

FRA submission to COM DG EAC/EP CULT Committee to inform the next EU Youth Strategy

**The fundamental rights of young people in the EU - data
and findings from FRA's large-scale surveys**

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Introduction

The [European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights](#) (FRA) provides independent evidence-based assistance and expertise to the European Union and its Member States where these are acting within the scope of EU law. It does this by collecting and analysing comparative, objective and reliable information and data about the situation of fundamental rights across the European Union.

FRA welcomes the development of the upcoming EU Youth Strategy and hereby offers this submission highlighting the importance of a human rights-based approach to youth and presenting a compilation of FRA survey data and other research findings relating to the lived experiences of youth from vulnerable backgrounds across the EU, in order to inform future EU and MS youth policies. Youth policies are primarily a Member State competence. The EU exercises a supporting competence under Article 6 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) fostering cooperation, facilitating the exchange of best practices and providing funding. This supporting competence is reflected in coordination and general policy frameworks, such as the EU Youth Strategy, and in areas such as education, vocational training, youth and sport, where the EU adopts incentive measures (e.g. Erasmus+) and recommendations, while Member States are responsible for implementing related policies at national and local level. In areas where the EU and MS share competences, such as employment and non-discrimination, EU law sets minimum standards (e.g. through equal treatment directives), which Member States transpose into national legislation and policy. Within this framework, the work and evidence-based advice of FRA contribute to supporting this process at the EU and MS levels.

FRA's recent reports from its large-scale surveys provide rich disaggregated data directly relevant to shaping youth policy in the EU. By incorporating FRA's data on children and young people aged 15-30 into policy design, the EU can help ensure that its youth policies are grounded in lived experience, contribute to more effective prevention of discrimination and violence and improve social inclusion, equality and participation of younger people in society.

EU legal and policy frameworks for youth should be firmly anchored in fundamental rights and human rights obligations, such as those laid out in instruments like the EU Charter for Fundamental Rights and treaties like the Convention for the Rights of the Child (CRC), to which all EU Member States are party. Policy frameworks, such a youth strategy should follow a human rights-based approach, in order to comply with such CRC and Charter obligations, thus empowering youth as rights-holders and holding duty bearers accountable, while ensuring their capacity building to fulfil their role.

Applying a human rights-based approach ⁽¹⁾ when developing, monitoring and reviewing EU youth law and policy, would entail:

- Respecting equality and non-discrimination in all actions
- Fostering meaningful and inclusive participation of youth in decision-making
- Ensuring accountability through continued monitoring and reporting which is supported by data disaggregated by age and other socio-economic characteristics
- Legal compliance with EU fundamental rights law and international human rights law.

The following section presents in more detail the human rights-based approach and its principles as adopted and applied by FRA.

⁽¹⁾ European Commission (2023): 'The human rights based approach (HRBA)'.

1. The human rights-based approach advanced by FRA

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) promotes a Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) to EU law and policy, rooted in EU, European and international human rights law. It emphasises the responsibility of public authorities as duty-bearers and the empowerment of individuals and groups as rights-holders.

Behind every meaningful action implementing legislation and policy stands a strong foundation. This foundation is a legal and policy framework that guarantees participation, non-discrimination, and accountability. It is anchored in a long-standing, inspiring, and robust human-rights architecture — built through EU law, European standards, and international human-rights instruments. In this perspective, the EU Youth Strategy can be anchored in the solid EU foundations, reflecting EU values and being grounded on human rights by-design.

FRA's socio-legal research and large-scale surveys across 30 countries (EU27, Albania, North Macedonia, Serbia) provide robust equality data on the lived realities of rights-holders and evidence-based advice to the EU and Member States in developing, implementing and evaluating law and policy. Its participatory methodology ensures that those most affected by social exclusion and inequality are not only consulted but actively shape the knowledge base that informs EU and Member State policies.

FRA's HRBA offers a comprehensive framework for addressing rights of the children and young people, ensuring that policies are legally sound, data-driven and centred on the empowerment and participation of rights holders. This methodology strengthens accountability and promotes more just and inclusive societies across the EU. The HRBA principles, including equality and non-discrimination, attention to persons in vulnerable situations, participation, accountability and monitoring, provide an analytical and methodological framework.

A HRBA to the EU Youth Strategy would mean that the design, planning, implementation and evaluation via a conceptual framework for development would be grounded in EU, European and international human rights legal standards and principles. FRA utilises this approach in its work to promote and protect human rights. A HRBA helps to anchor plans, policies and programmes in legally protected rights and corresponding obligations established by law.

FRA's HRBA in research and evidence-based advice and capacity building work connects legal obligations with empirical evidence and the lived experience of rights holders,

dealing with social exclusion in a fundamental rights perspective. By collecting data in 30 EU and European countries the Agency provides unique evidence and data about the realities on the ground, as well as opinions and evidence-based advice to support the EU and MS efforts in developing, implementing, monitoring, evaluating and reviewing law and policy.

In this submission, the Agency proposes a HRBA to the EU Youth Strategy that will ensure that its policy targets, concrete actions will be grounded on rights under EU and international human rights instruments and guarantee that its impact will be effective and measurable. The Agency can contribute to this process via its regular periodic and ad hoc data collection and socio-legal research to inform its implementation, evaluation and review, supporting duty bearers and policy makers at EU and national level with unique and valuable data and evidence.

In particular, FRA explores through socio-legal desk, quantitative and qualitative research:

- **Life Experiences:** FRA surveys amplify the voices of people experiencing exclusion, poverty or discrimination. By collecting and documenting their lived experiences, FRA empowers young people and children as **bearers of rights**.
- **Discrimination and violent victimisation:** FRA highlights systemic barriers that prevent equal access to employment, housing, healthcare and education. Its methodologies reach marginalised and “hard-to-reach” groups, as well the general population, producing unique insights into **structural inequalities**.
- **Social Protection and Exclusion:** FRA identifies gaps and shortcomings in law and policy and exposes the realities of exclusion, urging **duty-bearers** to ensure equal treatment in employment, housing and areas of life, as well as access and to goods and services and to strengthen social protection.
- **Intersectional Analysis:** FRA’s data disaggregation by socio-economic and demographic features enables analysis of **multiple and intersectional discrimination**, showing how overlapping disadvantages (e.g. gender, disability, ethnicity, age and respective belonging in different social groups and identities) compound social exclusion.

