYN Study delves into the disparities, barriers, and opportunities for early learning. In this section, segregation patterns, language difficulties, and inclusion strategies in early childhood education are discussed, showcasing the complexity of numerous factors depriving Roma children of opportunities for development, learning, and growth.

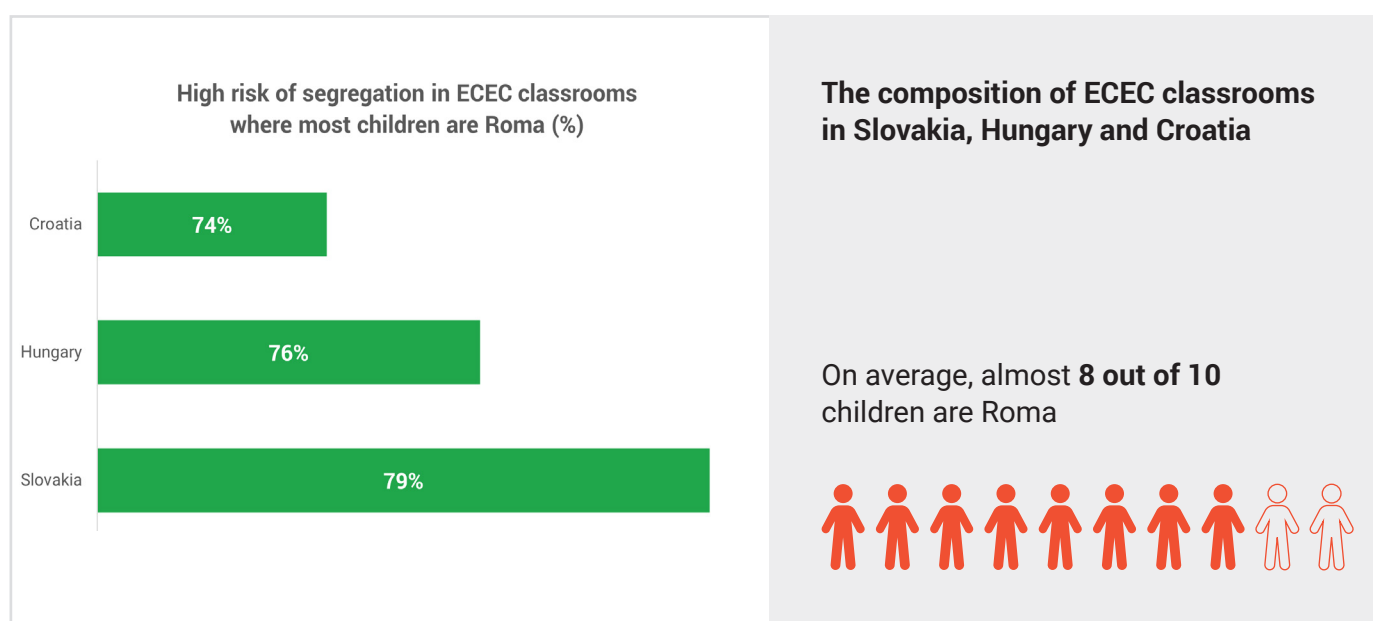
### SEGREGATION

Despite efforts to reduce the gaps that might yield better outcomes, special attention must be paid to the social phenomena of segregation that is very much present in educational practices and settings across Europe, even more so in countries with a larger number of Roma.

By looking at the demographics within classrooms and educational environments, the ratio of Roma children to all children gives an indication of the segregation they face: the higher the proportion of Roma children, the greater the segregation can be.

Based on parents' input, the study estimates that on average, 53% of young Roma children enrolled in ECEC might be at risk of segregation in the classroom. The perspective of professionals working with young Roma children and their parents differs, though. According to the data gathered, professionals estimate that around four out of ten **Roma children enrolled in ECEC (44%)** are likely to experience segregation always, often, sometimes, and/or rarely, while 33% of professionals do not know, or do not have information as to whether or not Roma children are segregated.

While the REYN average hovers around 44–53% based on input from both Roma parents and professionals working in early childhood services, the data coming from specific countries flags high rates of segregation in educational settings. Out of ten countries, Croatia, Hungary and Slovakia stand out, with 74%, 76%, and 79% (respectively) of Roma children being at risk of segregation. This means that in most cases, as reported by parents, all children, almost all children, or significant proportion of children in the classroom are Roma.

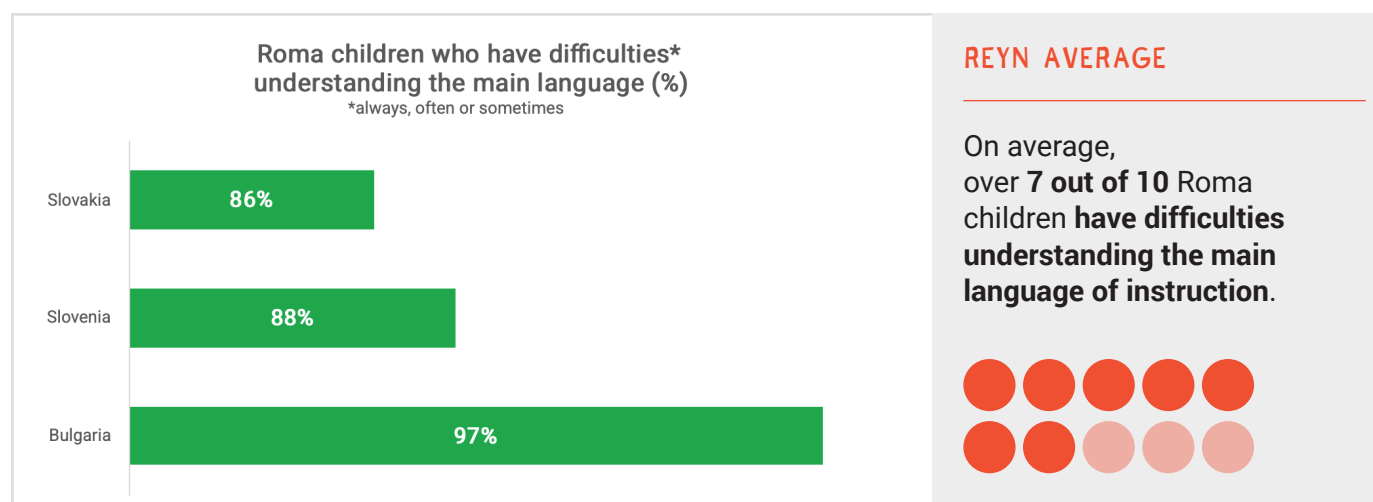


## LANGUAGE

When talking about the opportunities for early learning, we often look at the availability of services or programs, their proximity, and affordability. But we notably focus less on the quality of services, which includes inclusive practices that embrace diversity, part of which the first language of a child plays a vital role. Moreover, as stated by a policy maker from Ukraine, *“I also noticed that Roma children are very motivated to come to preschool when their culture is taken into account, their music is played at holidays or similar. The child wants to see a part of her/his world at preschool, so she/he feels more comfortable.”*

It is generally accepted that in learning processes and settings, the child’s first language is of utmost importance. Roma children attending early childhood education and care services, however, experience serious difficulties in understanding the language of instruction, which limits their opportunities for learning and the realization of their full potential.

According to professionals, on average, 75% of Roma children always, often, or sometimes face difficulties in understanding the main language of instruction. At the country level, alarming rates of language difficulty are found in Bulgaria (97%), Slovenia (88%), and Slovakia (86%).



*“In ECD services, there is no special attention being paid to cases where children do not understand the language. It is true that they most often learn the main language in pre-primary settings, but a special program should exist within ECD services. While non-Roma children can understand the teacher, the Roma are only learning the language. This problem also shows up later in primary schools.”*

FAMILIES | KOSOVO

## ROMA ASSISTANTS

When overcoming the language barriers mentioned above, Roma assistants or professionals speaking the Roma language play an important role. The study further explores the presence of Roma assistants who mitigate the effect of language barriers that young Roma children and their families face when enrolled/participating in an ECEC service.

The REYN Study shows that only 25% of Roma children attending ECEC services **always** get support from Roma assistants in overcoming language barriers; 22% get the support often, and 14% only sometimes.



If seven out of ten Roma children have difficulties understanding the main language of instruction (as presented above in the section related to language ), fewer than three out of ten benefit from the Roma assistant presence in the classroom.

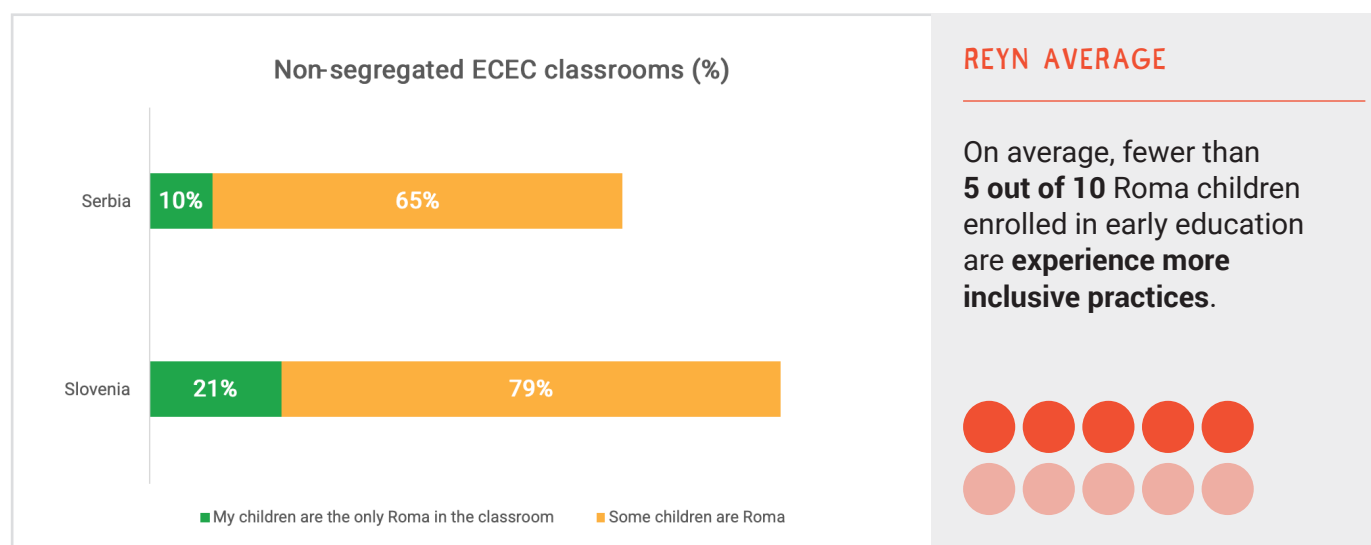
*“Even compulsory pre-school education faces problems at the local level. This is because the municipalities are not prepared for it in terms of capacity. There are not enough schools, and not enough assistants who speak the Roma language.”*

PROFESSIONALS | SLOVAKIA

## INCLUSION

As discussed above, based on parents’ input, on average 53% of young **Roma children enrolled in ECEC** might be at risk of segregation in the classroom, while **47% of them are less likely to experience segregation in the ECEC settings**. Looking into country-specific data, two countries stand out with positive trends. The REYN Study observes that in the case of Serbia, and Slovenia, most young Roma children enrolled in ECEC services are less likely to experience education and learning within segregated classrooms.

However, on average, segregation still prevails when enrolling/introducing Roma children to/in educational settings. The REYN Study identified positive trends indicating more inclusive approaches to enrollment and the participation of young Roma children in early childhood education and care services.



*“Our daughter could not speak Slovene when she entered school. One boy really tried to help her with the language so that he could understand her. Then her teacher decided to attend a course of Romani language to be able to help our children. All of us respected this noble decision. And we also had another teacher, who regularly took our children to the playground and worked with them on their physical fitness.”*

FAMILIES | SLOVENIA





## RESPONSIVE PARENTING

Another important key element that may be a determinant for the positive development of the child is responsive parenting. Parenting practices that are attentive to the child's needs, such as providing rich verbal input and maintaining and expanding on the child's interests, provide the variety of support required for multiple aspects of a child's learning. Based on focus groups conducted in nine countries with Roma families (mostly mothers), the following provides a list of most common practices/methods parents use to express love and affection to their children.

### Physical and verbal affection

- Hugs, kisses, cuddling
- Holding or carrying them
- Telling them "I love you"
- Positive affirmations or praises
- Talking to them

### Caregiving

- Cooking for them
- Taking care of them (feeding, bathing, etc.)
- Attending to their needs

### Quality time

- Playing games
- Spending time together
- Walking or going out with them

### Rewarding

- Buying them presents
- Fulfilling their wishes or desires

### Educational engagement

- Teaching them new things
- Helping with educational activities

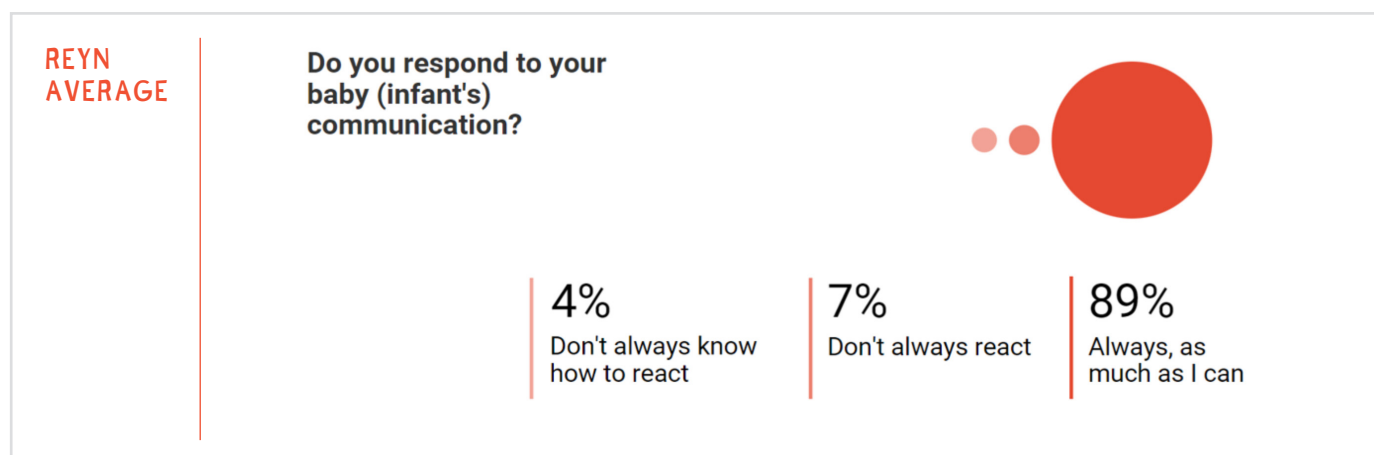
The REYN Study not only delves into how and to what extent the home setting promotes early learning and curiosity, but it also aims to present a more comprehensive perspective on the early learning conditions of young Roma children.

