

ERRRC

ANNUAL REPORT



2025

IN THIS REPORT

- A MESSAGE FROM OUR MANAGEMENT
- **WHAT DOES THE ERRC DO?**
- AWARD-WINNING ACTION
- ROMAGIC
- **STRATEGIC LITIGATION**
- GRASSROOTS LEGAL MOBILISATION
- **ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATIONS**
- BREAKING NEWS
- ROMA RIGHTS SUMMER SCHOOL
- ROMA RIGHTS DEFENDERS
- ROMA RIGHTS NETWORK
- **OUR FINANCES**

A MESSAGE FROM OUR MANAGEMENT

The year 2025 will be remembered as a year of intensifying pressure on our democracies and rule of law. A year marked by the accelerating rise of far-right populism across Europe, the systematic defunding of human rights activism, and a political climate that increasingly views civil society not as a partner, but as an adversary. The rhetoric targeting Romani people has hardened, becoming increasingly central to mainstream political platforms in several nations. The space for dissent is shrinking, and the resources required to defend the most vulnerable are being stripped away.

At the same time, the ERRC expanded its legal footprint to 17 countries; our RoMagic project brought vital visibility to Romani LGBTIQ+ lives through physical exhibitions in Brussels, Bucharest, and Belgrade complemented by online exhibitions and social media content that extended its reach internationally; and we secured landmark victories that will reshape the landscape of justice. Most notably, 2025 was a year of grassroots mobilisation. We saw a surge in community-led legal action, with 41 new cases initiated across six countries, driven by Romani communities themselves demanding their rights.

During this time, the ERRC has been working to preserve nothing short of the very survival of Roma Rights activism in Europe. Whether it's holding racist police forces to account, demanding justice for environmental racism, standing up for Romani women, LGBTQI+ Roma visibility, or defending the right to water for the most marginalised communities, the ERRC has remained at the forefront of the fight.

The impact of our grassroots legal mobilisation stood out particularly this year. By flooding decision-making bodies with complaints, we revealed patterns of discrimination that could no longer be ignored. This approach has led to tangible results and through these efforts, we have forged stronger alliances with national institutions, building a foundation for precedent-setting cases that challenge systemic inequality across the region.

Difficult times demand dedicated activists. We do not know what the future holds for Europe as human rights are assailed from all sides, but we do know that we are in it for the long run. Throughout 2025 – by winning judgments, by nurturing a new generation of activists at our Roma Rights Summer School, and by equipping our Roma Rights Defenders with the tools to combat racism – our network of activists have shown they have what it takes to continue to hold states accountable.

