

Private Security in Areas with Roma Communities: Challenges, Opportunities, and Security Responses

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Ensuring safety and security in areas inhabited by the Roma community presents a complex challenge, shaped by socio-cultural, economic, and political factors, a lack of trust in institutions, and historical marginalisation. A key responsibility of security actors, including private security services, is to maintain public order and prevent conflicts, which often arise from inter-community tensions. In Slovenia in 2024, crime rates increased in areas with significant Roma populations, particularly in Kočevje and Ribnica. In response, security measures were reinforced, and greater emphasis was placed on cooperation with the local population and representatives of the Roma communities, who play a crucial role in building trust and mediating disputes. This article highlights the fact that the role of private security in these contexts remains under-researched. To address this gap, an empirical study was conducted through interviews with security managers. Results indicate that while private security services contribute significantly to the perception of safety, they also face substantial challenges, including high operational costs, limited trust from the community, insufficient cooperation with local authorities, and restricted legal powers. Security personnel frequently encounter conflict situations and threats, which contribute to high staff turnover. Positive developments have been observed in regions with greater Roma participation in employment and service delivery, such as Pomurje and Lendava. Proposed improvements include legal reforms, infrastructure enhancement, the active involvement of Roma representatives, and improved training for security personnel. In conclusion, the authors emphasize that ensuring security is a shared responsibility involving the state, municipalities, non-governmental organisations, and the private sector. Effective and sustainable security in Roma-inhabited areas requires systemic, inclusive, and long-term strategies that transcend traditional security measures and address the broader social and cultural dimensions of safety and security.

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