FRA’s data collection processes themselves employ a HRBA. These processes are participatory, involving direct engagement with individuals and communities concerned or affected. Youth empowerment and participation to FRA work, in consultation in all phases of the Agency’s activities, from research to foresight and communication, also through the established Youth Advisory Panel, enables rights holders to share their lived

experiences, perspectives and perceptions regarding their human rights and inform with data law and policy makers at EU and MS level.

2. Definition of children and the concept of youth

Article 1 of the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) (CRC) defines a child as “[...] every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.”⁽²⁾

In contrast, the term ‘youth’ has no single legal definition. It is used differently across countries, institutions and contexts. For example, the UN describes ‘youth’ as the transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood’s independence, a more fluid category than fixed age-groups. For statistical purposes, the UN defines ‘youth’, as those aged between 15 and 24 years, while acknowledging that other age ranges may be used.⁽⁷⁾ Eurostat, for example, classifies ‘young people’ as those aged 15 to 29⁽³⁾.

In practice, the concept of ‘youth’ often overlaps with childhood. The sensitive transition phase from childhood to adulthood presents particular challenges and can be prolonged, with many young people in the EU only entering stable employment in their late 20s, especially those from vulnerable groups. Consequently, youth is often considered to span 13-30 years, which was also the target group for the European Year of Youth 2022.

Reflecting these developments, FRA applies the age range 13-30 in its youth engagement (e.g. in its Fundamental Rights Forum and other events) and 15/16+ in its large-scale surveys, while retaining flexibility to adapt definitions for specific projects. The terms youth and young people are used interchangeably by FRA.

FRA also conducts dedicated research on children’s rights and protection, which focusses on both children as subjects and involving children directly as participants where appropriate to ensure their perspectives are meaningfully integrated.

⁽²⁾ OHCHR (1989), [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#).

⁽³⁾ Eurostat (2025), [Overview - Children and youth - Eurostat](#).

3. Evidence relevant to youth from FRA surveys

FRA conducts EU-wide surveys on fundamental rights in the EU, including data on youth from the age of 15 or 16 years. FRA's survey findings show that inequalities and social exclusion remain a persistent challenge for young people in the EU. This includes access to rights (such as for ethnic and religious minorities, immigrants and descendants of immigrants, youth with disabilities, LGBTIQ youth or young women), equal educational and training opportunities, mobility and access to opportunities across different EU regions and socioeconomic backgrounds. The following section presents relevant key highlights from surveys and related reports that relate to the young age group.

3.1. EU Survey on immigrants and descendants (2022)

FRA's third large-scale survey on immigrants and the descendants of immigrants offers crucial insights into discrimination faced by young people, for example in areas such as education, housing and health. The survey collected comparable data in 15 EU Member States – Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain and Sweden – from people originating from North Africa, African countries south of the Sahara, Syria and Türkiye. Data were collected through face-to-face interviews and an online questionnaire. The [Technical and quality report - EU Survey on Immigrants and Descendants of Immigrants](#) technical report provides all the relevant technical information on the design, implementation and finalisation of the survey on immigrants and descendants of immigrants.

3.1.1. Experiences of young people of African descent

Report: [Being Black in the EU. Experiences of people of African descent – EU Survey on immigrants and descendants of immigrants \(2023\)](#)

The report is an output of FRA's third EU-wide survey on the experiences of immigrants and their descendants. It examines the experiences of almost 6,800 people of African

descent in 13 EU countries: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Spain, Poland, Portugal, Sweden.

Key findings:

- Young people (16-24 years old) of African descent in the EU face particularly high levels of discrimination and disadvantage. They make up nearly one fifth (19 %) of all respondents in the underlying survey ⁽⁴⁾ and experience discrimination more often than older age groups. In the past 12 months, 43 % reported discrimination on any ground ⁽⁵⁾, and the same share reported housing discrimination ⁽⁶⁾. They are also more likely to experience racist harassment (31 %, compared with 11 % of those aged 60+) ⁽⁷⁾, usually from strangers or people in school ⁽⁸⁾ or work settings ⁽⁹⁾. Despite these high rates, very few young people report incidents, only 3 % of 16-24-year-olds did so ⁽¹⁰⁾, compared with much higher rates among older respondents. Many (56 %) believe reporting would change nothing ⁽¹¹⁾.
- Young respondents also face structural barriers. They are more often stopped by police (34 % in the last five years; 22 % in the past year) when compared to other age groups, e.g. among those aged 45-49 years (22 % in the last 5 years and 11 % in the year before the survey) ⁽¹²⁾ and more likely to view these stops as disrespectful (30 %) ⁽¹³⁾ and discriminatory (69 %) ⁽¹⁴⁾.
- In education, early school leaving is a major issue. Over one third (36 %) of 18-24-year-olds of African descent leave education after lower secondary level, which is

⁽⁴⁾ EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (2024): [Being Black in the EU. Experiences of people of African descent – EU Survey on immigrants and descendants of immigrants](#), p. 110.

⁽⁵⁾ Ibidem, p. 30.

⁽⁶⁾ Ibidem, p. 42.

⁽⁷⁾ Ibidem, p. 56.

⁽⁸⁾ Ibidem.

⁽⁹⁾ Ibidem, p. 63.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Ibidem, pp. 63-64.

⁽¹¹⁾ Ibidem, p. 64.

⁽¹²⁾ Ibidem, p. 73.