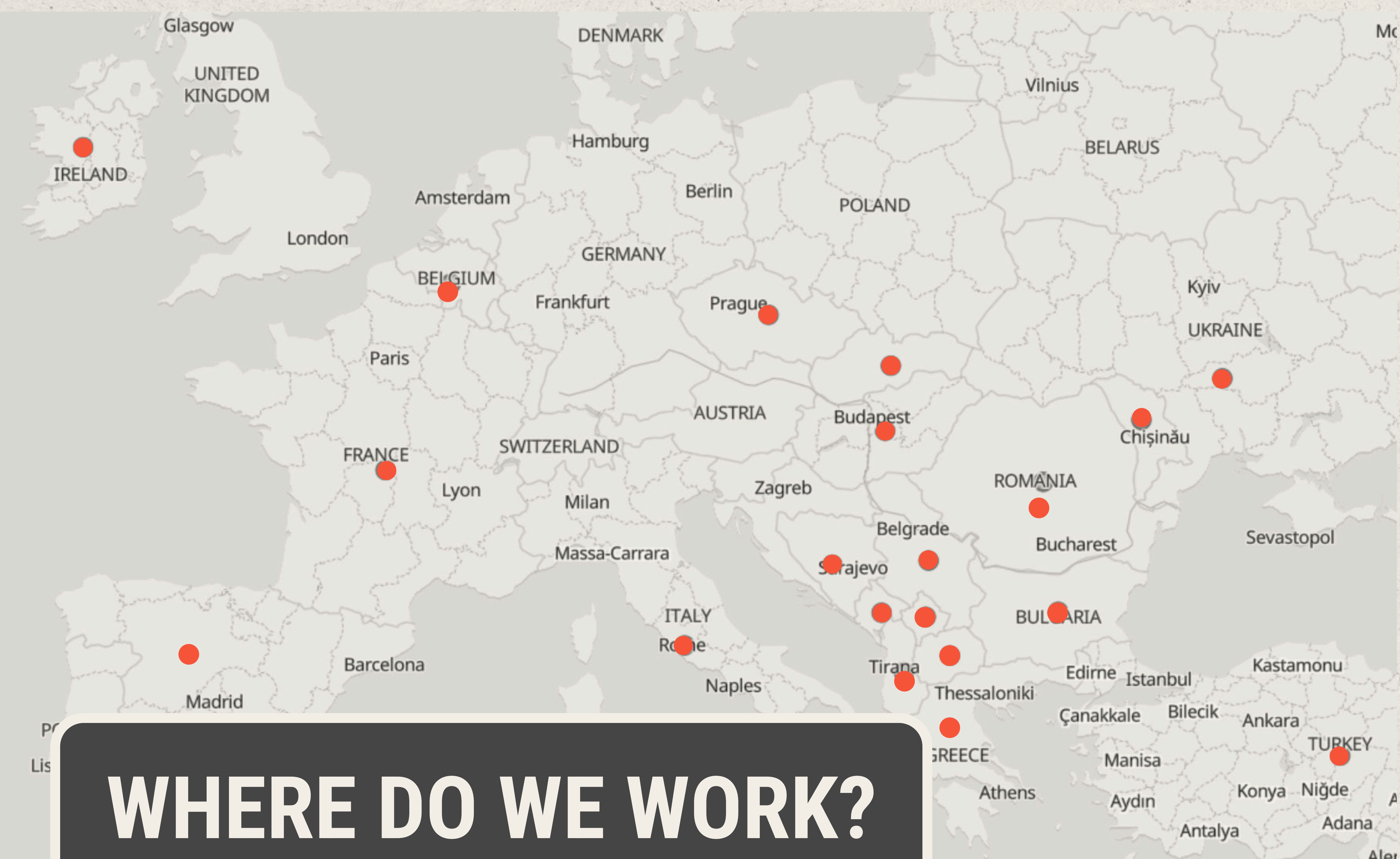
Despite the rising tide of intolerance and the erosion of funding, we remain steadfast. We are committed to exposing and eliminating the discriminatory structures that violate Romani people's human rights, not just for today, but for the many years to come.

WHAT DOES THE ERRRC DO?

WE TAKE LEGAL ACTION ACROSS EUROPE WITH THE AIM OF EXPOSING AND ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATORY STRUCTURES THAT VIOLATE ROMANI PEOPLE'S HUMAN RIGHTS.

WE ENSURE THAT HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES CONCERNING ROMA ARE FIRMLY ON THE POLITICAL AGENDA AT THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVEL.

OUR LEGAL AND ADVOCACY TEAMS WORK TOGETHER TO IDENTIFY, ADDRESS, AND COMMUNICATE THE ISSUES THAT EUROPE'S LARGEST ETHNIC MINORITY FACE.



WHERE DO WE WORK?

- AS OF THE END OF 2025, THE ERRC HAS ACTIVE LEGAL CASES ACROSS 17 COUNTRIES.
- OUR ROMA RIGHTS NETWORK MEMBERS SPAN 21 COUNTRIES ACROSS EUROPE.
- OUR VOLUNTEERS, THE ROMA RIGHTS DEFENDERS, ARE WORKING TIRELESSLY IN 4 COUNTRIES.

While much of our work is concentrated in Central and Eastern Europe, particularly in non-EU countries with large Romani populations, we ensure our work covers as many countries, local contexts, and communities as possible to promote an informed and coordinated response to Roma Rights violations across Europe.

