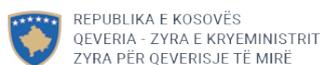
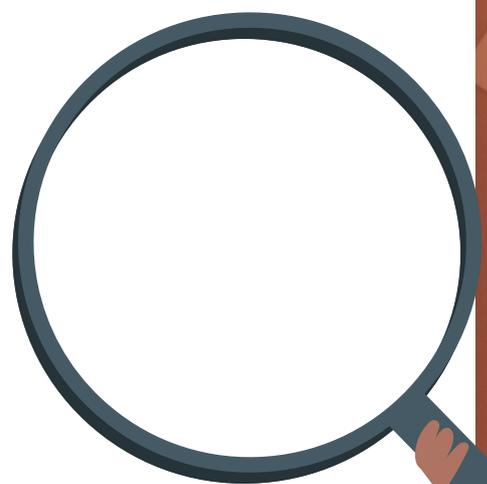


National Research on Antigypsyism in Kosovo



REPUBLIKA E KOSOVËS
QEVERIA - ZYRA E KRYEMINISTRIT
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VOICE OF ROMA,
ASHKALI AND
EGYPTIANS IN KOSOVO



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National
Research on
Antigypsyism
in Kosovo

REPORT

Prepared by:

**Think – International and UBO
Consulting**

Acknowledgements

The report is authored by the collective efforts of Ann Hyde and Delia Spatareanu from (Think-International a small Glasgow UK based company specialising in Roma related policy analysis and research), Dr Iulius Rostas (independent and European specialist leading on the subject of antigypsyism), Drenushë Telaku, Eneida Aliu (Until maternity leave) and Gjenezha Berisha, from UBO Consulting, Kosovo.

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The contact between the team was carried out remotely by Zoom platform, but we achieved a very successful working relationship which made the production of this very important research study possible.

Report

Prepared for:

The Consortium - VoRAE (Voice of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, Kosovo), HEKS/EPER Switzerland and TdH (Terre des hommes Kosovo) and the Office of Good Governance in the Office of the Prime Minister.

Authored by,

Ann Morton Hyde - Dr Iulius Rostas - Drenushë Telaku - Delia Spatareanu

May 2022

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Antigypsyism is a complex phenomenon that produces and reproduces inequalities among Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians and the rest of the society. The aim of the national research on antigypsyism in Kosovo is to explore the roots and manifestations of antigypsyism, its negative impact on social inclusion of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians and to identify possible solutions to be incorporated into government policies, all related procedures and large projects.

To achieve this aim, the following definition of antigypsyism was used:

'Antigypsyism' is a special form of racism directed against those stigmatised in the public imaginary as "Gypsies" that has at its core the assumptions that they are an inferior and deviant group and which justifies their dominance and oppression. Other key assumptions of 'antigypsyism' are: orientalism, nomadism, rootlessness and backwardness.¹

A mixture of qualitative and quantitative research methods and techniques such as desk research, surveys, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups are the basis of the research findings. A total of 1,065 face-to-face interviews were conducted in 38 municipalities, with a representative sample of randomly selected citizens of adult age (aged 18+), and from different gender and ethnic groups and different areas (urban and rural) in each of the 38 municipalities. The enumerators followed random walking procedures to select interviewees. Questionnaires were filled-in through face-to-face computer-assisted personal interviews (CAPI). During November 2021, 8 focus were conducted with different population groups: 2 Roma, 2 Albanian, 2 Ashkali, 1 Egyptian and 1 with Returnees and interviews were carried out a range of public officials from the following sectors – Ministry of Environment, Planning and Infrastructure, the Ombudsperson Institute, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Ministry of Health, Regional Police and the Police Inspectorate, Director of Family Care Centre, two school Principals and a centre for social work.

¹ This was an adapted definition from - A Task for Sisyphus: Why Europe's Roma policies fail (CEU Press) p 12. Dr Rostas, 2019

Main Findings

What stands out when it comes to stereotypes and prejudices displayed in Kosovo society is the significant disproportion of negative stereotypes and prejudices towards the three communities of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, compared to positive or neutral ones, especially on tv, print media and social media.

The word 'magjup' remains in popular speech and in the media and social media. Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians all find its use unacceptable and consider it to be a serious slur against them. It is not generally recognised as the hate speech, and many from the non-Roma, -Ashkali or-Egyptian population justify its use by saying it is not intended to be derogatory nor insulting – "it's just a habit – it's the term we have always used."

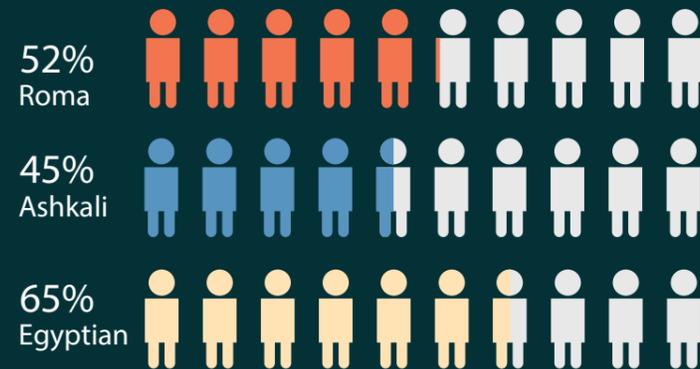
The main source of information on Roma Ashkali and Egyptian comes from TV and print media (respectfully 32%, 33% and 34%), followed by social media (15% and 14%). Other sources included individual readings, neighbours and friends, family etc. Only 4% of people listed schoolbooks and lessons as their source of this knowledge.

The educational institutions do not teach Romani language, in spite of the recognition of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian as a national minority, and do almost nothing to present Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians cultures and traditions. There are no Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian cultural institutions supported by the state, to accurately inform the public on the culture and history of these groups. So, the misinformed images and stereotypes of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians continue unchecked and unchallenged in society.

A finding of the national research on antigypsyism in Kosovo was the belief that all others display superiority, one of the definite roots of antigypsyism, towards Roma Ashkali and Egyptians in Kosovo. During focus group discussions, when asked about the superiority shown by Albanians towards Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, the Albanian participants did not disagree with the finding but attributed the phenomenon to being a majority community in Kosovo. The results of the discussions showed more that the feeling (belief) of superiority is manifested by each community which considers itself the majority in that municipality/state.

Most respondents rarely or very rarely interact with Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people – 60% rarely/ very rarely interact with Roma, 63% of them rarely/very rarely interact with Ashkali and 60% of them rarely/ very rarely interact with Egyptians. Around one-third of respondents declared that they never interact with either of the communities.

Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities believe they are separate groups and should be treated separately – 52% Roma, 45% Ashkali and 65% Egyptian. This finding contradicts the perception of the rest of Kosovo society, who mostly see Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians as one single ethnic minority.



Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians are clear about the intensity of the discriminatory treatment they receive from the rest of Kosovo society and from the institutions. But 63% of non-Roma-Ashkali or -Egyptian respondents viewed discrimination to be quite rare or very rare. Whereas the view of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian population is the opposite, with 69% of Roma, 58% of Ashkali and 41% of Egyptians viewing discrimination to be very widespread or quite widespread.

Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians are deprived of knowledge on their influence on the history and culture of the region where they and their ancestors lived. Consequently, the message they receive from the authorities is that they, their history and culture and their contribution to the larger community and wider society is not valued.

Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian populations in Kosovo are underrepresented in public administration. According to the Ombudsperson 2020 Annual Report, from the 56 state institutions with a total of 30,635 employees, only 113 employees are from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. The Government of the Republic of Kosovo Report on the Implementation of Roma Integration Policy in Kosovo for 2019 states there were a total of 277 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people employed in municipalities, 123 in civil and public service, 95 in education, 35 in administration and 24 in healthcare. Based on the Labour Force Survey 79,000 people are in public administration, education and health related employment – thus only 0.35% of public servants are of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian ethnicity.

The legal provisions and legal framework on hate speech and hate crimes in Kosovo are technically in place but are seldom activated. Although these phenomena are widespread in Kosovo, implementation of the law is hindered by a cumbersome process between the Police and the Prosecutors office, to accept a crime as a hate crime.

The antidiscrimination law remains largely ineffective in combating antigypsyism. The activity reports of the Ombudsperson indicate an institution that is weak when it comes to its efficiency and ability to combat discrimination. Ethnic discrimination tends to take precedence over gender-based discrimination. While Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women may be prepared to talk about their experiences, they do not report cases to the authorities either because they do not know their rights, or they distrust institutions. Findings that are clearly reflected in the responses to the national survey on antigypsyism.

The majority of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian respondents (78%) either tend to or totally agree that 'Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children have less access to kindergarten/nursery than Albanian children', a belief that was shared with 60% of non-Roma, -Ashkali or -Egyptian respondents.

Overall, the lack of a systemic data collection mechanisms facilitates the continuation of the status quo as indirect discrimination and institutional racism remain unreported and unchallenged. Without such data, the promotion of equality remains an unachievable policy aim and any affirmative action, as a policy response, remains an ad hoc and largely unused option.

Recommendations

A set of seven recommendations were made to the Government, state institutions and civil society, including Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities.

Recommendation 1 – to the Government of Kosovo and the Ombudsperson Institution

The antidiscrimination legislation should be implemented as a matter of urgency. The Government of the Republic of Kosovo to approve as soon as possible the strategy for the Roma and Ashkali Communities and to allocate budgets for its implementation. A legal analysis-assessment should be conducted and an awareness campaign on discrimination by the Government and the Ombudsperson Institution should be conducted together with all stakeholders.

Recommendation 2 – to the Government of Kosovo – and all public sector institutions

The government and all public institutions should provide initial training and ongoing professional development for civil servants in preventing and combating discrimination against the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. The government should develop a comprehensive methodology for data collection as a way to promote equality and non-discrimination. It should implement employment quotas for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in public administration and state-owned companies, and establish mechanisms to monitor law enforcement. It is recommended that the phenomenon of antigypsyism be incorporated in the legislation of Kosovo.

Recommendation 3 – Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation and to municipalities, school principals and teachers

Mainstream curricula should be reformed to include information about Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians. Romani language should be taught in schools similar to other minority languages. The state should recruit and train Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian teachers. Intercultural education should become mandatory for all pupils. Legal and rights literacy should be taught in all schools in Kosovo. School segregation should be eliminated once and for all and any infringements need to be appropriately penalised.

Recommendation 4 – to Kosovo Police and the Police Inspectorate

Kosovo Police recruitment process should include tailored training in the field of human rights, anti-racism and anti-bias and how to treat vulnerable and marginalised groups. All cases of discrimination should be recorded and disaggregated on the basis of ethnicity and their status reported on an annual basis. Recruiting Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian officers would facilitate the relations with these communities. In addition, regular dialogue and cooperation with minority communities and other vulnerable and marginalised groups should be strengthened.

Recommendation 5 – to civil society and the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people in Kosovo

Convey a clear message to all society that the use of pejorative language when talking to or about Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people will not be tolerated. A national awareness raising campaign, including giving Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians a clear narrative/script to stand up to and challenge those who use such terms combined with clear instructions on how to report the use of hate speech and the procedures that should be followed. Structures need to be put in place for coordinated data collection on the occurrences of hate speech. In its watchdog role, civil society should initiate regular monitoring of the level and progress of reported cases.

Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian civil society should take actions to improve contact and connections with members of the press and media, thus facilitating constructive access between both sides to both elevate the voices of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians and build personal connections/ understanding amongst those writing in the press. Also, there should be trainings for journalists on anti-racism and discriminatory terminology.

Recommendation 6 – to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people the Government of Kosovo, cultural institutions and civil society

Visibility and interactivity are ways to influence behavioural change and Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians should be part of the events, festivals, learning activities, sporting competitions and volunteering which bring people together into the same space.

The Government should fund Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian cultural institutions such as theatres, museums, folk assemblies, and philharmonic orchestras.

The Government should facilitate Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian artists access to mainstream cultural institutions in Kosovo – museums, art galleries, philharmonics, as a means to exhibit their products and communicate to the public their contribution to the culture and society.

Recommendation 7 – to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people in Kosovo

From a power strengthening perspective, for the Roma Ashkali and Egyptians in Kosovo the best strategy would be to combine their own representation with representation from other mainstream political parties



INTRODUCTION

This National Research on Antigypsyism in Kosovo is the first of its kind anywhere. It is therefore a highly important baseline tool and methodology, not only for Kosovo, as the participating country, but for all other countries in the Western Balkans and in wider Europe, where antigypsyism is prevalent as a life limiting factor for Roma Ashkali and the Egyptians.

The research was commissioned by a Consortium made up of: Voice of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians Kosovo; Ter des Hommes Kosovo, HEKS/EPER, as the aid agency of the Swiss Protestant churches; and the Office of Good Governance, Prime Minister's office Kosovo.

Antigypsyism is a complex phenomenon that operates in varied ways which permeate through institutional practices, their norms and procedures, and policies thus impeding the functioning of democratic institutions, thus producing and reproducing inequalities among Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians and the rest of the society, and stigmatising the identity of these groups. The negative feelings and attitudes of other groups in society towards Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians reinforces the stigmatisation of their identity and contributes to their negative portrayal in policy making and in the everyday operations of institutions.

The aim of the national research on antigypsyism in Kosovo is to explore the roots and manifestations of antigypsyism, its negative impact on social inclusion of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians and to identify possible solutions to be integrated into the larger project activities and government policies.

An important starting point, before researching antigypsyism, was an agreed definition to be used as the basis for all research activities, as follows:

'Antigypsyism' is a special form of racism directed against those stigmatised in the public imaginary as "Gypsies" that has at its core the assumptions that they are an inferior and deviant group and which justifies their dominance and oppression. Other key assumptions of 'antigypsyism' are: orientalism, nomadism, rootlessness and backwardness.²

Antigypsyism represents a system of oppression that builds on prejudices and stereotypes against those stigmatised in the public imaginary as 'gypsy' in Kosovo, as 'cigan' in Serbian language and 'magjup' in Albanian.

² This was an adapted definition from - A Task for Sisyphus: Why Europe's Roma policies fail (CEU Press) p 12. Dr Rostas, 2019

The National Research on antigypsyism in Kosovo set out to measure and test the perception of the general population towards the three ethnic groups, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, that all fall under the Council of Europe's collective term 'Roma', which is now widely used to encompass a wide diversity of groups, including those who have been stigmatised.

The National Research on antigypsyism in Kosovo set out to explore the general public's understanding of all three ethnic minority groups, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians to identify and try to understand the foundations of the prevailing discriminatory beliefs held by others towards these minority groups. It also explored the public policies and the social norms of antigypsyism in Kosovo to engage the public in the fight against antigypsyism by challenging the discriminatory social norms that distort public opinion and hamper access to public services. The research is intended as a baseline and foundation for future studies on the topic of antigypsyism. By describing the current situation, it can serve as an advocacy tool for challenging antigypsyism in national and local policies, thus enabling institutions to recognise and combat antigypsyism in existing laws and through the provision of key public services. The methodology, now tested at national level, is sufficiently robust to allow monitoring and measuring of attitudinal and societal change at defined intervals.

The Roma Ashkali and Egyptian populations in the Western Balkans make up one of the most vulnerable minorities in Europe. The origin of antigypsyism, as with elsewhere in Europe, is rooted in historical oppression, and a growing body of academic publications now document historical racism and research by universities, think tanks and other institutions are revealing new dimensions of oppression and discrimination to which Roma have been subjected to historically in Europe.

In 2019, the European Commission recognises that antigypsyism seriously undermines inclusion of Roma, in Kosovo - this is understood to be Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians. Antigypsyism squarely shifts the obligation on public institutions to tackle its multi-faceted forms, which include racist violence, hate speech, stigmatisation and discrimination, in particular institutional discrimination, which manifests itself as barriers to accessing public services in the proclaimed priority areas for inclusion (education, employment, housing, health). The need to adopt an effective policy approach for tackling antigypsyism that responds to a (often unheard) call for recognition of the experience and presents injustices that Roma face, in Kosovo understood as Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians.

One of the most common origins of antigypsyism is the rise of the nation-state and the nationalism as an ideology encompassing the nation-building processes. Thus, in Kosovo, antigypsyism arises at the confrontation of the two nationalisms that led to a recent war that affected all communities in Kosovo. Without a kinstate to defend them and speak on their behalf, many Kosovo Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians fled the war and were targeted to encounter other forms of antigypsyism: refusal to award them refugee status, intermediary solutions that allowed them a temporary right to stay in Western European countries, and forced returns to Kosovo, etc. Thus, among contemporary forms of antigypsyism, the experience of Kosovo's Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, adds to the institutional practices which constitute manifestations of antigypsyism.

In December 2017, the Civil Rights Defenders presented a series of reports on antigypsyism in the Western Balkans, consisting of a regional report and four country reports, on Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, and Serbia respectively. The reports voiced a need to go beyond mere descriptions of the difficult situation facing Roma, and the lack of policy implementation in this area, and indeed proposed to identify the reasons behind the current situation. Thus, antigypsyism was identified as the main cause of the difficult situation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in the Western Balkans.

In terms of EU membership, Kosovo remains a potential candidate country, not yet a candidate country, but in relation to Roma policies they, together with the other Western Balkan countries, are aligned with the EU's strategic framework and created a National Roma Integration Strategy. In October 2020, the European Commission issued a reinforced and reformed EU Roma strategic framework, which sets out a comprehensive three-pillar approach. This approach complements the socio-economic inclusion of marginalised Roma with fostering equality and promoting participation. All Roma should have the opportunity to realise their full potential and engage in political, social, economic and cultural life.

SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH

Some of the main drivers of antigypsyism in Kosovo today include: a general ignorance about Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people, their culture, history, and especially their history of oppression. A pervasive unconscious bias seems to contribute to the problem, as does a lack of understanding about racial essentialism and stigmatising concepts.

Therefore, the purpose is to conduct comprehensive national research regarding the phenomenon of antigypsyism in Kosovo in order to explain how antigypsyism is rooted and how it is manifested in the society. It aims to measure the perception of the general population towards Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, the level of discrimination these communities perceive themselves, as well as their trust in public institutions. Secondly, the purpose is to identify and understand the prevailing discriminatory policies and social norms of antigypsyism in Kosovo. Furthermore, it aims also to identify the potentials to fight antigypsyism at both levels, policy and social norms.

This is pioneering national research investigating the roots and manifestations of antigypsyism at a single-country level. It is the first of its kind, providing an extensive national sample of 1065 respondents across 38 municipalities in Kosovo.

During early discussions the commissioning Consortium requested that the national survey sample should include a larger share of people from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian ethnic groups. The sample from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian respondents was doubled, compared to the original proposal, from 100 to 200. This change maintains the relevance of the statistical returns. The data collection method enabled specific questions to be directed to people from these minority groups and enables disaggregation of responses from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people, and can be analysed accordingly. In line with the original Terms of Reference, to deliver the national research on antigypsyism in Kosovo, a mixture of qualitative and quantitative research methods and techniques such as desk research, survey, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups are the basis of the research findings presented in this report.

We reviewed relevant literature to expand understanding of what is available in data and to help shape the content of the questionnaires. We expected that Government reports would be a key element in the analysis of antigypsyism, but we overestimated how much relevant data these reports would provide. We had therefore to rely more than anticipated on information gathered from semi-structured interviews and focus groups. We did collect official documents, including the Antidiscrimination Law and government reports relating to implementation of the Government Strategy for Inclusion of Roma and Ashkali Communities in the Kosovo Society 2017-2021 and its Action Plan, such as annual reports from the Ombudspersons Institution and from the Police Inspectorate of Kosovo. The thematic report on antigypsyism in Kosovo by the Human Rights Defenders was a helpful source of information.³

³ Civil Rights Defenders, *The Wall of Anti-Gypsyism: Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in Kosovo*, November 2017, available at <https://crd.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/The-Wall-of-Anti-Gypsyism-Roma-in-Kosovo.pdf>



The implementation of the research period started on 29th June 2021 with preparation for the national research including drafting and discussion on the content of the questionnaires, a process that was complete by 6th September. The questionnaire was translated into Albanian and Serbian languages, and six pilot interviews were conducted to test the feasibility and appropriateness of the questionnaire, length, comprehensibility, and general good sense. The final questionnaire contained 22 questions. **ANEKS I – NATIONAL RESEARCH ON ANTIGYPSISM QUESTIONNAIRE** provides a copy of the final questionnaire.

Between 14th September and 4th October, 20 UBO trained professional enumerators were trained on the topic of antigypsyism and on the format of the questionnaire, ready to begin the face-to-face public research interviews with 1056 respondents across 38 municipalities in Kosovo. At the request of the Consortium, UBO included six enumerators from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian populations to help ensure participation in isolated settlements. The enumerators received instructions in the survey objectives, and interactive training on the definition and meaning of antigypsyism, how to ask questions, how to probe on inadequate responses, and how to record answers. Each enumerator was provided with an instruction manual to explain procedures for completing questionnaires.

The research period began on 6th October and ran for 15 days. A total of 1,065 face-to-face interviews were conducted, with a representative sample of randomly selected adult citizens (age 18+), and from different gender and ethnic groups and different areas (urban and rural) in each of the municipalities. The sample structure comes from the 2011 census, which is a standard format in the field of public opinion research. Using the population structure and its distribution, quotas are determined according to ethnicity (overestimation of minority communities), municipalities and type of settlement (urban and rural). This structure enables stratified extension to the lowest level of population-based sample organization.

In this context, in terms of ethnic representation, 66% of respondents are from the Albanian community, 9% from the Serb community, 2% from the Bosniak community, 1% from the Gorani community, 2% from the Turkish community, 5% from the Roma community, 9% from the Ashkali community and 5% from the Egyptian community. In terms of gender representation, 50% of them are male and 50% are female. Further, 19% belonged to the age group of 18-24 years, 22% are aged 25-35 years, 20% of the age group 35-44, 16% of the age group 45-54 years, 16% of the age group 55-64 years and 12% of age group 65+. In terms of education, most respondents have completed primary and secondary school (88%), while 12% of respondents stated that they have a bachelor / master / doctoral degree. Almost half of the respondents (48%) are employed part-time / full-time and 52 percent are unemployed (students, retirees or housewives). In terms of place of residence, 63% of respondents stated that they live in a rural area, compared to 37% living in an urban area.

The enumerators followed the random walk procedure to select the interviewees. The margin of error in this study with 1065 interviews completed is $\pm 3\%$ with a 95% confidence interval. This means that in 95 out of every 100 samples of the same size and type, the results we would get would differ by no more than ± 3 percentage points from the result we would get if we could interview every member of the population. UBO Consulting provided quality assurance, including a one-third of the sample check.

