



Follow-Up on the European Commission's Commitment Regarding Roma Security in the Context of the New European Security Strategy and the Next Financial Framework

Brussels, 5 October 2026

To:

Hadja Lahbib, European Commissioner for Equality, Preparedness and Crisis Management
Magnus Brunner, European Commissioner for Internal Affairs and Migration

Cc:

Henna Virkkunen, Executive Vice-President of the European Commission for Tech Sovereignty, Security and Democracy
Michael O'Flaherty, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights
Christophe Kamp, OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities
Volker Türk, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Dear Commissioners Lahbib and Brunner,

We are writing on behalf of the Global Roma Alliance for Strategic Security (GRASS) as a follow-up to your letter of 8 September 2025, in which you stated unequivocally that:

"The security of the European Roma is a priority concern for the European Commission."

We appreciated the clarity of this commitment, expressed in response to our open letter, *"Roma Security at Risk: Addressing the Growing Threats"* of 30 June 2025.

One year later, we respectfully ask what concrete measures the European Commission has taken to translate this declared priority into meaningful protection for Roma people in the European Union, as well as how the Commission is planning to integrate the Roma security into the new European Security Strategy and the next EU Financial Framework which are currently under preparation.



Global Roma Alliance for Strategic Security

Lumjaki Alijansa Romani pala Strategikano Arakhajmos

A New European Security Strategy in which Roma Security Matters

In her State of the Union address on 16 September 2026, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen put forward a sweeping new European Security Strategy, alongside structural initiatives such as an Emergency Security Protocol (modeled on NATO's Article 4) and a European Security Council. However, we want to address a critical question head-on in this dialogue: **How will the issues of Roma security and protection be concretely reflected in the proposed European Security Strategy?**

If the goal of the proposed European Security Strategy is to protect all Europeans from both internal and external threats, it must confront the internal vulnerabilities and guarantee that European security is inclusive from its foundation - something the existing European instruments fail to adequately address, as this letter demonstrates.

Two New Instruments and an Implementation Gap

Since your reply of 8 September 2025, the Commission has adopted the EU Anti-Racism Strategy 2026–2030 (adopted 20 January 2026) and the ProtectEU Agenda to prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism (COM(2026) 101 final, adopted 26 February 2026). We welcome the Anti-Racism Strategy's explicit recognition of antigypsyism as a specific form of racism and its acknowledgement that combating racism is also a security interest. However, when the two instruments are read together, a profound structural gap becomes apparent:

The EU Anti-Racism Strategy and the ProtectEU Agenda reveal a lack of a clear operational bridge between Roma equality policy and security policy.

The Anti-Racism Strategy recognizes antigypsyism but establishes no dedicated Roma-security workstream, budget, monitoring mechanism, security indicators, or protection protocol. Conversely, the ProtectEU Agenda contains operational instruments concerning threat assessment, online radicalisation, community resilience, and the protection of public spaces—including €5 million for community engagement and €30 million for public spaces—but makes no explicit reference to Roma or antigypsyism.

When a Roma activist, organisation, family, or community faces a serious and credible threat, where does that threat actually enter the EU system? Who receives it, who assesses the risk, and who decides whether it is treated as a hate-crime issue, a policing matter, or a broader security threat? Without an explicit escalation and protection pathway, political commitments risk remaining disconnected from the realities on the ground.

Lessons from the Treatment of Roma Refugees Fleeing the War in Ukraine

This protection vacuum has been thrown into sharp relief by the ongoing war in Ukraine. While the European Union rightly activated the Temporary Protection Directive to shelter millions fleeing the conflict, Romani refugees from Ukraine have systematically encountered secondary discrimination, segregation in transit and reception facilities, and barriers to documentation across several member states.



Global Roma Alliance for Strategic Security

Lumjaki Alijansa Romani pala Strategikano Arakhajmos

That refugees fleeing active warfare face institutional exclusion and heightened vulnerability upon reaching EU territory due to their Romani origin shows that current security and humanitarian instruments fail to safeguard majority and minority equally. And this issue is directly connected to the overall preparedness of the EU to act in emergency and crisis situations.