AWARD-WINNING ACTION

2025 SAW WELL-DESERVED AWARDS FOR THE ERRC AND OUR PARTNER ORGANISATIONS



The ERRC was awarded the 2024 Fundación Secretariado Gitano award for defending human rights across Europe, especially for women and children, with an intersectional approach and a significant impact.



ERRC Legal Director Senada Sali won an EU award for Roma Integration in the Western Balkans and Turkey. Senada won 2nd Prize for North Macedonia in recognition of the ERRC's efforts to advance the rights of Roma through education in the case of *Elmazova and Others v North Macedonia*.



For the same award our partner organisation, the Roma Women's Rights Centre, won 1st Prize for Albania for their work bringing forward *X and Others v. Albania*.

Both cases were the first time a school segregation case had been brought before the ECtHR in the respective countries and reflect the critical legal work undertaken by the ERRC and partner organisations in building precedent-setting cases.

ROMAGIC

PROUDLY QUEER. UNAPOLOGETICALLY ROMA.



In 2025 we also opened our RoMagic project exhibitions across Brussels, Bucharest, and Belgrade.

This groundbreaking initiative, co-funded by the European Union, was both an overdue celebration of the Romani LGBTIQ+ community, and a disruptive intervention aimed at highlighting the intersectional forms of discrimination faced by LGBTIQ+ Roma.

The exhibition combined a combination of photography, audio, and film which provided an intimate glimpse into the real lives of LGBTIQ+ Romani individuals, alongside documenting the discrimination they faced and acting as a testimony to the resilience of LGBTIQ+ Roma.

The images were also released in an accompanying Digital Photobook, available on the ERRC website. The book is a digital collection of the powerful stories and images that make up the exhibition and celebrates all kinds of love, humanity, and a refusal to remain silent in the face of oppression.

STRATEGIC LITIGATION

THE ERRC USES LITIGATION AS A FUNDAMENTAL TOOL TO ENSURE THE RIGHTS OF ROMANI PEOPLE ACROSS EUROPE ARE BEING RESPECTED.

OUR STRATEGIC LITIGATION TEAM IS LED BY OUR LEGAL DIRECTORS; TWO ROMANI WOMEN LAWYERS WHO ARE PUSHING OUR LITIGATION TO REFLECT THE INTERSECTIONAL LIVED EXPERIENCES OF ROMANI PEOPLE AND ENSURING THAT ROMANI PEOPLE THEMSELVES CAN LEAD THE FIGHT AGAINST ANTIGYPSYISM.

WE ARE ACTIVE ON THE DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL LEVEL, WORKING WHEREVER AND HOWEVER WE CAN TO MAKE SURE ROMANI PEOPLE ARE BEING HEARD; WE PROVIDE LEGAL REPRESENTATION, INTERVENE IN CASES, AND TAKE CASES IN OUR NAME OR THAT OF ROMANI LITIGANTS.

WHEN DOMESTIC COURTS DON'T PROVIDE JUSTICE WE TAKE IT FURTHER, BRINGING CASES TO THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

IN 2025 THE ERRC HAD:

- 134 ACTIVE CASES BEFORE DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL BODIES

WE COMMUNICATED:

- 2 RULE 9 SUBMISSIONS

AND WE SUBMITTED:

- 1 NEW CASE BEFORE THE ECtHR, AND:
- 3 THIRD PARTY INTERVENTIONS

- AS OF THE END OF 2025, THE MAJORITY OF THE ERRC'S CASELOAD IS CONCENTRATED IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

OUR LITIGATION COVERS A VARIETY OF HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE AREAS:

DISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATION	CHILDREN IN STATE CARE	ACCESS TO JUSTICE
ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM	POLICE MISCONDUCT	
WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS AND HEALTH	HATE SPEECH AND CRIME	

The largest number of cases are in the area of police misconduct, followed by cases on environmental racism and housing access issues.

OUR HARD WORK LED TO SOME KEY LEGAL SUCCESSES IN 2025:

NORTH MACEDONIA, JULY 2025 DISCRIMINATION AT THE BORDER

Two Romani citizens were stopped in two separate incidents at North Macedonia's border in 2014 and 2015 and denied travel despite holding valid passports, while non-Romani passengers passed through freely. The ERRC brought these cases before the UN Human Rights Committee, arguing violations of fundamental rights and anti-discrimination protections.

