

# DREAM TO GROW

UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATION



PRIMARY  
SCHOOL



HIGH SCHOOL



PRE-  
SCHOOL



EARLY  
SUPPORT  
SERVICES



BEFORE  
LOLI IS BORN





I am Loli. Starting with where I am now, and going back to my early years, I will walk you through my journey to become the person I am today. I will share notable moments in my life – exploring the events that made me strong and introducing you to the individuals who supported me throughout the many challenges I faced on my journey. **I am proud to be Roma, of who I am now, and of my dream to grow.**

At the age of 25, I am an empowered Roma woman. I work as an early childhood education professional in a public preschool.

**63% OF  
YOUNG ROMA  
ARE NOT IN  
EDUCATION,  
EMPLOYMENT  
OR TRAINING**

*Factsheet - 2019 Report on National  
Roma Integration Strategies: Key Conclusions*

**W**hen I was 22, I graduated from university, receiving a BA in Early Childhood Education. I was ready to put all the knowledge I acquired into practice. Although I had always been an excellent student, my family was not sure that I could go to university. Without policies to ensure financial support for Roma students, many families in my community can't afford higher education. Luckily, I was able to get a scholarship from a foundation.

**68% YOUNG  
ROMA AGED 18-24  
HAVE NOT ENROLLED  
IN EDUCATION OR  
TRAINING PROGRAMS  
PAST LOWER  
SECONDARY SCHOOL**

*Leaving no one behind in implementing the 2030  
agenda for sustainable development: roma inclusion in  
europe (undp 2017)*



I was a good student in high school. The school work was difficult, and the pressure was intense. I was the only student from my community in my school. For me, school was extra important. It was a chance to break the stereotypes that my classmates and teachers had about the Roma community.

With significant support from my family and a well-trained school counselor, I made it through even the toughest periods.



ONLY **18%** OF ROMA CHILDREN TRANSITION TO HIGHER LEVELS OF EDUCATION

*Factsheet - 2019 Report on National Roma Integration Strategies:  
Key Conclusions*



**41%** OF ROMA EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION BASED ON THEIR BACKGROUND IN THE LAST 5 YEARS AND 26% IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS

*EU-MIDIS II: Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey – Roma Selected findings*

In primary school, I often faced discrimination from my peers and sometimes even from teachers. I wanted to be the best student I could be, but prejudices that others held sometimes affected me.

I met a Roma volunteer at my village's community center. The volunteer helped me stay motivated and inspired me to help other young students in my community. I didn't know it, but I was building a community of support and learning resilience.

ONLY **53%**  
OF ROMA CHILDREN  
BETWEEN 4 YEARS  
OF AGE AND THE  
STARTING AGE  
OF COMPULSORY  
EDUCATION  
PARTICIPATE IN  
EARLY CHILDHOOD  
EDUCATION

*Educational level of adult Roma in four Central  
and East European countries*

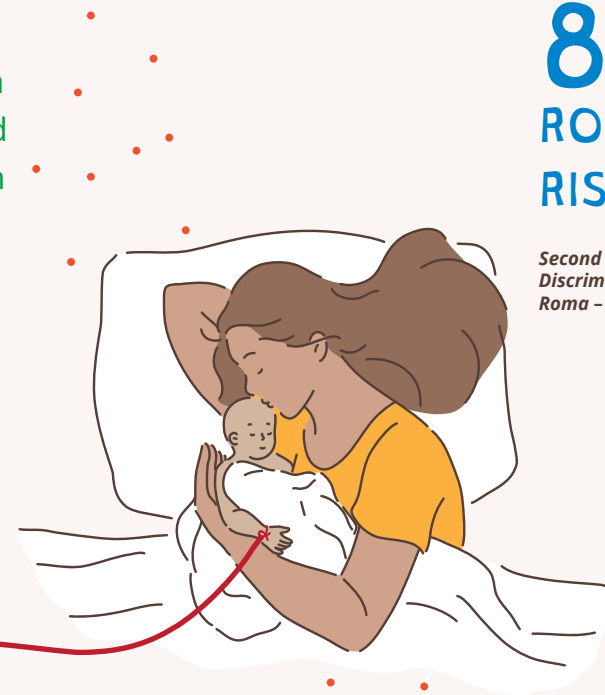


I was enrolled in preschool when I turned three-years-old thanks to the public preschool's successful outreach activities. My parents also receive parenting support during my enrollment, which helped them understand the importance of sending me to preschool, build relationships outside of their community, and enhance their trust in the education system.

ONLY ONE OUT  
OF TWO ROMA  
CHILDREN ATTEND  
PRESCHOOL  
OR KINDERGARTEN  
PROGRAMS

*Education: the situation of Roma in 11 EU Member  
States Roma survey – Data in focus –*

When I was one, my  
parents and I participated in a  
home visiting program carried  
out by local NGOs focusing on  
early childhood development,  
wellbeing, nurturing care, and  
positive relationships  
between caregivers and  
children.



**80%** OF  
ROMA ARE AT  
RISK OF POVERTY

*Second European Union Minorities and  
Discrimination Survey (EU-MIDIS II):  
Roma – selected findings*



Before I was born, my  
parents learned about a free  
prenatal program in their  
community. It was a powerful  
opportunity for them to learn  
more about responsive  
parenting and how they could  
best support me after birth.

FOR ROMA CHILDREN, IT IS AS IF A RED RIBBON IS PLACED AROUND THEIR WRIST THE DAY THEY ARE BORN. DEEPLY INGRAINED IDEAS ABOUT ROMA ACROSS EUROPE HAVE SPUN A CYCLE OF DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES AND PREJUDICES. THESE BELIEFS ARE EMBEDDED IN SCHOOL SYSTEMS, AS YOU SEE IN LOLI'S STORY. BUT, LOLI'S STORY IS A STORY OF SUCCESS. IT IS ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THERE IS A DIVERSE EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE – ABOUT HOW A LITTLE SUPPORT CAN GO A LONG WAY IN THE LIFE OF A CHILD IF WE ALL:

RECOGNIZE EACH CHILD'S UNIQUE POTENTIAL, ENCOURAGING THEIR DREAMS, AND HELPING THEM BLOSSOM.

ENSURE EQUITY FOR ROMA STUDENTS AT ALL LEVELS OF EDUCATION, AS WELL AS IN ACCESS TO PROFESSIONS IN THE EARLY CHILDHOOD FIELD.

YIELD INCLUSIVE WORK ENVIRONMENTS THAT EMBRACE DIVERSITY AND CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROFESSIONALS TO GROW AND MAKE THEIR VOICES HEARD.

NURTURE PROFESSIONALISM AND BELONGING AMONG ALL ROMA EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONALS — VALUING THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE FIELD.



The Romani Early Years Network is a Europe-wide network that promotes access to quality early childhood development for Romani and Traveller children, professionalism in early years services and a better representation of Romani and Travellers in the workforce.

Find out more at: [www.reyn.eu](http://www.reyn.eu)

Like us on Facebook: [facebook.com/ReynNetwork](https://facebook.com/ReynNetwork)

EMPOWERED BY ISSA



ISSA is a membership association, which serves as a learning community and a champion for quality and equity for all young children and their families. The ISSA network is a dynamic mix of experts from NGO's, schools and kindergartens, higher education and academic institutions in Europe and Central Asia. All ISSA members work to ensure the best quality care and education for young children, especially the most vulnerable.

[www.issa.nl](http://www.issa.nl)

*The data presented in this infographic is from Europe. It is the result of research and monitoring done by REYN.*