Voluntary Monitoring Driven by Urgency Without Institutional Support

The cases presented in this letter were collected voluntarily by members and partner organisations of the GRASS network after we received the Commission's response in September 2025. GRASS received no funding for this work, and we had no dedicated staff, monitoring infrastructure, or resources to conduct systematic data collection throughout the European Union. Our findings reflect only the information that members of our coalition were able to collect and communicate voluntarily.

That GRASS network had to step into this vacuum out of sheer urgency and without institutional support makes the gravity of our findings all the more undeniable. We expect EU institutions to appreciate this grassroots diligence and afford these documented threats the rigorous attention they warrant, especially as no other network of civil organisations has undertaken such vital monitoring on Roma security.

The presented cases must not be interpreted as representing the full scale of the security threats faced by Roma in Europe; they are illustrative, not exhaustive. Historical experience demonstrates the importance of dedicated monitoring: during 2008–2009, the Movement for Desegregation in Hungary, led by former Member of the European Parliament Viktória Mohácsi, registered 68 neo-Nazi attacks against Roma settlements within approximately one year. That experience showed that when systematic monitoring is undertaken, the scale of racist violence becomes visible. Without adequate early-warning mechanisms and trusted reporting channels today, many attacks, threats, and institutional failures remain undocumented, unconnected, and invisible at the European level.

The difference with the past period, however, is that in 2026, we are not speaking about individual human rights violations, but about threats to the collective security of Roma people which require stronger protection and monitoring mechanisms in the midst of growing tensions on the European continent.

Securitization Continuum: Developments Documented by the GRASS Network

1. Greece: State Securitization and Profiling

GRASS partners and Roma rights organisations, including have documented a sustained pattern of large-scale police operations targeting Roma neighbourhoods. The most significant is "Operation ENTOS," announced in late 2025 by the Minister for Migration and Asylum, Michalis Chrysochoidis, involving 25 units, 473 officers, and operations across 152 localities in 25 areas. According to monitoring by the ERRC and the Greek Helsinki Monitor, at least 76 such operations took place in six months, with a second phase in April–May 2026 accelerating



Global Roma Alliance for Strategic Security

Lumjaki Alijansa Romani pala Strategikano Arakhajmos

to approximately 4.7 raids per week with deployment of tactical units, police dogs, and drones. Police communications never name Roma directly referring instead to "socially homogeneous groups". While Greek authorities have a legitimate responsibility to investigate crime, security measures must comply with principles of legality, necessity, proportionality, and non-discrimination. Civil-society organisations report that the concentration and scale of these operations result in collective stigmatization, ethnic profiling, and a climate of fear and insecurity among Roma families. Where state authorities themselves are implicated in discriminatory practices, telling victims to report back through the same institutional channels creates an acute confidence crisis, demanding independent oversight and complaint mechanisms.

2. Germany: Criminalizing Narratives, Data-Driven Profiling, "Remigration"

In Germany, Roma remain largely invisible as victims while becoming increasingly visible as a group placed under suspicion. Our partners have reported growing threats and intimidation directed at Roma civil organisations and activists. In one particularly alarming case—raised on the basis of information received from partners, and without naming the individual concerned—a leading Roma activist discovered that their name had been included on the so-called "death list" associated with the National Socialist Underground (NSU), a far-right terrorist organisation responsible for multiple murders. The activist was reportedly never informed of this threat by competent security authorities, raising serious questions about institutional mechanisms: which authority is obliged to warn a person whose name appears on an extremist target list, and under what protocol? Furthermore, growing police and political attention to "clan criminality" and to Roma migrants from Eastern Europe contributes to the collective stigmatization of Roma people as criminal, fraudulent, or dangerous to public order, narratives increasingly exploited by far-right actors to promote "remigration" proposals.

Representing a dangerous new escalation in this landscape, the interlinking of social services, public-order authorities, and law enforcement agencies—combined with the use of data-driven and AI-supported procedures—has drastically increased the risk that ethnic classifications are covertly reproduced through so-called proxy markers. This systemic practice results in Roma being indirectly treated and targeted as a specific risk group. Far from being a mere social welfare issue, this convergence of automated risk-scoring and securitization is fundamentally a security issue that creates a backdoor for the reintroduction of ethnic markers as a direct means of surveillance and persecution, tightly anchored to the stigmatizing topos of "clan crime".

3. Denmark: Normalization of Collective Deportation in Public Discourse

These threats are further fuelled by a transnational online and public environment where explicit calls for the removal or deportation of Roma are increasingly voiced and normalised by influential actors. On 21 July 2026, software developer [David Heinemeier Hansson](#) published a [blog post advocating the comprehensive deportation of Roma as a matter of "self-preservation," comparing Roma to wolves to be shot "when the population gets out of control"](#). Rather than facing meaningful consequences, his associated open-source project subsequently attracted more than USD 12 million in donations from prominent technology



Global Roma Alliance for Strategic Security

Lumjaki Alijansa Romani pala Strategikano Arakhajmos

companies and executives (Der Standard, 3 September 2026; The Verge, 2026). Dehumanising rhetoric of this kind—directly echoing the "remigration" narratives documented in Germany—circulates freely on platforms accessible throughout the Union, is amplified by actors of considerable economic and social influence and carries no visible cost for those who produce or finance it. To our knowledge, no EU-level threat-assessment, online-radicalisation, or content-moderation mechanism has treated incitement of this kind against Roma as a security-relevant signal.

4. Hungary: The Extreme Flip Side—Real Racist Violence

On 19 April 2026, [neo-Nazi extremists reportedly attacked a Roma family inside its home while sleeping in a secluded area near Cegléd](#). The attackers, adherents of a neo-Nazi group calling itself the "Peacekeepers," broke into the home and threw a Molotov cocktail into a room where eight children were sleeping. The father was seriously assaulted (part of his finger was severed), and the attack caused physical injuries and profound psychological trauma. Although perpetrators had previously circulated extremist material online and were known to local authorities, no effective preventive measures were taken. Most seriously, police are reportedly investigating only "armed trespassing and grievous bodily harm" without qualifying the racist motive; the ERRC had to file a criminal complaint for the racist motive to be considered at all. Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA requires Member States under Article 4 to treat racist motivation as an aggravating circumstance, and under Article 8(2) to ensure that investigations do not depend on a victim's report. We ask whether the Commission will assess whether the Cegléd investigation complies with these articles and whether it will use its infringement powers.

5. Bulgaria: The State Paradox—"Radicalisation," State-Sanctioned Demolitions, Neo-Nazi Networks

GRASS partners in Bulgaria have raised deep concerns regarding the state's failure to prevent far-right radicalisation and violent neo-Nazi networks. On 4 August 2026, Georgi Kuzev, an ethnic Bulgarian, was tortured and murdered in an attack filmed by teenagers displaying Nazi symbols. While Kuzev was not Roma, the subsequent investigation drew attention to Blood & Honour, an international neo-Nazi organisation. Though banned or sanctioned in Canada, Germany, Spain, France, and the UK, [according to media reports Blood & Honour network operated openly in Bulgaria for nearly 25 years and was involved in serious hate crimes against Roma](#). During a raid on 15–16 August 2026, the Bulgarian police and the State Agency for National Security detained 18 people, seized Nazi flags, and charged three with inciting hatred.

This institutional blind spot regarding violent extremists contrasts sharply with active state-backed practices that undermine Roma security. Highlighting ongoing systemic violations, the European Court of Human Rights issued a landmark ruling against Bulgaria ordering urgent legislative and policy reform to halt the callous and systematic forced demolition of Roma homes by municipal authorities without prior proportionality reviews or proper legal access (such as in the Orlandovtsi settlement case).



Global Roma Alliance for Strategic Security

Lumjaki Alijansa Romani pala Strategikano Arakhajmos

Compounding this climate of insecurity, alarming instances of institutionalized hate speech targeting Roma have recently come to light. As detailed in a formal open letter submitted to the Bulgarian Minister of Interior on 15 September 2026 by Bulgarian citizens, prominent academic figures such as the “terrorism expert” Prof. Dr. Tatyana Dronzina have publicly characterized the entire Roma population as an “enormous problem” for the Bulgarian state (see the attachment). Such stigmatizing and radicalising rhetoric risks providing ideological justification for extremist actions. This paradox is sharply highlighted by the fact that significant European resources, specifically €1.7 million from the European Social Fund, were historically used to train police officers to detect “radicalisation” among Roma in Bulgaria under a questionable framework - an approach the Bulgarian government has neither denounced nor apologized for. The convergence of active neo-Nazi networks, systematic housing destruction, and unpunished public scapegoating creates severe structural risks for Roma security in Bulgaria.

European Court of Human Rights Findings

Bulgaria and Slovakia are currently among the European states with the heaviest Roma-related caseloads before the European Court of Human Rights and the largest backlogs of unimplemented judgments—a serious signal of systemic failures not only to prevent violations, but to remedy them, which leads to deterioration of the overall security situation of Roma in the region and growing mistrust in authorities.

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights Findings

This institutional alienation is further underscored by findings from the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA):

According to the 2024 FRA survey across 13 European countries, the percentage of Roma reporting discrimination has dropped drastically from 16% to 6% between 2016 and 2024. Far from representing a decrease in abuse, this decline is an alarming indicator of a profound loss of faith in capacity of national authorities to protect Roma. Ironically, among the few exceptions where reporting levels remained stable between 2016 and 2024, two are non-EU states - North Macedonia and Serbia, and only one is EU member-state - Spain. Rather than failures of individual EU member states, this points to systemic shortcomings and lack of coordinated European approach to Roma security. Against this background, it seems paradoxical that the European Commission and the Council of Europe still lack dedicated, high-level coordinators or special representatives to urgently address this discrepancy between growing antigypsyism, escalating into threats to Roma security, and the inability of national and local authorities to properly tackle these issues.

Moving from Policy Existence to Policy Implementation

The Commission stated in September 2025 that Roma security was a priority concern. Almost one year later, GRASS members—with no funding and extremely limited capacity—have



Global Roma Alliance for Strategic Security

Lumjaki Alijansa Romani pala Strategikano Arakhajmos

voluntarily collected evidence of serious threats. Meanwhile, the Commission's Internal Security Fund amounts to €1.931 billion for the entire 2021–2027 period across 27 Member States, yet we have not been able to identify any amount within it earmarked for protecting Roma from violence.

Furthermore, measuring implementation requires looking beyond whether formal policies exist on paper. True accountability demands clear answers regarding empirical realities:

- How many Member States actually record antigypsyism specifically in official hate-crime data, and how does the Commission assess security where severe under-reporting masks the true level of risk?
- How many Member States provide police training specifically addressing anti-Roma bias-motivated crime and ethnic profiling?
- How much of the funding allocated through relevant EU instruments actually reaches smaller, grassroots, Roma-led organisations—who face severe administrative and capacity barriers—rather than remaining accessible only in theory?
- How are the lived realities of insecurity affecting vulnerable groups within communities—including the safeguarding, protection, and justice barriers faced by Roma women and children—integrated into security strategies?

Forward-Looking: The 2028–2034 Multiannual Financial Framework

Beyond the past year, we draw attention to ongoing negotiations for the next MFF (2028–2034). While the Commission's proposal for the AgoraEU program includes a CERV+ component with a cited €3.6 billion envelope, this is a general citizenship, equality, and values program rather than a dedicated budget for Roma security. We urge the Commission to set out how Roma security will be explicitly provided for in the 2028–2034 framework—including within CERV+, ProtectEU community-resilience funds, and the Internal Security Fund—and confirm whether a dedicated budget line is under consideration.

Information Requested from the European Commission

We respectfully request detailed answers to the following questions:

1. What concrete measures has the Commission taken since 8 September 2025 to address threats affecting Roma people, communities, activists, and civil-society organisations?
2. Which actions of the EU Anti-Racism Strategy 2026–2030 specifically address antigypsyism as a security risk, and what budget, responsible service, baseline data, and indicators accompany them?
3. How are anti-Roma threats integrated into ProtectEU's assessment of violent right-wing extremism, and do Europol and the Single Intelligence Analysis Centre (SIAC) collect or analyse data on extremist threats directed at Roma?
4. What specific EU funds or financial instruments have been allocated during the past year to initiatives directly addressing Roma security, protection, or risk prevention?