In July 2025, the Committee delivered a landmark ruling in their favour, finding that North Macedonia had indeed discriminated against both applicants. The State was ordered to provide full reparation and adequate compensation to the victims, along with implementing systemic measures to prevent similar violations. This ruling joins other international judgments condemning North Macedonia's discriminatory border practices, creating a powerful body of findings that could help eradicate institutional racism in border controls.

BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA, MARCH 2025 ACCESS TO WATER

In 2019, the ERRC brought a collective discrimination complaint before the Municipal Court in Zenica, after a utility company intentionally cut off water to the Banlozi camp, leaving Romani families without safe drinking water or sanitation. In 2021, courts confirmed this disconnection constituted systemic ethnic discrimination and ordered the immediate restoration of water access.

After years of litigation, a settlement was reached in March 2025 where 118 affected residents will receive over €137,000 in compensation for non-material damages. This outcome serves as a formal acknowledgment that Romani families were denied basic human necessities because of their ethnicity. Beyond the financial settlement, the advocacy contributed to the closure of the camp and the allocation of social housing for its residents.

GRASSROOTS LEGAL MOBILISATION

In 2025 we continued to support Romani communities across the Western Balkans through our Community Legal Action programme, and through the complementary EU-funded RISE project we were able to extend this support to include Albania and Serbia.

This means in 2025 we were able to initiate 41 new cases and legal interventions across 6 countries:

NORTH MACEDONIA - 18 new cases

KOSOVO - 5 new cases

MONTENEGRO - 3 new cases

BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA - 2 new cases

SERBIA (RISE PROJECT) - 6 new cases

ALBANIA (RISE PROJECT) - 7 new cases

Our Community Legal Action programme uses large-scale legal activism to aims to flood decision-making bodies with legal complaints, making the issues impossible to ignore. This approach reveals patterns of discrimination, exposes overarching inequality, and places legal advocacy into the hands of Romani communities themselves so they are better able to fight for the issues that really matter to them. These complaints also underscore the urgent need for systemic reform to promote equality and protect the rights of Romani communities on fundamental issues.

This year, complaints addressed systemic discrimination across all the ERRC's issue areas, including: forced evictions, school segregation, hate speech, access to personal identification documents, access to water and basic services, and failures in child protection systems affecting Romani children.

ADVOCACY AND COMMS

OUR ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATIONS TEAM WORKS ALONGSIDE OUR LEGAL TEAM, BRINGING THE ISSUES OF RACISM AND INEQUALITY AGAINST ROMANI PEOPLE TO THE NATIONAL, EUROPEAN, AND INTERNATIONAL AGENDA AND HOLDING THOSE IN POWER ACCOUNTABLE FOR THEIR ACTIONS.

THROUGH DIRECT ADVOCACY, MEDIA OUTREACH, RESEARCH, SOCIAL MEDIA, AND SUBMISSIONS WE ENSURE THAT OUR ROMA RIGHTS MESSAGE REACHES AS FAR AS POSSIBLE.

IN 2025 WE PUBLISHED:

- **2 RESEARCH REPORTS**
- **20 PRESS RELEASES**
- **OVER 50 NEWS ARTICLES**
- **4 SUBMISSIONS TO INTERNATIONAL BODIES**
- **OVER 500 SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS**

ADVOCACY AND COMMS IN 2025...

- Continued to focus on police misconduct across Europe, highlighting the multiple cases of police violence across multiple countries. The ERRC's legal cases and extensive research on police misconduct against Roma in criminal legal systems across Europe show this is an ongoing and ever present issue.
- Drew attention to environmental racism in Bor, Serbia and the impact of a Chinese mining giant on Romani communities through articles and videos.
- Celebrated LGBTIQ+ Roma through the EU-funded ROMAGIC project, while at the same time addressing discrimination aimed at the community in Romania and Hungary.
- Concentrated on the ongoing issue of forced evictions in Italy, reporting on emergency situations and longstanding problems.
- Provided a briefing on the situation of Roma in Ukraine to the UNHCR, ensuring that Ukrainian Roma are not forgotten as the war in Ukraine continues.
- And, of course, continued to ensure awareness of the fight for Roma rights is raised through research, reporting, and communications.