Questionnaires were filled-in through face-to-face computer-assisted personal interviews (CAPI). This ensured the quality of data and minimised any misunderstanding of questions. It guaranteed a balanced survey sample, with regards to gender and community representation. The interviewers used the surveying software ASKIA DESIGN and ASKIA SCRIPT, a questionnaire-scripting environment that built the database system in parallel with questionnaire development. This eliminated the need for a manual data-entry process, and reduced errors. No obstacles or serious difficulties were encountered during the data collection period.

The research via focus groups was conducted during November 2021 with 8 focus groups from different population groups: 2 Roma, 2 Albanian, 2 Ashkali, 1 Egyptian and 1 with Returnees. A guideline was prepared for the focus group questions, which was adjusted accordingly to ensure relevance for each participating group.

The focus groups were organised after completion of the national survey. This enabled us to draw on and to refer to corresponding findings of the survey. The focus groups considered the manifestations of antigypsyism within their own groups which also enabled assessment of the relations each group has with the authorities, and with each other. **ANNEX II – Focus group discussion guideline** provides a copy of the final focus groups discussion guideline.

UBO consulting led the planning, setting-up and facilitation of the focus group sessions, and even in the current pandemic situation, the meetings were organised face-to-face. Experienced mediators led the focus groups discussions, and a think-international representative (Ann Hyde or Iulius Rostas) attended six of the eight meetings online. UBO consulting recruited participants using either research panels or face-to-face recruitment. Participants were selected based on their own willingness to take part and everyone was guaranteed confidentiality of the opinions they state during the discussion. Each meeting lasted between, one and half and two hours. The meetings were recorded, and each session was transcribed.

From 11 November, serious and concerted efforts were made to set-up and conduct semi-structured interviews with a range of public sector officials. We sent 39 invites, in English and Albanian with an explanatory letter attached from the Consortium. For many we did not receive a reply and for others we received a delivery failure notice. Some people accepted the meeting invite, then did not join the online meetings and others replied to say they were too busy. We supplemented our email invites with numerous telephone call requests, until we successfully concluded 12 interviews with a range of public officials from the following sectors – Ministry of Environment, Planning and Infrastructure, the Ombudsperson Institute, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Ministry of Health, Regional Police and the Police Inspectorate, Director of Family Care Centre, two school Principals and a centre for social work. Despite our best effort we did not manage to connect with someone from the prosecutor's office or from the Courts.

A guideline was prepared for the semi-structured interviews, which was adjusted accordingly to the sector. **ANNEX III In-DEPTH INTERVIEWS GUIDELINE** provides a copy of the final interview guidelines.

Two presentations were given on the initial findings from the national research, the first on 15 November to selected Consortium members and the second at The Summit on Antigypsyism on 24 November 2021 in Kosovo involving senior public sector officials.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

ANSWERING

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The definition preferred by the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo has a bearing on the terminology that should be used to ensure understanding and community ownership of the research findings. The national research included two questions for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian respondents and another to measure the majority population's knowledge of the term. The research confirmed that the most understood term is 'antigypsyism' confirmed by 38.5% of the population, 23.5% said 'I don't know' and 23.4% said 'anti-magjupizem'. The results from this question are available below:

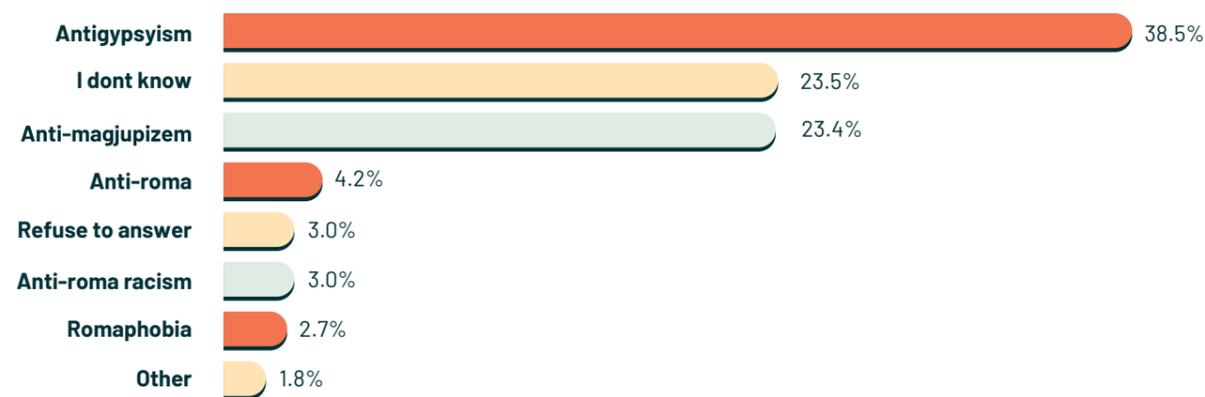


Figure 1. Which term should be used to describe past (historic) experiences directed towards your ethnic group?

There are sensible differences between the definitions of antigypsyism and discrimination, and between the legal sense of discrimination (individual discrimination) and institutional and structural discrimination. As part of the methodology, we have asked organisations, members of the local groups and key stakeholders about their preferences regarding the terminology as well as their understanding of antigypsyism manifestations.

The main objectives of the research are to:

- understand how deep antigypsyism is rooted in the society; through which mechanisms does it operate; how is it manifested and what is its effect on social inclusion efforts/present exclusion of the communities;
- confirm the assumption that antigypsyism is a significant restraint of change;
- recommend actions, which could be integrated in the operational plan of the project or beyond into government policies.

The terms of reference for the research set out the following nine questions to be addressed:

1. What are the main manifestations (or: most relevant patterns) of antigypsyism in Kosovo in terms of social stereotypes and prejudices, social practice, discrimination, structural inequalities and power relations?
2. What are the manifestations of antigypsyism among Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities themselves?
3. How power relations and its dynamics are interrelated with the production and reproduction of antigypsyism within Kosovar institutions?
4. Why antigypsyism manifestations occur? Why this phenomenon still persists in Kosovo?
5. How do members of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities themselves perceive and deal with these manifestations/patterns?
6. How does antigypsyism affect differently Roma Ashkali and Egyptian men and women? What is the combined impact of antigypsyism and gender discrimination for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women?
7. How do the effects of antigypsyism practices affect the development, well-being and childhood education of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children? When and how are Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children experiencing and possibly integrating antigypsyism in the image that they have of themselves?
8. Are there any actions to address discrimination and exclusion of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in employment, education and social service delivery?
 - (1) Are there any institutional mechanisms to address public and private sector employment quotas?
 - (2) Are there any policies and the cadastre plans for the legalisation of informal settlements and for house-legalisation; Are there any legal basis for housing support model for vulnerable families?
 - (3) How much Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women are engaged in the employment sector and secondary education system?
 - (4) Are there any community based early childhood day care centres? What is the participation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians children in ECD programs?
 - (5) Does the child protection system in Kosovo effectively address antigypsyism sentiments?
9. On the basis of the findings of the research, what are the recommendations towards different stakeholders to effectively recognize, address and combat antigypsyism in Kosovo?

Considering the sequence of the questions provides a logical framework to present the research findings, the next section of this report uses the data collected through the national survey, focus groups, semi-structured interviews and desk research to answer the set questions.

THE MAIN MANIFESTATIONS OF ANTIGYPSYISM IN KOSOVO

What are the main manifestations (or: most relevant patterns) of antigypsyism in Kosovo in terms of social stereotypes and prejudices, social practice, discrimination, structural inequalities and power relations?

Antigypsyism in Kosovo presents itself in different manifestations: prejudices and stereotypes, hate speech and hate crimes, police violence, distrust of the institutions, individual and institutional discrimination in almost all fields of public life which are all evident in the national research. Isolation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities ('mahalas'), lower access to quality education, limited access to kindergarten, separation of Roma Ashkali and Egyptian children from their peers, unequal access to employment and healthcare are all manifestations of antigypsyism. Clearly, the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians do not enjoy the same status as other national minorities in Kosovo.

Ethnic stereotypes and prejudices are present to a certain degree in every society. It is the role of education and institutions to make sure that these stereotypes and prejudices do not limit the exercise of rights for every human being or citizen. Whenever such a limitation of someone's rights takes place, there should be the legal means to remedy the situation, compensate the victim and punish the perpetrators. In Kosovo, however, the national survey shows that the official systems for reporting infringement of rights are neither accessible nor understood by the people when they need them. Rights are not only about legislation and systems, but their effective deployment requires an element of shared responsibility across all public officials, police, teachers, municipality, social and health workers alike. In Kosovo, these officials are not sufficiently acquainted with that responsibility, nor with the systems for upholding those rights or for reporting infringements.

Such public sector failures contribute to and enable the continuation of antigypsyism in Kosovo society and is clearly reflected in the national research data. When asked if respondents felt personally discriminated against in the last 12 months, 98% of those that responded affirmatively have not filed a complaint. When looking at the disaggregated data on ethnicity, 100% of the Roma Ashkali and Egyptians did not report it. When probed about their reasons, most believe it would not make a difference (19%), followed by a lack of trust in the institution (16%). There is however a difference in opinion between all respondents and Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians. When probed about their reasons, respondents from Roma (35%), Ashkali (36%) and Egyptian (35%) communities believe that it would not make any difference, followed by 35% of Roma and Ashkali and 31% of Egyptians who declared they had no information on where to file the complaint.

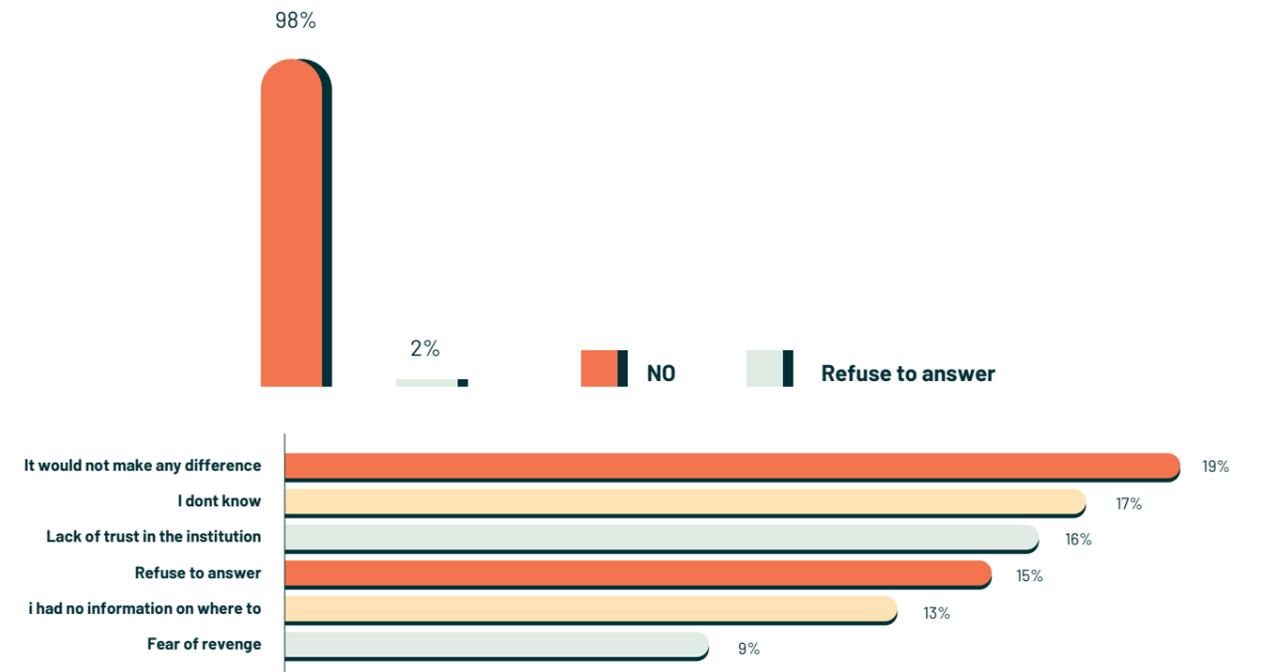


Figure 2. If in the past 12 months, you personally felt discriminated against, have you filed a complaint against the person/institution from whom you were discriminated and if not, what are the reasons?

What stands out when it comes to stereotypes and prejudices displayed in Kosovo society is the significant disproportion of negative stereotypes and prejudices towards the three communities of Roma Ashkali and Egyptians, in comparison to positive or neutral ones, especially on tv, print media and social media. These stereotypes and prejudices are informing social practices which in turn are reinforcing the existing stereotypes and prejudices. For example, popular sayings, jokes and ethnic labelling of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians become part of the socialisation of individuals, cementing a misinformed portrayal of these groups, and becoming the dominant narrative on Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian in the Kosovar society.

In focus groups during the national research on antigypsyism in Kosovo, time was spent discussing terminology and the terms regularly used towards Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians by the rest of the population. There is very strong evidence that the word 'magjup' remains in popular speech and in the media and social media. Most people said its use is not as commonplace as it was several years ago, but it is still present. Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians all find its use unacceptable and consider it to be a serious slur against them. It is not generally recognised as the hate speech it is, and many from the non-Roma, -Ashkali or -Egyptian population justify its use by saying it is not intended to be derogatory or to be insulting – "it's just a habit – it's the term we have always used."

"We take it as an insult. Most of them do not even know the meaning of the word –'magjup' means unclean/dirty."

"There are many students who have dropped out of school because of the word 'magjup'. They feel bad and they tell us when they come home from school. This comes from the Albanian parents, because children learn from their parents".

"There are times when this is mentioned even at our jobs – that they say 'I had a magjup here', this happened to me personally and I quit my job. This also leads to fights."

"Most people think that we are uneducated and unaware and that they are smarter than us and more self-aware, then they use that word again. We have not only heard it from some Albanian villagers, but also from citizens, teachers, doctors."

"There have been cases when the word was used during antidiscrimination training because they did not know what it was and what the difference Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians is. We told them the meaning of the word and told them who and what we are, and they were amazed because they did not know such a thing. They said that they did not know such a term. We always heard the word magjup, we did not know about Ashkali, etc."

Participants from focus group discussion with men from the Ashkali community

"The population does not know the meaning of the word 'magjup' because this word has nothing to do with the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. This is addressed to a poor, unclean, uneducated, unintegrated population, with a very poor socio-cultural aspect, with very little opportunities for integration in the society where they live, so this level of society is lower and is not equal to others."

Non-Roma, -Ashkali or -Egyptian respondents were asked on the sources of their knowledge/information about Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians. The figure below shows that the main source of this information comes from TV and print media (respectfully 32%, 33% and 34%), followed by social media (15% and 14%). Other sources included individual readings, neighbours and friends, family etc. Only 4% of them listed school books and lessons as their source of this knowledge.

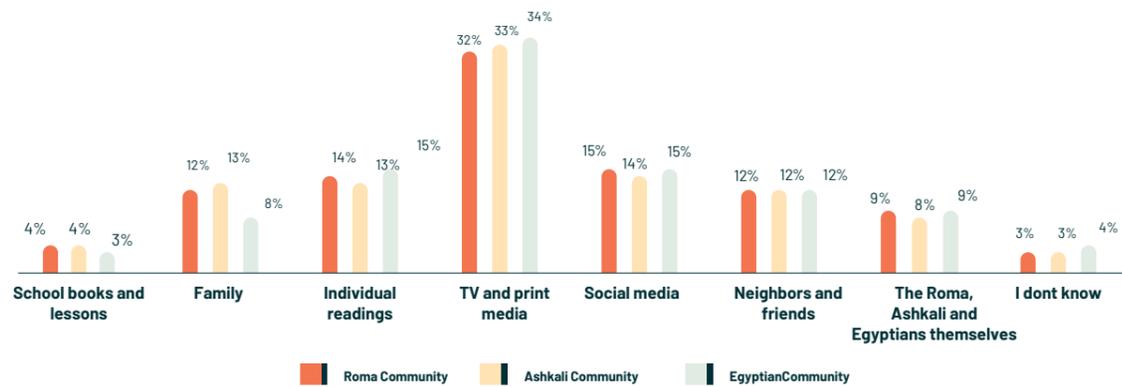


Figure 3. What is the source of your knowledge/information about Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians?

The educational institutions do not teach Romani language, in spite of the recognition of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian as a national minority, and do almost nothing to present Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians cultures and traditions. There are no Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian cultural institutions supported by the state, which to accurately inform the public on the culture and history of these groups. So, the misinformed images and stereotypes of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians continue unchecked and unchallenged in society. The survey showed that only 4% of respondents, the lowest reported source, gained information about Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian cultures from school books and lessons.

Ethnic stereotypes and prejudices play an important role in the exclusion and oppression of Roma in Kosovo. They determine specific individual behaviours towards Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, impact on the values in society and inform the norms and regulations governing societal institutions, being the very foundation of the dominance, hate, discrimination, and violence directed against Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in Kosovo.

A finding of the national research on antigypsyism in Kosovo was the belief that all others display superiority, one of the definite roots of antigypsyism, towards Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in Kosovo. This belief was expressed openly and discussed during the focus groups.

During focus group discussion, when asked about the superiority shown by Albanians towards Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, the Albanian participants did not disagree with the finding but attributed the phenomenon to being a majority community in Kosovo. The results of the discussions showed more that the feeling (belief) of superiority is manifested by each community which considers itself the majority in that municipality/state.

In this context, we have an example from a discussion held with the Returnees of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, in the village of Plemetine, in the municipality of Obiliq. Most people living in that village belong to the Serb community, while others are Albanian, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian. The focus group participants elaborated that they have very good social relations with Albanian citizens, but not with Serb citizens whom they believe display superiority towards them. Superiority is one of the recognised characteristics of oppression.⁴

⁴ Internalised racial superiority- is a complex multi-generational socialisation process that teaches white people to believe, accept and or live superior societal definitions of self. "Understanding and Dismantling Racism", By Joseph R. Barndt

Although Albanian focus group participants generally stated that they are against discrimination towards the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, a dose of racism could be seen in some of the specific participants' comments. When asked if they should be treated equally - some participants used a "lighter skin colour" position to determine the extent to which individual Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians deserve equal treatment. Meaning that equality is conditional on a lighter skin colour.

"There are people from these communities who look the same as us and cannot be identified by the colour of their skin, unless they say it out loud."

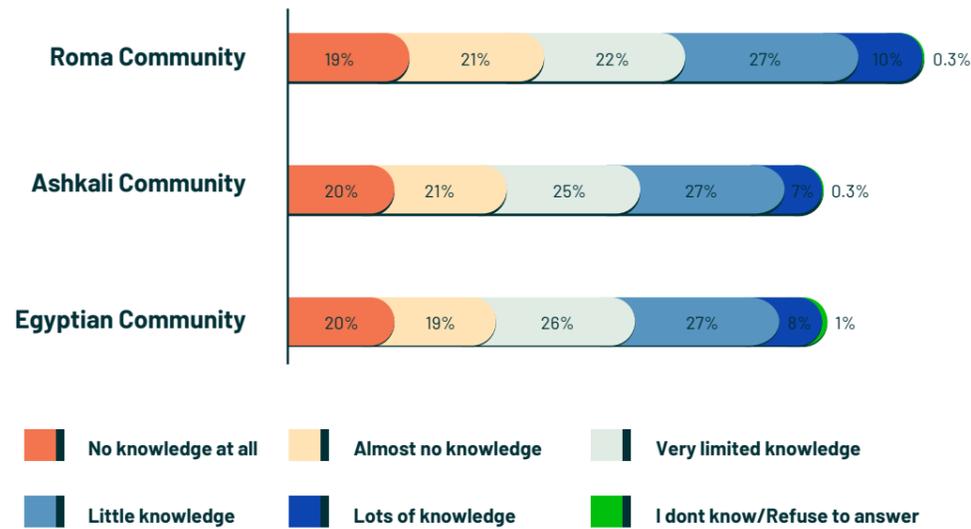
Participant from focus group discussion with women from Albanian Community

"Albanians are higher because they work harder, they are more educated. And consequently, can be hired more easily. We also have people from our community who are educated and are the same as Albanians. Albanians are superior only because of education, not because we are part of a certain community."

Participant from focus group discussion with women from Egyptian Community

"It's true that Albanians feel more superior towards the Roma Ashkali and Egyptian community, but it is not okay. More sophisticated rather than superior"

As part of the National Research, non-Roma, -Ashkalian-Egyptian respondents were asked about their level of knowledge about Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, in terms of history, culture and traditions. The graph below shows that around the same share of respondents (62% and 66%) have very limited/almost no/no knowledge at all.



Ilustrimi 4. Sa keni njohuri nga historia, kultura, traditat për romët, ashkalis dhe egjiptianët?

When asked how often they interacted with Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, there were no significant differences between how respondents answered toward each of the three communities. Based on the graph below, most of respondents (60%) rarely/very rarely interact with Roma, 63% of them rarely/very rarely interact with Ashkali and 60% of them rarely/very rarely interact with Egyptians. Around one-third of respondents declared that they never interact with either of the communities.

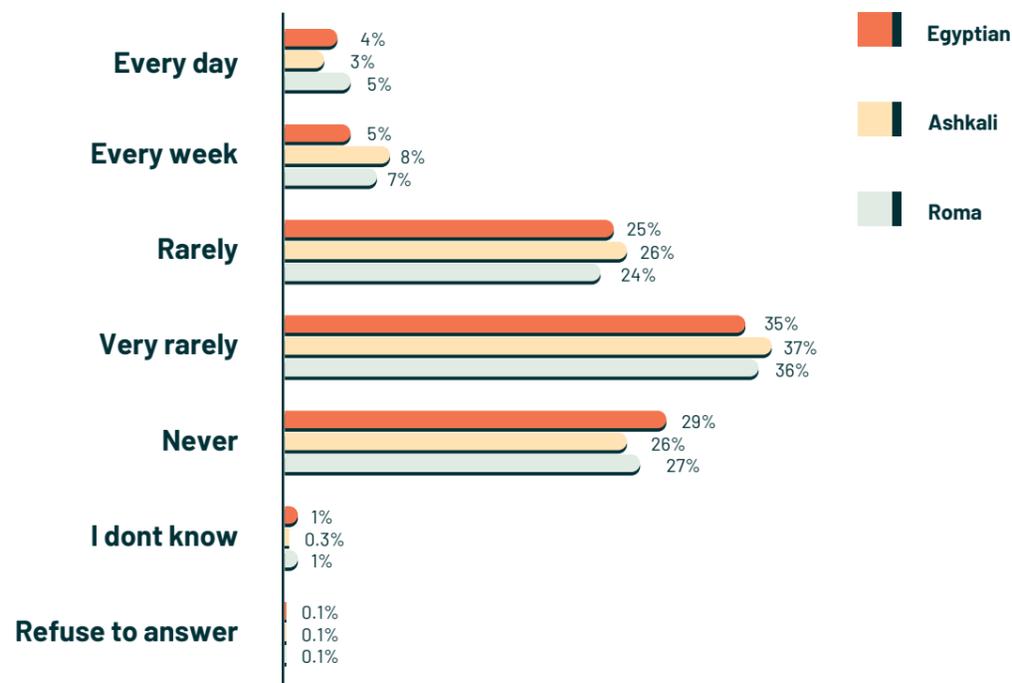


Figure 5. How often do you interact with Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians?