⁽¹³⁾ Ibidem, p. 76.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Ibidem, p. 78.

three times the EU average (¹⁵). Around 14 % are neither in employment nor in education or training (NEET) (¹⁶), with higher rates linked to weak language skills (¹⁷). In several Member States such as Spain, Sweden and France, young people of African descent face significantly higher NEET rates than their peers in the general population (¹⁸). In Italy, about one in five young people are NEET, with no notable difference between those of African descent and the general population (¹⁹). Language proficiency is a key factor. Young people with limited skills in reading, writing or speaking the national language are more than twice as likely to be NEET (28 %) compared with those proficient in all three areas (11 %) (²⁰). Moreover, immigrant youth of African descent face greater challenges, with a NEET rate of 17 % compared with 8 % among descendants of African descent born in the EU (²¹). These figures point to persistent structural barriers in accessing education-to-employment pathways.

- At the same time, young people report comparatively good health. 92 % rate their health as good or very good, which is higher than for older groups (²²). Overall, the findings show that while young respondents of African descent are healthier and make up a large share of the community, they face disproportionate risks of discrimination, harassment, educational disadvantage and exclusion from opportunities. These findings make youth-focused policy responses particularly urgent.

This evidence underscores the persistent and intersecting barriers faced by young people of African descent in the EU. Discrimination, structural obstacles in policing and education and low reporting rates point to systemic issues that require targeted interventions. Addressing these challenges is essential for advancing equality, social cohesion and effective inclusion.

(¹⁵) Ibidem, p. 81.

(¹⁶) Ibidem, p. 86.

(¹⁷) Ibidem, p. 84.

(¹⁸) Ibidem, p. 86.

(¹⁹) Ibidem.

(²⁰) Ibidem.

(²¹) Ibidem.

(²²) Ibidem, p. 98.

Box A 1 – Selected FRA opinions:

To address these issues, the FRA recommends that EU Member States:

- In line with the EU anti-racism action plan, collect data disaggregated by racial or ethnic origin, in order to capture experiences of discrimination and victimisation and intersecting forms of discrimination. These data should be comprehensive, reliable, representative and comparable. Collecting these data should be mainstreamed into EU and national surveys, and to the extent possible in administrative data systems. (23)
- Develop specific policies to address racism and racial discrimination experienced by people of African descent in their enjoyment of key economic and social rights, such as in the realm of employment. Such measures should also facilitate the recognition of foreign educational and training qualifications from EU and non-EU countries and support the full socioeconomic inclusion of people of African descent so that they can get decent work (appropriate to their educational qualifications and professional experience), remain in employment and improve their job security. (24)
- In line with Article 34 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and the European Parliament resolution on fundamental rights of people of African descent in Europe (2018/2899(RSP)), take all measures necessary to address discrimination against people of African descent in the housing market, including addressing inequalities in accessing housing and ensuring adequate housing and housing assistance. Within the remit of their respective areas of competence, the EU institutions and Member States should monitor the specific disadvantages of people of African descent when adopting measures to mitigate the burden of rising costs of living, housing and energy. (25)

3.1.2. Experiences of young Muslims

Report: [Being Muslim in the EU - Experiences of Muslims](#) (2024)

This report is another output of FRA's third EU-wide survey on the experiences of immigrants and their descendants. It examines the experiences of 9,604 Muslim

(23) Ibidem, p. 16.

(24) Ibidem, p. 21.

(25) Ibidem, p. 22.

respondents, including information about 22,277 household members, in 13 EU countries: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Spain and Sweden. The data were collected from October 2021 to October 2022.

Key findings:

Young Muslims face persistent barriers in education, work and society. Young Muslim women, especially those who wear visible religious clothing, are the most vulnerable. They are at the intersection of age, gender, religion and ethnicity-based discrimination, which shapes their prospects and daily experiences of exclusion, harassment and profiling. (26)

Discrimination

- Discrimination is especially high among young Muslims and descendants of immigrants.
- 44 % of young Muslims (16-24) experienced discrimination in the past year, compared to 19 % of older Muslims (60 years or over). (27)
- Muslim women who wear traditional/religious clothing face substantially higher rates of discrimination when looking for work (up to 64 % for EU-born young women). (28)
- Intersectional factors, i.e. religion, race/ethnicity, gender, age, disability and sexual orientation compound exclusion. (29)

Education

- Young Muslims are three times more likely to leave school early than their peers in the general population (30 % vs. 9.6 %). (30)

(26) EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (2023): [Being Muslim in the EU – Experiences of Muslims](#), p. 7.

(27) Ibidem, p. 39.

(28) Ibidem.

(29) Ibidem, p. 7.

(30) Ibidem, p. 97.

- More young Muslim men (37 %) than young Muslim women (22 %) leave education early. (31)
- Descendants of immigrants tend to achieve higher levels of education than first-generation immigrants but still face strong barriers in the labour market.

Employment

- Many young Muslims are in temporary, insecure jobs, while even those with higher education are often overqualified and underemployed. (32)
- Young Muslim women face additional challenges. Wearing a headscarf, hijab or niqab is linked to lower employment rates (46 % in work compared with 61 % for women not wearing such clothing). (33)
- Gender and generation intersect. EU-born young Muslim women wearing religious clothing face the highest levels of labour market discrimination, more than both Muslim men and immigrant Muslim women. (34)

Racist harassment and violence

- Young Muslims are disproportionately targeted. One in four aged 16-24 has faced racist harassment, compared to 9 % of those aged 60 or over. (35)
- Risks of racist violence are also higher among younger Muslims and descendants of immigrants. (36)

Policing

- Young Muslims are stopped by police more frequently than older Muslims (36 % of those aged 16-24 vs. 14 % of those 60 or over). (37)

(31) Ibidem.

(32) Ibidem, p. 1.

(33) Ibidem, p. 26.

(34) Ibidem, p. 54.

(35) Ibidem, p. 64.

(36) Ibidem, p. 78.

(37) Ibidem, p. 86.