This broader view encompasses more than just their participation in ECEC services and programs.

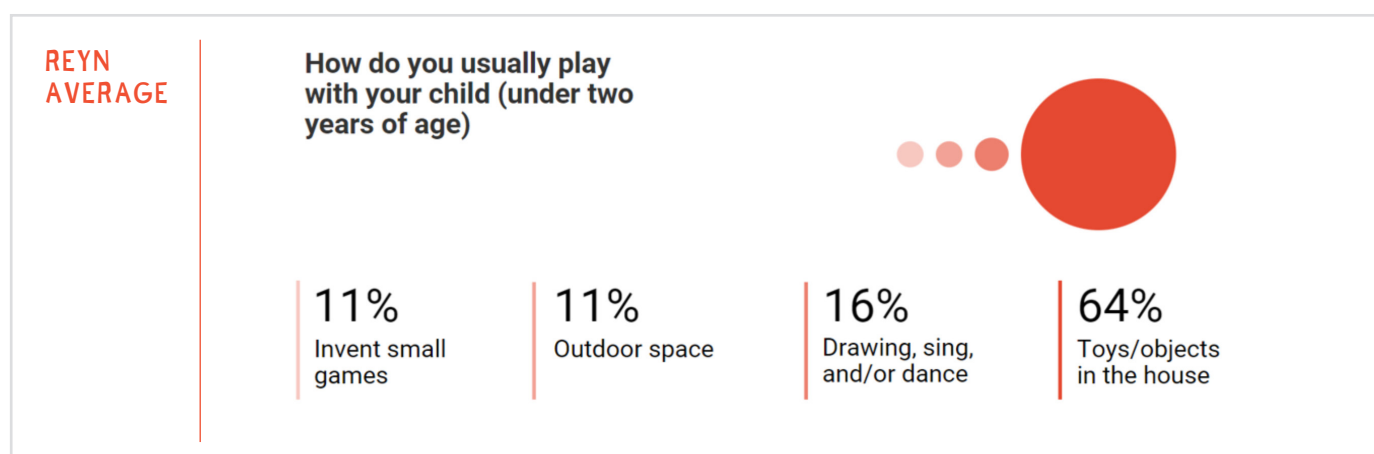
## PLAY AND INTERACTIONS

Parents are usually referred to as children's first playmates. Warm and caring interactions, enabling them to build strong bonds and laying the foundations for the development and growth of a child. The study further unpacks how Roma parents engage in communication with their young children through vocalizations, facial expressions and gestures, from the day they are born. The study records that on average, **89% of parents react to their babies' communication through vocalization, facial expressions, and gestures always or as much as they can.** A very positive trend can be observed across six out of the nine countries involved in the study, where the average parental responsiveness is above 85%. However, in the case of Hungary, 16% of parents say they don't always know how to react to their babies' communication signals.





Building on high parental responsiveness, the study further investigates how parents engage with their children through play. The vast majority of parents (six out of ten) make use of toys and other objects/items in the house to play with their children, while the remainder prefer to engage in play through drawing, singing, and/or dancing as well as inventing small games or use the outdoor space. During focus groups with families in Serbia, one mother explained, *"I show love by playing with my children and singing or drawing."*

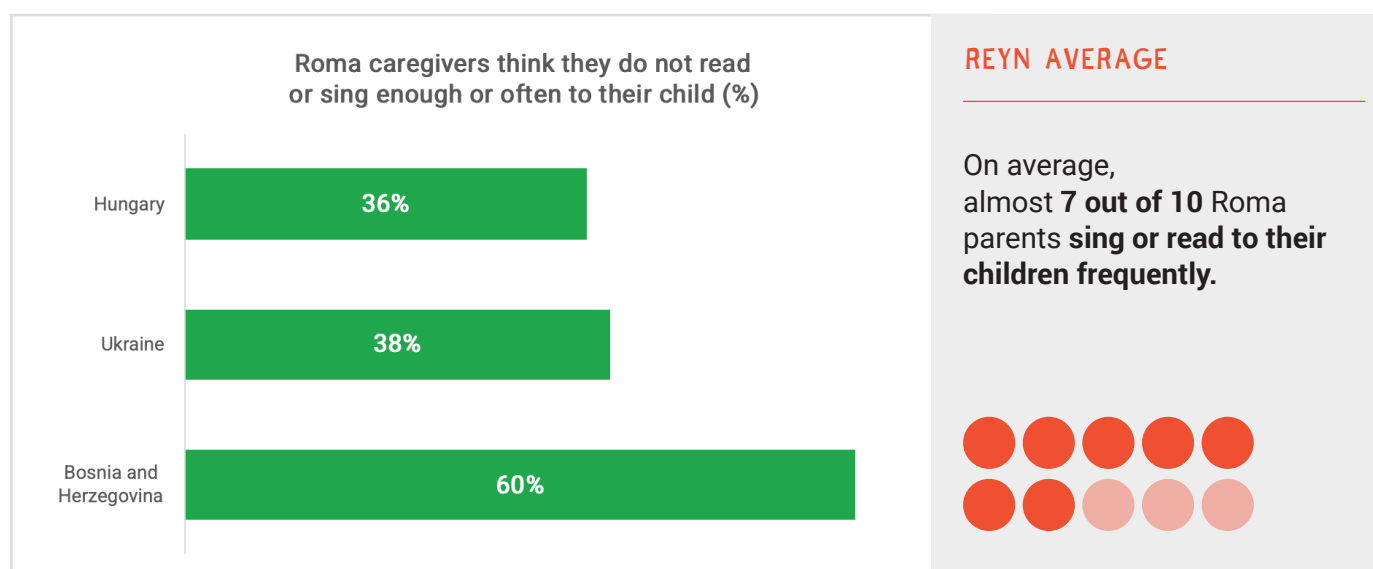


*“With younger children, who cannot express themselves yet verbally, mothers confirmed that they do not have problems understanding their children. They say that they feel what children want to tell them: “A mother just feels what the child needs.”*

#### FOCUS GROUPS WITH FAMILIES | SLOVENIA

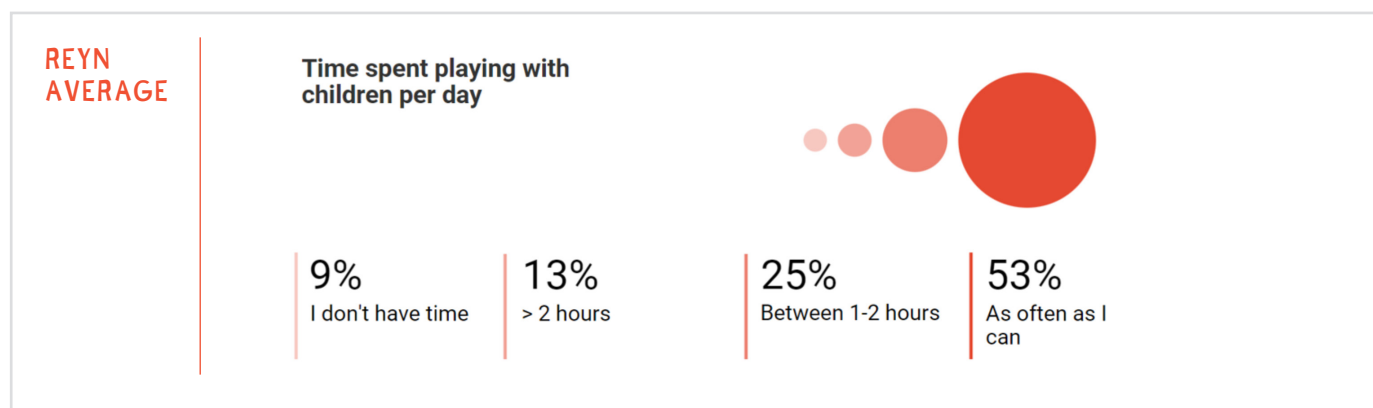
According to high parental responsiveness and engagement with their children through play, the study further delves into the frequency of play with children aged between two and six. On average, 75% of parents play with their children four times a week or more, with even higher rates in four countries above the average: Hungary (86%), Ukraine (84%), Slovenia (83%), and Kosovo (80%).

In terms of Roma families’ engagement with their children through singing and/or reading activities, the study records a positive average of **69% of parents who often and/or sometimes interact with their children through singing and/or reading**. In contrast, the number of Roma families who report not engaging in these activities often or not doing them enough is notably high in countries like Bosnia and Herzegovina (60%), Ukraine (38%), and Hungary (36%). The REYN average across nine countries is that 30% of parents think they do not engage in such activities enough. Only 1% of parents state that they do not have enough time.



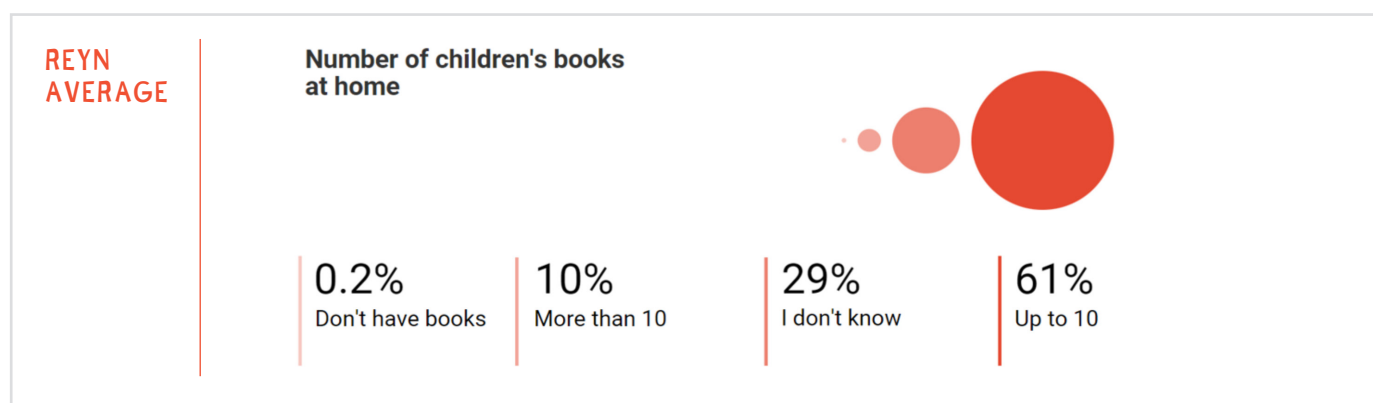
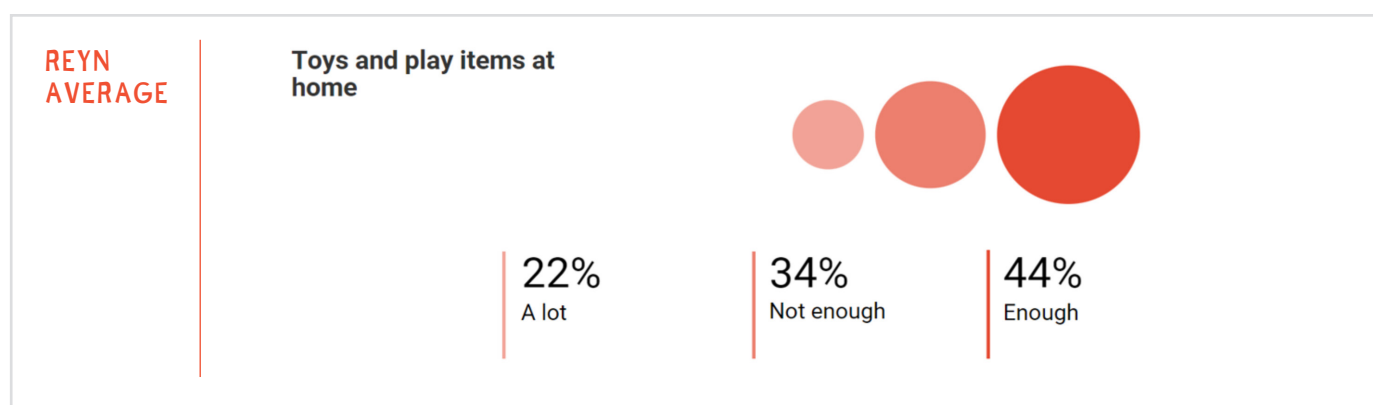
The study confirms the high level of awareness among Roma parents interviewed about the importance of interactions and the benefits of play. Overall, around 53% of parents state that they play with their child(ren) as often as they can, whereas 9% express that they don't have enough time. As one mother described in the focus group in Serbia, *“I like to dedicate one whole day to the child so that the child feels that I love him.”*

Looking at country-specific data, the study observes that four countries are above the REYN average regarding play time spent with children per day, with parents playing with their children as often as they can: Croatia (72%), Serbia (66%), and Ukraine and Slovakia (64%).



## HOME-LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Toys and books stimulate children's play and curiosity by engaging their senses, challenging their thinking, and providing opportunities for exploration and discovery. They serve as tools for learning and expression, nurturing imagination, promoting language and cognitive development, and aiding emotional understanding and communication. Therefore, the REYN Study wanted to learn more about the home-learning environment of young Roma children and the availability of toys. A total of 66% of Roma families across nine countries affirm that their children have a lot or enough toys at home to play with. The presence of books at home indicates that on average, six out of ten Roma families report having up to ten children's books at home. The conclusions from the focus groups conducted in Croatia reveal that there are parents that provide children with age-appropriate toys and picture books. At the same time, during focus groups in Hungary, some parents expressed a desire to support their children's development at home, but felt limited by their lack of resources and understanding. They highlighted as key obstacles the absence of toys, limited knowledge of child development, and a lack of parental role models in their own lives. For example, in Hungary on average, 44% of parents report not having enough toys or play objects at home, which is 10% above the REYN average (34%).