BREAKING NEWS

THE ERRC CONTINUES TO ACT AS A TRUSTWORTHY NEWS SOURCE FOR STORIES ABOUT ROMA.

IN 2025 WE MADE SURE THAT STORIES OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST ROMANI PEOPLE AND ROMA RIGHTS ISSUES WERE RELIABLY REPORTED ON THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

WE PUBLISHED 20 PRESS RELEASES AND OVER 50 NEWS POSTS RELATED TO RELEVANT, UNFOLDING NEWS STORIES AND OUR ONGOING WORK.

From a 90 year old Romani couple being made homeless in Italy after their caravan was bulldozed



To 31 Romani children under the age of 12 being found in a 'house of horrors' in Bosnia after a police officer is among the eight arrested for trafficking



To a Romani LGBTIQ+ activist facing criminal charges for organising a Pride March in Hungary

The ERRC reports accurately and credibly on the breadth and variety of human rights abuses faced by Romani people across Europe.

For an overview of the top news stories of 2025, see our Roma Rights News Review: [Look Back in Anger](#).



ROMA RIGHTS SUMMER SCHOOL

CLASS OF 2025

For the second year in a row, the ERRC Roma Rights Summer School was held in Athens, Greece. 14 young Roma Rights activists from 8 countries came together to learn, share, and celebrate diversity.

Over 7 days our participants took part in interactive sessions on key topics such as: using litigation to defend fundamental rights, intersectional approaches and LGBTIQ+ rights, Roma rights history, human rights advocacy, public speaking, and more.



The Roma Rights Summer School is a cornerstone of the ERRC's commitment to giving Roma rights activists the tools to fight against oppression and racism. Each year, we see a new generation of activists equipped with the knowledge and skills, resilience, and solidarity needed to challenge discrimination and advance human rights.

ROMA RIGHTS DEFENDERS

The ERRC Roma Rights Defenders are our volunteer activists, working passionately to fight against discrimination. In 2025, over 40 volunteers were engaged across 4 countries: ALBANIA, BULGARIA, ROMANIA, and SERBIA.

Tackling online hate speech against Roma is a key part of what our Roma Rights Defenders do: they're building digital communities, reporting hate speech, flipping the script on racist comments, and creating resources to stop the spread of racist disinformation.

This year, as part of the EU-funded RISE project, our Roma Rights defenders contributed to a report: [RISE UP! Racism, Resilience, and the Right to Mental Health](#).

For the publication our volunteers responded to questions focusing on the psychological harm done by racism, and the particular harms done to young people by online hate speech targeting Roma in Europe, as well as country specific snapshots of the online hate context.

The report also goes on to look at resilience and resistance; examining how Roma Rights Defenders find the strength and the passion to keep fighting on.



ROMA RIGHTS NETWORK

Launched by the ERRC in 2022, the Roma Rights Network brings together activists—both Roma and non-Roma—who are committed to defending the human rights of Romani people across Europe.

The network promotes a coordinated human rights-based approach to Romani activism, with a strong focus on improving access to basic rights for Romani communities.

In 2025 the Roma Rights Network was made up of 33 organisations spanning 21 countries. This wide geographic reach enables the network to combine local expertise with coordinated European-level advocacy, strengthening its ability to respond to Roma Rights challenges.

This year on May 16th, Romani Resistance Day, the ERRC held the Roma Rights Network's annual meeting in Vienna, an exciting opportunity for members to come together and meet in-person.

27 member organisations gathered to share knowledge and ideas, to work collaboratively, and to discuss the resilience and sustainability of Roma Rights activists in the face of challenges for Roma Rights movements across Europe.