In general, the study highlighted a superiority from the rest of Kosovo society, especially Albanians, towards Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian citizens in Kosovo. The survey shows how comfortable respondents would feel to accept Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in different situations, giving a rating of 1 to 10, where '1' means 'not at all comfortable' and '10' 'totally comfortable'.

The superiority is confirmed by how respondents answered questions that implied very close contact in their personal and family life. Respondents who would accept a Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian person as a close relative bound by marriage is extremely low, with a score of around 2 out of 10 - 1.90 for Roma, 1.93 for Ashkali and 2.05 for Egyptians. As a close friend, the score was a bit higher but was still closer to not comfortable with an average of less than 5 - 4.02 for Roma, 4.23 for Ashkali and 4.15 for Egyptian.

A very revealing element of this question was how the wider population responded, using the 1 to 10 scale, to the question about how comfortable they feel having people from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities as citizens of their country. Collectively the average result from non-Roma, -Ashkali or -Egyptian respondents was 6.73 out of 10 for Roma, 6.70 for Ashkali and 6.38 for Egyptians, leaning more towards being comfortable accepting people from these communities as citizens of their country. With further analysis we were able to look beneath these average results to see percentages of the population who responded with a low rating (1, 2 and 3) indicating not comfortable compared to those giving a high-level rating of (8,9 and 10) indicating comfortable.

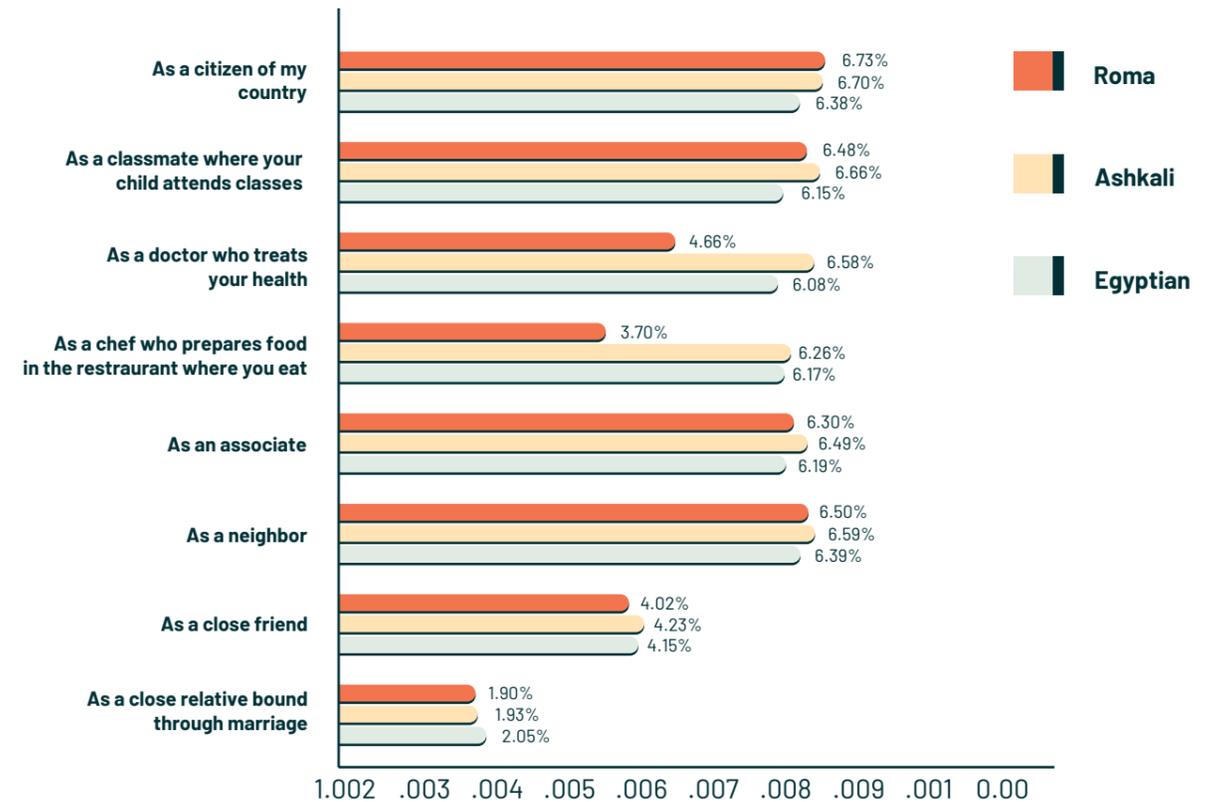


Figure 6. How comfortable would you feel to accept members of these minority groups, in the following situations?

The lower end responses from non-Roma-Ashkali or-Egyptian respondents were 17% not comfortable with people of Egyptian ethnicity, 16% not comfortable with people of Ashkali ethnicity and 13% not comfortable about people with Roma ethnicity as citizens of their country.

At the higher end responses from non-Roma, -Ashkali or -Egyptian respondents were 55% very comfortable accepting people with Ashkali ethnicity, 53% accepting people with Roma ethnicity and 46% very comfortable accepting people with Egyptian ethnicity as citizens of their country.

While the data shows that just over half of non-Roma, -Ashkali or -Egyptian respondents are comfortable having people of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian ethnicity as citizens of their country it also reveals that a significant share of the population are not of the same opinion. With as many as 17% saying they are very uncomfortable having people from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian ethnic groups as citizens of their country. This high proportion of negative responses reveal the extent and even the hardcore degree of antigypsyism that exists in Kosovo.

Focus groups showed that Albanian people believe that Kosovo, as a multi-ethnic state must be able to ensure inclusion of all communities. According to them, more frequent interaction between the communities living in Kosovo would make the Albanian community more aware of the issues that members of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities face. They also recognise that discrimination against members of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities is widespread, although its prevalence is much lower than in the past.

This data, combined with the reported levels of discrimination that people experience, challenges beliefs that Kosovo is a multicultural and multi-ethnic society. People may believe, as reported in focus groups, that antigypsyism and superiority is not as severe as it was in previous years, but this data shows that much still needs to be done to extend and build connections, understanding and positive relationships between Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people and the rest of the population in Kosovo.

Another low-ranking response was when respondents were asked if they would feel comfortable that a person from the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities would be a chef who prepares food in the restaurant where they eat. In this case, there is a noticeable disparity about the views of different minorities, with the chef being Roma scoring only 3.7 when compared to Ashkali at 6.26 or Egyptian 6.17. This response features in other surveys and responses are taken to show a correlation between skin colour and a lack of cleanliness which generate sophisticated forms of invisible and indirect discrimination.

In general, all focus group members stated that they have no objection to interacting with members of other communities. However, this interaction occurred only if members of other communities were neighbours, work colleagues or even friends. Focus group participants were shown the national survey results on interaction with Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. They were further asked about their opinion on the results obtained, specifically on the 3% of Albanians who stated that they would be somewhat comfortable to marry a person from these three communities (with a rating of 4 and 5), while 97% stated the opposite (who gave a rating of 1 and 2).

In general, all participants believed that this result represented the reality in Kosovo. As for the participants in the discussions, more than half of them stated that they would agree to have a Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian member as a close relative bound by marriage, especially younger participants. However, they further elaborated that such a thing would not be widely accepted by their families and society. According to them, the societal expectations and prejudices would influence them not to make such a choice. This last statement was also supported by some participants of the Ashkali community, who stated that Albanian families would make it difficult for an interracial couple to be accepted in the community.

“I could get married with an Albanian woman, but the problems would appear after creating a family with her. When the child goes to his/her uncle, they will say ‘the son/daughter of the “magjup” is here’.”

Participant from focus group discussion with men of Ashkali Community

Throughout the discussion, the Ashkali participants stated how high the prevalence of discrimination against them was, as well as the ill-treatment they had in the municipality where they lived. However, when the results of the national poll were shown, which states that only 3% of members of the Albanian community would accept a marriage with a member of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, they stated that this result could not be accurate. The social need to feel like they “fit in” in society seems to be higher than the hard experiences based on race and ethnicity. Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian participants do not believe that Albanians are willing

“I do not believe that this 3% is real, because we have a lot of Albanian friends and this is not what they believe.”

Participant from focus group discussion with men of Ashkali Community

to accept them as close relatives bound by marriage. However, they do have good relations in terms of friendship, neighbour or work colleagues, a statement also supported by Albanian participants. Some of the Albanian participants (both women and men) stated that in the past they had a more negative impression of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. Among the biggest factors that had influenced the change of impression was the proximity and frequent interaction with people from these communities.

This statement was reflected by the Roma participants during the focus group discussions. According to them, the citizens from the Albanian community have based their judgments against the Roma on the cooperation of some of the latter with the Serbs during the 1999 conflict. However, according to them, such a judgment was not fair, because a few of such cases are not representative of the attitudes of an entire community.

ANTIGYPSYISM AMONG ROMA, ASHKALI AND EGYPTIAN COMMUNITIES

What are the manifestations of antigypsyism among Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities themselves?

The way ethnic groups interact and are represented in a society are important differentials that create and recreate manifestations of antigypsyism among Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities themselves.

The national survey data revealed that Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities believe they are separate groups and should be treated separately. The National Survey results, when disaggregated on the basis of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian respondents, show that the larger share of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian respondents consider that they are groups that differ significantly from each other and should be treated as separate communities - 52% Roma, 45% Ashkali and 65% Egyptian.

There are also Roma and Ashkali who believe they are very similar to each other and should be treated as a single community - Roma 31% and 25% Ashkali. But there is a significant disparity in the opinion of Egyptians about this statement, only 6% support this statement.

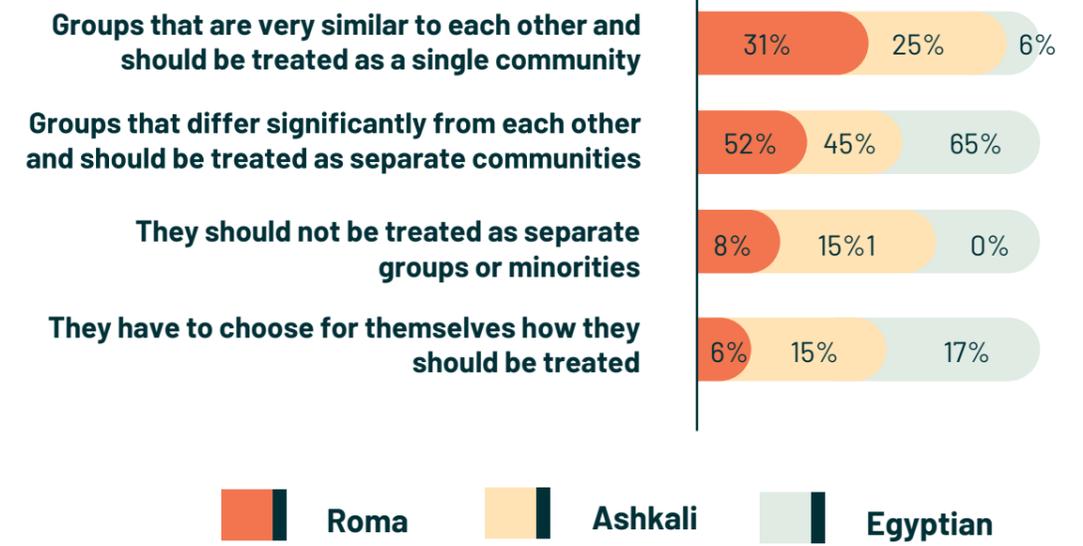


Figure 7. Do you consider Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians as - showing only Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian respondents:

This finding comes in contradiction with the perception of the rest of Kosovo society who mostly see Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians as one single ethnic minority. The study gave the opportunity to further assess how the rest of Kosovo society view Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians. In this regard, we have extracted the results by cross-tabulation with the ethnicity variable, to identify the views of each group of society.

More than half of Albanians (56%) consider Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian as groups that are very similar to each other and should be treated as a single community, an opinion which was shared by almost half (44%) of Turkish respondents. On the other hand, 50% of Serbian respondents believed that Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian should choose for themselves how they should be treated.

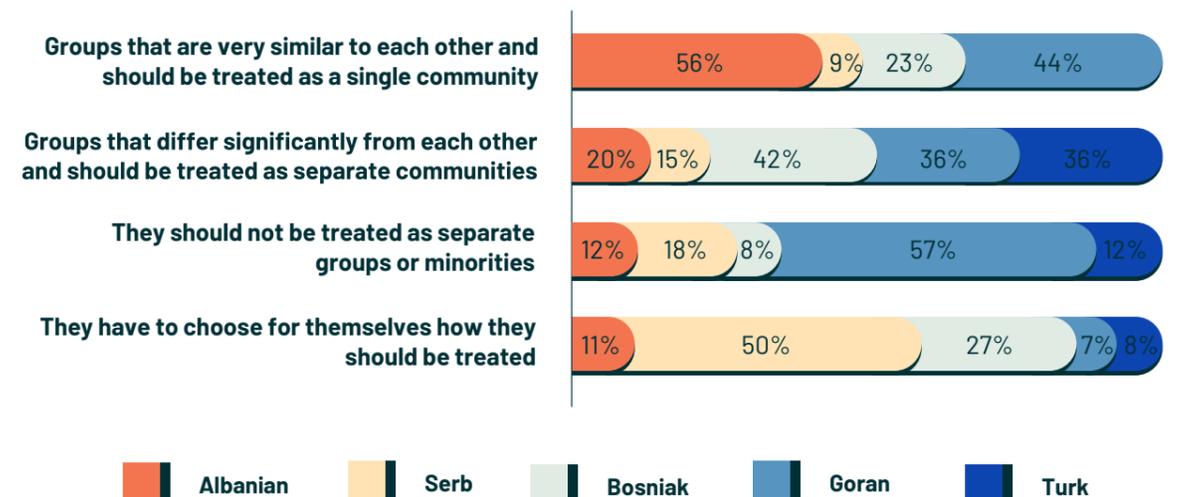


Figure 8. Do you consider Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians as:

In Kosovo, the current representation mechanism of Roma Ashkali and Egyptians is not ensuring equal access to power and resources, the basis of an inclusive and democratic political system. Although Kosovo's Constitution recognises Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians as three distinct ethnic communities, in practice the three communities are not differentiated and policy making tends to target all three communities as one group. The current representation does not ensure that Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian voices are heard in policy making, especially in those matters relating to their separate, and collective, communities.

Egyptian representatives made a claim to be treated separately, as they do not want to be referred to under the collective term of Roma, or the recently rejected term/ acronym of RAE. A claim that led to their removal from the Government inclusion processes which went ahead as 'The Strategy and Action Plan for the inclusion of Roma and Ashkali communities in Kosovo Society 2017-2021' drafted under the leadership of the Office for Good Governance of the Office of the Prime Minister. Such competition among the groups has the potential to negatively affect their mobilisation and their capacity to influence policymaking.

The artificial competition between the communities combined with the perception by the rest of the population of them being at the bottom of the social and power ladder, plays against them. The competition between the three ethnic groups does not increase their access to power nor access to resources.

Historically, and in other countries with significant Roma populations, powerholders have encouraged competition for power between different Roma groups, whose legitimacy and authenticity has also come into question. But the apparent power enjoyed by certain Roma individuals or groups originates not from the will of community members who would entrust their leaders/groups to act on their behalf, but from powerholders' view of them as interlocutors with the authorities. The competition between Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in Kosovo resembles such historical patterns of power manipulation aggravated by external superiority, to divide and dismantle any collective efforts to build strength and gain power.

The Constitution of Kosovo provides for reserved seats for ethnic minorities in the Parliament. Out of 120 seats, 20 are reserved for minorities as follows: ten for Serbians, four for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, three for Bosnians, two for Turkish and one seat for Goran populations in Kosovo. The distribution of the four seats among Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians is one seat per each community plus one more seat for the community that gets most votes. But this mechanism is not sufficient to ensure Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians have a voice in national and local politics as there is very little consultation, through adequate local platforms, on the policies and actions that directly affect their lives.

Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians are represented by political parties such as the Romani Initiative, Egyptian Liberal Party, Ashkali Party for Integration, Democratic Ashkali Party of Kosovo, Progressive Movement of Kosovar Roma, United Roma Party of Kosovo, Kosovar New Romani Party and the New Democratic Initiative of Kosovo (IRDK). At one of the recent parliamentary elections a member of the Egyptian community was appointed Minister of Local Government Administration, the first Ministerial position ever to be held by a representative from a Roma, Ashkali or Egyptian minority.

The following chart shows the varying beliefs that Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians have about the extent of their power compared to the views of the rest of the population.

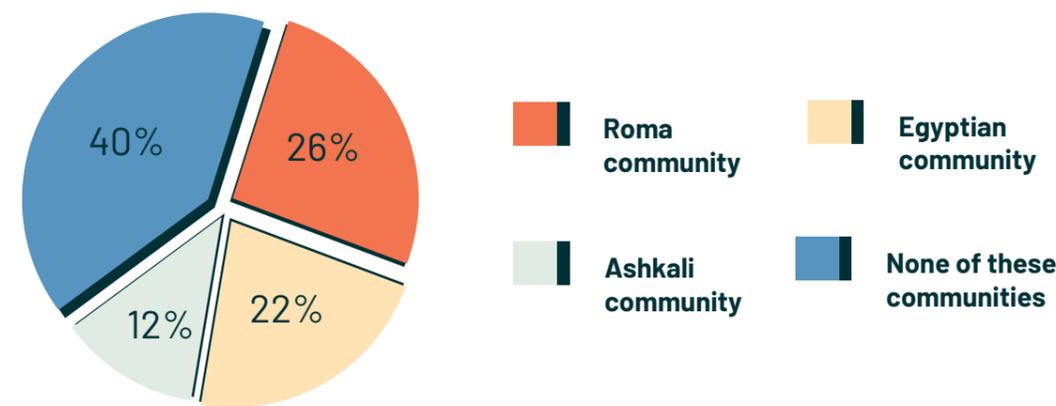


Figure 9. In Kosovo, which group Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian have the most political influence? (Showing non-Roma Ashkali and Egyptian respondents)

The relatively small number of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in Kosovo, approximately 3% of the population, makes it difficult to see if and how they could become a sizeable political force, unless in coalition with others, a situation which is now in place as the New Democratic Initiative of Kosovo (IRDK), an Egyptian political party is a member of the Government Coalition.

Although the electoral system provides for parliamentary representation of national minorities and these groups have four seats reserved, from a power strengthening perspective, for the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in Kosovo the best strategy would be to combine representation as national minorities, with representation within the mainstream political parties.

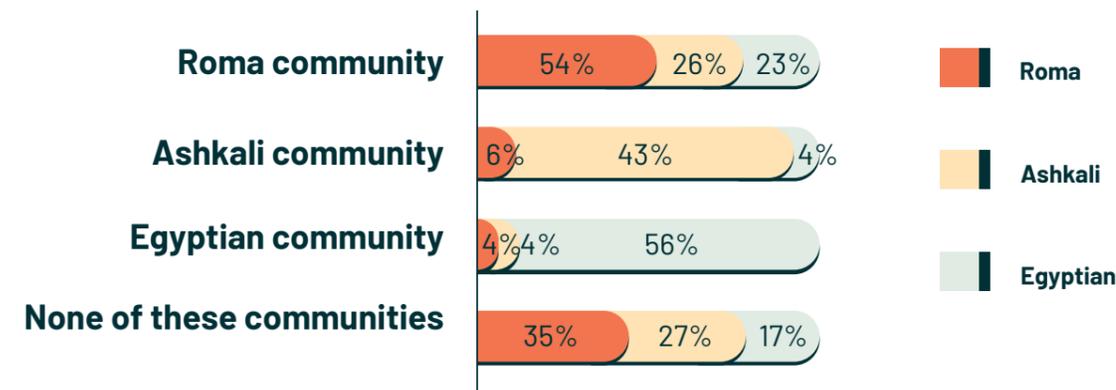


Figure 10. In Kosovo, which group Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian have the most political influence? (showing only Roma Ashkali and Egyptian respondents)

Beyond the political power struggles, the evidence from the survey clearly shows that while there may be some cultural and language difference between the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, there is more that connects them than divides them. Some comments from the focus groups confirm some of the differences and the similarities.

“Egyptians speak only Albanian, Roma use their own language and Albanian, and their customs are the same. Egyptians marry Roma, no problem, I have a Roma husband, I am Egyptian.”

Participant from a focus group discussion with women from the Egyptian population

“You will notice these differences in Prizren, Gjakova and Ferizaj. In Prizren it is the Roma community, in Gjakova it is the Egyptian community, while in Ferizaj it is the Ashkali community. The same goes for political parties. But, if everyone tells their own traditions and customs, you will notice the similarities. We are a community. The Ashkali consider themselves closer to the Albanians, the Egyptians of Egyptian origin, while the Roma are a nationality in themselves, more involved in education, etc.”

Participant from a focus group discussion with women from the Roma population

The following graph contains the responses to the same questions that were asked of non-Roma, Ashkali or -Egyptian populations. When asked how comfortable they feel to accept members of these minority groups, in the following situations, respondents were asked to use a scale from 1 to 10, where ‘1’ means “not at all comfortable” and ‘10’ “totally comfortable”, to give their evaluation. The questions intended to indicate where social distance exists. Compared to the responses of the non- Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian population which were all below 6, when asked the same question Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians responded with scores of over 9 and close to 10 for all the questions. This shows no societal gaps between the three communities and a strong acceptance and continuity of opinion from each community about the others.