- Nearly half of young Muslims (44-46 %) perceive police stops as ethnic profiling. (38)
- Muslim women wearing religious clothing are more likely to perceive police stops as discriminatory than those not wearing such clothing. (39)

Disabilities

- Young Muslims with disabilities face cumulative disadvantages at the intersection of age, religion, ethnicity and disability. The rate of experiencing such limitations increases with age. In the youngest age group (16-24 years), the rate is 15 % (it is at 47 % among those 60 years or over). (40) While this rate is lower than among older age groups, it still represents a significant share of young Muslims.(41) Muslims with disabilities are more likely to experience discrimination on multiple and intersecting grounds, such as religion, gender identity or expression and disability.(42) This suggests that young Muslims with disabilities experience layered forms of exclusion with disability reinforcing the barriers they already face in education, employment and wider social participation.

This evidence underscores the complex and intersecting barriers faced by young Muslims in the EU, particularly young women and those with disabilities. Discrimination, educational and employment disadvantages and frequent experiences of harassment and profiling point to systemic issues that require comprehensive, rights-based interventions to promote equality, inclusion and social cohesion.

Box A 2 – FRA Opinion

To address these issues, the FRA recommends that EU Member States:

- adopt targeted labour market measures to support Muslims, especially young Muslim women wearing visible religious clothing, and regularly assess these measures through an intersectional approach and gender mainstreaming. (43)

(38) Ibidem, p. 90.

(39) Ibidem.

(40) Ibidem, p. 31.

(41) Ibidem.

(42) Ibidem, p. 33.

(43) Ibidem, p. 24

3.2. Roma and Travellers survey (2024)

The latest FRA survey on Roma and Travellers 2024 collected comparable data in ten selected EU Member States (Bulgaria, Czechia, France, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Romania and Spain) and three accession countries (Albania, North Macedonia and Serbia), touching upon areas of life such as education, employment, housing, health and more. The survey collected information from 10,126 respondents in 13 European countries living in private households who self-identify as Roma or any other group that is subsumed under this umbrella term (see the passage on definitions above), are aged 16 years or older and have lived in the survey country for at least the past 12 months. Information was also collected on their households and the 22,484 people living in them. The main results report [Rights of Roma and Travellers in 13 European countries – Perspectives from the Roma Survey 2024](#) was published on 2 October 2025 and allows to highlight trends for various indicators related to housing. Detailed results disaggregated also by age are accessible the [online](#) (also for [Roma survey 2021](#), [Roma and Travellers survey 2019](#)).

3.2.1. Experiences of young Roma/Travellers

The EU Roma framework sets ambitious targets for 2030 (⁴⁴). Its goals explicitly address youth, including : a) reducing the poverty gap between Roma children and other children by at least half and ensuring that the majority of Roma children escape poverty; b) cutting by at least half the gap between Roma and the general population regarding enrolment in early childhood education and care and ensure that at least 70 % of Roma children are in preschool; c) reducing the gap in upper-secondary education completion rates between Roma and the general population by at least one third and ensuring the majority of Roma youth completes at least upper-secondary education; d) ensuring that fewer than one in five Roma children attend schools where most or all of the children are Roma; e) cutting the rate of youth not in education, employment or training (NEET) by at least half and ensuring that fewer than one in three Roma youth are NEET.

⁴⁴) European Commission (2020): [A Union of Equality: EU Roma strategic framework for equality, inclusion and participation](#).

Key findings: (45)

Discrimination

- Every third Roma/Traveller respondent (31 %) felt discriminated against based on their ethnic background in the 12 months preceding the survey. The report notes that younger Roma/Travellers experience higher rates of discrimination compared to older age groups. (46)
- 14 % of Roma/Traveller respondents felt discriminated against because of their ethnic origin during the 12 months before the survey when in contact with an educational institution, either as a student or as a parent/guardian of a child. This is a higher share than in 2016 (7 %). All countries surveyed observe the same negative trend except for Hungary, Serbia and Spain, where the situation has not changed, and Greece, where the share of Roma experiencing discrimination in education has decreased. (47)
- Every third Roma/Traveller older than 16 (36 %) felt discriminated against because of being Roma/Traveller when looking for a job in the last 12 months before the survey – double the rate from 2016 (16 %). The discrimination rate is somewhat lower once they are in work – two out of five Roma/Travellers older than 16 (22 %) felt discriminated against because of being Roma/Traveller in the workplace in the last 12 months before the survey. This is four times more than in 2016 (5 %). Young Roma do not face very different levels of discrimination than other age groups when looking for work. However, they do experience discrimination more often when they are at work. (48)
- 16 % of Roma/Travellers felt discriminated against for their Roma/Traveller origin when accessing health services in the past 12 months. This is two times more than in 2016 (8 %). All countries surveyed show the same negative trend except for Greece, Romania, Serbia and Spain, where the situation has not changed. (49)
- Every third Roma/Traveller (35 %) experienced discrimination because of their ethnic background when looking for housing – a slight improvement compared

(45) EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (2025): [Rights of Roma and Travellers in 13 European countries – Perspectives from the Roma Survey 2024](#), p. 22.

(46) Ibidem, p. 26.

(47) Ibidem, p. 20

(48) Ibidem, p. 21.