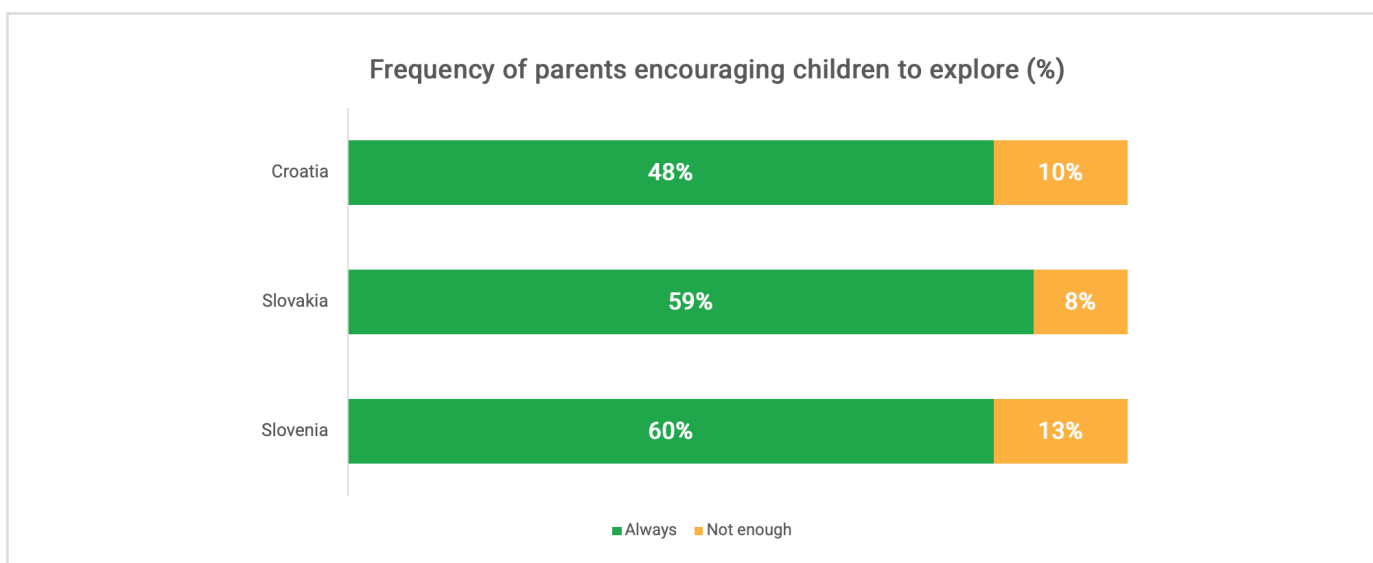
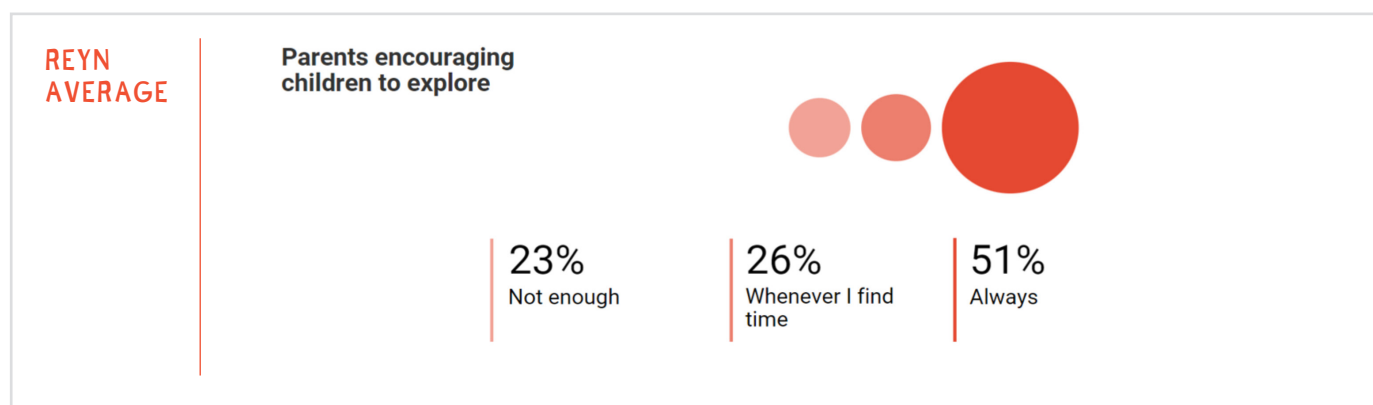
## STIMULATING CURIOSITY

Another area covered in the study is the proactivity of parents in encouraging children's curiosity by letting them explore objects, people or the surroundings around them. The findings show that, on average, 77% of Roma parents always or whenever they have the time, do encourage their children's curiosity. High parental awareness about the importance of children discovering and exploring the world around them can be observed in Slovenia (88%), Croatia (90%), and Slovakia (92%), all three of which are the above REYN average (77%).

The early experiences matter! To ensure children can explore a variety of objects and environments, as well as engage with a broad range of individuals in various contexts during their formative years, the role of caregivers is crucial. Caregivers must keep a careful balance between safeguarding the child and nurturing their innate curiosity to explore the world. Caregivers' support is instrumental in providing opportunities, encouraging, and accompanying their children on a path to fulfilling their full potential and fostering lifelong learning.

During the focus group discussions in Belgium, one parent reflected:

*"For example, I want my little daughter to be a dentist and the other one maybe, I don't know, a secretary or something. But, of course, I don't choose that. They choose. I am here to support them and help where I can. But it lies with them to study."* Roma families | Belgium



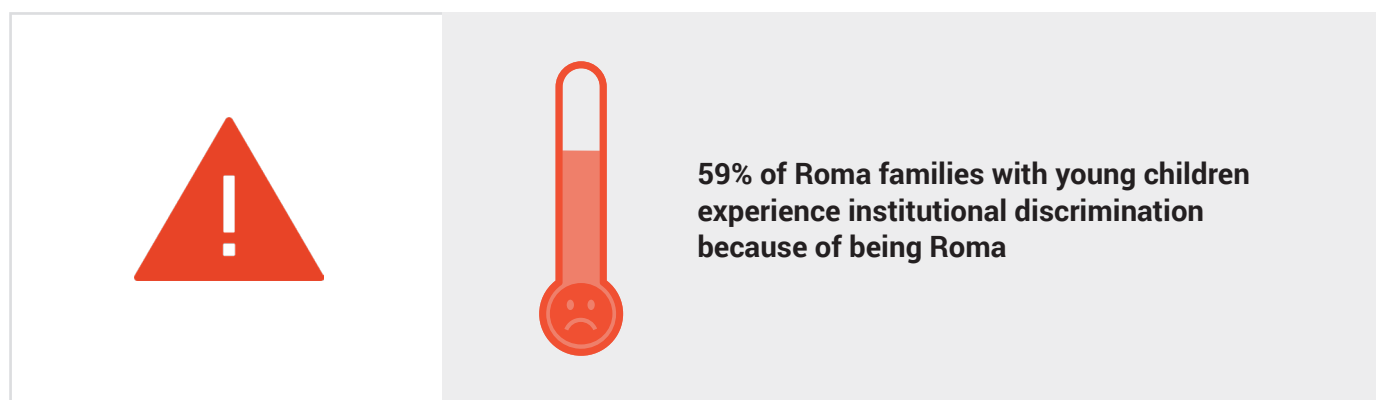


# DISCRIMINATION

Finally, and has been mentioned in many studies, investigations, and EU reports,<sup>9</sup> the most heinous forms of antigypsyism, hate-motivated crime, and harassment continue to hamper Roma inclusion, also impacting the development of Roma children under six years of age and their families.

The REYN Study shows how discrimination is one of the most important difficulties and barriers faced by Roma children under six years of age and their families, affecting opportunities for development, growth, and learning.

The data collected reveals that Hungary, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Ukraine are the countries where Roma families with children under six years of age experience the highest levels of institutional discrimination, as reported by parents. On average, six out of ten Roma families with young children report experiencing discrimination (always/often/sometimes/rarely) when accessing public services, looking for a paid job, in health services, and in educational settings.



## DISCRIMINATION IN ACCESSING PUBLIC SERVICES

The study further unpacks the complexity of institutional discrimination, delving deeper into how public services are accessed. It estimates that on average, **55% of Roma families with young children are more likely to experience discrimination in accessing public services**, i.e., in relation to supermarkets, shops, public transportation, and similar (always, often, sometimes, and/or rarely).

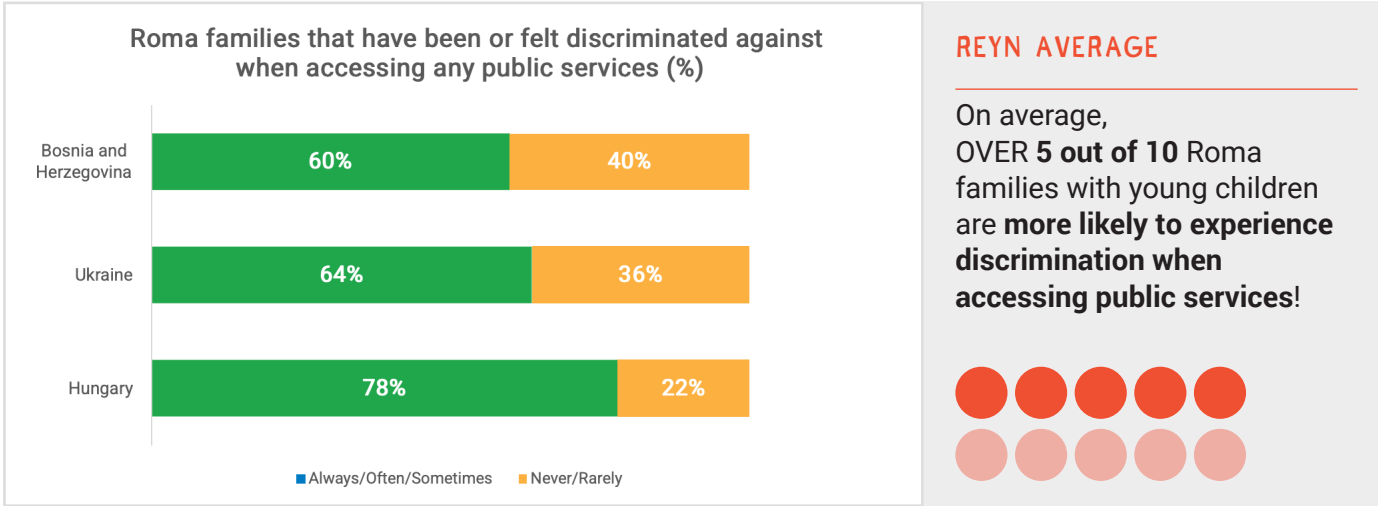
The percentage of Roma families that have been or have felt discriminated against when accessing any kind of public service (always/often/sometimes) is of particular concern in Hungary, Ukraine, and Bosnia and Herzegovina (78%, 64%, and 60%, respectively). In contrast, Roma families in Bulgaria (26%), Slovenia (27%), and Kosovo (29%) reported experiencing discrimination when accessing public services with significantly lower rates compared to the three aforementioned countries.

<sup>9</sup> See for instance, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. (2018). A persisting concern: anti-Gypsyism as a barrier to Roma inclusion. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Available at [https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra\\_uploads/fra-2018-anti-gypsyism-barrier-roma-inclusion\\_en.pdf](https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2018-anti-gypsyism-barrier-roma-inclusion_en.pdf)



Another essential domain in which Roma families with young children report experiencing institutional discrimination arises when accessing health care services. On average, **59% of Roma families with young children have reported experiencing discrimination**, while 41% say they have not.

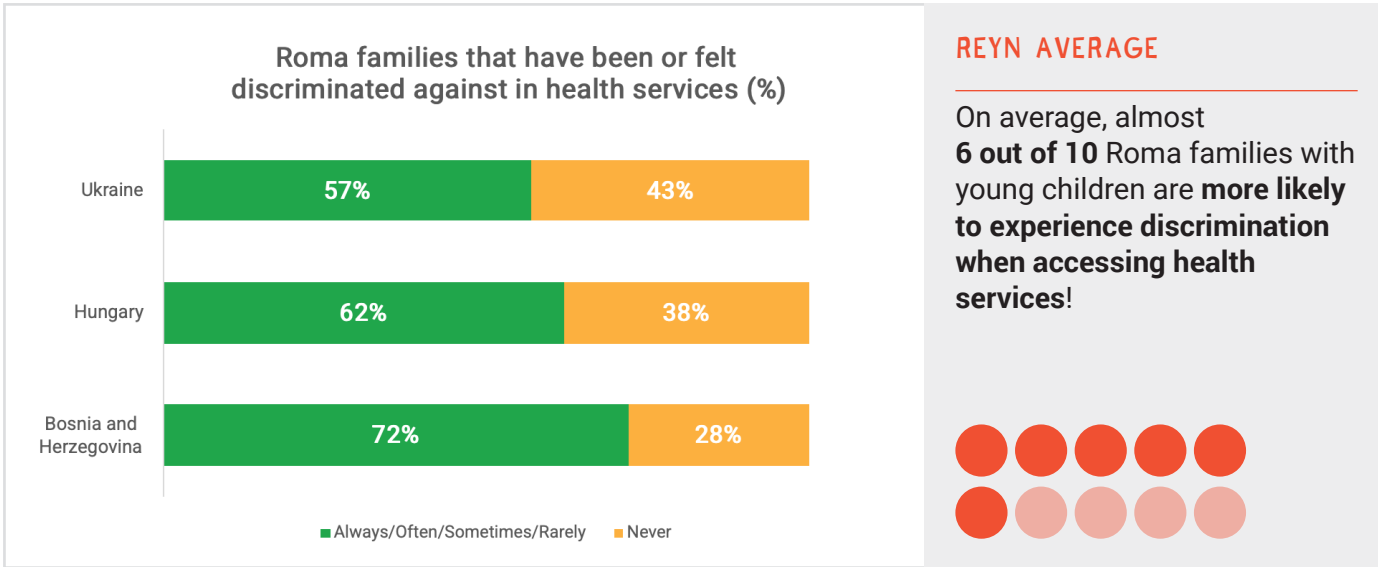
At the country level, the data indicates that in Bosnia and Herzegovina (72%), Hungary (62%) and Ukraine (57%), Roma families with young children are more likely to experience discrimination when accessing health services (always/often/sometimes), while in countries like Serbia, Kosovo, and Slovenia, Roma families report significantly lower discrimination rates (22%, 24%, and 25% respectively).