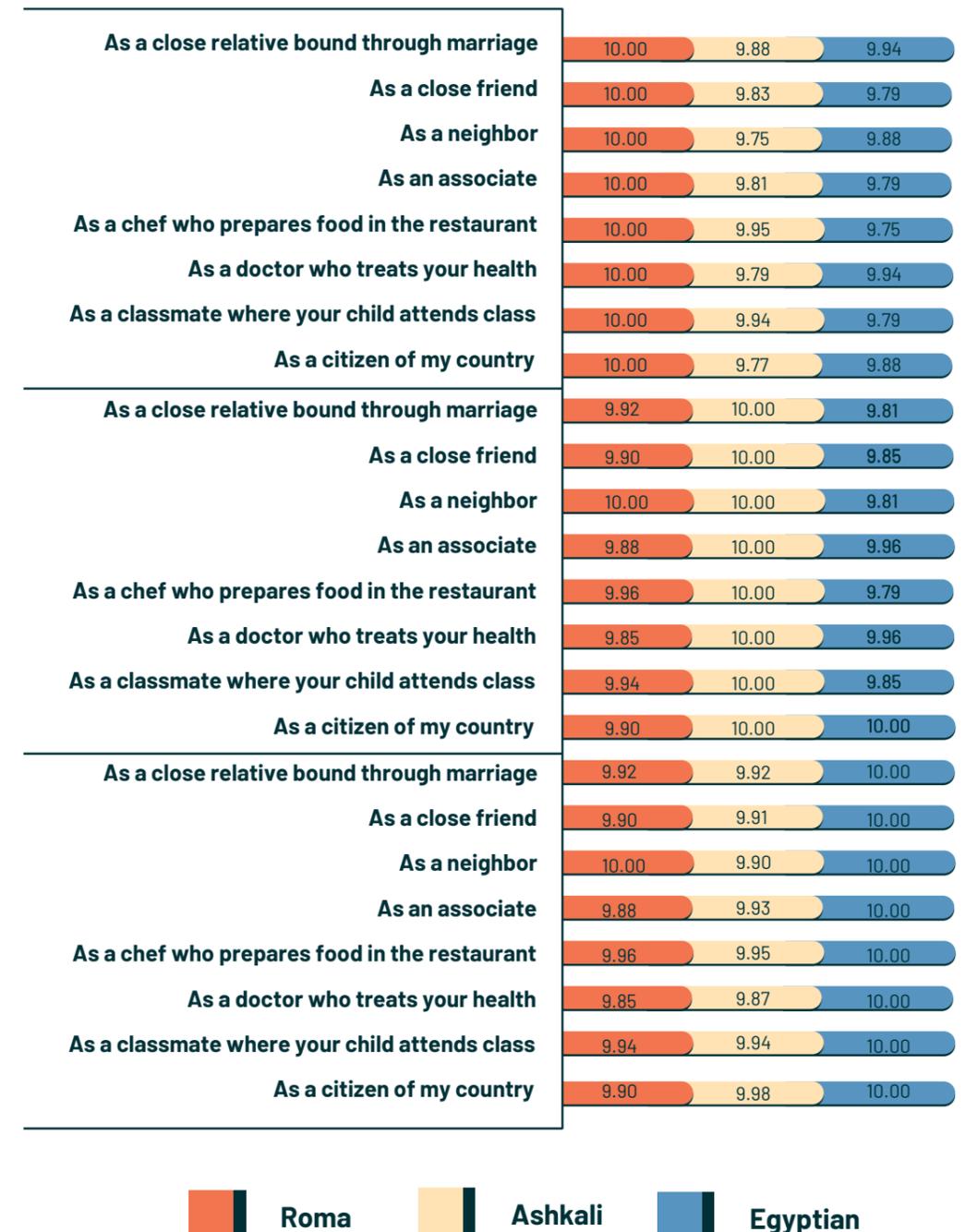


Figure 11. How comfortable would you feel to accept members of these minority groups, in the following situations: (showing only Roma Ashkali and Egyptian respondents)

The national survey shows that Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians are clear about how different is the discriminatory treatment they receive from the rest of Kosovo society and from the institutions. The focus groups with Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian participants indicated that discrimination is an omnipresent phenomenon in their life in Kosovo. It is also testifying that they experience a different prevalence of discrimination depending on the municipalities they live in. For instance, discussions with focus group participants from municipality of Peja, Gjakova and Prizren declare that there is less discrimination towards them in their municipalities. This is seen to be the case because they live in the same neighbourhoods as Albanians. Whereas, in the municipality of FusheKosova, Ashkali participants stated that they experience a high level of discrimination from other residents of this municipality. In FusheKosova the Ashkali community live in a separate neighbourhood, which is referred to by Albanians as the neighbourhood of “magjupeve”.

The power dynamics of Antigypsyism

How are power relations and its dynamic interrelated with the production and reproduction of antigypsyism within Kosovar institutions?

The exclusion of Roma Ashkali and Egyptians in Kosovo has multiple dimensions, and it takes place in almost all fields of public life. The perceived vulnerability of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians is usually framed in terms of poverty and risk of exclusion, but power relations and concerted displays of superiority from the rest of society are key dimensions to be considered when analysing antigypsyism. The passive role of the state, meaning when the state is not implementing its positive obligations to enact and protect its citizens, together with the power differentials between ethnic groups, have multiple negative influences on dismantling antigypsyism.

According to the Population and Housing census of 2011, 8,824 Roma, 15,436 Ashkali and 11,524 Egyptians were reported to reside in Kosovo. The census was boycotted by Kosovo-Serbs and partly by the Roma. Other Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians refused to disclose their identity because of fear of stigmatisation, and other possible repercussions. As some scholars have revealed⁵, the 2011 census results do not reflect the ethnic composition of the society and that leads to an underrepresentation of these minorities in the central and local institutions and the budgetary allocations. The situation is known to the Government, and it remains to be seen if the Government has been in a position to address these issues in the 2022 census.

Different treatment received by Roma Ashkali and Egyptians is the result of individual or institutional distinction, restriction or preference which has negative consequences for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians people individually and collectively for communities. Exercising their rights is denied, or their rights are restricted. Examples of such individual treatments are when Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians individuals are denied entry into public spaces such as bars, restaurants, waiting rooms, etc due to their ethnicity. Another example is that of limited access for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian individuals to public services such as transportation, education, health care services, employment, social housing, etc.

⁵ Musaj, M. (2015). Kosovo 2011 Census: Contested Census within a Contested State. Contemporary Southeastern Europe, 2015, 2(2), 84-98. Available at http://www.contemporarysece.org/sites/default/files/papers/musaj_kos_census.pdf

Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians are deprived of knowledge on their contribution to the history and culture of the region where they and their ancestors lived. Consequently, the message they receive from the authorities is that they, their history and culture and their contribution to the larger community and wider society is not valued. As previously shown in our research, the educational system does not include any information about Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian cultures and traditions. Research by Terre des Hommes and VoRAE conducted in September 2021 on diversity and inclusion within school text books, found insufficient materials and information about the cultural uniqueness of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo. Data and information on ethnic diversity is often flawed and inaccurate.⁶

Romani language is not taught in schools in Kosovo, although the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) piloted a program for teaching Roma language in public Albanian schools in Prizren, with the vision to be replicated in Ferizaj, Obiliq, Gjakova, for various reasons it was not continued, thus depriving the Roma community of an important symbolic resource for cooperating and articulating their interests. Recognition of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians as national minorities is not translated into equal treatment like other national minorities living in Kosovo.

The Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children are lacking in any positive cultural affirmations and are induced by the idea that they cannot be proud of their ancestors, their past and their contribution to society, thus they should not be proud individuals of their ethnic identity. For Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, education on their culture and history remains a private matter away from public reach, while other groups are accessing state resources to develop and transmit their knowledge. Consequently, the wider public remains highly ignorant and unknowledgeable about Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians and their contribution to society.

Power exclusion is when apparently neutral criteria is used to limit the access of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people to certain rights or services, for example the registration of births, accessing the health care system, accessing all levels of education and equal treatment in employment. But these unequal outcomes and access, usually defined as indirect discrimination create an intimidating or offensive environment, usually for a minority group and/or less powerful group – it is how exclusion works. Such institutional treatment of Roma Ashkali and Egyptian people are even more egregious as they have a collective character. Created by the exclusionary procedures, policies and objectives and adopted by institutions where the behaviour of individuals, who control and serve in these institutions, created disadvantage and exclusion of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians.

Antigypsyism is composed of all these individual and institutional practices, then add the structural dimensions and social structures (economy, law, family, religion and class) and the cumulative effect is unequal outcomes and opportunities and inequality for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians individually and collectively for the communities.

⁶ Diversity and Social Inclusion - Textbook Analysis in Kosovo - September, 2021. Source: Diversitetidhegjithëpërfshirjasociale - Analizë e teksteveshkollorënë Kosovë - Shtator, 2021 https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-MypMCnYy-vMvdjuiCyYfreg1gUFu_eGn/view?fbclid=IwAR3L-2yvzhZ_gnaQVtZQc1fcQZ2JKIsR_LeXzrcqrTjVXYFJqski5ay-CHBq4

According to the Ombudsperson 2020 Annual Report, from the 56 state institutions with a total of 30,635 employees, only 113 employees are from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. The Government of the Republic of Kosovo Report on the Implementation of Roma Integration Policy in Kosovo for 2019 states there were a total of 277 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people employed in municipalities, 123 in civil and public service, 95 in education, 35 in administration and 24 in healthcare. Based on the Labour Force Survey 79,000 people are in public administration, education and health related employment – thus only 0.35% of public servants are of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian ethnicity.

This is a clear indication that Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian populations in Kosovo are underrepresented in public administration. Public sector employment is really not accessible for most Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people, only the exceptional, or lucky ones, are afforded such positions. In the last few years there has been a push to increase this number but overall, any improvement is minimal. The most cited rationale by public officials is the low educational attainment levels by Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, but this is such a circular justification given that participation in education and attainment levels are mainly in the control of the public sector.

Making public sector employment available for ethnic minorities who are perceived as vulnerable and discriminated against, like Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, is a powerful means to send a message to them and the wider population about their value in society. It is also a means to build power within such communities and create bridges, for both ways communication between isolated and segregated communities to essential public services. Also, as demonstrated by the earlier example from the Ministry of Health, it can increase understanding of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, help dispel myths and misconceptions and create opportunities for public policy to be based on accurate knowledge, not on hearsay and rumours distorted by antigypsyism.

As seen in the national research, when respondents were asked to share their opinion regarding the recruitment process in Kosovo, more than half of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian respondents (59%) believe that their ethnicity is a disadvantage and 54% specifically that being Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian is a disadvantage. Furthermore, 39% of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian respondents considered skin colour as a criterion that might put them at disadvantage. On the contrary, only 26% of the wider population believe that being Roma, Ashkali or Egyptian might put someone at a disadvantage. Lastly, 28% of non-Roma, Ashkali or -Egyptian respondents considered gender (male/female/transgender) as a detrimental factor during the recruitment process, a belief shared only by eight 8% of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian respondents.

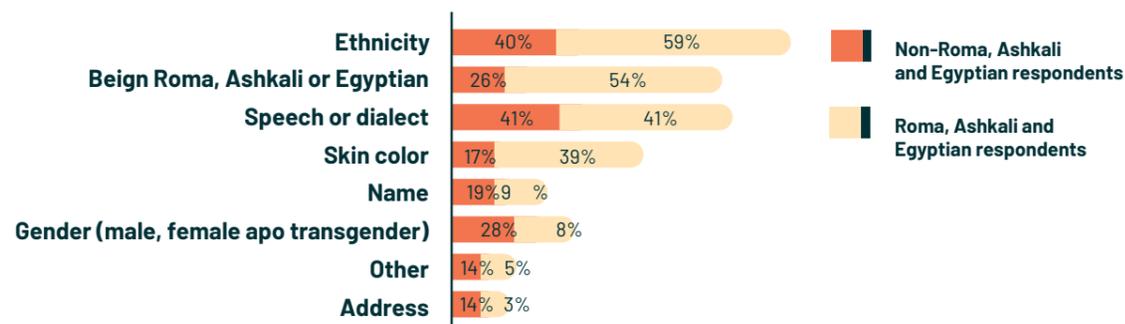


Figure 12. In Kosovo, when a company wants to hire someone and has to choose between two candidates with equal skills and qualifications, which of the following criteria may, in your opinion, put one candidate at a disadvantage?

Based on the results, 71% of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian respondents believed that not enough is being done to promote diversity in their workplace as far as employing people of Roma, Ashkali or Egyptian origin or background, a belief that was shared by only 46% of the wider population.

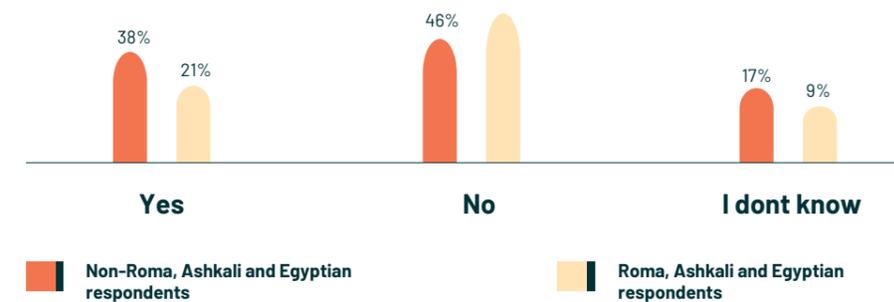


Figure 13. Do you think that enough is being done to promote diversity in your work place as far as employing people of Roma, Ashkali or Egyptian origin or background?

Police and other law enforcement institutions play an important role in reproducing antigypsyism, as one of the state institutions that comes regularly in contact with citizens. Police violence against Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, failure to investigate complaints against law enforcement officers, failing to protect the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians when they are subjected to violence or hate speech and hate crimes, are the most common manifestations of antigypsyism linked with policing in Kosovo.

Police violence against minorities is widespread in Kosovo, according to the research findings by international organisations and NGOs. The confirmatory data is contained in a report of the OSCE Mission to Kosovo 2015, which registered 479 ethnic incidents in Kosovo against ethnic minorities, without mentioning how many were committed against Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians.⁷ In May 2019, the European Roma Rights Centre reported a spike of violence against Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in Kosovo based on the false rumours of child stealing. The violence was inflicted by police officers while exercising their duty, as well as by individuals in a series of incidents, creating a climate of fear among Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, dehumanising them in the eyes of wider society and sending a message that their human rights are less important than others.

The failure of the police to protect Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians when they are subjected to violence might result in the death of the victims, as it was the case of an Ashkali 9-year-old boy, who was killed by his neighbour after being sexually assaulted despite his parents' complaint to the police of previous incidents with the neighbour.⁸

Although the abuser was known to police authorities for past crimes, and despite his admission of his offence against the boy, the police released him without charges. Such incidents expose the extent to which Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian minorities receive unequal, often inadequate protection from the law⁹ and they further undermine any confidence the communities have on public authorities.

⁷ Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Mission in Kosovo, Community Rights Assessment Report Fourth Edition, 2015, available at <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/f/2/209956.pdf>

⁸ See Radio Free Europe report on the incident at <https://www.evropaelire.org/a/vrasja-kujtim-veselit-kpk-nuk-of-ron-qasje-dosjen-hetimore-ndaj-prokurorit/31187339.html>

⁹ Information from media sources and backed up by <https://www.state.gov/reports/2020-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/kosovo/>

In Kosovo, the oppression of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians is also directly reflected in under-representation of employees in the police forces. The Kosovo Law on Police provides for the equal participation of all ethnic minorities in the Police, in its Article 35: "The ethnic composition of the Police Officers assigned within a municipality shall, to the extent possible, reflect the ethnic composition of the population within the municipality."¹⁰

However, despite this provision, in 2014, there were only 30 Roma, 14 Egyptians and 40 Ashkali recruited within the Kosovo Police out of 8,693 of total staff.¹¹

Hate speech and hate crimes are inspired by stereotypes and prejudices and play an important role in validating these beliefs. Moreover, hate speech and hate crime, as forms of violence, are important intimidating factors for those fighting against antigypsyism and for the victims alike.

The legal provisions and legal framework on hate speech and hate crimes in Kosovo are technically in place but are seldom activated. Although these phenomena are widespread in Kosovo¹², implementation of the law is hindered by a cumbersome process between the Police and the Prosecutors office, to accept a crime as a hate crime.¹³

Hate speech is very common and easily identifiable in the media and especially in social media. In public institutions, if pejorative language is used by officials while exercising their public duty, this is perceived as and dealt with as a minor disciplinary matter and would not be reported as hate speech.¹⁴ Offensive and derogatory speech towards marginalized communities, when used by civil servants, especially by law enforcement and judicial corpus, should be treated as a serious violation of the status of the civil servant and be subject of heightened administrative scrutiny, including ex officio investigation, adequate recording of such incidents, and deterring punitive measures.

¹⁰ See the Law on Police no. 04/L-076 (2012) available at: https://www.rightofassembly.info/assets/downloads/2012_Kosovo_Law_on_Police.pdf

¹¹ Source: Association of Women in Kosovo Police, Women in Kosovo Security Institutions (Pristina, Kosovo: Royal Norwegian Embassy in Pristina, 2014), https://www.nato.int/nato_static_f2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2014_12/20150126_1412-women-kosovo-security-institutions.pdf

¹² Article 141 of Criminal Code no. 06/L-074 explicitly states: "Whoever publicly incites or publicly spreads hatred, discord and intolerance between national, racial, religious, ethnic and other groups or based on sexual orientation, gender identity and other personal characteristics, in a manner which is likely to disturb the public order shall be punished by a fine or imprisonment of up to five (5) years." Article 147 of the Criminal Code provides that anyone who publicly incites and spreads hatred or intolerance between those of different nationality, race, religion, or ethnicity can be punished by fine or imprisonment of one to eight years.

¹³ See ECMI report Potentially Ethnically Motivated Incidents: Challenges in Defining and Reporting, 2015, available at https://www.ecmikosovo.org/uploads/Pemi_ENG.pdf

¹⁴ Confirmed during semi-structured interviews with public officials

WHY ANTIGYPSYISM PERSISTS IN KOSOVO

Why antigypsyism manifestations occur? Why this phenomenon still persists in Kosovo?

Antigypsyism is a persistent phenomenon all over Europe, including in Kosovo. Besides the different forms of manifestations and their causes, there are several factors that facilitate the production and re-production of antigypsyism. Key among these factors are: the antidiscrimination and anti-racism legal framework, lack of public awareness on racism and discrimination, media and its negative influence in society, the impunity that perpetrators enjoy for the crimes committed against Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, and enabling institutions and social mechanisms.

In the national survey people were asked to comment on the extent of discrimination based on being a Roma, Ashkali or Egyptian person in Kosovo. The following graphs show significant disparity in opinion. 63% of non-Roma-Ashkali-Egyptian respondents viewed discrimination to be quite rare or very rare. Whereas the views of Roma Ashkali and Egyptian population is the opposite, with 69% of Roma, 58% of Ashkali and 41% of Egyptians viewing discrimination to be very widespread or quite widespread.

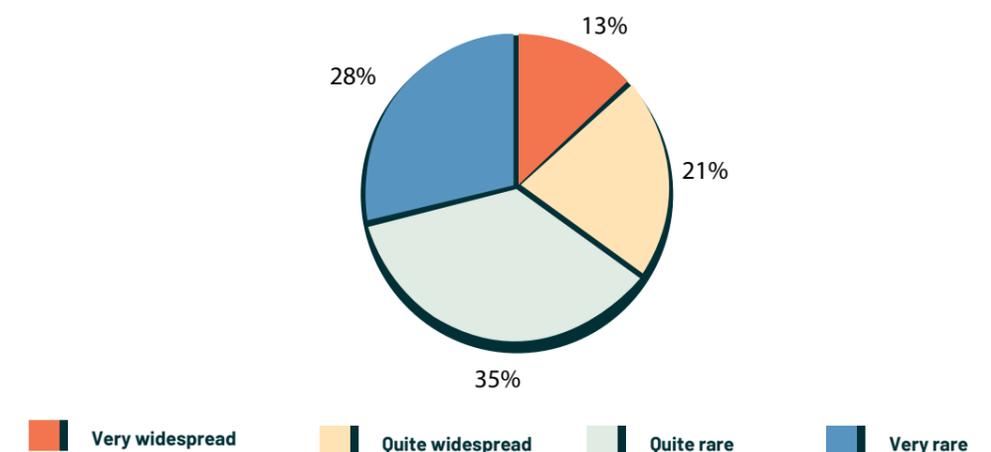


Figure 14. Could you please tell me whether, in your opinion, discrimination based on being a Roma, Ashkali or Egyptian person in Kosovo is: (showing the responses of non-Roma Ashkali and Egyptian population)

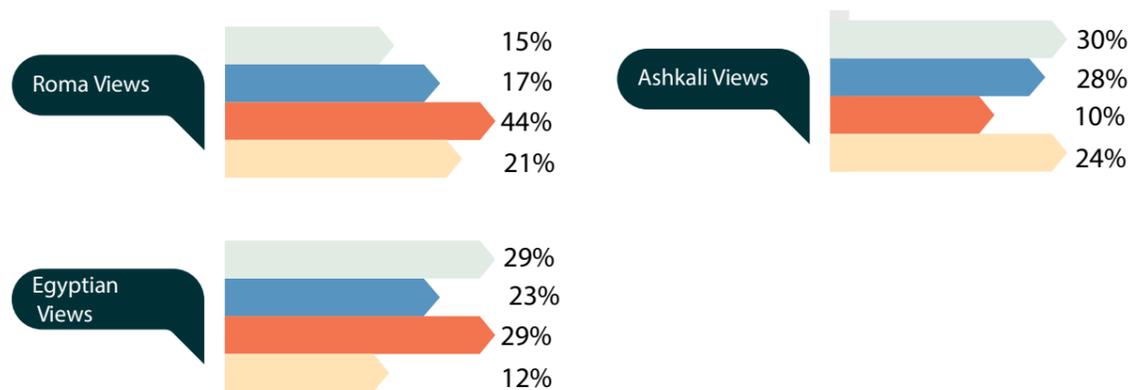


Figure 15. Could you please tell me whether, in your opinion, discrimination based on being a Roma, Ashkali or Egyptian person in Kosovo is: (showing the responses of Roma Ashkali and Egyptian population)

Respondents were also asked to indicate their views about the perceived criminality of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians. 51% of non-Roma-Ashkali-Egyptian respondents tend to agree that Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians commit more crimes than Albanians. Very surprisingly 58% of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian respondents also tend to agree or totally agree with that statement.

When elaborating further, most of non-Roma, -Ashkali or -Egyptian respondents (42%) stated that 'something they heard from another person shaped this opinion' while the majority of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian respondents (67% - 70%) chose personal experience as the shaping factor of this opinion.

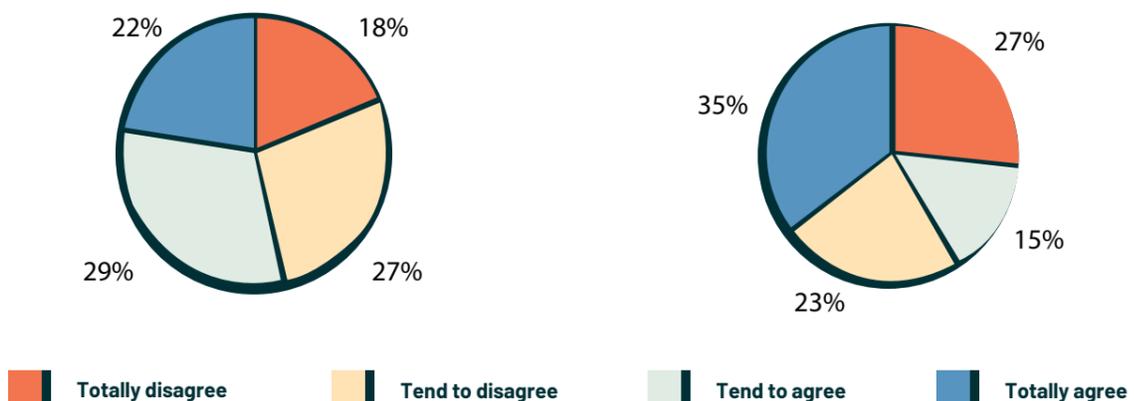


Figure 16. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: The Roma community, the Ashkali community and the Egyptian community commit more crimes.