(49) Ibidem, p. 22.

with 2016 (41 %). At the national level, the same decreasing trend is found in only two of the countries surveyed – Czechia and Spain. In Bulgaria, France, Hungary and Romania, the situation has worsened. (50)

Awareness of equality bodies and human rights institutions

- Awareness of national equality bodies and human rights institutions has improved, with 46 % of respondents knowing about at least one such institution. However, this increase in awareness has not led to higher reporting rates of discrimination experiences. In Albania, France, Ireland, Italy, North Macedonia and Portugal, the respondents aged 16–24 have lower awareness levels than the oldest respondents. (51)

Poverty and social exclusion

- 77 % of Roma/Traveller children aged under 18 live in households at risk of poverty. This rate is lower than in 2016 (85 %) but still much higher than that for children from the general population (19 % in the EU-27 in 2024 and 20 % in 2018). (52)
- The share of Roma/Traveller children aged 17 and under living in severe material deprivation is also lower (40 %) than it was in 2016 (66 %). The rates in the countries surveyed have generally decreased since 2016, except for Traveller children in Ireland. In comparison, 7 % of children in the general population in the EU-27 are in the same situation (data from 2020 and 2018). (53)

Education

- Every second Roma/Traveller child (53 %) attends early childhood education. Although there has been improvement in comparison with 2016 (42 %), this is still only about half of the proportion observed for children in the general population in the EU (95 % in both 2023 and 2018). A positive trend is observed in most countries covered except for Spain. (54)
- Only 32 % of Roma/Travellers aged 20–24 have completed at least upper secondary education; this marks little change in comparison with 2016 (28 %). In the general EU-27 population, this rate was 84 % in both 2024 and 2018. In Czechia, Greece and

(50) Ibidem, p. 61.

(51) Ibidem, p. 37.

(52) Ibidem, p. 17.

(53) Ibidem.

(54) Ibidem, p. 19.

Serbia, the share is decreasing, while in Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and Spain, it is increasing. In the remaining countries, the situation has not changed. (55)

- Every second Roma/Traveller child (46 %) is educated in a school where all or most of the pupils are Roma/Travellers. This has changed very little over the past few years (52 % in 2021 and 44 % in 2016). Only in North Macedonia is the trend positive, while most countries surveyed, including Bulgaria, Czechia, France, Greece and Romania, have shown a negative trend (i.e. an increase in segregation) since 2016. (56)

Employment

- In 2024, every second Roma/Traveller aged 20–64 (54 %) was in paid work. This is an improvement on the 2016 rate (43 %) but is still only less than three quarters of the rate for the general EU population (75 % in 2023 and 73 % in 2018). Young Roma (aged 16–24) face difficulties entering the job market: the share of people in paid work in this age group is consistently lower than in the other age groups, with few exceptions. Only France, Ireland and Spain showed a relatively high percentage of employment for young people compared with the other age groups and the total population. (57)
- Every second young (aged 16–24) Roma/Traveller (47 %) is NEET, a large decrease from the rate of 62 % in 2016. This is still five times higher than the rate for the EU-27's general population (9 % in 2023 and 10 % in 2018). A negative trend is observed only in Portugal and Serbia. In Czechia, Greece and Ireland (for Travellers), the situation has not changed. (58)

Housing

- Every second Roma/Traveller (47 %) lives in a state of housing deprivation. The rate has improved since 2016, when it was 61 %, but it is far higher than the rate of 18 % for the general EU population in 2023 and 2018. On average, Roma/Traveller children (aged 15 and under) live in housing deprivation more often (52 %) than Roma/Travellers aged 25–60 (43 %). (59)

(55) Ibidem, p. 20.

(56) Ibidem.

(57) Ibidem, p. 21.

(58) Ibidem.

(59) Ibidem, p. 23.

- Four out of five Roma/Travellers (83 %) live in a household that does not have enough rooms and is overcrowded. This rate has changed little since 2016 (78 %). It is almost five times the rate for the general EU population in both 2024 and 2018 (17 %). On average, the overcrowding rates are highest for Roma/ Traveller children aged 15 and under, exceeding 90 % in all countries except Spain and Ireland. (⁶⁰)
- One out of five Roma/Travellers (17 %) live without tap water inside their accommodation – a clear improvement in comparison with 2016 (30 %). Progress is mainly due to substantial reductions in Hungary and Romania. The rate is still eight times higher than it was among the general EU-27 population in 2023 and 2018 (2 %). Roma/Traveller children (aged 15 and under) are more likely than older Roma/Travellers to live in households without tap water generally across the Member States (22 %) and in Albania (49 %), Bulgaria (25 %), Czechia (10 %), North Macedonia (22 %) and Romania (34 %). (⁶¹)

While there have been improvements in some areas such as poverty, education and employment, young Roma and Travellers continue to face significant and intersecting barriers to equality and inclusion. Discrimination, poverty, educational disadvantage and poor housing conditions are persistent and young people are particularly affected. Policy efforts must focus on targeted, youth-specific interventions to close these gaps, reduce discrimination and promote social inclusion.

(⁶⁰) Ibidem.

(⁶¹) Ibidem, p. 24.

3.3. EU LGBTIQ survey III (2023)

FRA's LGBTIQ survey is one of the biggest of its kind globally. It analyses the experiences of 100,577 people aged 15 years or older who identify as LGBTIQ in the EU-27 and three accession countries (Albania, North Macedonia and Serbia). This is the third wave of the survey FRA first conducted in 2012 and again in 2019. It presents results showing gradual progress in equality over time. The findings contribute to developing legal and policy responses to meet the needs of LGBTIQ people and protect their fundamental rights. The report sets out ways forward for the EU and Member States to ensure their dignity and equality. [Explore the survey data.](#)

3.3.1. Experiences of LGBTIQ youth

[Report: LGBTIQ equality at a crossroads- progress and challenges \(2024\)](#)

The 2024 report covers experiences of discrimination, harassment and violence, rights awareness, living conditions and perceptions as well as trends between 2019 and 2023.

Key findings:

Life for young LGBTIQ people in Europe is full of contradictions. On the one hand, things are improving and more are open about their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics. Schools talk about LGBTIQ issues more often and holding hands with their partners in public feels safer than it did ten years ago. On the other hand, FRA's survey shows that hate and violence remain part of LGBTIQ people's daily life. Being young and LGBTIQ in Europe means visibility but also courage when being exposed to hate and disinformation more than any other group. EU institutions and Member States must take the lead and provide stronger social protection and support. ⁽⁶²⁾

Violence and harassment

Many young people face harassment in schools and on the streets.

- 13 % of LGBTIQ people were physically or sexually attacked in the past 5 years.