DISCRIMINATION WHEN ACCESSING HEALTH SERVICES

Another essential domain in which Roma families with young children report experiencing institutional discrimination arises when accessing health care services. On average, **59% of Roma families with young children have reported experiencing discrimination**, while 41% say they have not.

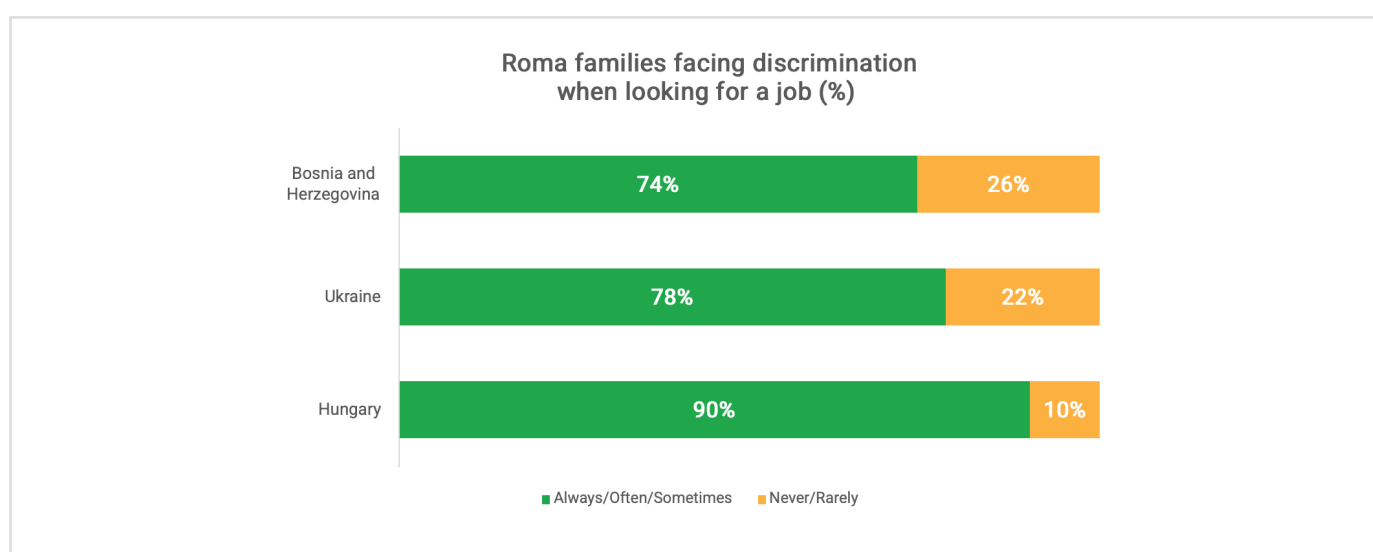
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## DISCRIMINATION WHEN LOOKING FOR PAID WORK

According to the data collected, six out of ten Roma families with young children are more likely to experience discrimination when looking for paid work (always, often, sometimes, and/or rarely) which, to a certain extent, explains the activity status of Roma families with young children with low levels of employment. On average, only 27% of families with young children across ten countries report being employed or having paid work (see more on page 13).

Zooming into country-specific data, the study reveals that Roma families with young children in Bosnia and Herzegovina (74%), Ukraine (78%), and Hungary (90%) report experiencing discrimination always, often, and or/sometimes when looking for paid work. In comparison, countries like Slovakia (40%), Slovenia (18%), and Bulgaria (18%) report experiencing discrimination with the same frequency (always, often, and/or sometimes) but at significantly lower rates.



*"I live without a husband and the Center for Social Work does not admit that I am a single mother and does not give me any help."*

FAMILIES | BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

## DISCRIMINATION WHEN ACCESSING EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

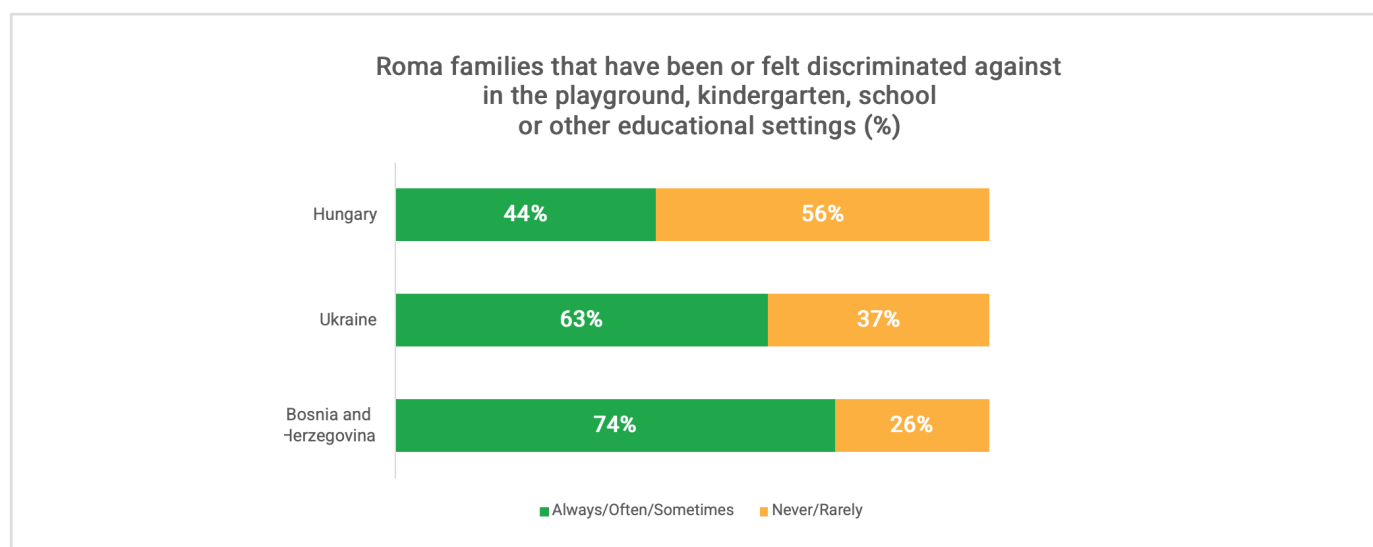
The REYN Study has already discussed the availability and access to different educational settings (see page 24). The low percentage of Roma families with young children having access to essential services like healthcare, kindergartens, public libraries, parks, and playgrounds reveals disparities depriving young Roma children to develop, grow and thrive. Opportunities are often limited due to the unavailability of services in the vicinity (see page 25).

Although only a small percentage of Roma families have access to nearby services, the vast majority of them still face discrimination when accessing them. Of particular concern is the institutional discrimination that Roma families face when accessing educational settings or facilities, i.e., kindergartens, playgrounds, schools, and similar. On average, **five out of ten Roma families are more**



**likely to experience discrimination when accessing educational settings and facilities.** Looking at the frequency, the REYN Study records that on average, 37% of Roma families with young children report facing discrimination always, often, or sometimes when accessing educational settings and facilities, while 63% of parents report experiencing discrimination in the same context rarely or never.

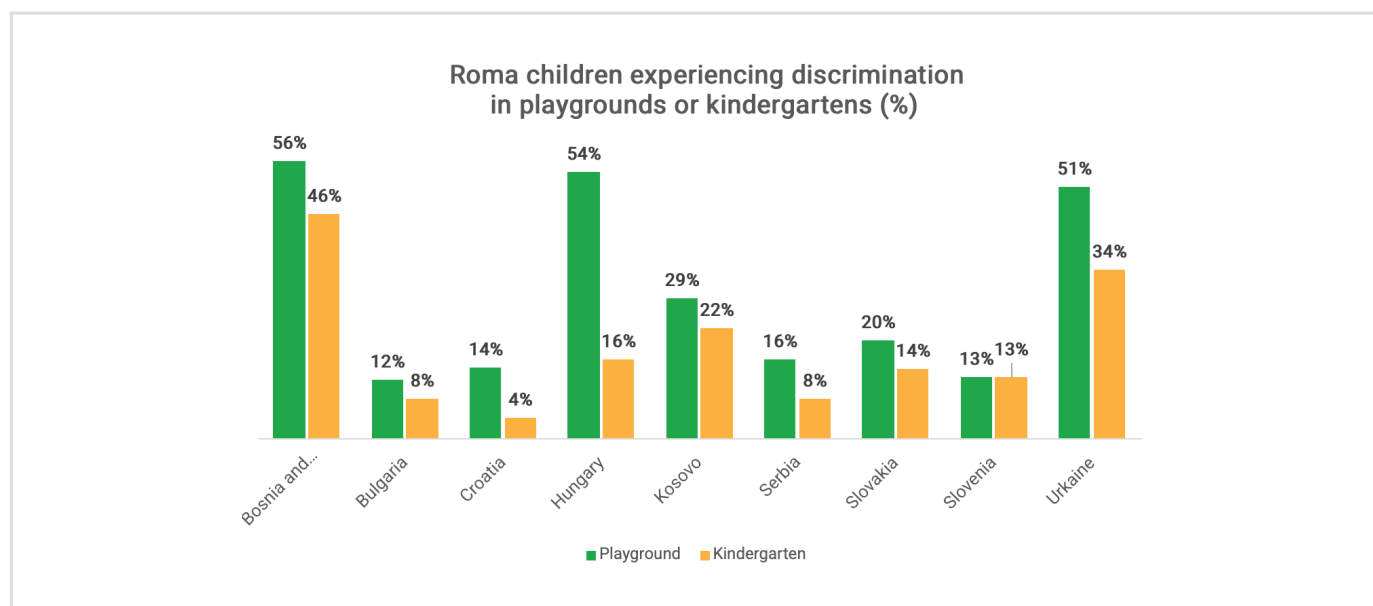
National realities become alarming in Hungary, Ukraine, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, where parents report experiencing discrimination always, often, and/or sometimes when accessing educational settings and facilities (44%, 63%, and 74%, respectively). In Slovakia (20%), Serbia (22%), and Kosovo (24%), fewer Roma parents, in comparison with the countries mentioned above, report experiencing discrimination within the same frequency (always, often, and/or sometimes).



## CHILDREN EXPERIENCING DISCRIMINATION IN KINDERGARTENS AND PLAYGROUNDS

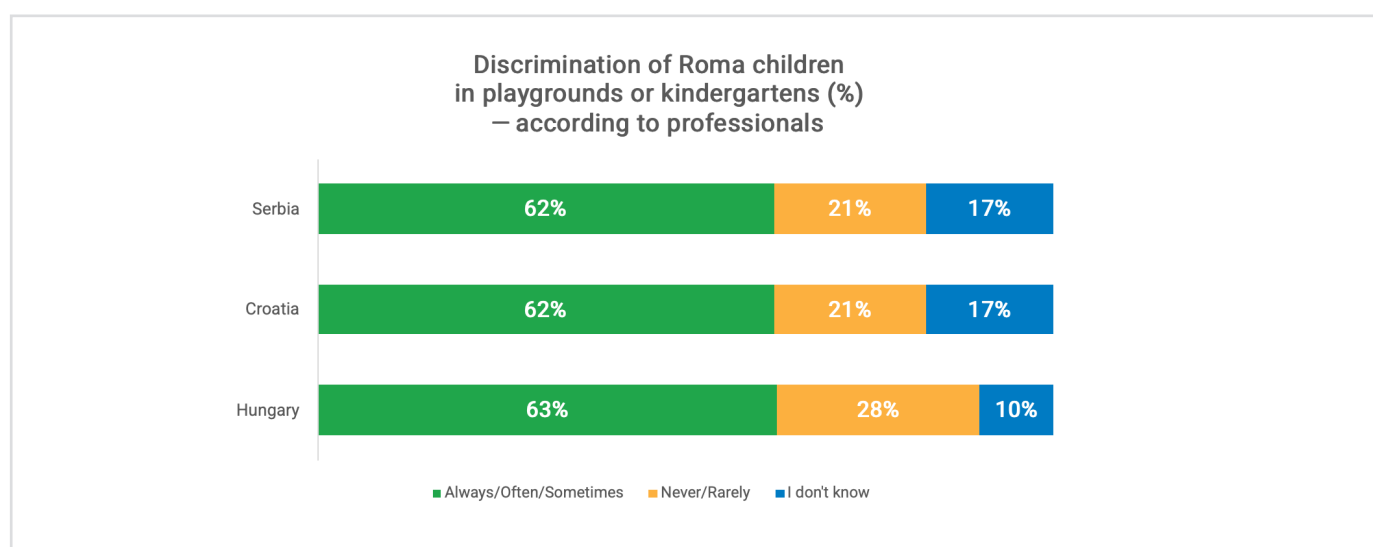
Based on parent reports 54% of Roma families with young children report experiencing discrimination always, often, sometimes, and/or rarely when accessing educational settings and facilities. The REYN Study observes slightly lower rates of Roma children being discriminated against at kindergartens (because of being Roma). On average, almost three out of ten young Roma children attending kindergarten are likelier to experience discrimination always, often, sometimes, and/or rarely. Countries where parents report that young Roma children attending kindergartens experience discrimination more frequently (always/often/sometimes) are Kosovo (22%), Ukraine (34%), and Bosnia and Herzegovina (46%). In comparison, in Croatia (4%), Bulgaria (8%), and Serbia (8%), children attending kindergartens are less likely to experience discrimination with the same frequency as their peers in Kosovo, Ukraine, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In addition, the REYN Study further zooms into the frequency of discrimination that young Roma children experience in the playground. As reported by parents, on average, 44% of young Roma children experience discrimination at the playground always, often, sometimes and/or rarely, while 56% never do so. Country-specific data offers a range of variation across countries and frequency. For example, in countries like Ukraine (51%), Hungary (54%), and Bosnia and Herzegovina (56%), more than half of Roma children frequently experience discrimination in the playground. In comparison, in countries like Croatia (86%), Slovenia (88%), and Bulgaria (88%), Roma children face discrimination less frequently or never.