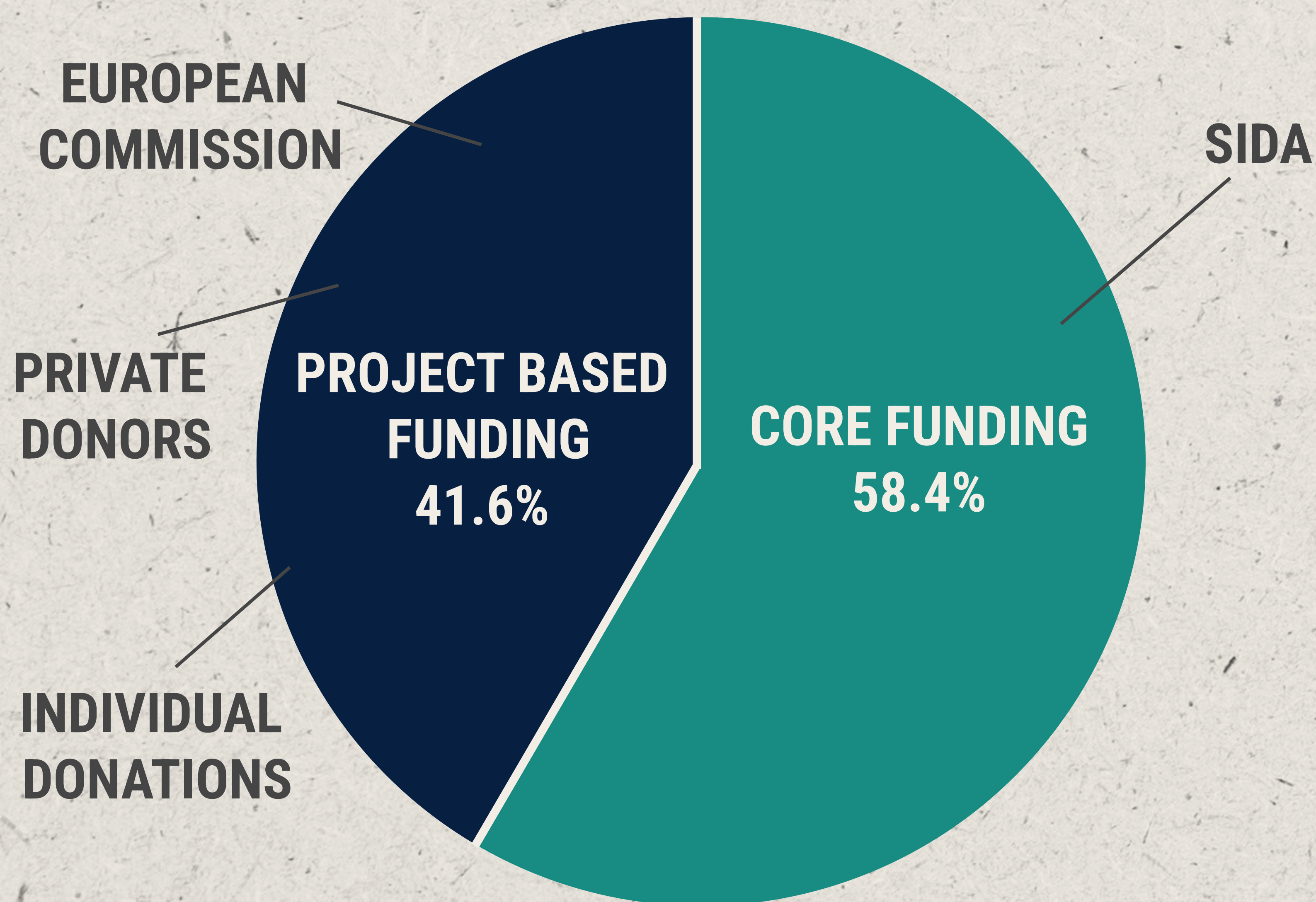


OUR FINANCES

The ERRC receives funding from private foundations, individual donors, and governmental and non-governmental agencies, including the European Union.

The Swedish International Development Agency is the long-standing core funding supporter of the ERRC.

In 2025, the ERRC's total income was €2,658,703





european roma rights centre