This was an unexpected finding from the national research as the reality is, as confirmed by the semi-structured interviews with the police and discussions in the focus groups, that criminality is not more prevalent amongst Roma, Ashkali or Egyptian communities than Albanians. The police confirmed that crime data is recorded internally by ethnicity, but we were unable to source crime data to corroborate this statement.

The findings provided by the data offer strong evidence of externalities such as media branding and negative stereotypes which can characterise a person's view of themselves, and lie at the core of antigypsyism and oppression, like in the old saying: 'if you say something to a person often enough, they will begin to believe it'. In this case, it is the view that Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians must be criminals because everyone says so, the press, the rumours and hearsay and because the police and other people treat you like a criminal, in shops and in public places. Such inaccurate image portrayals in the media largely go unchallenged and the lack of official information from reliable sources, such as schools and universities, mean such beliefs remain unchecked and are further perpetuated through rumours and hearsay.

The focus groups offered additional insight on this situation.

“These statements about being criminals came as a result of – the war period. More crimes are committed by Albanians than by us. They try to blame us only for being part of a community. If one or two people have committed crimes, they include us all.”
Participant from a focus group discussion with men from the Ashkali population

“According to your statistics, Albanian people think that the Ashkali community commits the most crimes, it is not true. This may be related to the years when the war took place in Kosovo, but we were not born at that time and I do not know”.
Participant from a focus group discussion with women from the Ashkali population

“It is not true at all. We are cowards and we do not even show the injustices done to us, let alone commit crimes. Chances are that they’ve responded that way to look stronger.”
Participant from a focus group discussion with women from the Roma population

Additional crime and justice questions were asked about police targeting of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, about the severity of court sentences and police treatment. Responses were that 35% of non-Roma-Ashkali-Egyptian respondents tend to agree or totally agree that “In its actions, the police more often target the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, a view shared by 56% of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian respondents.

When asked if “When under police arrest, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians are treated worse than Albanians”, 53% of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian respondents tend to agree or totally agree with this statement in contrast with 64% of non-Roma-Ashkali-Egyptian respondents who disagree or tend to disagree.

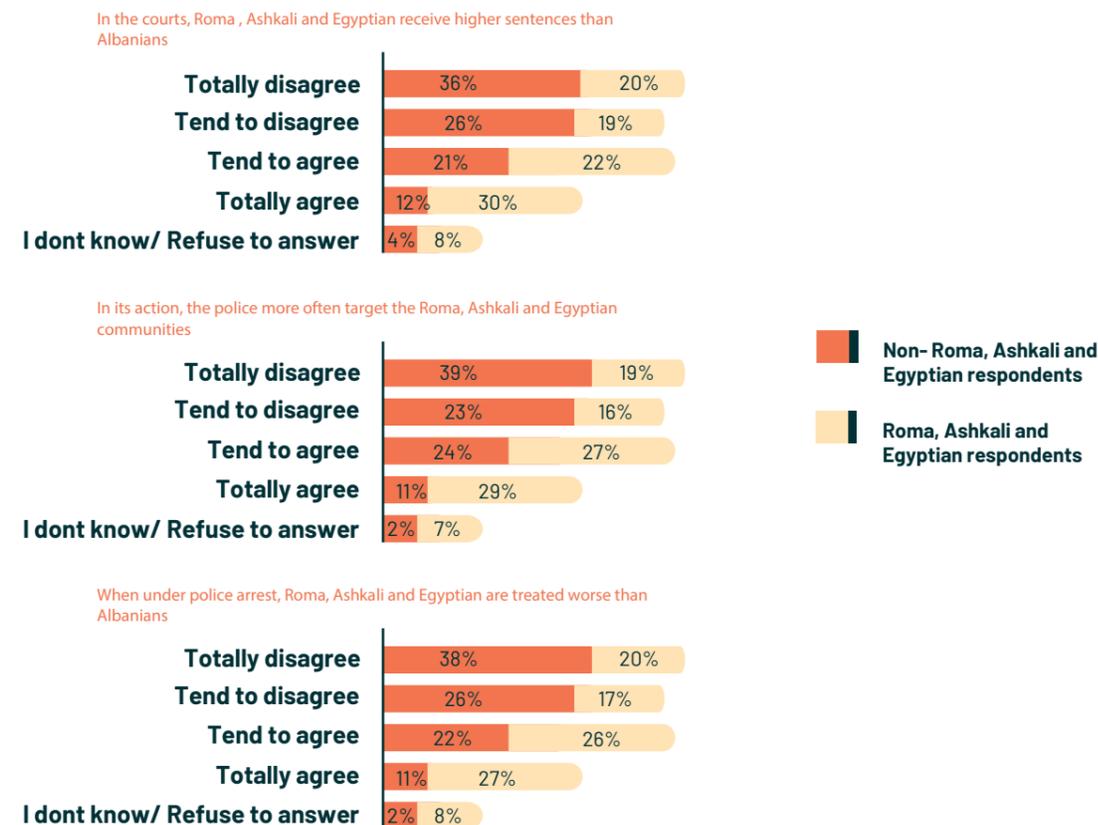


Figure 17. To what extent do you agree with the following statements

Media, especially online portals, play an important role in negatively portraying the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in Kosovo. The national research shows that media represents the main source of knowledge for the population about Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, hence its role in promoting hatred and intolerance against these communities. Research on hate speech in Kosovo Media for 2019 – 2020 reveal that 12% of online content and 9% of TV shows deployed hateful speech which targeted specific communities such as the Serb minority, LGBTQi community, women, religious community and the Roma, Egyptian and Ashkali communities.¹⁵

The Roma and the Serbs are the most exposed communities to hate speech. Hate speech is criminalized by the Kosovo Criminal Code,¹⁶ but despite the widespread hate speech against Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in media and online, none was prosecuted yet for such a crime, according to a 2018 Civil Rights Defender report.¹⁷

The impunity enjoyed by the perpetrators is a general characteristic of antigypsyism in Europe. The research confirmed that the perpetrators of crimes against Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in Kosovo enjoy impunity as many cases are not reported due to fear of retaliation or the complaints are not registered by police or prosecutors, investigations are not carried out, and nobody is prosecuted. The failure to prosecute anyone for hate speech against Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians despite being reported as a widespread phenomenon in Kosovo society confirms again that antigypsyism goes unchallenged and the perpetrators are not held to justice.

The Ombudsperson is the institution entrusted with handling the cases of discrimination, while ministries and municipalities are instructed to set up units and to report on the implementation of the law. The antidiscrimination law remains largely ineffective in combating antigypsyism. Based on the activity reports of the Ombudsperson, one might evaluate the institution as being weak when it comes to its efficiency to combat discrimination. The activity reports do not provide any relevant information on the procedures and standards for investigating complaints, nor about its capacity to tackle discrimination reflected in the staffing and funding. The institution also lacks sanction power. An in-depth analysis of the institution and its role in combating discrimination could be conducted based on the indicators proposed by Equinet on the mandate and independence of equality bodies.

The result of antigypsyism is a society where social inequalities are the direct result of racism and unequal rights for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, compounded by a historical dimension which has reproduced inequalities across generations. Antigypsyism is tolerated in Kosovo, mainly because the state institutions are too weak and not sufficiently functional to provide a framework to challenge the phenomenon, including the behaviour and efficiency of public officials.

In Kosovo, the war for independence had a significant impact on ethnic relations and its influence can still be detected in some locations more than others, in the way the majority relates to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians and how these groups have internalised the pressure to conform to wider society’s decisions and behaviour.

An example from the Ministry of Health shows how the homogenisation of Roma,

¹⁵ Hate-O-Meter Research on Hate Speech in Kosovo Media 2019-2020, available at https://advocacy-center.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Hate-O-Meter_Research.pdf

¹⁶ Article 141 of Criminal Code no. 06/L-074 explicitly states: “Whoever publicly incites or publicly spreads hatred, discord and intolerance between national, racial, religious, ethnic and other groups or based on sexual orientation, gender identity and other personal characteristics, in a manner which is likely to disturb the public order shall be punished by a fine or imprisonment of up to five (5) years.”

¹⁷ Civil Rights Defenders, The Wall of Anti-Gypsyism: Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in Kosovo, November 2017, available at <https://crd.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/The-Wall-of-Anti-Gypsyism-Roma-in-Kosovo.pdf>

Ashkali and Egyptian communities impacts on public policy. Early in the period of Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, some Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people were fearful to take the vaccine. This was heard by some nursing staff and was then taken to mean that no one from the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian population would take the vaccine. This information travelled all the way to the Minister of Health who believed it to be true. This belief was dispelled by a visit to the communities, arranged by an advisor from the Egyptian community working in the Ministry of Health. Such homogenization and dehumanisation of whole communities is a clear demonstration of antigypsyism, resulting in generalisations and assumptions being made about a situation, followed by serious decisions being made at a high level based on hearsay and rumours. This is a simple example which could be extrapolated across many public policy statements, and therefore decisions, which is compounded by the lack of contact with Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people and would unlikely happen in decisions related to other strands of society in Kosovo¹⁸.

Weak and dysfunctional intuitions in Kosovo can be identified by analysing the gap between what they are supposed to do by law and what they achieve in practice. For example, the Ombudsperson Institution in Kosovo is entrusted with the application of the Antidiscrimination Law. Despite the fact that the antidiscrimination legal provisions go beyond the minimum international standards on antidiscrimination, implementation of the law is highly inefficient, rendering it inadequate in combating discrimination against Roma Ashkali and Egyptians in Kosovo.

The number of closed cases, the passive role of the Ombudsperson's institution, as well as the limited capacity to address timely the complaints it receives, sends a message to the public that discrimination is not an issue. In its 2020 Annual Report, the Ombudsperson institution does not present a clear picture of the concrete steps on combating discrimination and the case law. From the information it provides on antidiscrimination for 2020, the Ombudsperson received 145 individual complaints, 107 cases were opened, while 38 complaints were found inadmissible. Ex-officio, the Ombudsperson has opened 10 cases for investigation. In the same year, 26 cases have been closed, while there are a total of 108 cases under investigation. The Ombudsperson addressed the courts in two cases with legal opinions, sent them three reports with recommendations and two letters of recommendation.¹⁹

An indirect recognition of Government failure to effectively combat discrimination against Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians is reflected in the establishment of the Technical Group for Protection against Discrimination of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities to assist the institutions in their fight against discrimination, including by providing legal assistance to the victims.²⁰

It is too early to assess the work of this group, but in response to an international commitment made by Kosovo's Government, instead of strengthening the implementation of the law, the Government decided to set up an additional structure with an unclear mandate and unknown resources.

The limited attention paid by the authorities to the discrimination directed against Roma Ashkali and Egyptians, is a clear contradiction of the reality. According to the data from the survey conducted as part of the current research, discrimination is perceived as a widespread phenomenon by most of Roma Ashkali and Egyptians, but also to an extent by the population as a whole. See figure 14, question 4.

¹⁸ Source - semi-structured interview during national research on antigypsyism.

¹⁹ 2020 Annual Report, the Ombudsperson Institution.

²⁰ Decision of the Government of Kosovo No. 138/2020 dated 11.09.2020.

The distrust that citizens have in state institutions is a direct consequence of the low performance of these institutions. The way the citizens perceive and evaluate the well-functioning of an institution, its role and achievements, determines the level of trust or distrust in that institution. In Kosovo, the level of trust in the state institutions seems to be low. According to the data from the 2020 Balkan Barometer, when asked about the trust in public institutions, the majority of Kosovars expressed distrust in the Parliament 68%, in the Government 69%, in the Courts 57%, and in the Ombudsperson 52%.²¹ The same source indicates that 69% of the people in Kosovo do not think the law is applied and enforced effectively²² and 62% think that the judicial system is under political influence.²³

The participants of all focus groups were asked to share their opinions as to why 100% of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians respondents declared that they have not reported a case of discrimination.

Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian participants declared that they have a lack of trust in the institutions, and they do not believe that their complaints would be taken seriously. In addition, Albanian participants also stated that members of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities had a lack of trust in the institution and feared revenge.

“If you go to the police station, the police must call the person in question and that person will never forget you. The person will then deal with you personally.”

Participant from focus group discussion with men of Ashkali Community

“Participants said that Roma Ashkali and Egyptian community members do not report cases of discrimination because of the feeling of belonging. They want to feel that they belong here and do not want to jeopardise anything.”

Participant from focus group discussion with men from the Albanian population

²¹ 2020 Balkan Barometer, Figure 105, p. 100.

²² 2020 Balkan Barometer, Figure 102, p. 98.

²³ 2020 Balkan Barometer, Figure 107, p. 102.

One of the participants states his opinion saying that “in the initial phases when Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian wants to report a case, they do not get the necessary treatment, and are not taken seriously, and there is discrimination. Whereas, in cases when the report is done and the judge takes the matters in their hands, it is different.”

Participant from focus group discussion with men from the Albanian population

“There is also hesitation because they are scared that they do not have enough proof to raise a case, some do not know how to report a case. The most part do not report such cases because they are afraid that these cases will not be treated as they should”.

Participant from focus group discussion with women from the Albanian population

The institutions are regarded by the majority of its citizens to be under political influence, applying the law ineffectively, in a way that can hardly serve justice. In this climate, it is impossible to have the same institutions delivering justice to members of ethnic communities that are highly stigmatised by the public.

Kosovo has never had a strategy or a comprehensive policy on promoting equality of all ethnic groups. Its most recent strategy targeting Roma and Ashkali - the Strategy and Action Plan for the Integration of the Roma and Ashkali Communities (2017-2021) - has produced very limited change on the ground, according to the Ombudsperson 2020 Annual report.²⁴

It becomes clear that these policies, programs and actions have been adopted to fulfil the international commitments and not as a result of a strong commitment to equality. Moreover, the legal framework and strategies targeting human rights are often hallmarked by limited financial means, political apathy and often lack coordination among the implementing institutions.

²⁴ The report presents the strategy as “a guideline to public policies, programs and actions” and openly states that “no progress has been noticed in the implementation of this strategy” (page 97).

THE GENDER RESPONSES TO THE NATIONAL RESEARCH

**How does antigypsyism differently affect Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian men and women?
What is the combined impact of antigypsyism and gender discrimination for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women?**

All of the data collected through the national survey can be disaggregated by gender which allows us the possibility to convey the views of women from each group of Kosovo society including Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women in regards to for every question posed.

Responses to the national survey question ‘How often do you interact with Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians?’ show that less women than men interact with people from the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians communities. A staggering 77% of all men respondents said they rarely /very rarely or never had any contact with Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people, yet women show even less interaction, with 81% of women declaring they rarely, very rarely or never had any contact with Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people. In a similar way, women have even less knowledge about Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities than men - 89% of women know nothing or almost nothing compared to 83% of men. But these differences are marginal, and similarly, across every question in the national survey, there is very little difference between the views of women when compared to those of men.

We expected that when disaggregated by ethnicity and gender there would be some differences in women’s responses, especially to the statements in Question 14. Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children have less access to kindergarten/nursery than Albanian children question, and the multi-part Question 15, which asked ‘How much do you agree with the following statements? There is very little opportunity for other children to be educated about Roma history and culture; The experience of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in education negatively affects their development and well-being; Most of the children living on the streets belong to the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities; Most children under state care belong to the Roma community, the Ashkali community and the Egyptian community; Most trafficked persons belong to the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities.’ This question was asked slightly differently to respondents who declared to be Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian, but again there were no significant gender differences.

Even to Question 18. 'In the past 12 months, have you personally felt discriminated against or experienced harassment on one or more of the following grounds - gender was included as a possible response?' only marginal differences exist between the responses of men 7% and women 8% for non-Roma, -Ashkali or -Egyptian and those of Roma Ashkali and Egyptian men 6% and women 10%. The element from this question which generated the highest response was about discrimination based on ethnicity which saw a 59% response rate from Roma Ashkali and Egyptian men and 51% from Roma Ashkali and Egyptian women.

This response is supported by the findings of the 2019 research report by Kosovo Women's Network (KWN) Gender Based Discrimination and Labour in Kosovo. The section on Discrimination against Minority Ethnic Groups confirmed a similar finding, that only a few survey respondents (4% of women and 5% of men) said they had been discriminated against at work based on their ethnicity. KWN's research suggested that people from an ethnic minority may face discrimination at work, especially women. One respondent working with Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian persons said that discussing gender-based discrimination is a 'luxury' because both men and women face discrimination constantly due to their ethnicity. Thus gender-based discrimination comes secondary to ethnic discrimination, in her view.²⁵

Gender Equality in Kosovo is obligated in law / No. 16 / 26 JUNE 2015. The Law guarantees, protects and promotes equality between genders as a basic value of democratic development of society. In Kosovo the Law is in accordance with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); and is aligned with The Equality Framework Directive 2000/78/EC, a major strand of EU labour law which aims to combat discrimination on grounds of disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief and age in the workplace. It accompanies the Directive 2000/43/EC on equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin.

Ethnic discrimination seems to take precedence over gender-based discrimination. While Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women may be prepared to talk about their experiences, they do not report cases to the authorities either because they do not know their rights, or they distrust institutions, findings that are clearly reflected in the responses to the national survey on antigypsyism.

Women in many situations absorb, and at times normalise discrimination, oppression and fundamental antigypsyism to minimise the shock and its negative impact, thus enabling those close to them to maintain a level of dignity and optimism. This is illustrated by a situation in one of the focus groups with Roma women from Prizren, Pejë., carried out during the national research on antigypsyism. One Roma woman defended those in society acting with superiority and using the derogatory term by saying 'but what is so wrong with that, that is who we are - that is what they see us as - we are their magjup'. Thankfully other women in the group challenged this view and expressed outrage about the continued use of such a derogatory term.

An interview with an Egyptian woman revealed how she and her peers are treated by people in positions of power. She explained that her friend, a young Egyptian woman planning to go to university, was ridiculed by her doctor when she attended for a check-up. The doctor was asking 'So why are you not getting married?' You know the mentality of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians they marry their daughters off at a very young age. The doctor was then asking about her private life and questioning her - are you not already set up to be married sometime soon? The interviewee explained that actions like this cause hesitation from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women to go to the doctor, worrying that they will be judged and not be treated right and anxious that they will face racist and derogatory statements because they are Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian.

In hindsight, it was unrealistic to expect that this national survey on antigypsyism would deliver significant information on the specific bias that Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women experience. Although we gained more insight from the focus group discussions, the women who participated are in employment and are more empowered, having a level of education above the norm for many Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women in Kosovo.

²⁵ Gender Based Discrimination and Labour in Kosovo 2019. https://womensnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/GBD-Labour-Kosovo-ISBN-978-9951-737-31-9_FINAL.pdf

The recent 2019-2020 Kosovo* (UNSCR 1244) Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey and Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey confirmed that 'While almost all women and men age 15-49 years in Kosovo are literate, only 2 in 3 women in Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities are literate. Also, that women aged 15-49 years living in poorest households in Kosovo are twice more likely than men to justify domestic violence'.²⁶

An in-depth listening survey is what would really hear the voices of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women. A survey of the regularly unheard women, which are often muffled, stifled and silenced. Such a survey could reveal surprising examples of antigypsyism and oppression, showing how Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women absorb and counter the effects of antigypsyism, without awareness that this is what they are doing. Showing that even when they are limited by intersectional discrimination and oppression, and certainly by antigypsyism, they create routes and opportunities for family members, often driven by a basic survival instinct.

Saying that, undoubtedly the women in Kosovo fit the characteristics of intersectional discrimination, for example their expected roles and functions in the family structures, but the hierarchy of first racial discrimination then ethnic discrimination then antigypsyism means many Roma²⁷ are unaware and do not recognise such life limiting externalities.²⁸

It is for women who are not Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian to ask what we are currently doing to amplify the voices of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women. Think, are you using your privilege, access and opportunities you have to challenge antigypsyism towards Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women every time it rears its head?

²⁶ Kosovo (UNSCR 1244) (National and Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities) 2019-20 MICS-SF English- https://mics-surveys-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/MICS6/Europe%20and%20Central%20Asia/Kosovo%20under%20UNSCR%20res.%201244/2019-2020/Survey%20findings/Kosovo%20%28UNSCR%201244%29%20%28National%20and%20Roma%20Ashkali%20and%20Egyptian%20Communities%29%202019-2020MICS-SF_English.pdf

²⁷ In the Kosovo context this would mean Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women

²⁸ The Guide for Intersectional Discrimination – The Case of Roma Women, Madrid 2019

THE EFFECTS OF ANTIGYPSYISM ON CHILDREN

How do the effects of antigypsyism practices affect the development, wellbeing and childhood education of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children? When and how are Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children experiencing and possibly integrating antigypsyism in the image that they have of themselves?

Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian are born, through no choice of their own, into a system that is already distorted by antigypsyism. The very health care system that should be there to care and protect them, is already inaccessible to the point that it puts their long-term wellbeing at risk from the start, by not ensuring they have access to essential childhood immunisations /vaccines to protect them through their early years of life.

For many young Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children, the housing and public facilities accessible to the families they join are in a substandard condition, lacking water and acceptable levels of sanitation to guarantee a safe environment during their early years. Immediately this puts them at risk of long-term limiting illnesses such as asthma, bronchitis diabetes and of course mental health problems in the future.

The situation which existed for Roma people in the camps of Mitrovicë/Mitrovica from 2000 until 2010 and beyond, illustrates the extent of such health failures. The health of all Roma people living in the camps at that time, especially children and pregnant women were at sustained and serious long-term risk from lead contamination. The time and effort required to generate any form of response from the Government's side showed a flagrant disregard for the health and wellbeing of Roma people, especially the children and pregnant women.

In April 2009, the CoE Commissioner for Human Rights stated when visiting the camp that he was "struck by both the very poor conditions in which the families lived as well as the extremely serious health hazards", which they faced on a daily basis by virtue of the fact that they were living in a lead-contaminated area. In 2016, The Human Rights Advisory Panel's report clearly set out a long list of failures and accepted the allegations of violations of the right to life, the prohibition of inhuman and degrading treatment,

respect for private and family life, the prohibition against discrimination in general, the prohibition of discrimination against women, and the rights of children. The report confirmed what previous reports consistently stressed – the particularly critical health situation of children. According to Human Rights Watch, camp children suffered from serious health problems possibly linked to lead contamination (stunted growth, nervousness, epilepsy, fatigue). In addition, because of their weak immune systems, and as a consequence of their poor diet and hygiene, they were vulnerable to all kinds of disease and epidemics, such as diarrhoea, skin problems, pneumonia.