Global Roma Alliance for Strategic Security

Lumjaki Alijansa Romani pala Strategikano Arakhajmos

5. Within the Multiannual Financial Framework, which budget lines or programmes include resources for Roma security, and what amounts have been committed and disbursed?
6. Have projects addressing Roma security been approved, funded, or implemented through EU programmes, including CERV, ESF+, AMIF, or the Internal Security Fund, during the past year? If so, could the Commission provide a list identifying their objectives, beneficiaries, Member States, and funding amounts?
7. How much of the €5 million community-engagement programme under ProtectEU reaches Roma-led organisations or projects against anti-Roma extremism, and can Roma centres, cultural institutions, and other exposed sites access the €30 million for the protection of public spaces?
8. Has the Commission issued specific guidance, recommendations, or operational instructions to Member States concerning Roma security, the prevention of anti-Roma hate crime, the protection of vulnerable Roma communities, or safeguards against ethnic profiling?
9. Have the Commission or the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights undertaken any assessments, monitoring missions, or risk analyses concerning threats against Roma communities since September 2025? In particular, will anti-Roma violence and threats, threats to activists and organisations, hate-crime reporting, Roma trust in the police, ethnic profiling, and the subjective sense of security in Roma communities be included in forthcoming FRA research on the situation of Roma?
10. Has the Commission assigned responsibility for Roma security to a particular Commissioner, Directorate-General, unit, or senior official? If so, what is the mandate and scope of that responsibility?
11. How are DG HOME and DG JUST coordinating their work on the security and fundamental rights of Roma, and how is the recognition of antigypsyism under the Anti-Racism Strategy being operationally linked to ProtectEU?
12. What confidential, trusted early-warning mechanisms are available to Roma activists and organisations for reporting credible threats, escalation patterns, and doxxing campaigns, and obtaining an appropriate security-risk assessment?
13. How does the Commission ensure that radicalisation-prevention programmes do not stigmatise Roma themselves as a security problem?
14. What initiatives, funding calls, or policy measures specifically addressing Roma security are planned for 2026–2027, and how will Roma civil organisations be meaningfully involved in designing, implementing, and evaluating them?
15. Within the ongoing negotiation of the 2028–2034 MFF, is the Commission considering a dedicated budget line or earmarking for Roma security and the protection of Roma civil society, and if so under which programmes (CERV+/AgoraEU, the Internal Security Fund, or ProtectEU community-resilience funds)?
16. How will the AgoraEU / CERV+ proposal and its cited €3.6 billion envelope be used to resource antigypsyism-related security objectives, beyond general equality and values actions, and will Roma civil-society organisations be consulted in shaping these lines?
17. How do ProtectEU's instruments on online radicalisation, and the systemic-risk provisions of the Digital Services Act (Regulation (EU) 2022/2065, Articles 34–35), address publicly disseminated incitement to the deportation or "remigration" of



Global Roma Alliance for Strategic Security

Lumjaki Alijansa Romani pala Strategikano Arakhajmos

Roma—including where such content originates outside the Union but is accessible to, and amplified within, EU audiences—and does the Commission consider such content in its supervision of very large online platforms?

We would welcome a response from the Commission within 30 days, as well as a structured meeting with the relevant services to discuss the evidence, institutional responsibilities, and necessary next steps concerning the new European Security Strategy and the post-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework of EU.

When the Commission states that Roma security is a priority, communities must be able to see the operational system behind that statement: who identifies the threat, who assesses the risk, who protects the individual, and what funding supports that protection. Roma people must be protected both from racist and extremist violence and from discriminatory security policies and practices.

Thank you for your attention. We look forward to receiving your detailed response.

Attachment: Copy of the open letter submitted to the Bulgarian Minister of Interior on 15 September 2026 by Bulgarian citizens and civil society organisations.

Yours sincerely,

For the Global Roma Alliance for Strategic Security (GRASS)

.....