⁽⁶²⁾ EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (2024): [LGBTIQ equality at a crossroads – Progress and challenges](#), p. 1.

- Trans women: 29 %
- Trans men: 23 %
- Intersex: 32 %. (63)
- 54 % experienced harassment in the past year. (64) For youth aged 15-17, this jumps to 70 %. (65)
- Only 18 % of victims of attacks (66) and 8 % of hate-motivated harassment victims (67) reported what happened. This shows a lack of trust in systems meant to protect them.

Online hate and disinformation

Online hate and disinformation are widespread and contribute to a hostile environment for young LGBTIQ people. It emphasises the urgent need for stronger digital protection and legal measures.

- Online campaigns promoting hate crimes against LGBTIQ people are fuelling disinformation. (68)
- 63 % respondents regularly see hateful statements about LGBTIQ people online. (69)
- 16 % experienced hate-motivated cyber-harassment. (70)
- Almost 63 % of survey respondents often or always encounter hateful content online. This includes calls for violence, claims of “LGBTIQ propaganda” or “gender ideology” and accusations of being a threat to society or mentally ill. (71)

(63) Ibidem, p. 64.

(64) Ibidem.

(65) Ibidem, p. 70.

(66) Ibidem, p. 64.

(67) Ibidem, p. 65.

(68) Ibidem, p. 1

(69) Ibidem, p. 65.

(70) Ibidem.

(71) Ibidem, p. 21.

- Online harassment is reported less often than personal incidents (16 % vs. 52 %) and affects many young people, of who 11 % have had offensive or threatening comments posted about them and 9 % received threatening emails. (72)

Schools

Bullying in schools is on the rise. (73) Sometimes teachers themselves make homophobic or transphobic remarks. (74)

- 62 % of respondents said their schools never addressed LGBTIQ issues. (75)
- Younger generations see small improvements. While in 2019, 47 % of 15-17-year-olds said school never mentioned LGBTIQ issues (76), this figure is down to 35 % in 2023. (77)
- 9 % of 15-17-year-olds said their schools taught about LGBTIQ issues in a negative way. (78)

Mental health

- 37 % of all LGBTIQ respondents had suicidal thoughts in the last year. (79)
 - Trans men: 60 %
 - Trans women: 59 %
 - Non-binary and gender-diverse: 55 %
 - With disability: 66 %
 - Facing financial difficulties: 58 %. (80)

(72) ibidem, p.21.

(73) Ibidem, p. 1.

(74) Ibidem, p. 84.

(75) Ibidem, p. 83.

(76) Ibidem.

(77) Ibidem.

(78) Ibidem, p. 84.

(79) Ibidem, p. 90.

(80) Ibidem, p. 91.

Healthcare and housing

- 5 % forgoing medical treatment, 6 % avoided necessary health care and 2 % were refused treatment by doctors. (81)
- 10 % had problems accessing emergency care. (82)
- Intersex people are especially vulnerable:
 - 57 % underwent surgery or hormonal treatment without informed consent. (83)
 - 6 % have been homeless at least once (vs. 0.2 % in the general population). (84)

Harmful practices

- 24 % of LGBTIQ people were subjected to “conversion practices” trying to change their identity or orientation.
 - 11 % through family pressure.
 - 5 % through religious counselling.

Satisfaction with governments and awareness of equality bodies

- Only 26 % believe their government is doing enough to combat prejudice and intolerance against LGBTIQ people. (85)
- In countries like Hungary (3 %), Italy and Poland (4 %), Bulgaria (6 %) and Slovakia (7 %) trust is extremely low. (86)
- Awareness of national equality bodies is lowest among young people: only 42 % of 15-17-year-olds know about them, compared to 76 % of those aged 55 and over. (87)

(81) Ibidem, p. 23.

(82) Ibidem.

(83) Ibidem.

(84) Ibidem.

(85) Ibidem, p. 80.

(86) Ibidem.

(87) Ibidem, p. 52.

Despite some progress, young LGBTIQ people in Europe continue to face high levels of violence, harassment and discrimination, both offline and online. Mental health concerns are acute and access to supportive services remains limited. There is a pressing need for targeted policy interventions, stronger digital protections and increased institutional support to ensure the safety, inclusion and well-being of LGBTIQ youth.

Box A 3 – Selected FRA opinions:

To address these issues, the FRA recommends that EU Member States:

- ensure the full and effective implementation of the Digital Services Act, which entered into force on 17 February 2024 and includes several provisions regarding the obligations of online platforms to protect the fundamental rights of users. In their efforts to combat hate crime against LGBTIQ people, the EU and the Member States should consider extending the current list of ‘EU crimes’ in Article 83(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) to hate crimes and hate speech, as in the European Commission’s proposal A more inclusive and protective Europe: extending the list of EU crimes to hate speech and hate crime. (⁸⁸)
- ensure that all educational settings – particularly schools – provide a safe and supportive learning environment, free from harassment, bullying and violence, for all LGBTI children and young people. National educational authorities should consider establishing school-based mechanisms to report and penalise bullying. The EU and the Member States should develop measures to address bullying and harassment in educational settings, sharing promising practices and adopting a zero-tolerance approach to harassment and bullying of LGBTIQ students and teachers. The Member States could use the guidelines in A Compendium on Comprehensive Sexuality Education (2023), compiled by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, the Special Rapporteur on the right to education and the Working Group on discrimination against women and girls. Within the framework of EU programmes such as Erasmus+, educational authorities and professionals can benefit from training and peer learning among schools and educators, including sharing promising practices, in order to tackle homophobic and transphobic bullying. (⁸⁹)
- consider revising educational and training curricula and materials on LGBTIQ issues in close cooperation with national human rights institutions, equality bodies, ombuds institutions, including ombuds institutions for children, as well as relevant civil society organisations. Such revisions should have a solid scientific basis and clear grounding in EU fundamental rights law. They should reflect the lived experience and realities of LGBTIQ people, in terms of sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics, and should ensure that LGBTI people are not referred to in terms of disease or abnormality, which is both scientifically unfounded and unethical. Such actions should be implemented in educational settings and, where appropriate, be developed with and disseminated among local communities, businesses, service providers and faith organisations. (⁹⁰)