The Commissioner for Human Rights wrote that 'lead contamination undoubtedly causes permanent developmental damage to children' which he had viewed with his own eyes when visiting Osterode and Cesminluka/Česmin Lug in March 2009. He also reported that the life-threatening conditions of approximately 600 Roma living for a decade in the lead contaminated camps of northern Mitrovicë/Mitrovica has been "probably the most extreme case in Europe of failure to safeguard Romas' right to health"²⁹.

Antigypsyism is a health issue with potentially long-term debilitating consequences for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians. This is already recognised in relation to racism, but it will take time before the impact of antigypsyism is acknowledged in the same way as a health issue.³⁰

The children soon come to face a school system that has been biased by antigypsyism for decades. In terms of social practice and discrimination, one of the main manifestations of antigypsyism is school segregation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children. In general, segregation practices in education and housing represent an intergenerational reproducer of social inequalities. School segregation as a practice has been ignored by authorities for many years and it is not sufficiently acknowledged by teachers, principals, and parents.

Since 2008, a framework has been in place to outlaw segregation in schools and in classrooms and in recent years considerable effort has been made to improve the experiences that Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children have in school. For example, with significant push from the Consortium of VoRAE, Terre des hommes and HEKS, learning centres have been established, tested and most recently mainstreamed in some schools to supplement and enhance the educational experiences of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian pupils. While the learning centres and new inclusive learning approaches may be benefiting individual children, it is too recent and too sporadic to influence discernible change to an education system with a historical ethos of segregating Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children. As stated in the Government Strategy for the Inclusion of Roma and Ashkali Communities in Kosovo Society 2017-2021 'cases of segregation and discrimination against children of Roma and Ashkali communities are not uncommon and have a negative impact on the performance of learners from these communities'.³¹

As confirmed during the semi-structured interviews with school personnel, too often desegregating and changing such practices that continue from the past depends on the views and the commitment of school principals and individual teachers to challenge the existing entrenched segregationist mentalities in some schools. The system of inspection and professional quality control of educational practices is not sufficiently developed to oversee and guarantee that changes are being implemented and that new teaching methods and practices are being applied.

²⁹ <https://www.law.umich.edu/facultyhome/drwcasebook/Documents/Updates/Chapter%203%20Problem%203%20N.M.%20and%20Others%20v.%20UNMIK.pdf> <http://www.errc.org/news/kosovo-lead-poisoning-a-tragic-timeline-of-poisoned-neglect> and <https://www.hrw.org/report/2009/06/23/kosovo-poisoned-lead/health-and-human-rights-crisis-mitrovicas-roma-camps>

³⁰ <https://answers.childrenshospital.org/racism-child-health/>

³¹ Strategy for Inclusion of Roma and Ashkali Communities in the Kosovo Society 2017-2021, Pristina

The midterm evaluation of the Implementation of Kosovo Education Strategic Plan (KESP) is highly critical of the lack of progress to improve the education for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children. 'In regards to the activity of drafting regulations by municipalities to facilitate the enrolment and attendance conditions of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in pre-school and higher secondary education level, according to the MEST data, only the municipality of Obiliq drafted the regulation and based on that regulation it facilitates the enrolment of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in public and private pre-school institutions. Lack of such regulation in all municipalities where Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children live, may have an impact and increase in the inclusion of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in preschool, primary and secondary education may not be in line with the expectations for the increase in inclusion in education of children from these communities'.³²

The systemic challenges to enable the professional improvement and modernisation of the education system is well documented in the midterm evaluation of the Implementation of Kosovo Education Strategic Plan (KESP). 'The teacher performance assessment implementation is not in line with the KESP action plan. By 2019, performance assessment was carried out for around 2% of teachers (compared to 60% planned for the period 2017 - 2019). The whole new curriculum implementation process was accompanied with numerous challenges, lack of supervisory mechanisms, support and accountability in the curriculum implementation process, insufficient training and support provided to teachers and directors in implementing the curriculum'.³³

The mainstream curriculum does not include information about Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian history, culture and tradition. Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians' own image is not reflected in the system, nor that of their ancestors. Textbooks do not contain information nor any images, pictures or drawings of Roma Ashkali and Egyptians people.

Collectively, such lack of positive reinforcement can limit the mental image that a child has of themselves, it can also diminish their own self-worth and seriously impinge on their sense of belonging within the school system. The KESP is committed to make training of teachers for teaching in Roma language available every year. But during the school year 2018/2019 a training was organised on how to use curriculum and textbooks of Roma language and culture. It is reported that there is no interest by teachers to participate in this training.³⁴

How children are treated in the early years of their lives, including how they are treated in the education system, can impact negatively or positively on the rest of their lives. For many Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children it is during their passage through the education system that they encounter and succumb to the pressures of antigypsyism. For most non-Roma Ashkali and Egyptian children, school does not offer an adequate educational message on the antecedents of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people in Kosovo or in wider Europe, thus like their parents, they will rely on the media and hearsay to shape their views about these communities. The focus groups revealed that for some, a more positive message is emerging because of regular contact between families and between children in schools which is helping to break down barriers and challenge the negative stereotypes.

³² Source - MID-TERM EVALUATION: Implementation of Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2017 – 2020

³³ Ibid

³⁴ Ibid

In the Strategy for the Inclusion of Roma and Ashkali Communities in Kosovo Society 2017-2021 in activity 1.2, which includes the 'elimination of segregation and discrimination against Roma and Ashkali community children', the Government envisaged that each segregation case will be dealt with in accordance with the law, that the Ministry of Education will issue pedagogical guidelines to avoid segregation and that teachers training on inclusive education would be organised regularly. But in the midterm evaluation of the Strategy, the Government reported under the points on elimination of school segregation the following: "With the OSCE support, the MEST has drafted the Guide on Promoting the Dialogue and the contacts between the communities. The Guide sets out some intercommunity activities." However, the latest analysis of the implementation of the Government Strategy does not provide any information about the progress in this regard.

Given that the historical practices of segregation have existed for many years, it is likely that the parents and grandparents of children retain the long-term negative effects of their own adverse childhood experiences, which without even realising they will transfer onto their children. Even the recent University graduates from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities talk to each other about the racial bullying they experienced while in school.

The role of education in multi-ethnic societies is crucial in fostering a climate of understanding and harmony among different ethnic and racial groups. From an early age, children interact with peers from other ethnic groups, learn about their peers' history and traditions, are taught to value each group and the multiple cultures existent in their community and surroundings. Unfortunately, this is not the case in Kosovo.

Education policies are not developed in an inclusive manner, parents are not afforded the opportunity to voice their opinions and to shape the content of the education policies and the national learning curriculum.

There is clear and strengthening evidence that the earliest experiences, our childhood experiences are important factors that shape the rest of our lives. More importantly that adverse childhood experience (ACE)s, such negative experiences in childhood and the teenage years may put children at risk of chronic health problems, mental illness, and substance use in adulthood?

ACEs include many different types of experiences, including abuse, neglect, household challenges, and traumatic events that occur outside the home such as bullying, discrimination, violence, witnessing community violence. Antigypsyism is not yet listed as an ACE experience, but undoubtedly it has all the negative characteristics to undermine the self-image, and self-worth that Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children internalise about themselves. Some risk and protective factors are at the individual and family level, but no child is at fault for the ACEs they experience.

“From the first grade onwards, it seems to me that differences are being made between students and they are not teaching our children in the right way.

Children are taught in separate classes one class of Albanian children and in another they teach our children, the class of children of the communities is located near the toilets.”

Participant from focus group discussion with women from the Ashkali population

‘I am against discrimination and against separate classes in schools because avoiding contact. If someone is not kept familiar with the everyday problems of these communities, they think that they are not discriminated. But the moment one strengthens contact with this community, they better understand discrimination and problems that Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians community faces. ’

Participant from focus group discussion with men from the Albanian population

In recent years, many Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian families emigrated abroad. Some of these children do not enrol at all or drop out of school. Other children whose families return to Kosovo have difficulties to re-enter the education system, they may lack documentation from the schools in European countries or are unable to obtain official recognition from foreign school's records.

Positively, the national research, survey and semi structured interviews showed that there is a general appreciation across all society that Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children are not being afforded equal access to the education system. The majority of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian respondents (78%) either tend to or totally agree that ‘Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children have less access to kindergarten/nursery than Albanian children’, a belief that was shared with 60% of non-Roma, -Ashkali or -Egyptian respondents.

But when focusing on the accessibility of medical services, also crucially important for childhood experiences, 64% of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian respondents either tend to or totally agree that ‘Doctors and medical staff often refuse to provide medical services to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian families, while on the contrary, 56% of non-Roma, -Ashkali or -Egyptian respondents disagree with this statement. Such finding shows that the wider population have an understanding of the challenges that Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children face in relation to education, possibly because this has had more coverage in the media, and very little grasp that exclusion from health care may exist for families in Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities.

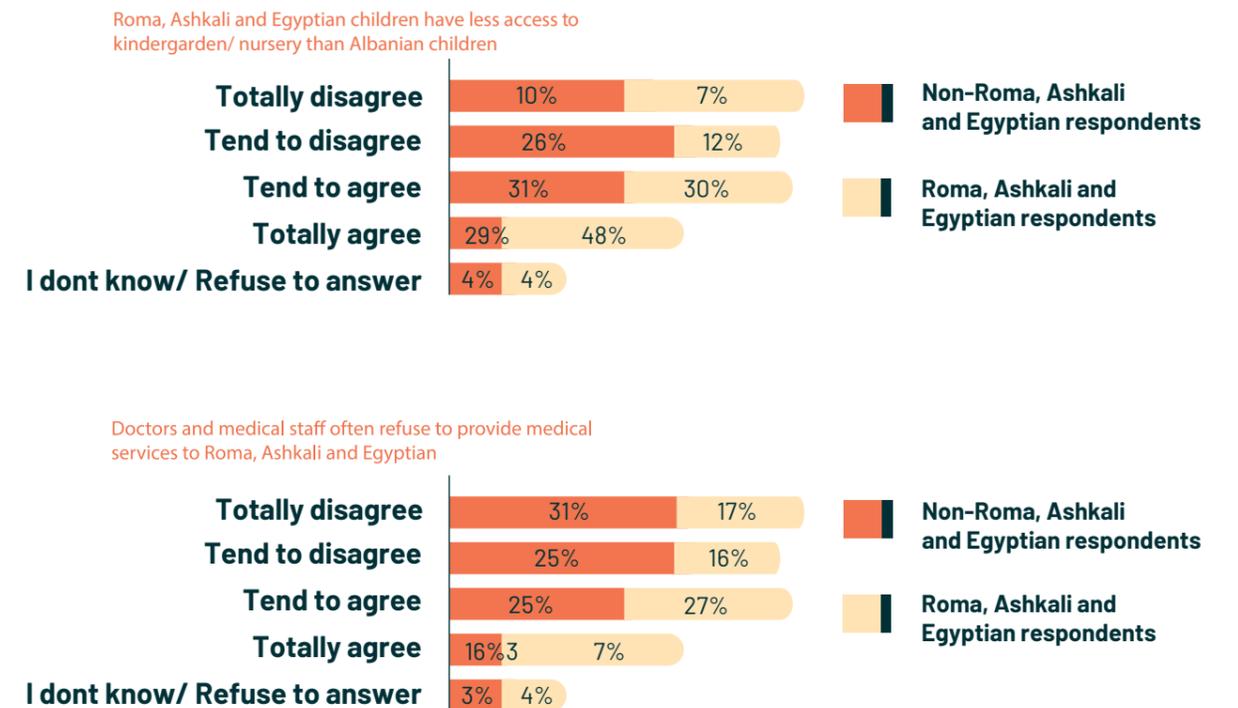


Figure 18. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

The focus group discussions explored the subject of equal access to education in the format of the following questions:

- Do you think inequality in education affects children in the long term?
- Does it impact on how they view themselves?
- What can be done to improve the situation?

In terms of education, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian participants stated that they and their children have access to education on an equal footing with other children from pre-school to high level of education, but the mistreatment and discrimination that children experience in school creates an unsuitable situation for learning.

They further elaborated that school segregation is very present in some municipalities in Kosovo. The separation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children from Albanian children into classes causes a high prevalence of discrimination.

“There are many Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children who dropped out of school because they have been constantly called ‘magjup’.

I do not believe that Albanian children do this on purpose, I believe they are taught by their parents. One child should not call another child ‘magjup’.”

Participant from focus group discussion with men of Ashkali Community

For children with safeguarding issues in Kosovo, protection was only confirmed in law since 2019. Until then they were treated the same as adults, without dedicated and legitimate protocols to safeguard their rights and vulnerabilities as children.

Poverty and disadvantage drive some children from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian families to drop out of school and to engage in street work.

Action has been ongoing for several years under the influence of Terre des hommes (Tdh) – Kosovo Delegation to establish Juvenile Justice reforms in Kosovo as well as a Child Protection Safety Net.

This is a model of multidisciplinary and multi stakeholder collaboration to manage cases of children in high-risk situations of being victims of abuse and exploitation, in order to provide comprehensive responses and adequate coordinated support for the child and their family. In the municipality of Prishtina, the regular monitoring during 2020 and 2021 identified a total of 128 (51 girls and 77 boys) vulnerable children on the streets, out of which 121 (50 girls & 71 boys) are coming from the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. Actions are also being taken at municipality level to provide the necessary support for vulnerable children. The semi-structured interview with a centre for social work revealed that:

“There is an action plan with the police, but the biggest problem we have is that we have the border with Albania and believe that there is network, where Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian kids are being sent out to the streets to beg for money through abuse.”

“Together with the police and involvement of the prosecutor’s office, we return the children to the border when they are from Albania. For others we hold meetings with the parents, if they have interrupted their education, we take care to continue their education.

If they have the necessary conditions, we try to provide them with a social supplement. If they are 16 years old, we refer them to get a professional training to be trained in that type of work to help them find a job in the future. I believe that not in an immediate way, but gradually we have done good things, with the very limited capacity we have.”

Although such problems and responses are about vulnerable children that should provoke outrage and a demand from the wider public for a strong public sector response, this is not always the case. Challenging the expectations that societies have about children and their conduct, street children for example, can lead to the stigmatisation and demonisation of the victims – the children. The media are complicit in such behaviour.

In line with this, the problems associated with children in state care or on the streets in Kosovo is generally ignored by the public or it attracts negative and critical responses and media coverage. Such responses are driven by antigypsyism and society’s projection of superiority which distorts their view and makes them view vulnerable children, not as the victims they are, in need of a robust compassionate state support, but instead, as culpable as if them or their families are deliberately creating such situations. This is another demonstration that Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children are not valued and treated as not deserving of the protection afforded to other children.

The national survey showed that some of the exclusions and challenges that Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children face are widely recognised across society.

76% of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian respondents and 63% of respondents from the rest of the population tend to totally agree that ‘there is very little opportunity for other children to be educated on Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian history and culture’.

79% of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian respondents tend to/totally agree that 'the experience of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in education negatively affects their development and well-being.', while 60% of respondents from the rest of the population declared the same.

86% of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian respondents tend to or totally agree that 'most of children living on the streets belong to the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities.', yet only 33% of respondents from the rest of the population tend to/totally disagree with this statement. This is showing a lack of understanding of the extent of the problem.

78% of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian respondents tend to or totally agree that 'most children under state care belong to the Roma community, the Ashkali community and the Egyptian community' and 51% percent of respondents from the rest of the population share the same belief. See Figure 19, page 55.

The system which enabled Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people to underperform is fractured by institutional failure. Although steps are being made to improve the situation, its legacy is not gone but lives on in the young adults and parents of today. Even those Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children who successfully navigate through the school system, maybe with the assistance of a scholarship, and graduate from university, cannot eradicate their adverse childhood experiences. The new cohort of recent graduates from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian families naturally connect to each other and are bound by their common experiences. They continue to talk, to share and compare with each other the extent of racial or ethnic bullying they experienced during their school years. There is no magic eraser to eradicate years of systemic antigypsyism.

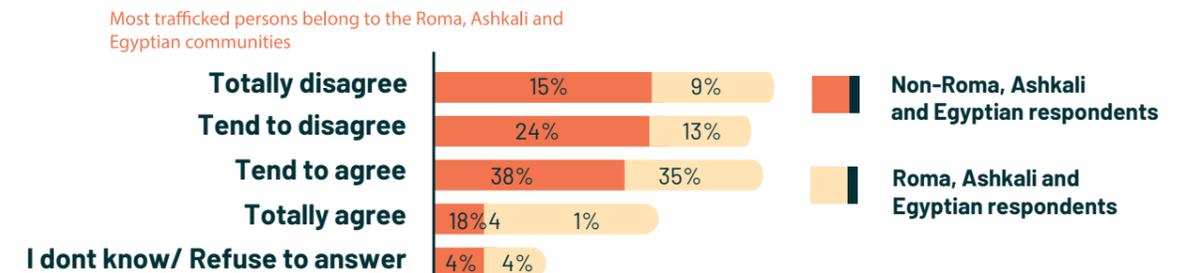
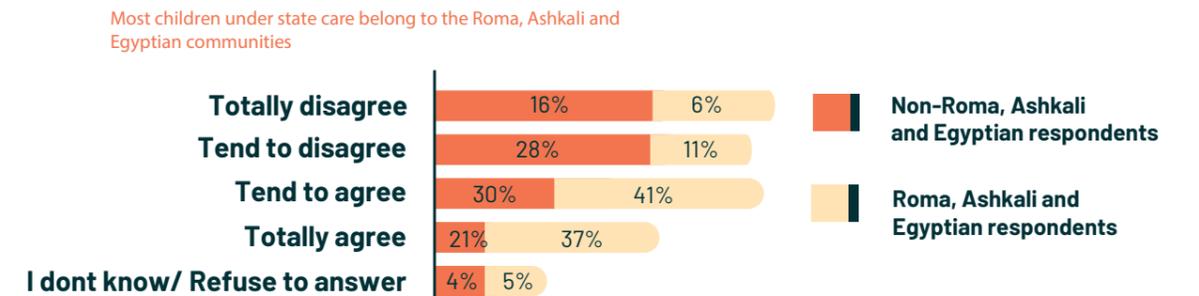
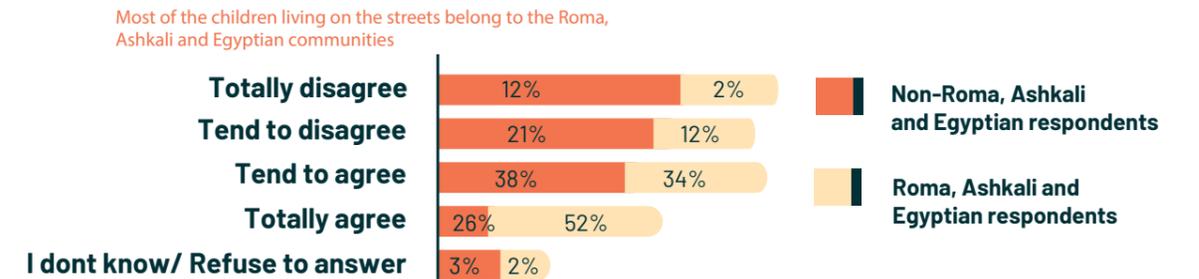
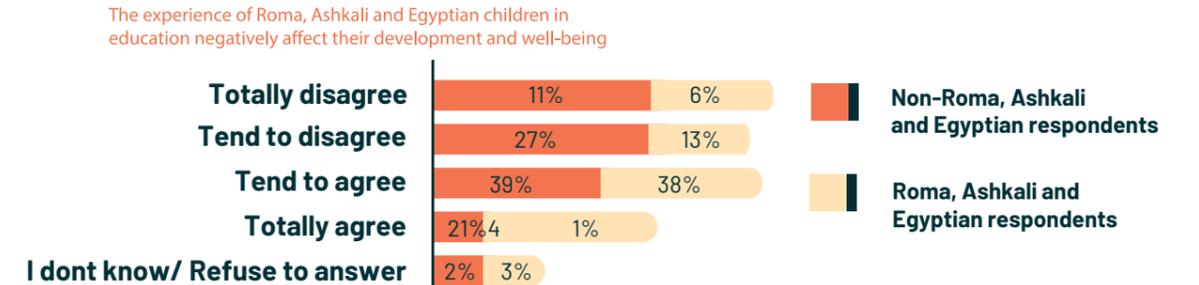
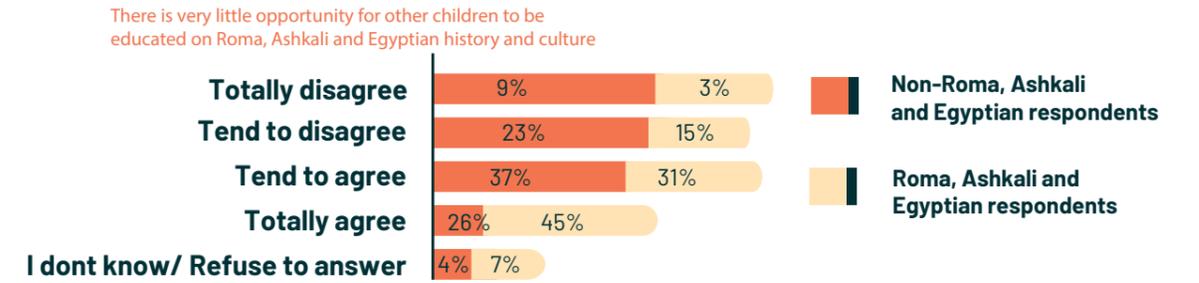


Figure 19. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

ACTIONS IN PLACE IN RELATION TO EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICE DELIVERY

Are there any actions to address discrimination and exclusion of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in employment, education and social service delivery?

In Kosovo the antidiscrimination and the antiracism legal frameworks are inadequate and are generally not adequately applied to either act as a deterrent or be a reassurance that there is protection in the legal processes for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians. In its failure this system compounds and enables the reproduction of antigypsyism.

The legal framework prohibiting hate crimes and ethnically motivated incidents, as well as the mechanisms for recording them, is in place but few cases are progressed through the system, especially those involving Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people. Most that progress are from the Serbian population. Cases are generally under-reported to the authorities and those that are, are not appropriately sanctioned in line with the legal framework. Shortcomings in the recording system, under-reporting and mistrust in law enforcement are all factors which hamper the system, despite the efforts that have been made to train the police and to introduce a process for tracking cases from investigation to prosecution and conviction. Overall, the lack of awareness and responsiveness to hate crimes and the absence of visible legal repercussions are factors which deter people from exercising their rights and undermine the validity of the systems that are in place.