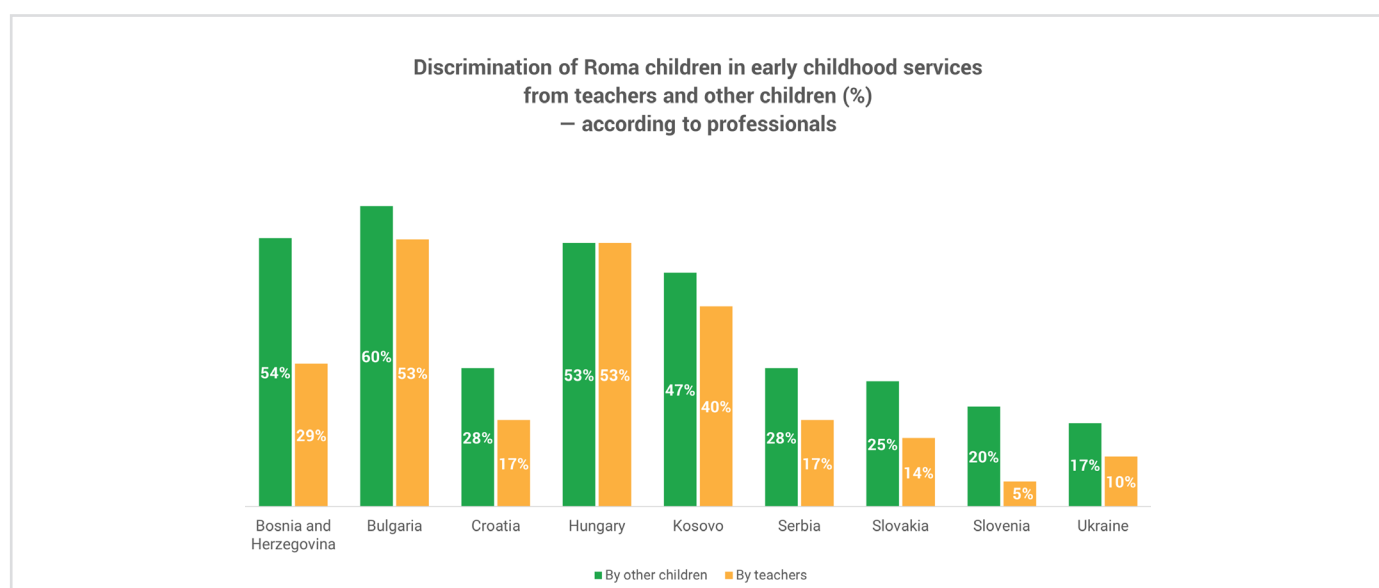
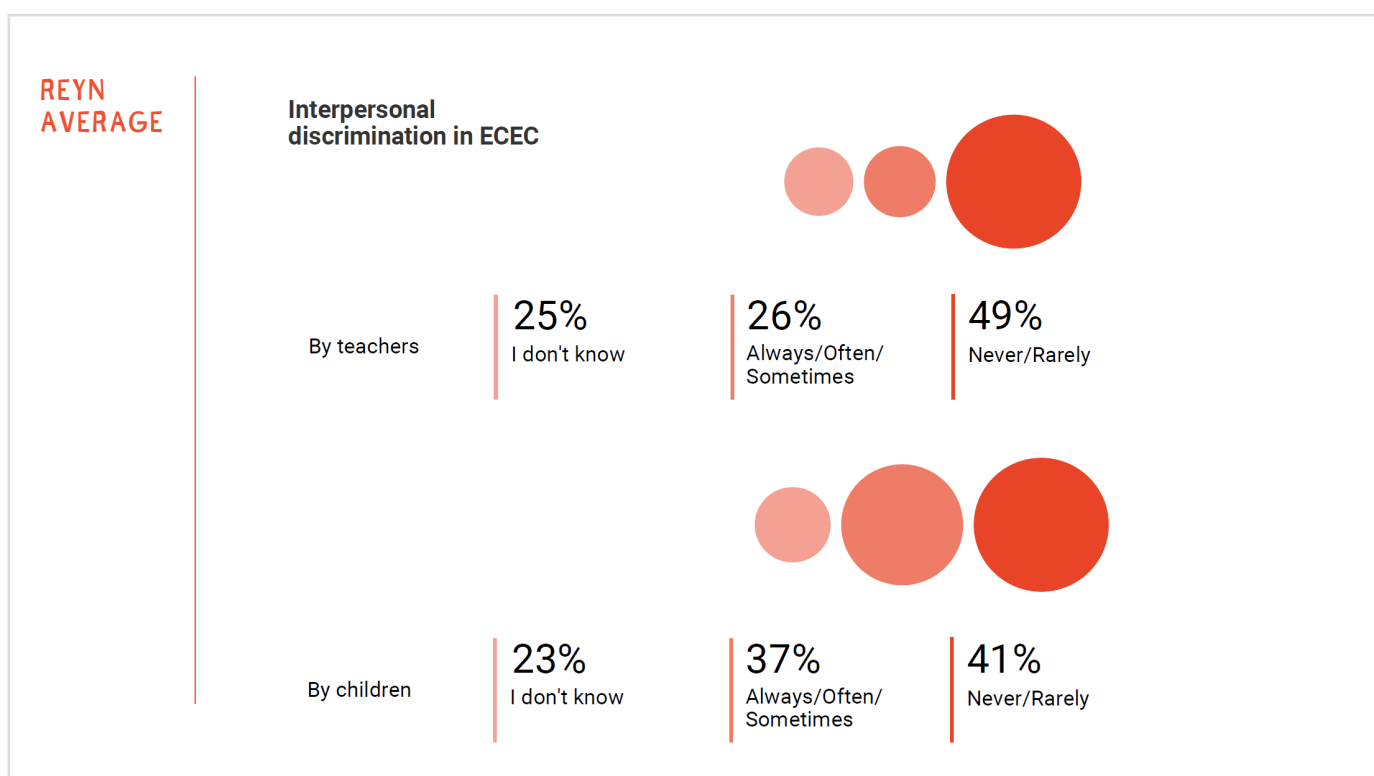
The study also captures the perspective of professionals working with young Roma children and their families regarding the extent to which children experience discrimination in playgrounds and early childhood centers. On average, six out of ten professionals estimate that young Roma children experience discrimination in the kindergarten or playground always, often, sometimes, and/or rarely.

While 23% of professionals interviewed working in early childhood with young Roma children and their families reported having no information or knowledge about whether Roma children experience discrimination in kindergartens or playgrounds, 43% estimate that Roma children experience discrimination frequently (always/often/sometimes). Serbia (62%), Croatia (62%), and Hungary (63%) stand out with highest percentages. On the other hand, 34% of professionals across nine countries report that Roma children rarely or never face discrimination. In Slovakia, Ukraine, and Bosnia and Herzegovina the percentages are 68%, 43% and 34% respectively.



In addition to the discrimination that young Roma children and their families face at the institutional level and when accessing different services and settings, early childhood professionals across nine countries voice their concerns about the interpersonal discrimination that young Roma children experience in interaction with teachers and their peers.

On average, 40% of professionals report that Roma children are more likely to experience discrimination in early childhood services from teachers. In comparison, only 35% of professionals think teachers would never discriminate against Roma children, while 25% of professionals do not have enough knowledge to say.



Country-specific data reveals that professionals in Bulgaria (53%), Hungary (53%), and Kosovo (40%) report that Roma children experience discrimination from teachers frequently (always, often, and/or sometimes). A very positive trend can be observed in Slovenia, as reported by professionals, with 95% estimating that Roma children are less likely to experience discrimination by teachers (rarely or never).

Interpersonal discrimination occurs on a peer-to-peer level. 26% of professionals report that Roma children face discrimination from other children in the early childhood service, while 49% of professionals say Roma children never or rarely do so. A further 25% of professionals across nine countries say they do not have enough information to give an opinion.

Looking into country-specific data, the study records higher rates of professionals reporting Roma children facing discrimination (always, often, and/or sometimes) in interaction with their peers in Hungary (53%), Bosnia and Herzegovina (54%), and Bulgaria (60%). At the same time, the study records lower rates of professionals saying that Roma children frequently experience discrimination in Ukraine (17%), Slovenia (20%), and Slovakia (25%).

The study asks families, professionals, and policymakers to reflect on the discrimination that Roma families with young children experience in everyday contexts. For instance, families in Kosovo speak of the “fear of prejudice and stereotypes at school and kindergarten,” causing them to hesitate to send their children to these institutions. Parents in Serbia express the need for “better preparation and social adaptation for children,” which they see as a solution to combating prejudice.

Professionals in Slovakia indicate that “Roma families often face financial challenges and exclusion,” a testament to economic discrimination. In Hungary, there’s an expressed need for “strategic planning and research on outcomes related to Roma children,” signaling neglect at an institutional level.

Policymakers across countries reveal systemic issues with policy execution. In Hungary, they critique the “poor preparation and a lack of strategic planning.” Policymakers in Kosovo acknowledge “rights on paper, but disparities in their actual implementation”. Similarly, Ukrainian policymakers draw attention to the “disconnect between declared policies and their actual implementation,” with Roma interests neglected in political decision-making. In Slovakia, policymakers call for “intensive work with Roma children and their parents,” highlighting the importance of active involvement for progress.

The persistent and pervasive nature of antigypsyism, institutional discrimination, and hate-motivated crimes poses a significant obstacle to Roma inclusion, particularly affecting Roma children under six and their families. This insidious discrimination, which occurs in public services, healthcare, employment, education, and even in playgrounds, underscores the systemic barriers faced by Roma communities.





## CONCLUSIONS

While recognizing the immense potential of young Roma children in Europe, it is also crucial to acknowledge and understand the complex set of challenges they face. When referring to young children and their opportunities to grow, develop, and learn in their early years, no narrative should exclude families. Family members represent a child's most important personal connections –their primary caregivers and educators. Therefore, to learn more about the status of young Roma children, the data analyzed in the REYN Study highlights the numerous challenges and barriers that Roma families with children under six years of age face across Europe. Despite some positive trends and developments, these families continue to experience significant disparities compared with their counterparts in the general population. These disparities exist in such areas as education, health, nutrition and well-being, safety and security, and early learning. In addition, multi-layered discrimination persists in diverse forms and contexts in the daily lives of Roma families with young children.

A child's earliest years are undeniably influenced by their **family and living environment**, frequently marked by socio-economic challenges. Many families face issues ranging from unemployment (seven out of ten family members) to housing challenges, which impact their children's development and growth. Their living conditions are not just markers of economic stability and sustainability but are also intertwined with overall family well-being, shaping their prospects, and impacting mental and physical health.

**Health, nutrition, and well-being** are vital to any child's development. Yet, for many Roma children, access to adequate healthcare and nutrition is hindered. Systemic issues, from living far from facilities to financial constraints, further coupled with social exclusion and discrimination, often lead to health disparities that jeopardize Roma children's well-being, depriving them of nurturing environments in which to thrive. Data from the REYN Study shows that three out of ten Roma families with young children who participated in the research cannot afford to have nutritious meals twice a week.

Every child deserves and has the right to grow up in an environment of **safety and security**. But Roma children often encounter environments marked by physical dangers and environmental risks. For example, according to data collected under REYN Study, three out of ten Roma children grow up in unsafe neighborhoods. In addition, their parents face financial barriers, and are unable to secure a more stable living situation. Four out of ten Roma families with children under six who participated in the research do not receive any kind of subsidy or similar. Evidence emphasizes the need for stronger social safety nets and financial support systems for vulnerable Roma families with young children.

Beyond the immediate challenges in their physical surroundings, Roma children also face barriers in terms of their exposure to formal, non-formal, or informal learning environments, which are crucial for their holistic development. When looking at the **early learning opportunities and experiences** of young Roma children, the REYN Study reveals multi-layered barriers and challenges hindering their access and full participation in ECEC services. On average, according to the data collected, 47% of young Roma children are deprived of these essential services in their neighborhoods (and 59% of children under the age of three). The disparities extend to essential public spaces like parks, playgrounds, health facilities, and cultural centers – vital amenities that can enrich a child's learning experiences and support growth. Segregation in classrooms, cultural insensitivity, and resource deficiencies with persistent language barriers (seven out of ten Roma children do not understand the main language of instruction) all determine the quality of services, which ultimately impacts upon their academic and developmental prospects.

The early childhood development science stresses the importance of the role of parents in their children's lives, especially in the early years. The REYN Study sheds light on **responsive parenting**, which



stimulates children's emotional and cognitive development and confirms that many Roma parents strive to provide a nurturing environment, even as they grapple with the broader challenges of discrimination and socio-economic constraints and hardships (89% of parents react to their babies' communication through vocalization, facial expressions, and gestures always or as much as they can). The data also shows that many parents have limited access to information and knowledge about child development and the importance of play, which influences their responsive parenting practices.

Lastly, the overarching issue of **discrimination** is one of the most socially deep-rooted difficulties and barriers for Roma children under six years of age and their families, affecting these children's opportunities for development, growth, and learning. The REYN Study shows that on average, six out of ten Roma families with young children are more likely to experience institutional discrimination across sectors and domains because they are Roma. Despite some country differences, a strong and recurrent discrimination pattern manifests itself throughout all the areas analyzed in the study, affecting various aspects of the lives of Roma families with young children, including access to public services, housing, employment, and education.

In presenting this evidence-based data, the REYN Study seeks to inform and inspire actions, both at the European and national levels, in order to transform the lives of young Roma children and their families (see a list on the following page). The Study aims to spark dialogue and stimulate determined action among policymakers, practitioners, researchers, CSOs, and the broader public. It is an invitation to anyone who believes in a more inclusive and equitable Europe to come forward and contribute to this transformative journey in making early childhood a priority for young Roma children as well!

**The task ahead is not easy, but it is essential. Together, we can ensure that young Roma children and their families are not left behind, but are progressing forward, as we strive towards a more equitable and inclusive Europe. This report is a step in that direction.**



## INSPIRING INITIATIVES TO IMPROVE THE STATUS OF YOUNG ROMA CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

The REYN Early Childhood Research Study brings forward a set of inspiring initiatives identified during the fieldwork by national REYNs in 11 countries as part of desk research and interviews with policymakers, professionals, and families. During the process, the social impact of listed initiatives was not analyzed. The aim of such a list is to showcase the efforts of national and international stakeholders in mitigating the barriers and addressing the needs of young Roma children and their families through various programs and actions.

### BELGIUM

<b>Title</b>	Children First
<b>Implementing organization</b>	City of Ghent
<b>Description</b>	Anti-poverty strategy creates more opportunities for children living in poverty. <a href="#">More information here.</a>
<b>Title</b>	Community Stewards/ Bridging Figures
<b>Implementing organization</b>	Local authorities in Brussels
<b>Description</b>	Establishes and strengthens links between the Roma population and local provision. <a href="#">More information here.</a>
<b>Title</b>	Good Practices for Caravan Dwellers
<b>Implementing organization</b>	LEVL
<b>Description</b>	Implements educational incentives, mobile vaccination, postnatal support, and social management at transfer sites. <a href="#">More information here.</a>
<b>Title</b>	Ouderklap
<b>Implementing organization</b>	Caritas Vlaanderen
<b>Description</b>	Provides a play and meeting room for Roma families with young children. <a href="#">More information here.</a>

### HUNGARY

<b>Title</b>	Sure Start Children's Houses (SSCHs)
<b>Implementing organization</b>	Local municipalities
<b>Description</b>	Provides comprehensive and flexible services catering to the needs of individual families. ( <a href="#">More information</a> – see page 69)
<b>Title</b>	Inclusive Kindergartens for Quality Education of Roma
<b>Implementing organization</b>	Municipality of Józsefváros, Partners Hungary Foundation and Rosa Parks Foundation
<b>Description</b>	Operates in 11 kindergartens, reaching more than 1,000 children to end Roma segregation. <a href="#">More information here.</a>



## SLOVAKIA

<b>Title</b>	Health Improvement Programs
<b>Implementing organization</b>	The International Step by Step Association, the European Public Health Policies (Romania) and Skola dokoran (Wide Open School-Slovakia).
<b>Description</b>	Recommendations in the strategic areas necessary to ensure every child gets the good start in life they need. <a href="#">More information here.</a>
<b>Title</b>	TOY for Inclusion
<b>Implementing organization</b>	Skola Dokoran
<b>Description</b>	Easy-to-reach services promoting inter-sectoral work, flexible solutions and contextualized responses to the specific needs of young children and their families. <a href="#">More information here.</a>
<b>Title</b>	Healthy regions
<b>Implementing organization</b>	Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic
<b>Description</b>	Reducing differences in health and at the same time bringing a significant improvement in access to health services and information. <a href="#">More information here.</a>

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## SLOVENIA

<b>Title</b>	Short Programs in Kindergartens
<b>Implementing organization</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>Description</b>	Free short pre-school programs were introduced in 2018/19 in Slovenia for children not yet enrolled in kindergarten, with the aim of enhancing their preparedness for primary school. Despite initial low response, amendments to regulations have been made to encourage greater involvement from kindergartens and municipalities, especially targeting children from vulnerable groups or remote areas. <a href="#">More information here.</a>
<b>Title</b>	Educational Strategy for Roma in Slovenia
<b>Implementing organization</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>Description</b>	A holistic educational strategy aimed at the social integration of the Roma community. <a href="#">More information here.</a>
<b>Title</b>	Skupaj za Znanje
<b>Implementing organization</b>	Center for School and Outdoor Education
<b>Description</b>	A program aimed at the professionalization of Roma assistants in the system. <a href="#">More information</a> in Slovenian.



## KOSOVO

<b>Title</b>	Learning Centers
<b>Implementing organization</b>	Kosovo Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian's Early Years Network
<b>Description</b>	Encourages Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian primary and pre-primary children to attend educational services. <a href="#">More information here.</a>

## CROATIA

<b>Title</b>	Language-friendly Environment for Roma Children
<b>Implementing organization</b>	Open Academy Step by Step Croatia
<b>Description</b>	Fosters a language-friendly environment for Roma children. <a href="#">More information here.</a>

<b>Title</b>	Buna Zua! Kum Ješč?
<b>Implementing organization</b>	Open Academy Step by Step Croatia
<b>Description</b>	An adult education course teaching the basics of the Beyash language. <a href="#">More information here.</a>

## ITALY

<b>Title</b>	Mobile TOY for Inclusion
<b>Implementing organization</b>	Associazione 21 luglio
<b>Description</b>	Provides a mobile play hub in Rome and fosters a general approach to inclusive play. <a href="#">More information here.</a>

## EUROPE-WIDE

<b>Title</b>	TOY for Inclusion
<b>Implementing organization</b>	International Child Development Initiatives (ICDI) – Coordination role
<b>Description</b>	TOY for Inclusion champions the idea that social inclusion starts with young children's desire to play together, establishing Play Hubs that promote inter-sectoral work and flexible solutions. These hubs offer contextualized responses to the unique needs of young children and their families, making services more accessible rather than labelling certain groups as 'harder to reach'. <a href="#">More information here.</a>

Help us make positive actions visible and accessible to those improving the status of young Roma children. Send your suggestions to [info@reyn.eu](mailto:info@reyn.eu).



## ANNEXES

1. List of REYN Early Childhood Research Indicators
2. 14 factors determining young Roma children's enrollment and participation in ECEC services and programs
3. Statistical data
  - Table 1. Activity status of persons living in the Roma household
  - Table 2. Educational level of Roma families
  - Table 3. Roma households with children under six years of age, without access to facilities
  - Table 4. Roma children with all required vaccines for their age
  - Table 5. Roma families with children under six years of age that cannot afford certain living conditions situations, including nutrition
  - Table 6. Roma families asking for professional help or talk to someone for support when they feel down or in distress
  - Table 7. Roma families visiting the health center in the last two months because of a child's health issue/problem
  - Table 8. Roma families who easily get support from doctors at the clinic/hospital
  - Table 9. Roma households with children under six years of age receiving any kind of subsidy or similar
  - Table 10. Safety of the place/neighborhood where Roma children live
  - Table 11. Roma households with children living in areas exposed to pollution
  - Table 12. Roma households with/without access to clean and drinking water
  - Table 13. Access to ECEC services in the neighborhood or near (no more than two kilometers from home)
  - Table 14. Amount of Roma children in early childhood educational settings
  - Table 15. Roma children who have difficulties in understanding the main language
  - Table 16. Presence of Roma assistants in EC services helping children and/or families with language barriers
  - Table 17. Roma parents' responses to their baby (infant's) communication
  - Table 18. Activities used by Roma parents when playing with their children
  - Table 19. Frequency with which Roma parents read or sing to their child
  - Table 20. Time spent playing with children per day
  - Table 21. Number of toys and play items at home
  - Table 22. Number of children's books at home
  - Table 23. Roma parents encouraging their children to explore objects, people and surroundings
  - Table 24. Roma families that have been or have felt discriminated against when accessing any public services
  - Table 25. Roma families that have been or have felt discriminated against in health services
  - Table 26. Roma families facing discrimination when looking for a job
  - Table 27. Roma families that have been or have felt discriminated against in the playground, kindergarten, school or other educational settings
  - Table 28. Roma children experiencing discrimination in playgrounds
  - Table 29. Roma children experiencing discrimination in kindergartens
  - Table 30. Discrimination of Roma children in playgrounds or kindergartens – according to professionals
  - Table 31. Discrimination of Roma children in early childhood services by teachers – according to professionals
  - Table 32. Discrimination of Roma children in early childhood services by other children – according to professionals



## ANNEX 1: LIST OF REYN EARLY CHILDHOOD RESEARCH INDICATORS

### FAMILY AND LIVING ENVIRONMENT

- Number of persons living in the household
- Number of children under six years of age living in the household
- Relationship with the children under six years of age
- Parents of children under six years of age live in the household
- Number of persons living in the Roma household with a different main activity status
- Activity status of people in the household
- Number of persons in the household with different types of employment contract
- Number of persons in the household with different education levels
- Receipt of help or subsidy for household expenses
- Number of people contributing to the household income
- Size of the household (in square meters)
- Number of rooms in the household
- Availability of separate rooms and beds for young children
- Households where adults and young children share sleeping spaces
- Facilities in the household (electric lighting, running water, etc.)
- Household problems (leaks, noise, pollution, etc.)
- Neighborhood demographics

### HEALTH, NUTRITION AND WELL-BEING

- Presence of chronic diseases in household members
- Presence of disability in household members
- Maternal consumption of nicotine and alcohol during pregnancy
- Health assistance during pregnancy
- Health assistance after pregnancy
- Childbirth location
- Visits to health centers in the last two months due to health issues
- Inability to visit health centers in the last two months due to health issues
- Availability of selected pediatrician or family GP
- Vaccination status of children under six years old
- Ease of access to doctors when the child is sick
- Frequency of regular check-ups with the child
- Ease of getting information about the child's development and potential developmental problems
- Willingness to seek professional help when feeling down or unhappy
- Experience of going to bed hungry in the previous month
- Frequency of children under six years old going to bed hungry
- Ability to afford nutritious food on a regular basis
- Frequency of consuming healthy food
- Frequency of consuming protein and carbohydrates
- Frequency of consuming less healthy food
- Nutrition care during pregnancy
- Breastfeeding duration
- Child's contentment with the food provided
- Daily feeding and sleeping routines for children
- Eating habits of children





## SAFETY AND SECURITY

- Access to social security/assistance
- Availability of social assistance
- Child registration at birth
- Access to clean and drinking water
- Perception of the safety of the neighborhood
- Exposure to or presence of domestic violence in the neighborhood
- Assessment of safety in the neighborhood (indicators 47 and 49 look very similar)
- Level of exposure to pollution in the neighborhood
- Frequency of Roma children being segregated in early childhood services

## EARLY LEARNING

- Enrolment of Roma children under six years of age in early childhood education
- Access to public spaces and facilities for children and families
- Access to quality education and care in crèches/kindergartens or community services
- Access to other programs for parents and children
- Access to early childhood education services
- Availability of early childhood education services in the neighborhood
- Affordability of early childhood education services
- Reasons for not enrolling children in a crèche/kindergarten
- Understanding the main language of instruction
- Assessment of the home environment for stimulating the child's learning
- Roma children benefiting from a Roma teaching assistant/mediator
- Classroom demographics (composition of students in classroom – Roma compared to general population)

## RESPONSIVE PARENTING

- Parental involvement in child play and communication
- Parental understanding of a child's needs
- Main caretaker in the family
- Parental involvement in child play and reading activities
- Adults spending the most time with young children
- Playtime activities with children under two years of age
- Frequency of playtime with children under two years of age
- Playtime methods with children under two years of age
- Frequency of playtime with children under two years of age
- Playtime methods with children over two and under six years of age
- Response to infant's communication
- Singing or reading with the child
- Involvement of fathers and extended family members in the child's upbringing
- Involvement of siblings in the child's playtime
- Display of love and affection toward children
- Understanding of non-verbal communication with young children
- Support from other members of the family in taking care of young children



## DISCRIMINATION

- Families experiencing institutional discrimination in various situations and settings
- Children experiencing institutional discrimination in various situations and settings
- Children experiencing interpersonal discrimination in various situations and settings
- Knowledge and evaluation of successful initiatives or policies for young Roma children
- Personal experiences and recommendations for improving various situations for Roma children and their families
- Recommendations and descriptions of successful health, hygiene, and nutrition initiatives
- Barriers and opportunities related to policy implementation related to Roma children and families

## ANNEX 2: 14 FACTORS DETERMINING YOUNG ROMA CHILDREN'S ENROLLMENT AND PARTICIPATION IN ECEC SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

1. Financial constraints: Many families mention a lack of financial resources to pay for kindergarten, transportation, or associated costs.
2. Lack of transport: Some parents report not having a means of transportation to take their children to kindergarten or the cost of transportation being prohibitive.
3. Distance to facilities: The location of kindergartens or other ECEC facilities being too far away is often mentioned, particularly when families live in rural or remote (segregated) areas.
4. Lack of space in kindergartens: Many parents report that there are not enough places in local kindergartens for their children.
5. Discrimination: Parents express that their children, because they are Roma, are not accepted in kindergartens or ECEC facilities.
6. Documentation requirements: Parents mention the challenge of not knowing how to obtain the required documents for enrollment.
7. Lack of ECEC facilities: Some parents live in places where there are no kindergartens or similar facilities.
8. Work obligations: Parents report that their work schedules or locations make it challenging to arrange transportation or care.
9. Unemployment: Being unemployed, parents are unable to afford the costs associated with ECEC.
10. Safety concerns – lack of trust: Parents express fears about leaving their children alone or sending them to kindergartens.
11. Age of children: Some parents believe their children are too young for kindergarten.
12. Cost of ECEC services: Parents often mention the high cost of ECEC services as being a barrier.
13. Employment requirements: In some places, both parents must be employed for a child to be accepted in a kindergarten.
14. Waiting lists: Parents report long waiting lists as a barrier to enrolling their children in kindergartens.



## ANNEX 3: STATISTICAL DATA

**Table 1. Activity status of persons living in the household**

Country	Activity status	%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Employed	4%
	Unemployed	35%
	Other inactive*	61%
Bulgaria	Employed	38%
	Unemployed	38%
	Other inactive	24%
Croatia	Employed	22%
	Unemployed	31%
	Other inactive	47%
Hungary	Employed	36%
	Unemployed	32%
	Other inactive	32%
Italy	Employed	33%
	Unemployed	26%
	Other inactive	41%
Kosovo	Employed	26%
	Unemployed	44%
	Other inactive	30%
Serbia	Employed	17%
	Unemployed	57%
	Other inactive	26%
Slovakia	Employed	29%
	Unemployed	34%
	Other inactive	37%
Slovenia	Employed	30%
	Unemployed	58%
	Other inactive	12%
Ukraine	Employed	36%
	Unemployed	30%
	Other inactive	34%
<b>REYN average</b>	Employed	27%
	Unemployed	38%
	Other inactive	35%

\*Other inactive: retired, illness or disability, domestic work, education, military service



Table 2. Educational level of Roma families

Country	Educational level	%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	She/he hasn't been to school and she/he cannot read or write	21%
	She/he hasn't been to school, but she/he can read and/or write	3%
	She/he has gone to school, but did not complete	32%
	Primary education	28%
	Lower secondary education	10%
	Upper secondary education or more	6%
	Bachelor's or equivalent, or more	0%
Bulgaria	She/he hasn't been to school and she/he cannot read or write	6%
	She/he hasn't been to school, but she/he can read and/or write	3%
	She/he has gone to school, but did not complete	16%
	Primary education	20%
	Lower secondary education	33%
	Upper secondary education or more	21%
	Bachelor's or equivalent, or more	1%
Croatia	She/he hasn't been to school and she/he cannot read or write	4%
	She/he hasn't been to school, but she/he can read and/or write	2%
	She/he has gone to school, but did not complete	32%
	Primary education	38%
	Lower secondary education	17%
	Upper secondary education or more	6%
	Bachelor's or equivalent, or more	1%
Hungary	She/he hasn't been to school and she/he cannot read or write	2%
	She/he hasn't been to school, but she/he can read and/or write	2%
	She/he has gone to school, but did not complete	33%
	Primary education	60%
	Lower secondary education	2%
	Upper secondary education or more	0%
	Bachelor's or equivalent, or more	0%
Italy	She/he hasn't been to school and she/he cannot read or write	1%
	She/he hasn't been to school, but she/he can read and/or write	10%
	She/he has gone to school, but did not complete	8%
	Primary education	13%
	Lower secondary education	52%
	Upper secondary education or more	3%
	Bachelor's or equivalent, or more	0%
Kosovo	She/he hasn't been to school and she/he cannot read or write	18%
	She/he hasn't been to school, but she/he can read and/or write	9%
	She/he has gone to school, but did not complete	12%
	Primary education	42%
	Lower secondary education	6%
	Upper secondary education or more	7%
	Bachelor's or equivalent, or more	6%
Serbia	She/he hasn't been to school and she/he cannot read or write	4%
	She/he hasn't been to school, but she/he can read and/or write	3%
	She/he has gone to school, but did not complete	23%
	Primary education	42%
	Lower secondary education	15%
	Upper secondary education or more	10%
	Bachelor's or equivalent, or more	2%
Slovakia	She/he hasn't been to school and she/he cannot read or write	1%
	She/he hasn't been to school, but she/he can read and/or write	1%
	She/he has gone to school, but did not complete	21%
	Primary education	59%
	Lower secondary education	11%
	Upper secondary education or more	7%
	Bachelor's or equivalent, or more	0%



Country	Educational level	%
Slovenia	She/he hasn't been to school and she/he cannot read or write	0%
	She/he hasn't been to school, but she/he can read and/or write	0%
	She/he has gone to school, but did not complete	32%
	Primary education	38%
	Lower secondary education	14%
	Upper secondary education or more	13%
	Bachelor's or equivalent, or more	3%
Ukraine	She/he hasn't been to school and she/he cannot read or write	16%
	She/he hasn't been to school, but she/he can read and/or write	15%
	She/he has gone to school, but did not complete	19%
	Primary education	14%
	Lower secondary education	24%
	Upper secondary education or more	8%
	Bachelor's or equivalent, or more	5%
<b>REYN average</b>	She/he hasn't been to school and she/he cannot read or write	9%
	She/he hasn't been to school, but she/he can read and/or write	5%
	She/he has gone to school, but did not complete	23%
	Primary education	36%
	Lower secondary education	18%
	Upper secondary education or more	8%
	Bachelor's or equivalent, or more	2%



Table 3. Roma households with children under six years of age, without the following facilities

Country	Facilities without access to	%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Hot water	24%
	Kitchen	12%
	Toilet with running water inside the house for exclusive use of the home	26%
	Shower or bathrub	26%
	Running water	8%
	Electric light	5%
Bulgaria	Hot water	27%
	Kitchen	20%
	Toilet with running water inside the house for exclusive use of the home	44%
	Shower or bathrub	40%
	Running water	5%
	Electric light	0%
Croatia	Hot water	30%
	Kitchen	8%
	Toilet with running water inside the house for exclusive use of the home	35%
	Shower or bathrub	35%
	Running water	20%
	Electric light	0%
Hungary	Hot water	32%
	Kitchen	0%
	Toilet with running water inside the house for exclusive use of the home	48%
	Shower or bathrub	35%
	Running water	7%
	Electric light	0%
Italy	Hot water	55%
	Kitchen	20%
	Toilet with running water inside the house for exclusive use of the home	25%
	Shower or bathrub	40%
	Running water	30%
	Electric light	0%
Kosovo	Hot water	10%
	Kitchen	10%
	Toilet with running water inside the house for exclusive use of the home	6%
	Shower or bathrub	8%
	Running water	8%
	Electric light	0%
Serbia	Hot water	30%
	Kitchen	14%
	Toilet with running water inside the house for exclusive use of the home	26%
	Shower or bathrub	23%
	Running water	30%
	Electric light	28%
Slovakia	Hot water	38%
	Kitchen	6%
	Toilet with running water inside the house for exclusive use of the home	35%
	Shower or bathrub	35%
	Running water	37%
	Electric light	5%
Slovenia	Hot water	20%
	Kitchen	10%
	Toilet with running water inside the house for exclusive use of the home	15%
	Shower or bathrub	23%
	Running water	10%
	Electric light	12%



Country	Facilities without access to	%
Ukraine	Hot water	60%
	Kitchen	0%
	Toilet with running water inside the house for exclusive use of the home	50%
	Shower or bathtub	35%
	Running water	10%
	Electric light	0%
<b>REYN average</b>	Hot water	33%
	Kitchen	10%
	Toilet with running water inside the house for exclusive use of the home	31%
	Shower or bathtub	29%
	Running water	17%
	Electric light	5%

Table 4. Roma children with all required vaccines for their age

Country	Yes	No
Bosnia and Herzegovina	32%	68%
Bulgaria	96%	4%
Croatia	90%	10%
Hungary	96%	4%
Kosovo	82%	18%
Serbia	100%	0%
Slovakia	98%	2%
Slovenia	88%	12%
Ukraine	36%	64%
<b>REYN average</b>	80%	20%





**Table 5. Roma families with children under six years of age that cannot afford certain living conditions situations, including nutrition**

Country	Living conditions situations	%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Paid vacation away from home at least one week a year	94%
	One meal of meat, chicken or fish at least every two days	46%
	Keep your home at a suitable temperature during cold months	32%
Bulgaria	Paid vacation away from home at least one week a year	70%
	One meal of meat, chicken or fish at least every two days	26%
	Keep your home at a suitable temperature during cold months	4%
Croatia	Paid vacation away from home at least one week a year	78%
	One meal of meat, chicken or fish at least every two days	18%
	Keep your home at a suitable temperature during cold months	6%
Hungary	Paid vacation away from home at least one week a year	100%
	One meal of meat, chicken or fish at least every two days	42%
	Keep your home at a suitable temperature during cold months	68%
Italy	Paid vacation away from home at least one week a year	0%
	One meal of meat, chicken or fish at least every two days	95%
	Keep your home at a suitable temperature during cold months	0%
Kosovo	Paid vacation away from home at least one week a year	56%
	One meal of meat, chicken or fish at least every two days	16%
	Keep your home at a suitable temperature during cold months	6%
Serbia	Paid vacation away from home at least one week a year	80%
	One meal of meat, chicken or fish at least every two days	32%
	Keep your home at a suitable temperature during cold months	16%
Slovakia	Paid vacation away from home at least one week a year	80%
	One meal of meat, chicken or fish at least every two days	16%
	Keep your home at a suitable temperature during cold months	6%
Slovenia	Paid vacation away from home at least one week a year	58%
	One meal of meat, chicken or fish at least every two days	0%
	Keep your home at a suitable temperature during cold months	13%
Ukraine	Paid vacation away from home at least one week a year	86%
	One meal of meat, chicken or fish at least every two days	24%
	Keep your home at a suitable temperature during cold months	18%
<b>REYN average</b>	Paid vacation away from home at least one week a year	70%
	One meal of meat, chicken or fish at least every two days	32%
	Keep your home at a suitable temperature during cold months	17%



Table 6. Roma families asking for professional help or talk to someone for support when they feel down or in distress

Country	Yes	Only when I have no other option	No	There is no one I can ask for help
Bosnia and Herzegovina	8%	12%	54%	26%
Bulgaria	28%	16%	48%	8%
Croatia	2%	12%	84%	2%
Hungary	43%	8%	33%	16%
Kosovo	50%	0%	48%	2%
Serbia	6%	6%	72%	16%
Slovakia	56%	8%	32%	4%
Slovenia	40%	28%	25%	8%
Ukraine	9%	33%	52%	7%
<b>REYN average</b>	27%	14%	50%	10%

Table 7. Roma families visiting the health center in the last two months because of a child's health issue/problem

Country	Yes	No
Bosnia and Herzegovina	58%	42%
Bulgaria	62%	38%
Croatia	52%	48%
Hungary	14%	86%
Kosovo	60%	40%
Serbia	74%	26%
Slovakia	78%	22%
Slovenia	40%	60%
Ukraine	38%	62%
<b>REYN average</b>	53%	47%



**Table 8. Roma families who easily get support from doctors at the clinic/hospital**

Country	Yes	No
Bosnia and Herzegovina	74%	26%
Bulgaria	88%	12%
Croatia	78%	22%
Hungary	66%	34%
Italy	95%	5%
Kosovo	96%	4%
Serbia	90%	10%
Slovakia	96%	4%
Slovenia	95%	5%
Ukraine	67%	33%
<b>REYN average</b>	84%	16%

**Table 9. Roma households with children under six years of age receiving any kind of subsidy or similar**

Country	Type of subsidy	%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Without subsidy or similar	22%
	With a subsidy or similar from public funds or NGOs	24%
	With a subsidy or similar from public funds	44%
	With a subsidy or similar from NGOs	10%
	Others	0%
Bulgaria	Without subsidy or similar	26%
	With a subsidy or similar from public funds or NGOs	26%
	With a subsidy or similar from public funds	26%
	With a subsidy or similar from NGOs	18%
	Others	4%
Croatia	Without subsidy or similar	26%
	With a subsidy or similar from public funds or NGOs	0%
	With a subsidy or similar from public funds	66%
	With a subsidy or similar from NGOs	0%
	Others	8%
Hungary	Without subsidy or similar	100%
	With a subsidy or similar from public funds or NGOs	0%
	With a subsidy or similar from public funds	0%
	With a subsidy or similar from NGOs	0%
	Others	0%
Italy	Without subsidy or similar	35%
	With a subsidy or similar from public funds or NGOs	5%
	With a subsidy or similar from public funds	5%
	With a subsidy or similar from NGOs	25%
	Others	30%



Country	Type of subsidy	%
Kosovo	Without subsidy or similar	50%
	With a subsidy or similar from public funds or NGOs	50%
	With a subsidy or similar from public funds	0%
	With a subsidy or similar from NGOs	0%
	Others	0%
Serbia	Without subsidy or similar	56%
	With a subsidy or similar from public funds or NGOs	8%
	With a subsidy or similar from public funds	28%
	With a subsidy or similar from NGOs	8%
	Others	0%
Slovakia	Without subsidy or similar	70%
	With a subsidy or similar from public funds or NGOs	0%
	With a subsidy or similar from public funds	22%
	With a subsidy or similar from NGOs	6%
	Others	2%
Slovenia	Without subsidy or similar	3%
	With a subsidy or similar from public funds or NGOs	8%
	With a subsidy or similar from public funds	55%
	With a subsidy or similar from NGOs	3%
	Others	33%
Ukraine	Without subsidy or similar	40%
	With a subsidy or similar from public funds or NGOs	0%
	With a subsidy or similar from public funds	50%
	With a subsidy or similar from NGOs	4%
	Others	6%
<b>REYN average</b>	Without subsidy or similar	43%
	With a subsidy or similar from public funds or NGOs	12%
	With a subsidy or similar from public funds	30%
	With a subsidy or similar from NGOs	7%
	Others	8%

Table 10. Safety of the place/neighborhood where Roma children live

Country	Yes	No
Bosnia and Herzegovina	58%	42%
Bulgaria	60%	40%
Croatia	50%	50%
Hungary	90%	10%
Italy	60%	40%
Kosovo	73%	27%
Serbia	78%	22%
Slovakia	70%	30%
Slovenia	80%	20%
Ukraine	78%	22%
<b>REYN average</b>	70%	30%



Table 11. Roma households with children living in areas exposed to pollution

Country	Yes	No
Bosnia and Herzegovina	60%	40%
Bulgaria	33%	67%
Croatia	63%	37%
Hungary	0%	100%
Kosovo	34%	66%
Serbia	22%	78%
Slovakia	18%	82%
Slovenia	19%	81%
Ukraine	15%	85%
<b>REYN average</b>	29%	71%

Table 12. Roma households with/without access to clean and drinking water

Country	Yes	No
Bosnia and Herzegovina	14%	86%
Bulgaria	4%	96%
Croatia	20%	80%
Hungary	8%	92%
Italy	10%	90%
Kosovo	26%	74%
Serbia	8%	92%
Slovakia	4%	96%
Slovenia	13%	88%
Ukraine	6%	94%
<b>REYN average</b>	11%	89%



Table 13. Access to ECEC services in the neighborhood or near (no more than two kilometers from home)