- ban ‘conversion therapies’ by clearly defining and sanctioning in law a range of prohibited practices and their advertisement. Member States should, consistent with the terms of Article 4 of the Charter, provide effective legal protection for LGBTIQ people from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and from intrusive and irreversible interventions relating to their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or sex characteristics. Member States are encouraged to end non-vital surgery and medical interventions in intersex infants and adolescents designed to make them fit typical definitions of male or female without their or their parents’ informed consent. Member States should ensure that gender markers in identity documents and birth registries reflect a person’s gender identity and expression. (91)
- ensure that LGBTIQ people enjoy equal access to good-quality, affordable preventive and curative healthcare, taking account of any specific medical needs. To achieve this, medical professionals providing primary and secondary healthcare services should be well informed about the particular health needs of LGBTI people. Member States should monitor health inequalities by systematically collecting reliable equality data, disaggregated by sex, racial and ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age, or sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics. Member States should support LGBTIQ people in need of health and mental health services and protect them from poverty and homelessness. (92)

(88) Ibidem, p. 21.

(89) Ibidem, p. 22

(90) Ibidem.

(91) Ibidem, p. 23.

(92) Ibidem.

3.4. EU survey of Jewish people (2023)

Antisemitism remains a harsh reality for many Jews in the EU. Most feel unable to live openly as Jews. FRA's [Third EU survey of Jewish people \(2023\)](#) across 13 Member States (covering 96 % of the EU's Jewish population) documents experiences of antisemitism, discrimination and insecurity. Conducted before the October 2023 Hamas attacks and the war in Gaza, the findings complemented by consultations with Jewish organisations provide policymakers with evidence to combat antisemitism, enhance security and foster Jewish life.

3.4.1. Experiences of young Jews

Report: [Jewish People's Experiences and Perceptions of Antisemitism – EU Survey of Jewish People \(2023\)](#)

When this report refers to young Jews, it relates to the age group 16-39.

Key findings:

Young Jews face especially high exposure to antisemitism in daily life both offline and online. They feel less safe, are more often blamed for global events and experience more discrimination in education and work. Yet they are also more active than older Jews in reporting and pushing back against antisemitism. In France and Belgium, young respondents place antisemitism at the top of sociopolitical issues. (⁹³)

Prevalence and context of antisemitism encountered

- Young Jews almost universally encounter antisemitism, 98 % compared to 93 % of older respondents. Their experiences cut across all backgrounds, whether secular, progressive, conservative, Orthodox or strictly Orthodox, whether or not they belong to a community, wear visible symbols or are strongly attached to Israel. (⁹⁴)

^(⁹³) EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (2023): [Jewish People's Experiences and Perceptions of Antisemitism – EU Survey of Jewish People](#), p. 25.

^(⁹⁴) Ibidem, p. 33.

Online antisemitism

- Young Jews are the most exposed to antisemitism online, especially on Instagram (27 %), X/Twitter (27 %), Facebook (15 %) and TikTok (12 %). (95)
- The content young Jews face often includes negative stereotypes (Jews controlling finance, media or politics), denying Israel's right to exist or equating Israel with Nazi policies. (96)
- Online antisemitism often soar after related events, like the Hamas attacks in October 2023. Digital spaces are a particularly hostile environment for younger Jews who spend more time there than older respondents. (97)
- Young Jews report higher levels of targeted online harassment than older Jews. Offensive or threatening messages, comments or posts are common and they experience these attacks more frequently. While both online and offline harassment are widespread, online harassment is more repetitive and harder to escape for younger generations who spend more time in digital spaces. (98)

Safety and security

- Young Jews (16-39) are more worried than older Jews about harassment or violence in the next year. Over half fear verbal insults (53 %) and nearly half (44 %) fear physical attacks. Many also worry about their family members' safety. (99)
- To cope, younger Jews more often avoid Jewish events or locations and many sometimes hide Jewish symbols like the Star of David or a kippa. This shows that safety concerns are shaping how young Jews live and express their identity, which sometimes pushes them to limit participation in community life. (100)

Influence of events in the Middle East on Jewish life

- Young Jews feel the impact of Middle East conflicts more strongly than older Jews. Overall, almost two-thirds (62 %) of Jews say events like the Arab-Israeli conflict

(95) Ibidem, p. 44.

(96) Ibidem, p. 14.

(97) Ibidem, p. 61.

(98) Ibidem, p. 74.

(99) Ibidem, p. 54.

(100) Ibidem, pp. 56-57.

affect their sense of safety. The numbers are especially high in France and Belgium. (101)

- They are also more likely to feel personally blamed for Israel's actions. 79 % of young Jews report this, compared with 67 % of older ones. (102)

Experiences of discrimination

- More young Jews experience discrimination than older ones. Education and workplaces are the areas where this shows most. Many hide their Jewish identity at school or work to avoid problems. (103)

Reporting rates

- Young Jews are more likely than older generations to report online antisemitism. 35 % of young victims report compared with only 16 % of those over 60. This suggests younger people are more proactive in challenging hate but overall reporting rates remain low. Many still choose not to report, often because they believe nothing will change or fear negative consequences. (104)

Young Jews in the EU face pervasive antisemitism and digital spaces present particular risks. Safety concerns lead to changes in behaviour and identity expression, including avoidance of community events and hiding of symbols. Discrimination is especially acute in education and employment and the impact of global events is felt more strongly by younger generations. While young Jews are more proactive in reporting, overall reporting rates remain low. This highlights the need for more effective institutional responses and support systems.

3.5. Violence against women (2024)

In cooperation with the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) and Eurostat, in 2020-2024, FRA conducted the EU survey on gender-based violence against women and other forms of interpersonal violence. The survey also collected data on violence experienced during childhood. Respondents aged 18 years of age and older were also asked whether their children have witnessed intimate partner violence. Using a common questionnaire, the survey gathered information on women's experiences of violence

(101) Ibidem, p. 61.

(102) Ibidem, p. 62.

(103) Ibidem, pp.77-78.

(104) Ibidem, pp. 84-85.

before the age of 15, including physical and psychological violence where the perpetrator was a parent or a guardian, and sexual violence by any perpetrator. Key results are available on FRA's website and in Eurostat's online database.

3.5.1. Experiences of girls and young women

Report: [EU gender-based violence survey - Key results](#) (2024); forthcoming 2026: EU gender-based violence survey – Main results.

While the survey primarily focuses on adult women, it also offers insights into the experiences of girls. The survey indicates that a significant number of women experienced various forms of violence since the age of 15.

Key findings:

- Around one in five women in the EU (20.2 %) have experienced physical violence or threats and/or sexual violence by someone other than their intimate partner since the age of 15. (¹⁰⁵)
- Young women aged 18-29 reported the highest prevalence of such experiences (25.6 %), which underscores age as a significant factor of vulnerability to gender-based violence. (¹⁰⁶)
- 17.3 % of women aged 18-29 in the EU have experienced physical violence or threats and/or sexual violence by a domestic perpetrator (compared with 19.3 % of women aged 18-74 in the EU who have experienced this). (¹⁰⁷)
- 41.6 % of women aged 18-29 in the EU have experienced sexual harassment at work during their lifetime (compared with 30.8 % of women aged 18-74 in the EU who have experienced this). (¹⁰⁸)

⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (2024): [EU gender-based violence survey - Key results](#), p. 28.

⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ Ibidem, p. 32.

⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ Eurostat (2024): [Women who have experienced violence by a domestic perpetrator, by age group](#).

⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ Ibidem.

- 6.6 % of women in the EU have experienced sexual violence during childhood (in the survey, before the age of 15). (¹⁰⁹)
- 13.0 % of women in the EU have experienced physical violence by a parent during childhood (before the age of 15), specifically, 7.5 % by their mother and 8.7 % by their father. (¹¹⁰)
- 32.9 % of women in the EU have experienced psychological violence by a parent during childhood. (¹¹¹)
- 33.9 % of women in the EU have witnessed violence between their parents during childhood. (¹¹²)

Early experiences of violence can have profound effects on girls' and young women's development and wellbeing. While the survey does not provide direct data on the impact of GBV on educational outcomes, experiences of violence in childhood can lead to various challenges in educational and other life settings.

Young women, especially those aged 18–29, are at heightened risk of gender-based violence, both in domestic and workplace settings. Experiences of violence and harassment are alarmingly common and significant proportions of women affected from childhood through adulthood. FRA data underscores the urgent need for targeted prevention, protection and support measures for girls and young women, as well as broader efforts to address gender-based violence across the EU.

(¹⁰⁹) Eurostat (2024): [Women who have experienced sexual violence during childhood, by age group](#).

(¹¹⁰) Eurostat (2024): [Women who have experienced physical violence by parents during childhood, by type of perpetrator](#).

(¹¹¹) Ibidem.

(¹¹²) Eurostat (2024): [Women who have witnessed violence between parents during childhood, by type of perpetrator](#).

Conclusions

FRA surveys highlight that young people across the EU, especially those belonging to minorities or marginalised groups, face persistent and intersecting forms of inequality and discrimination. While some progress has been made in past years, systemic barriers in education, employment, housing, policing and access to rights continue to limit their opportunities.

Young people of African descent, Muslims, Roma, LGBTIQ youth, Jewish youth and young women report higher exposure to discrimination and harassment compared to older groups. This includes racist harassment, online hate, ethnic profiling and gender-based violence. Reporting rates remain very low across all groups often due to mistrust in institutions and a belief that nothing will change. Young people from minorities are more frequently stopped by the police and report ethnic profiling.

Early school leaving is disproportionately high among young Roma, Muslims and youth of African descent. Segregation, language barriers and discrimination reinforce exclusion. Even when achieving higher education, many remain underemployed or stuck in insecure jobs. High NEET rates persist among young Roma, youth of African-descent and significantly above average for Muslims. Structural disadvantages such as non-recognition of qualifications, language barriers and discrimination in hiring practices prevent fair labour market integration.

Young Jews and LGBTIQ youth are especially targeted by online hate and disinformation. Hateful narratives and disinformation fuel harassment, increase insecurity and amplify social exclusion. This underscores the need for digital protection and accountability of online platforms. The EU's Digital Services Act is a vital tool to help protect young people from harmful online content. Youth mental health challenges are severe, particularly among LGBTIQ youth with many reporting suicidal thoughts.

Poverty continues to shape young people's life across Europe. Children and young adults are disproportionately affected by overcrowded housing. For Roma youth, poverty and deprivation are reinforcing cycles of exclusion.

Young women, particularly Roma women, Muslim women wearing religious clothing, and LGBTIQ women face multiple barriers across education, work, housing and safety.

The evidence underlines the urgency for youth-focused, intersectional policies. Action is essential to fulfil the European Pillar of Social Rights. This for example also includes combating discrimination, improving education-to-employment pathways, tackling

disinformation and hate in digital spaces, housing, policing and strengthening trust in institutions.

The data highlights not only the challenges but also the opportunities for building more inclusive, equitable and participatory societies for all young people in the EU. Young people across the EU are increasingly active in reporting discrimination and participating in efforts to combat hate and exclusion, demonstrating resilience and a commitment to positive change. Policy impact is tangible, as targeted interventions and EU-wide strategies are beginning to close gaps in education, employment and social inclusion for marginalised youth. Awareness is rising and more young people and their families know about equality bodies and human rights institutions, which is a crucial step towards empowerment and access to justice.



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