Kosovo adopted a comprehensive antidiscrimination law in 2015 which goes beyond the minimum standards set by the EC Directive 43/2000. The Law No. 05/L-021 on the Protection from Discrimination applies to all fields of public life, defines direct and indirect discrimination and other forms of discrimination such as harassment, incitement to discrimination, victimisation, segregation, discrimination based on association, failure to reasonably accommodate persons with disability, discrimination based on perception and multiple discrimination. It goes further by defining severe forms of discrimination and makes it clear that affirmative action does not fall under the incidence of banned behaviour by the law. But this opportunity has never been operationalised.

Regarding anti-racism, Kosovo does not have an antiracism program similar to the European Commission antiracism program of 2020-2025. According to recent research, the Government recently decided to adopt a legal framework with the aim to tackle anti-semitism, which is not prevalent in Kosovar society. In September 2020, the government approved the decision to prevent and counter antisemitism in Kosovo and plans to draft appropriate legislation to this effect, yet no program to combat antigypsyism exists yet.

Besides the mechanisms that facilitate antigypsyism, there are also institutions that enable it through their perceived neutrality and inaction towards existing issues of antiracism or antidiscrimination.

Overall, the lack of a systemic data collection mechanisms facilitates the continuation of the status quo, as indirect discrimination and institutional racism remain unreported and unchallenged. Without such data, the promotion of equality remains an unachievable policy aim and any affirmative action, as a policy response, remains an ad hoc and largely unused option. Employers, from public and private sector, do not publish their employment data, nor are they required to set diversity targets and to report against their progress on a regular basis. Until there is such a requirement in law for all employers, and an institutional response to monitor progress, the antigypsyism and the bias that prevents even qualified Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people from entering and fully performing in the labour market will continue unchecked.

The national research revealed that wider society in Kosovo do not see or even acknowledge the labour market exclusions that exist for Roma Ashkali and Egyptians. The labour law prohibits discrimination in employment which relates to recruitment, training, promotion, terms and conditions of employment, disciplinary measures, cancellation of the employment contract or other matters arising out of the employment relationship.

'Discrimination' is defined as: any discrimination including exclusion or preference made on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, age, family status, political opinion, national extraction or social origin, language or trade-union membership.

Therefore, the law as it stands prevents any opportunity to apply measures that would improve equality of opportunity or equal treatment in employment and prevents positive discrimination, but it does not prevent actions such as employment quotas. In the hiring process, employers are obliged to create equal opportunities and criteria to both male and female applicants.

“It is true that he was not discriminated regarding to the ethnicity or skin colour, yet the only thing in which the discrimination exist is the job vacancy. When they check the job application and see that our ethnicity is Roma then we are neglected.”

Participant from focus group discussion with men from the Roma population

One participant stated they are paid less, even if they perform better at their jobs.

Another participant stated that he had a case in which the manager treated another worker better even though he was specialised in that specific field.

The participants added that there are a lot of cases when other ethnicities are paid more than Roma people.

Participants from focus group discussion with men from the Roma population

In its own way, the business sector is an enabler of social injustices, as it does not facilitate social contact, fair distribution of resources, nor high levels of employment which are all contributing factors to social inequalities. Kosovo does not have a system of data collection of employment by ethnicity and even the data that is collected is not available to the public, although required by law. Very little leverage is placed on the business sector to limit the extent to which it contributes and reproduces social inequalities or alternatively the extent to which it contributes to and enhances employment opportunities, for example by respecting and ensuring employment quotas on the basis of ethnicity. More could be done in law and through the corporate social responsibility, and the willingness of the business sector to improve access to employment for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people. Such a change would have a strong impact on the whole of society.

In relation to education, the shortcomings in the systems in Kosovo are well articulated extensively throughout this report. The learning centres and scholarship programmes, that are in place are heavily influenced and facilitated by civil society, are making a difference by increasing educational opportunities for some Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children. But despite this added value, these actions are not delivering enough change in a statutory education system with serious fractures, that continually enables antigypsyism and that tolerates widespread underperformance from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children.

In 2015 a joint programme between the European Union and the Council of Europe: ‘Increasing Access to Education and Intercultural Understanding: EU/CoE Support in the field of Education to forced returnees and to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo’ developed a curriculum for the in-service teacher training course: ‘Inclusive schools supporting the education of Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian and returned children’. It offered training for developing the capacity of the Kosovo schools to provide an inclusive and intercultural environment, to facilitates and supports effective integration of Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian and repatriated children, while enhancing chances of school success for all children. But these aims of inclusion have never been fully realised as children returning from other countries continue to face challenges to reconnect with the system in Kosovo, such as language barriers and document registration.

Social work services in Kosovo remain in need of modernisation and significant investment in terms of human resources, as well as the introduction of modern social work practices and the professionalisation of the social work service. Again, like the education sector, the activity of civil society organisations has enhanced some of the services that are available at local level, especially in relation to vulnerable children, many of whom are from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian families. While this is making important improvement at local level, it is proving insufficient as the underlying statutory service is outmoded, understaffed, under resourced and in need of significant investment in retraining and upskilling. Until more inclusive interventions and methods are established to challenge the attitudes and legacies from the past, antigypsyism will continue to be validated by the inherently superior policies and practices that emanate from the public sector.

Based on the survey results, 71% of Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian respondents believed that not enough is being done to promote diversity in their workplace as far as employing people of Roma, Ashkali or Egyptian origin or background, a belief that was shared by 46% of non-Roma, -Ashkali, or-Egyptian respondents. See figure 13, from Question 3.

Respondents were further asked if they reported cases of discrimination. In this context, the results of the National Survey and the focus group discussions have a great similarity between them, since most respondents from the Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities stated that they had not reported cases of discrimination, addressing this as a lack of trust in the institution, fear of revenge, and a general belief that it would not make any difference.

Further, respondents were asked on what can be done more to promote diversity and equality for all communities that live in Kosovo. The graph below shows that 33% of them believe that there should be institutional and legal support. A smaller share of respondents (13%) believes that more needs to be done to raise public awareness, followed by 11% who believe that there should be more promotion of diversity and equality in schools/work. Only 7% of the respondents stated that schools should have subject that promote diversity.

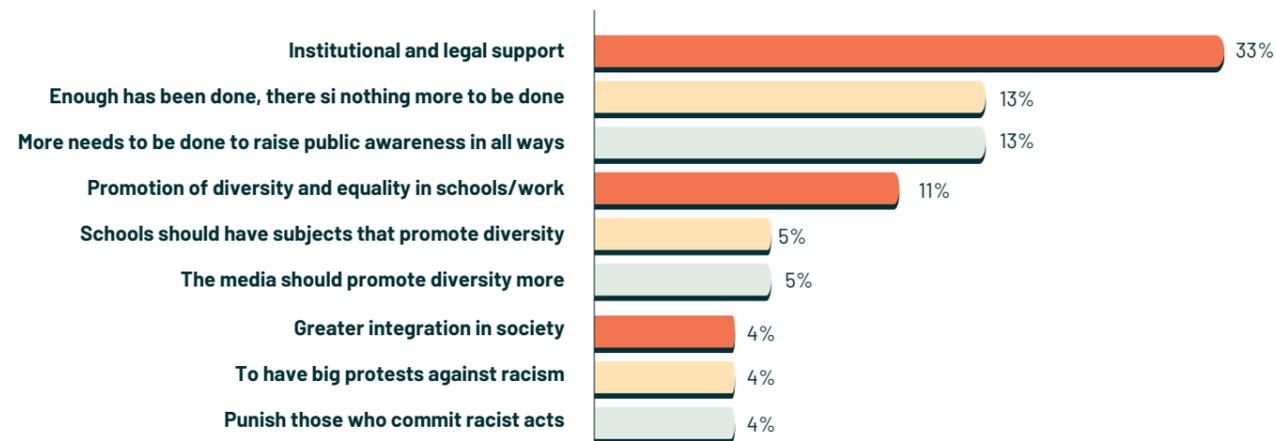


Figure 20. In your opinion, what can be done more to promote diversity and equality?

Respondents of the National Survey were asked to make an assessment on the efforts made by Government policies (national and local) in Kosovo for the integration (in the fields of education, health, housing and employment) of its Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian population, by using a scale from 1 to 10, where '1' meant "not at all effective" and '10' meant "very effective".

Based on the results, there were no significant differences between non-Roma-Ashkali-Egyptian respondents and members of these three communities. In general, the efforts made on education (5.40 & 5.46), health (5.26 & 5.25), inequality/discrimination (5.21 & 5.27), housing (5.19 & 5.22) and employment (4.95 & 4.93) were considered to be.

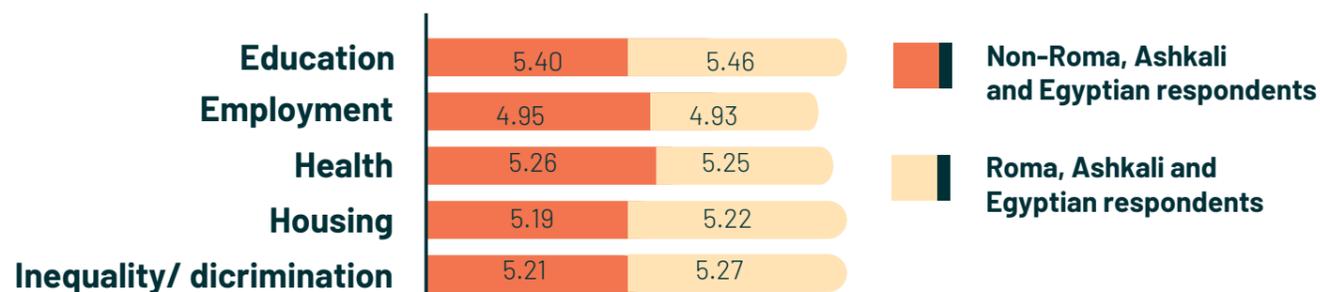


Figure 21. Please tell me if you think that the efforts made by Government policies (national and local) in Kosovo for the integration (in the fields of education, health, housing and employment) of its Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian population are effective.

Encouragingly the national survey demonstrated that the wider public agree that more needs to be done to improve the opportunities of Roma Ashkali and Egyptians.

When National Survey respondents were asked how much they agree with the statement: 'The government needs to do more to support the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities,' the majority of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian respondents (89%) tend to agree/totally agree with the aforementioned statement, while the percentage of non-Roma, -Ashkali or -Egyptian respondents who tend to agree/totally agree it is smaller (71%).

Non Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians

Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians

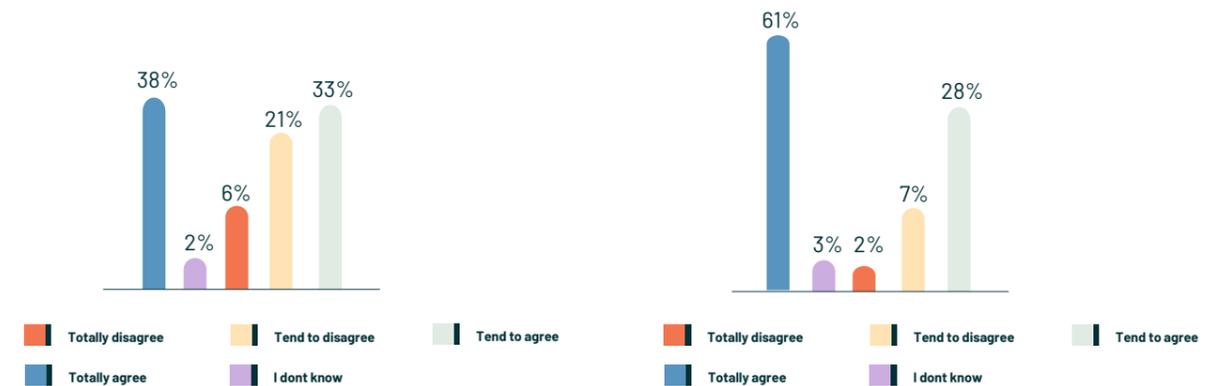


Figure 22. To what extent do you agree with the following statements? The government needs to do more to support the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities.

When National Survey respondents were asked how much they agree with the statement: 'The government needs to provide more resources to support Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian culture,' the majority of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian respondents (93%) tend to agree/totally agree. The percentage of non-Roma-Ashkali-Egyptian respondents who tend to agree/totally agree is smaller (75%) but nonetheless still sending a clear message to the Government.

Non-Roma, Ashkali or -Egyptian respondents

Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian respondents

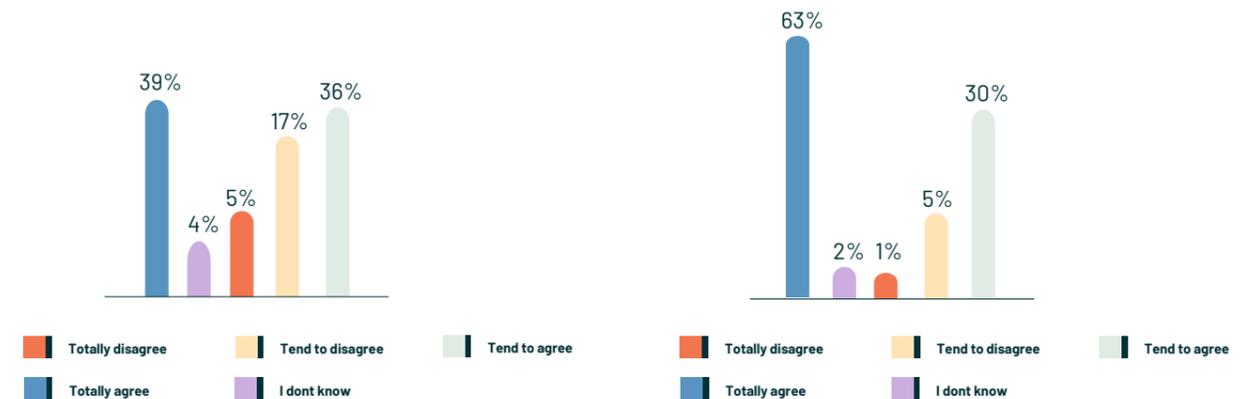


Figure 23. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: 'The government needs to provide more resources to support Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian culture.'

While distrusting the state institutions, Roma Ashkali and Egyptians cope with the oppression by setting up NGOs to voice their concerns, relying on extended family for support or by finding other ways to generate income such as collecting scrap metal, selection of garbage or engaging in risky behaviour.

KEY

FINDINGS

- Discrimination and other forms of antigypsyism are widespread –hate speech, hate crimes, racism, segregation, stereotypes and prejudice towards Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians inform social practices. Most of the population is unaware of antigypsyism, and discrimination against Roma Ashkali and Egyptian is not considered an issue in Kosovar society.
- Despite a progressive antidiscrimination law, victims are not reporting cases of discrimination because they do not trust the institutions, but also because of the pressure to fit in (conformity). The public sector is not sufficiently well equipped – informed, trained and sufficiently skilled – to uphold and apply the legislative framework that is in place.
- It is from their education related experiences that Roma Ashkali and Egyptians feel most excluded, most discriminated, most badly served, most undermined by public service providers. Those responsible for delivering the education services from the policy level in the Ministry to the way education is supplied in schools. School segregation is generally ignored by the authorities and not fully acknowledged by principals and teachers and is enabled by the same group of public servants.
- The mainstream curriculum does not engender any sense of belonging for Roma Ashkali and Egyptians children, by presenting aspects of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian history, culture and tradition and including people with their image and culture in the school text books.
- Hate speech and pejorative names are in regular use towards Roma Ashkali and Egyptians people in Kosovo. Although they do consider it insulting, hurtful and very derogatory many do not feel equipped to challenge these terms. They would never consider reporting it as a crime. The term is also used by public officials, police, teachers, health workers, and employers which normalises the use of the term which enables it to continue in popular speech.
- Similarly, the media in Kosovo use the same derogatory terms which further normalises and condones the use of derogatory language towards Roma Ashkali and Egyptians. The United Nations' Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech is clear- talking about hate speech, to raise awareness is the responsibility of all – governments, societies, the private sector, starting with individual women and men. All are responsible – all must act.
- There are very limited interactions between Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in Kosovo and the rest of the population. This research has revealed that Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, as well as people from the rest of the population, all believe that more regular contact helps to break down barriers, challenges negative and demeaning stereotypes and reduces the use of derogatory language.

- Media plays an important role in portraying negatively the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in Kosovo. The research confirmed that media is the main source of knowledge for the population about these communities, and that its messages are tempered by negative stereotypes, regular displays of hate speech, especially in social media, and overtly and negative and judgemental views on the way Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians people live their lives. This is not an acceptable situation and it needs to be addressed and adjusted for the good of society.
- Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians culture is not generally valued in the Kosovar to the same extent as other minority cultures. There are no cultural institutions belonging to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians – theatres, cultural centres, art galleries, folk assemblies – funded by the state, to offer the public an alternative, more factual, valued image of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians and their contribution to society now and for decades before.
- Despite the desire of the Egyptians to be seen as a separate group, there is more that unites Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people in Kosovar society than divides them. Roma Ashkali and Egyptians are underrepresented in public life and their voices remain largely unheard throughout the democratic political processes. This is compounded by underrepresentation in public administration, despite the provision of the law. The competition between Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian play against them. Although they perceive themselves rather as separate groups, the rest of the population regards them as one group.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1 *to the Government of Kosovo and the Ombudsperson Institution*

The antidiscrimination legislation should be implemented as a matter of urgency. The Government of the Republic of Kosovo to approve as soon as possible the strategy for the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities and to allocate budgets for its implementation. A legal analysis-assessment should be conducted to identify shortcomings in the implementation of anti-discrimination law and to design concrete steps to be followed over a one-year period that could lead to a significant increase in legal cases.

The Government of the Republic of Kosovo as well as the Ombudsperson Institution should work closely with Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, as well as other minority groups, to design a national awareness campaign on discrimination and legal remedies available to combat discrimination in Kosovo.

Achieving this means regular monitoring in a professional and sustained manner and procedures where infringements are appropriately penalised and acknowledged as the correct response. Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians also need to take responsibility for acknowledging and challenging and reporting discriminatory and exclusionary practices when they experience them. Processes can be put in place to support and facilitate Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians people to be more active in this regard and to be less fearful of repercussion.

Recommendation 2 *to the Government of Kosovo – and all public sector institutions*

The Government, and all public sector institutions, should provide initial training and continuous professional development to the civil servants on anti-racism and antibias, as a means to increase institutional performance and to create a more professional body of civil servants, accountable to those they serve. It is recommended that the phenomenon of antigypsyism is incorporated into the legislation of Kosovo.

The Government should elaborate a comprehensive methodology for data collection as a way to promote equality and non-discrimination. It should implement the Civil Service Law on the quotas for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in public administration and state-owned companies and establish mechanisms to encourage and promote employment, as well as monitor law enforcement.

Recommendation 3 *to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and Innovation and to municipalities, school principals and teachers*

Transformative inclusive education is very much needed in Kosovo to strengthen the citizens' human rights and the implementing institutions. Mainstream curricula should be reformed to include information about Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians. Romani language should be taught in schools similar to other minority languages. The state should recruit and train Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian teachers. Intercultural education about all the ethnic groups that live together in a local community should become mandatory for all pupils.

Legal and rights literacy through civic education programs should be taught in all schools in Kosovo. The systems are in place to eliminate school segregation once and for all, but these need concerted effort and serious commitment from all involved in the education system in Kosovo. The legal framework and the systems are in place, they just need to be activated, and regularly monitored in a professional and sustained manner.

Furthermore, infringement needs to be appropriately penalised, for the individuals and schools who apply these exclusionary and damaging practices. The public recognise how damaging these practices are, a finding from this research, and they universally agree that more needs to be done to significantly improve the experiences, and attainment levels of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians children in the education system.

Recommendation 4 *to Kosovo Police and the Police Inspectorate*

Kosovo Police recruitment process should include tailored training in the field of human rights, antiracism and antibias and how to treat vulnerable and marginalised groups. Recruiting Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian officers would facilitate the relations with these communities.

All cases of discrimination should be recorded and disaggregated by ethnicity and their status reported on an annual basis. In addition, Kosovo Police, and the Police Inspectorate should engage in a regular dialogue and cooperation with minority communities and other vulnerable and marginalised groups as a means to improve its policing style and serve better the local communities.

Recommendation 5 *to civil society and the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people in Kosovo*

Look to and follow the guidance of the United Nations' Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech to encourage more speech, not less, to convey a clear message to all society that the use of pejorative language when talking to or about Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people will not be tolerated.

Civil society in partnership should support the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian community to develop a national awareness raising campaign, including giving Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians a clear narrative/script to stand up to and challenge those who use such terms combined with clear instructions on how to report the use of hate speech and the procedures that should be followed.

For example, preparing and disseminating information sheets that people use to challenge public officials, and instruct the police how they are expected/required to respond. In this digital age it also means empowering citizens to recognise, reject and stand up to hate speech online.

Structures need to be in place for coordinated data collection on the occurrences of hate speech. In its watchdog role civil society should initiate regular monitoring of the level and progress of reported cases.

Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian civil society should take actions to improve contact and connections with members of the press and media, thus facilitating constructive access between both sides to both elevate the voices of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians and build personal connections/understanding amongst those writing in the press. Also, there should be trainings for journalists on anti-racism and discriminatory terminology.

Recommendation 6 *to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people the Government of Kosovo, cultural institutions and civil society*

Find ways such as events, festivals, learning activities, sporting competitions and volunteering which bring people together into the same space.

Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians should be part of the same activities, with the rest of the population-creating, planning and delivering together as a means to break down barriers and equalise all contributions. Visibility and interactivity are ways to influence behavioural change.

The Government should fund Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian cultural institutions such as theatres, museums, folk assemblies, and philharmonic orchestra.

The Government should facilitate Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian artists access to mainstream cultural institutions in Kosovo – museums, art galleries, philharmonics, as a means to exhibit their products and communicate to the public their contribution to the culture and society.

Recommendation 7 *to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people in Kosovo*

With just 3% of the population Roma Ashkali and Egyptian in Kosovo it is difficult to see how they could on their own become a sizeable political force. Strength is definitely more achievable in unity with a common purpose and similar goals.

From a power strengthening perspective, for the Roma Ashkali and Egyptians in Kosovo the best strategy would be to combine their representation with representation from other mainstream political parties.

ANNEX I – NATIONAL RESEARCH ON ANTIGYPSISM QUESTIONNAIRE

INTRODUCTION

M1. Code Municipality of Current Residence in Kosovo

1. Pristina	11. Kline	21. Ferizaj	31. Junik
2. South Mitrovica	12. Istog	22. Kacanik	32. Mamusha
3. Gjilan	13. Decan	23. Fushe Kosovë	33. Hani i Elezit
4. Peje	14. Dragash	24. Obiliq	34. Gracanica
5. Prizren	15. Suhareke	25. Novo Brdo	35. Ranillug
6. Gjakove	16. Rahovec	26. Zubin Potok	36. Partesh
7. Podujeve	17. Viti	27. Strpce	37. Klllokot
8. Vushtrri	18. Kamenice	28. Zvecan	38. North Mitrovica
9. Skenderaj	19. Lipjan	29. Gliogovc	
10. Lepsaviq	20. Shtime	30. Malisheve	

M2. Urban/Rural Residence

1. Urban area
2. Rural area

M3. Interviewer Code -----

M4. Interview Completed on the...