Country	Health centre	Crèche/nursery*	Kindergarten/ preschool**	Primary school	Secondary school
Bosnia and Herzegovina	62%	24%	34%	78%	24%
Bulgaria	64%	52%	78%	76%	35%
Croatia	32%	32%	52%	58%	2%
Hungary	32%	62%	94%	90%	6%
Kosovo	85%	48%	67%	79%	48%
Serbia	66%	66%	76%	94%	58%
Slovakia	88%	6%	98%	96%	26%
Slovenia	38%	37%	60%	40%	18%
Ukraine	71%	39%	49%	69%	77%
<b>REYN average</b>	60%	41%	68%	76%	33%

Country	VET Centre	Sports centre	Public park/ playground	Cultural centre	Libraries
Bosnia and Herzegovina	24%	22%	36%	34%	33%
Bulgaria	19%	24%	60%	33%	66%
Croatia	22%	12%	44%	22%	68%
Hungary	4%	10%	72%	32%	82%
Kosovo	21%	44%	34%	30%	16%
Serbia	16%	30%	86%	32%	64%
Slovakia	20%	26%	46%	34%	44%
Slovenia	18%	38%	38%	33%	40%
Ukraine	25%	25%	57%	42%	58%
<b>REYN average</b>	19%	26%	53%	32%	52%

\* Children young than 3 years old

\*\* Children from 3 years to primary school



Table 14. Amount of Roma children in early childhood educational settings

Country	All children are Roma	Almost all children are Roma	An important part of the children are Roma	My children are the only Roma children in the group/classroom	Some children are Roma
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0%	14%	41%	14%	32%
Bulgaria	37%	14%	14%	0%	34%
Croatia	41%	15%	19%	0%	26%
Hungary	4%	10%	62%	0%	24%
Kosovo	22%	29%	31%	4%	13%
Serbia	15%	0%	10%	10%	65%
Slovakia	63%	8%	8%	0%	21%
Slovenia	0%	0%	0%	21%	79%
Ukraine	15%	0%	5%	20%	60%
<b>REYN average</b>	22%	10%	21%	8%	39%

## SEGREGATION OF ROMA CHILDREN IN ECEC SERVICES - according to early childhood professionals

Country	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	I don't know
Bosnia and Herzegovina	4%	7%	29%	14%	14%	32%
Bulgaria	7%	30%	20%	20%	7%	17%
Croatia	0%	10%	14%	17%	21%	38%
Hungary	0%	16%	26%	13%	32%	13%
Kosovo	3%	7%	23%	3%	17%	47%
Serbia	0%	10%	14%	17%	21%	38%
Slovakia	2%	2%	14%	11%	36%	34%
Slovenia	4%	8%	12%	16%	52%	8%
Ukraine	0%	10%	0%	10%	13%	67%
<b>REYN average</b>	2%	11%	17%	14%	24%	33%



Table 15. Roma children who have difficulties in understanding the main language

Country	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	I don't know
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0%	32%	21%	11%	21%	14%
Bulgaria	20%	60%	17%	3%	0%	0%
Croatia	55%	28%	0%	10%	7%	0%
Hungary	8%	16%	21%	26%	21%	8%
Kosovo	13%	33%	17%	13%	17%	7%
Serbia	55%	28%	0%	10%	7%	0%
Slovakia	20%	55%	11%	7%	2%	5%
Slovenia	8%	52%	28%	4%	0%	8%
Ukraine	31%	31%	17%	3%	10%	7%
<b>REYN average</b>	23%	37%	15%	10%	10%	5%

Table 16. Presence of Roma assistants in EC services helping children and/or families with language barriers

Country	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	I don't know
Bosnia and Herzegovina	48%	19%	7%	0%	4%	22%
Bulgaria	33%	47%	13%	0%	3%	3%
Croatia	21%	21%	14%	14%	24%	7%
Hungary	3%	3%	18%	29%	29%	18%
Kosovo	38%	17%	17%	3%	3%	21%
Serbia	21%	21%	14%	14%	24%	7%
Slovakia	23%	34%	20%	14%	5%	5%
Slovenia	24%	28%	16%	0%	8%	24%
Ukraine	17%	7%	7%	0%	0%	69%
<b>REYN average</b>	25%	22%	14%	8%	11%	20%



Table 17. Roma parents' responses to their baby (infant's) communication

Country	Always, as much as I can	Don't always know how react	Don't always react
Bosnia and Herzegovina	90%	4%	6%
Bulgaria	78%	6%	16%
Croatia	94%	0%	6%
Hungary	72%	16%	12%
Kosovo	96%	2%	2%
Serbia	94%	2%	4%
Slovakia	86%	4%	10%
Slovenia	92%	3%	5%
Ukraine	98%	0%	2%
<b>REYN average</b>	89%	4%	7%

Table 18. Activities used by Roma parents when playing with their children

Country	Draw, sing and/or dance	Invent small games	Toys/objects in the house	Outdoor space
Bosnia and Herzegovina	20%	32%	37%	12%
Bulgaria	9%	9%	62%	20%
Croatia	22%	0%	63%	16%
Hungary	12%	6%	49%	33%
Kosovo	14%	19%	67%	0%
Serbia	9%	9%	74%	9%
Slovakia	3%	6%	86%	6%
Slovenia	13%	7%	80%	0%
Ukraine	23%	12%	58%	8%
<b>REYN average</b>	14%	11%	64%	11%



Table 19. Frequency with which Roma parents read or sing to their child

Country	Always, often, sometimes	Not enough/ Not very often
Bosnia and Herzegovina	40%	60%
Bulgaria	70%	30%
Croatia	76%	24%
Hungary	64%	36%
Kosovo	83%	17%
Serbia	68%	32%
Slovakia	82%	18%
Slovenia	78%	23%
Ukraine	62%	38%
<b>REYN average</b>	70%	30%

Table 20. Time spent playing with children per day

Country	As often as I can	Between 1 -2 hours	More than 2 hours	I don't have time
Bosnia and Herzegovina	53%	26%	9%	12%
Bulgaria	40%	38%	10%	12%
Croatia	72%	12%	6%	10%
Hungary	48%	38%	10%	4%
Kosovo	40%	36%	20%	4%
Serbia	66%	16%	6%	12%
Slovakia	64%	12%	8%	16%
Slovenia	33%	25%	40%	3%
Ukraine	64%	26%	4%	6%
<b>REYN average</b>	53%	25%	13%	9%



Table 21. Number of toys and play items at home

Country	A lot	Enough	Not enough
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2%	38%	60%
Bulgaria	36%	30%	34%
Croatia	38%	40%	22%
Hungary	10%	46%	44%
Kosovo	10%	74%	16%
Serbia	14%	42%	44%
Slovakia	27%	41%	33%
Slovenia	53%	40%	8%
Ukraine	12%	44%	44%
<b>REYN average</b>	22%	44%	34%

Table 22. Number of children's books at home

Country	Up to 10	More than 10	I don't know	Don't have books
Bosnia and Herzegovina	27%	4%	67%	2%
Bulgaria	80%	4%	16%	0%
Croatia	57%	4%	39%	0%
Hungary	93%	2%	4%	0%
Kosovo	38%	35%	26%	0%
Serbia	51%	4%	45%	0%
Slovakia	73%	8%	20%	0%
Slovenia	56%	18%	26%	0%
Ukraine	72%	11%	17%	0%
<b>REYN average</b>	61%	10%	29%	0.2%

Table 23. Roma parents encouraging their children to explore objects, people and surroundings

Country	Always	Whenever I find time	Not enough
Bosnia and Herzegovina	48%	20%	32%
Bulgaria	28%	32%	40%
Croatia	48%	42%	10%
Hungary	68%	18%	14%
Kosovo	78%	0%	22%
Serbia	52%	26%	22%
Slovakia	59%	33%	8%
Slovenia	60%	28%	13%
Ukraine	18%	38%	44%
<b>REYN average</b>	51%	26%	23%

Table 24. Roma families that have been or have felt discriminated against when accessing any public services

Country	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Bosnia and Herzegovina	14%	16%	30%	22%	18%
Bulgaria	4%	6%	16%	12%	62%
Croatia	4%	16%	39%	8%	33%
Hungary	8%	30%	40%	22%	0%
Kosovo	6%	8%	15%	13%	58%
Serbia	0%	2%	30%	12%	56%
Slovakia	2%	12%	24%	18%	44%
Slovenia	0%	10%	18%	18%	55%
Ukraine	16%	30%	18%	30%	7%
<b>REYN average</b>	6%	14%	26%	17%	37%



Table 25. Roma families that have been or have felt discriminated against in health services

Country	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Bosnia and Herzegovina	14%	20%	38%	10%	18%
Bulgaria	2%	8%	12%	18%	60%
Croatia	2%	18%	24%	8%	47%
Hungary	0%	16%	46%	32%	6%
Kosovo	4%	10%	10%	22%	53%
Serbia	0%	0%	22%	16%	62%
Slovakia	2%	8%	20%	22%	48%
Slovenia	0%	8%	18%	13%	63%
Ukraine	20%	16%	20%	27%	16%
<b>REYN average</b>	5%	12%	23%	19%	41%

Table 26. Roma families facing discrimination when looking for a job

Country	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Bosnia and Herzegovina	24%	38%	12%	6%	20%
Bulgaria	7%	2%	9%	9%	73%
Croatia	6%	27%	15%	10%	42%
Hungary	34%	38%	18%	10%	0%
Kosovo	4%	21%	17%	8%	50%
Serbia	0%	12%	30%	12%	46%
Slovakia	6%	20%	14%	10%	50%
Slovenia	0%	10%	8%	15%	67%
Ukraine	42%	24%	11%	9%	13%
<b>REYN average</b>	14%	21%	15%	10%	40%

**Table 27. Roma families that have been or have felt discriminated against in the playground, kindergarten, school or other educational settings**

Country	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Bosnia and Herzegovina	18%	34%	22%	10%	16%
Bulgaria	2%	10%	14%	16%	58%
Croatia	2%	4%	27%	13%	54%
Hungary	12%	6%	26%	52%	4%
Kosovo	10%	6%	8%	14%	61%
Serbia	0%	2%	20%	8%	70%
Slovakia	4%	4%	12%	8%	72%
Slovenia	3%	10%	18%	5%	65%
Ukraine	16%	23%	23%	28%	9%
<b>REYN average</b>	7%	11%	19%	17%	46%

**Table 28. Roma children experiencing discrimination in playgrounds**

Country	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Bosnia and Herzegovina	15%	8%	33%	10%	33%
Bulgaria	0%	2%	10%	14%	74%
Croatia	0%	6%	8%	22%	63%
Hungary	6%	10%	38%	34%	12%
Kosovo	4%	8%	16%	6%	65%
Serbia	0%	2%	14%	6%	78%
Slovakia	0%	4%	16%	12%	68%
Slovenia	0%	5%	8%	3%	85%
Ukraine	5%	28%	19%	28%	21%
<b>REYN average</b>	3%	8%	18%	15%	56%





**Table 29. Roma children experiencing discrimination in kindergartens**

Country	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Bosnia and Herzegovina	15%	24%	7%	7%	48%
Bulgaria	0%	6%	2%	6%	86%
Croatia	0%	2%	2%	8%	88%
Hungary	0%	10%	6%	18%	66%
Kosovo	4%	12%	6%	8%	69%
Serbia	0%	4%	4%	4%	88%
Slovakia	0%	10%	4%	8%	78%
Slovenia	0%	8%	5%	10%	78%
Ukraine	8%	13%	13%	18%	47%
<b>REYN average</b>	3%	10%	5%	10%	72%

**Table 30. Discrimination of Roma children in playgrounds or kindergartens – according to professionals**

Country	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	I don't know
Bosnia and Herzegovina	3%	17%	17%	31%	3%	28%
Bulgaria	7%	13%	40%	23%	7%	10%
Croatia	0%	10%	52%	17%	3%	17%
Hungary	13%	40%	10%	20%	8%	10%
Kosovo	7%	7%	24%	7%	17%	38%
Serbia	0%	10%	52%	17%	3%	17%
Slovakia	0%	0%	16%	16%	52%	16%
Slovenia	8%	0%	12%	23%	15%	42%
Ukraine	0%	7%	20%	20%	23%	30%
<b>REYN average</b>	4%	12%	27%	19%	15%	23%

Table 31. Discrimination of Roma children in early childhood services by teachers – according to professionals

Country	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	I don't know
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0%	4%	25%	18%	21%	32%
Bulgaria	0%	23%	30%	20%	13%	13%
Croatia	0%	0%	17%	14%	31%	38%
Hungary	0%	34%	18%	16%	24%	8%
Kosovo	17%	3%	20%	3%	37%	20%
Serbia	0%	0%	17%	14%	31%	38%
Slovakia	0%	0%	14%	16%	50%	20%
Slovenia	0%	0%	0%	20%	72%	8%
Ukraine	0%	7%	3%	3%	40%	47%
<b>REYN average</b>	2%	8%	16%	14%	35%	25%

Table 32. Discrimination of Roma children in early childhood services by other children – according to professionals

Country	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	I don't know
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0%	18%	36%	14%	11%	21%
Bulgaria	3%	27%	30%	13%	7%	20%
Croatia	0%	7%	21%	24%	21%	28%
Hungary	3%	29%	21%	18%	21%	8%
Kosovo	10%	10%	27%	17%	13%	23%
Serbia	0%	7%	21%	24%	21%	28%
Slovakia	0%	0%	25%	18%	32%	25%
Slovenia	0%	0%	20%	40%	32%	8%
Ukraine	0%	10%	7%	20%	20%	43%
<b>REYN average</b>	2%	12%	23%	21%	20%	23%















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Find out more about  
REYN Early Childhood Research Study:



The Romani Early Years Network (REYN) is a European-wide initiative of ISSA that promotes access to quality early childhood development for Roma and Traveller children, professionalism in early years services, and a better representation of Roma and Travellers in the early childhood workforce.



ISSA is an early childhood membership association that serves as a learning community and a champion for quality, equitable and integrated services. The ISSA network is a dynamic mix of expert organizations, ranging from NGOs to research institutes, from public bodies to early childhood services, primarily from Europe and Central Asia.