1. First Visit?
2. Second Visit?
3. Third Visit?

Begin Sampling Procedure HERE:

1. After selecting a house or apartment using the random route technique,
2. Introduce yourself: "Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name is -----
I work for UBO Consulting. We are conducting a nation-wide survey to establish the magnitude and dynamics of antigypsyism in Kosovo"
3. The person in the household who is over 18 years of age, with the next birthday (looking forward in time) is the designated respondent for that household. Attempt to complete the interview with the designated respondent now.
4. If the designated respondent is at home and refuses the interview or another family member blocks the interview, politely leave the house and go to the next appropriate house or apartment on that route.
5. If the designated respondent is not at home, attempt to schedule an interview for later that day (in rural areas) or at any other time in the field work period (in urban areas). Record the date and time of that appointment

1. Do you consider yourself to be part of any of the following?
(Multiple Answers Possible)

- a) A religious minority
- b) Roma minority
- c) Ashkali minority
- d) Egyptian minority
- e) Albanian community
- f) Serbian minority
- g) Bosnian minority
- h) Gorani minority
- i) Turkish minority
- j) Other, please specify: _____

8. To what extent do you agree with the following statement – “The Government should employ measures to promote opportunities for equal access – to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians”:

	1-Totally disagree	2 - Tend to disagree	3 - Tend to agree	4- Totally agree	88- I do not know	99 - Refuse to answer
When applying for a public sector job						
When applying for high school						
When applying for university						
In terms of housing/ housing conditions						

9. Using a scale from 1 to 10, please tell me how you would feel about having a person from each of the following groups in the highest elected political positions in Kosovo. '1' means that you would feel "not at all comfortable" and '10' that you would feel "totally comfortable"?

	Not at all comfortable	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Totally comfortable	88- do not know	99 - Refuse to answer
Albanian community												
Roma minority group												
Ashkali minority group												
Egyptian minority group												
Serbian minority group												
Bosnian minority group												
Gorani minority group												
Turkish minority group												

10. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

	1- Totally agree	2 - Tend to agree	3 - Tend to disagree	4- Totally disagree	88- I do not know	99 - Refuse to answer
The Roma community, the Ashkali community and the Egyptian community have a more difficult life compared to the Albanian community						
The Roma community, the Ashkali community and the Egyptian community are the most discriminated groups in our society						
The Roma community, the Ashkali community and the Egyptian community commit more crimes						
The Roma community, the Ashkali community and the Egyptian community get married at a young age						
The Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities prefer not to go to school						
The Roma community, the Ashkali community and the Egyptian community prefer to live together						
The Roma community, the Ashkali community and the Egyptian community are poor because they do not work						

11. If you have agreed with 2 or more of the aforementioned statements, what do you think has shaped your opinion?

- a) Personal experience
- b) Something you heard from another person
- c) Media
- d) I do not know
- e) Other, please specify: _____

12. On a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is the lowest and 10 is the highest value, how trustworthy do you consider the following groups?

	1 - Not trustworthy at all	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 - Very trustworthy	88- - I do not know	99 - Refuse to answer
Albanian community												
Roma minority group												
Ashkali minority group												
Egyptian minority group												
Serbian minority group												
Bosnian minority group												
Gorani minority group												
Turkish minority group												

13. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

	1 - Totally agree	2 - Tend to agree	3 - Tend to disagree	4- Totally disagree	88- I do not know	99 - Refuse to answer
In the courts, Roma receive higher sentences than Albanians						
In the courts, Ashkali receive higher sentences than Albanians						
In the courts, Egyptians receive higher sentences than Albanians						
In its actions, the police more often target the Roma community						
In its actions, the police most often target the Ashkali community						
In its actions, the police most often target the Egyptian community						
When under police arrest, Roma are treated worse than Albanians						
When under police arrest, Ashkali are treated worse than Albanians						
When under police arrest, Egyptians are treated worse than Albanians						

14. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

	1 - Totally agree	2 - Tend to agree	3 - Tend to disagree	4- Totally disagree	88- I do not know	99 - Refuse to answer
Roma children have less access to kindergarten / nursery than Albanian children						
Ashkali children have less access to kindergarten / nursery than Albanian children						
Egyptian children have less access to kindergarten / nursery than Albanian children						
Doctors and medical staff often refuse to provide medical services to Roma						
Doctors and medical staff often refuse to provide medical services to Ashkali						
Doctors and medical staff often refuse to provide medical services to Egyptians						

15. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

	1 - Totally agree	2 - Tend to agree	3 - Tend to disagree	4- Totally disagree	88- I do not know	99 - Refuse to answer
There is very little provision for children to be educated about Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian history and culture.						
The experience that Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children have in education negatively impacts on their development and wellbeing						
Most of the children living on the streets belong to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities						
Most of the children in state care belong to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities						
Most of the trafficked persons belong to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities						

16. If Q1 = b); c) or d), How much do you agree with the following statements?

	1 - Totally agree	2 - Tend to agree	3 - Tend to disagree	4- Totally disagree	88- I do not know	99 - Refuse to answer
There is very little opportunity for other children to be educated about Roma history and culture						
There is little chance that other children will be educated about Ashkali and Egyptian history						
There is very little opportunity for other children to be educated about Egyptian history and culture						
The experience that Roma children have in education negatively affects their development and well-being						
The experience that Ashkali children have in education negatively affects their development and well-being						
The experience that Egyptian children have in education negatively affects their development and well-being						
Most of the children living on the streets belong to the Roma community						
Most of the children living on the streets belong to the Ashkali community						
Most of the children living on the streets belong to the Egyptian community						
Most children under state care belong to the Roma community						
Most children under state care belong to the Ashkali community						
Most children under state care belong to the Egyptian community						
Most trafficked persons belong to the Roma community,						
Most trafficked persons belong to the Ashkali community						
Most of the trafficked persons belong to the Egyptian community						

17. Could you please tell me whether, in your opinion, discrimination based on being a Roma, Ashkali or Egyptian person in Kosovo is:

	Very widespread	Fairly widespread	Fairly rare	Very rare	I do not know	Refuse to answer
Roma minority group						
Ashkali minority group						
Egyptian minority group						

18. In the past 12 months, have you personally felt discriminated against or experienced harassment on one or more of the following grounds? (Multiple Answers Possible):

- a) Gender (being a man or a woman)
- b) Sexual orientation
- c) Religion
- d) Language
- e) Ethnicity
- f) Age
- g) Place of residence
- h) Other, please specify: _____
- i) No, I have not personally felt discriminated against or experienced harassment on any of the aforementioned grounds

If Q18= a) – g), did you file a complaint against the person/institution you were discriminated/harassed by?

- a) Yes
- b) No [Skip to Q19]
- c) Refuse to answer

18.2. Where did you file the complaint?

a) _____

18.3. How much confidence do you have in the aforementioned person/institution to address and handle your complaint, fairly?

- a) Complete confidence
- b) Somewhat confidence
- c) Little confidence
- d) No confidence at all

19. What were the reasons you did not file a complaint?

- a) Lack of confidence
- b) Fear of retaliation
- c) I did not have any information on where to file the complaint
- d) It would not make a difference
- e) Other, please specify: _____
- f) I do not know
- g) Refuse to answer

20. In Kosovo, when a company wants to hire someone and has to choose between two candidates with equal skills and qualifications, which of the following criteria may, in your opinion, put one candidate at a disadvantage? (Multiple Answers Possible). The candidate's:

- a) Name
- b) Where they live
- c) Way of speaking or with an accent
- d) Ethnic origin
- e) Skin colour
- f) Roma, Ashkali or Egyptian
- g) Gender or sex (man or woman)
- h) Other, please specify: _____

21. Do you think that enough is being done to promote diversity in your work place as far as employing people of Roma, Ashkali or Egyptian origin or background?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) I dont know
- d) Refuse to answer

21.1. In your opinion, what can be done more to promote diversity and equality?

22. If Q1=b); c) or d), which term should be used to describe past (historic) experiences directed towards your ethnic group? (Choose one of the following answers)

- a) Antigypsyism (translated as Antisiganism)
- b) Romaphobia
- c) Anti-Romaism/Anti-Romism
- d) Anti-Roma racism
- e) Antimagjupism
- f) Other, please specify: _____
- g) I do not know
- h) Refuse to answer

23. Using a scale from 1 to 10, please tell me if you think that the efforts made by Government policies (national and local) in Kosovo for the integration (in the fields of education, health, housing and employment) of its Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian population are effective. '1' means you consider that these efforts are "not at all effective" and '10' that you consider that these efforts are "very effective".

	Not at all effective	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Very effective	I dont know	Refuse to answer
Education												
Employment												
Health												
Housing												
Inequality/discrimination												

24. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	1 - Totally agree	2 - Tend to agree	3 - Tend to disagree	4 - Totally disagree	88 - I do not know	99 - Refuse to answer
The government should do more to support Roma community						
The Government should do more to support Ashkali community						
The Government should do more to support Egyptian community						
The Government should provide more resources for supporting Romani culture						
The Government should provide more resources for supporting Ashkali culture						
The Government should provide more resources for supporting Egyptian culture						

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Gender of the respondent:

- a) Male
- b) Female

D2.

How old are you? --- Age

D3. (ETHNICITY) What is your ethnicity/what ethnic group do you belong to?

- a) Albanian
- b) Serb
- c) Bosnian
- d) Goran
- e) Turk
- f) Roma
- g) Ashkali
- h) Egyptian
- i) Other, specify _____

D4. How many formal years of education you have completed?

--- No. of years (98. Ref (vol.) 99. DK (vol.))

D5. Are you ...

- a) working full-time
- b) working part-time
- c) a housewife?
- d) a student or apprentice?
- e) retired/disabled?
- f) unemployed and looking for work?
- g) unemployed, but not looking for work?

D6. Please tell me how many members, including yourself, your household consist of

ANNEX II – FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDELINE

INTRODUCTION

Dear participants, thank you for taking the time to come to today's meeting.

Your participation and thoughts are very important to our study. As you have been informed, you have been invited to participate in one of the discussions that are being held within the project. The discussion will last approximately an hour and a half.

Before we start with the discussion part, we would like to introduce you to some basic rules of the format of these discussions, which help us to have a more productive and comfortable discussion.

Basic Focus Group Rules

- We would love to hear from each of you. So please do not expect us to call you by name.
- However, if we notice that someone has not spoken yet, we can call him / her and ask for his / her opinion.
- There is no need to raise your hand when you want to take the floor. Please do not hesitate to express your opinion on any questions. There is no right or wrong answer.
- Respect everyone's opinion and do not interrupt each other during the conversation.
- Please speak in order and raise your voice when speaking so that everyone in the room can hear you.
- Please turn off your cell phones and do not leave the room until the discussion is over.

We also need your permission to record today's discussion. However, we assure you that your views will remain completely confidential and will be used for the purpose of this study ONLY.

The recording will be used to transcribe / describe the discussion which will help us to report and analyze your thoughts. Once the discussion is transcribed, the recording will be deleted. In addition, the opinions and information resulting from today's meeting will not be reported in any way on the basis of your personal data, which may identify you (eg name and surname).

They will be reported only on the basis of ethnicity, gender and municipality. If you do not have any questions, we can start the discussion.

DISCUSSION [90 minutes]

TOPIC 1: Antigypsyism [10 minutes]

1. Are you aware of the following terms means?

Probe Questions:

Are you aware what any of the following terms means:

- a. Antigypsyism (translated as Antisiganism)
- b. Romaphobia
- c. Anti-Romaism/Anti-Romism
- d. Anti-Roma racism
- e. Antimagjupism

Which one is most relevant in the Kosovo context?

Probe Questions:

- Is the term Magjup widely used in Kosovo
- How does that term make you feel about yourself –
- How do you think it makes your children feel?

TOPIC 2: VIEWS OF THE WIDER PUBLIC [10 minutes]

We asked the wider public how often do you interact with Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians? Over 60 % said they had little or no contact. Also, that only 3% of the majority populations would be comfortable to have someone from the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian community join their family, 6% as a close friend? Why do you think this is?

Probe Questions:

- How do these negative and exclusionary views make you feel?
- Do they impact on how you view yourself and your family?
- Do such negative views impact on your children? In what way – examples?

Based on the results of the National Survey, almost 60% of Roma, Ashkali Egyptians declared that they have been discriminated against, but not reported a case of discrimination. Why do you think this is happening?

Probe Questions:

- What do you think are the main reasons people do not feel comfortable to file a complaint?
- Do you believe that institutions handle people's complaints fairly, regardless of their race/ethnicity?

TOPIC 3: CHILDREN [10 minutes]

Roma children and their access to education. We asked this in the national survey. Do you think that children from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities have access to education on an equal footing with other children from pre-school to high level of education?

Probe Questions:

- Do you think inequality in education affects children in the long term?
- Does it impact on how they view themselves? Examples please
- What can be done to improve the situation?

TOPIC 4: JUSTICE AND CRIME [20 minutes]

Based on the results of the National Survey, the majority population totally agreed or tended to agree that Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians commit more crimes. respondents totally disagree/tend to disagree with two of the following statements.

How much do you agree with these statements? Why? What do you think has shaped your opinion?

1. In courts of law, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians receives higher sentences than majority population (Around 60%)
2. In its actions, the police targets more frequently Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities (Around 70%)
3. When in police custody, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians receive worst treatment than majority population (Around 65%) 60% of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians agree

BUT - According to our survey most Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians communities think the opposite.

Why do they think there is such a disparity of opinion?

In the national survey we had a question about how Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians are treated by the Police and the Courts. Do you think

- the Police target the communities? Do you have any examples of this?
- the Police treat people from the communities more harshly than other? Example please
- the courts give harsher sentences harsher for community members? Examples please

Probe Questions:

- The views of the majority population were quite the opposite from the people interviewed from the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. Show slide for question 13
- Any thoughts why this should be the wider public opinion?

The national survey also asked people if Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian commit more crime. The wider public opinion is that they do – show slide for question 10 only about the majority population? Do you think this is a reasonable response? Why do you think this is the view of the wider public?

Probe Questions

- Do you have people in your family or know people in your immediate circles who are involved who commit crimes – petty or violent?
- So, in this room we don't have family or friends who are criminals?
- Why then would Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people respond in the same way as the majority population? Explain

TOPIC 5: ACCESS TO PUBLIC SERVICES [20 minutes]

What relationship do the people in your neighbourhood have with the mayor, with the local authority? If for example you want to apply for documentation for your house, where would you apply? Do they have an office close to where you live? Are they helpful?

Do you think that the efforts made in Kosovo for the integration (in the fields of education, health, housing and employment) of its Roma population are effective? Do you have equal access to services?

Do you think that enough is being done to promote diversity in your work place or school as far as employing people of Roma, Ashkali or Egyptian origin or background?

Probe Questions:

- Do you have experience of Roma, Ashkali or Egyptian people being paid less than others?
- In your opinion, what can be done more to promote diversity and equality?
- Should there be employment quotas for minorities?
- What should the Government do to change this?

TOPIC 5: DISCRIMINATION/differences [20 minutes]

Based on the results of the National Survey, most respondents think that discrimination based on being a Roma, Ashkali or Egyptian person in Kosovo is very rare or fairly rare. Do you agree with these statements? Have you experienced discrimination? How does that impact on you and their family – especially their children

- In your view are Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians are the most discriminated in our society
- Are they aware of discrimination against Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children?
- But people do not report discrimination – why – examples?

Probe Questions:

But according to the survey – 50% of the Roma Ashkali and Egyptian communities think the opposite that discrimination is very widespread/ fairly widespread

- Why do you think the wider public are not aware or do not acknowledge discrimination?

What defines the difference between the three communities – discuss. Would it surprise you to know that most of the wider population think that all three groups are the same? Discuss

The national survey illustrates that the majority population shows superiority about Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people?

Probe Questions:

Have you felt that superiority – Examples?

CONCLUSION [10 min.]

We have reached the end of this discussion. We thank you for sharing your thoughts on today's topic and your contribution to this discussion.

Do any of you have any additional comments regarding the issues we have discussed?

If not: Thank you and have a nice day!

ANNEX III – IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS GUIDELINE

DISCLAIMER

Hello! My name is Ann Morton Hyde and I am leading a research team contracted by a Consortium of organisations (working on behalf of including the Office of Good Governance in the Prime Minister's Office).

You may be aware that tackling antigypsyism is one of the priorities of the EU Framework on Roma for the period 2021-2030. The purpose of our research is to establish the extent that antigypsyism exists in the wider public in Kosovo and to try to identify what are the drivers of these negative and damaging beliefs. Our research includes national research, focus groups with various members of the public and interviews with people working in important positions in public life.

Some multi country research has been carried out in EU member states and more recently by RCC in the Western Balkan countries, but this is the first time a national research has been carried out. Our aim is to prepare a report based on the findings from research to highlight the extent and characteristics of the situation in Kosovo, for the wider public. It is well documented that presenting examples of discrimination and explaining their impact on the lives of individuals can be a powerful means of raising awareness about such destructive behaviour and it can encourage people to consider and ideally change their own behaviour. We also hope to provide useful insight for decision makers so they can recognise antigypsyism and translate this into effective actions in each policy area of the national action plans.

You are invited to participate in this research due to your position as in the public sector.

I would like to ask your permission to record the interview. I will use the recorded interview solely for preparing the country report. At the end of the research period, the recording will be deleted and no trace of the recordings will be available. We have prepared a set of questions to assist in collecting the relevant data.

Interview Guide

1. Is antigypsyism a term you have encountered in the institution you work for?

If yes, please explain how you know and apply the term

If No, do you understand what they term means?

2. Are you aware that antigypsyism is one of the priorities of the EU Framework on Roma for the period 2021-2030?

If yes how does that impact on your work?

If No, how do you think you will respond to this new information in future?

3. Do you have policy making responsibility, public service or monitoring responsibilities in your work?

In that context how do you encounter Roma Ashkali and Egyptian people? Do you consult or cooperate with Roma Ashkali and Egyptian in a policy making context?

What are the main challenges in policymaking towards Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian?

Do the authorities facilitate access to public services, and personal records for persons without legal documents

4. Are you aware of regular reports of the public authorities on the implementation of policies towards Roma Ashkali and Egyptian?

If yes, have you contributed to the collection of information/ data for these reports?

Do you have any knowledge of how those reports are responded to Roma Ashkali and Egyptian people or the public at large?

If No, do you think the collection of this data is important?

5. How are data on the situation of Roma Ashkali and Egyptian collected by state authorities and researchers?

Are there specific obstacles?

How accurate are considered these data?

6. In your opinion, how effective is the antidiscrimination legal framework in combating different forms of discrimination against Roma (school segregation, forced evictions, police violence, etc)?

Do you know of any What important legal cases on discrimination against Roma Ashkali and Egyptian decided by courts or specialized bodies?

What else is needed to combat more effectively these forms of discrimination against Roma?

7. Are you aware of any cases of hate speech against Roma?

How are the authorities reacting to such cases?

Is there training and protocols for dealing with hate speech?

8. What policies/regulations are in place to combat school segregation?

How are Roma Ashkali and Egyptian represented in the curricula?

Is there relevant info about Roma history and culture included in textbooks?

Is Romani language taught in schools across the country?

How is racial bullying combated within schools?

9. How are the authorities addressing the housing situation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians?

Are there programs or plans to avoid forced evictions?

How are Roma Ashkali and Egyptian included in the different infrastructure development plans, environmental protection sector or green energy production?

How is the government and local authorities dealing with people living on the street?

How is the government and local authorities dealing with IDPs

10. Have you encountered segregation of Roma Ashkali and Egyptian in hospitals or access to medical services?

Or refusal to provide medical services to Roma Ashkali and Egyptian

Or refusal to provide medical insurance?

How do the authorities react if cases of segregation are reported

Or if cases of refusal to provide medical insurance are reported?

11. Are any measures in place to close the gap in unemployment rate between Roma and the rest of the population?

How effective are these measures?

How could they be improved?

12. Are steps being taken to ensure Ashkali and Egyptian get access to employment in public services?

Do you think this should be encouraged?

What could make the process better ?

13. How often are reported cases of police violence against Roma Ashkali and Egyptian?

How is police handling such cases of reported violence?

Are there restrictions orders in cases of domestic violence implemented?

In your opinion, what makes Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian vulnerable to police violence?

14. How are the authorities supporting Roma cultural institutions?

What types of institutions are financed from public funds?

15. How are problems faced by Roma represented in media?

What efforts are in place to improve the reporting on Roma?

16. Are there courses on Roma situation taught in schools and universities?

17. Can you tell me of any examples of positive practices in addressing the situation of Roma in Kosovo?

ANNEX IV – LIST OF PEOPLE INTERVIEWED

NAME	ORGANISATION	POSITION
EDUCATION		
Emin Neziraj emin.neziraj@rks-gov.net	The Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation	Community Advisor
Liridon Maliqi liridinmaliqi@live.com	PrimarySchool "QamilBatalli" in Prishtina	School Principal
Driton Sadiku driton.sadiku@hotmail.com	PrimarySchool "Ismail Luma" in Lipjan	School Principal
Ganimete Konjufca ganimetekonjuca@gmail.com	PrimarySchool "Ahmet Hoxha" in Ferizaj	School Principal
HOUSING		
Driton Tafallari dtafallari@yahoo.com	Ministry of Environment, Planning and Infrastructure	Advisor to Minister
HEALTH		
Aida Morina Aida.Morina@rks-gov.net	Ministry of Health	Chief of Minister's Staff
Nadire Ymeri nadireymeri1@gmail.com	Family Care Centers, Ferizaj	Director
POLICE		
Fehmi Xhata fehmi.xhata@kosovopolice.com	Kosovo Anti-Trafficking Police Unit	Director
Arber Beka arber.beka@ipk-gov.net	Kosovo Police Inspectorate	Director of Communications
Faik Krasniqi	Gjakove Police	Major of Regional Police
Daut Hoxha daut.hoxha@kosovopolice.com	Kosovo Police	Spokesperson
CENTERS FOR SOCIAL WORK		
Kumrije Bytyqi Kumrije.Bytyqi@rks-gov.net	Center for Social Work Prizren	Director
OMBUDSPERSON		
Besart Elshani arta.ibrahimi@oik-rks.org	Ombudsperson Institution	Chief of Cabinet

ANNEX V – LIST OF DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO

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2. 'Analysis of mainstream policies targeting Roma and Ashkali integration in Kosovo', Regional Cooperation Council Roma Integration Action team, 2020
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Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra