

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

Session document

23.1.2008

B6-0050/2008

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to Questions for Oral Answer B6-0003/2008, B6-0004/2008 and B6-0005/2008

pursuant to Rule 108(5) of the Rules of Procedure

by Livia Járóka

on behalf of the PPE-DE Group

on a European Strategy on the Roma

European Parliament resolution on a European Strategy on the Roma

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Articles 3, 6, 7, 29 and 149 of the EC Treaty, which commit the Member States to ensuring equal opportunities for all citizens,
- having regard to Article 13 of the EC Treaty, which enables the European Community to take appropriate action to combat discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin,
- having regard to Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, which bans discrimination on ethnic grounds,
- having regard to Article 4 of the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms,
- having regard to Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation,
- having regard to the comprehensive Action Plan, adopted by OSCE participating States, including EU Member States and candidate countries, focused on improving the situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE area, in which the States undertake inter alia to reinforce their efforts aimed at ensuring that Roma and Sinti people are able to play a full and equal part in our societies, and at eradicating discrimination against them,
- having regard to its resolution of 28 April 2005 on the situation of Roma in the European Union,
- having regard to its resolution of 1 June 2006 on the situation of Roma women in the European Union,
- having regard to its resolution of 14 November 2007 on application of Directive 2004/38/EC on the right of EU citizens and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States,
- having regard to the Lisbon Strategy and its goals of social cohesion and social inclusion, and the many mechanisms established by the Union institutions to secure the Lisbon goals,
- having regard to the European Charter of Fundamental rights, and to the Statute of the Fundamental Rights Agency,

- having regard to the report of the High Level Advisory Group of Experts on the Social Integration of Ethnic Minorities and their Full Participation in the Labour Market entitled 'Ethnic Minorities on the Labour Market - An Urgent Call for Better Social Inclusion', which was published by the Commission in 2007,
 - having regard to Rule 108(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the 12-15 million Roma living in Europe, 7-9 million of whom live in the European Union, suffer racial discrimination and in many cases are subject to severe structural discrimination, poverty and social exclusion, as well as multiple discrimination on the basis of gender, age, disability and sexual orientation,
 - B. recognising the lack of progress in combating racial discrimination against Roma in the fields of education, employment, health care and housing in most Member States and candidate countries, despite the clear request in Parliament's resolution of 28 April 2005 to prepare a communication on how the EU, in cooperation with the Member States, can best coordinate and promote efforts to improve the situation of the Roma,
 - C. having regard to the racially segregated schooling systems in place across several Member States, in which Roma children are educated either in segregated classes with lower standards or in classes for the mentally disabled; recognising that an improvement in access to education and opportunities for academic achievement for Roma is crucial to the advancement of Roma communities' wider prospects,
 - D. whereas substandard and insanitary living conditions and evidence of ghettoisation exist on a wide scale, with Roma being regularly prevented from moving out of such neighbourhoods,
 - E. whereas on average Roma communities face unacceptably high levels of unemployment, so that specific measures are required to facilitate access to jobs; emphasising that the European labour market, as well as European society as a whole would greatly benefit from the inclusion of Roma,
1. Welcomes the conclusion of the European Council meeting of 14 December 2007, in which the European Council, 'conscious of the very specific situation faced by the Roma across the Union, invites Member States and the Union to use all means to improve their inclusion' and 'invites the Commission to examine existing policies and instruments and to report to the Council on progress achieved before the end of June 2008';
 2. Stresses the relevance of the European Union and its institutions undertaking the fight against structural and/or institutional discrimination at the highest level, but acknowledges that the crucial competences for the inclusion of Roma communities lie within the sovereignty of Member States;
 3. Urges the Commission to comprehensively shape a Community Action Plan on Roma Inclusion, noting that the Plan must:

- be drawn up and taken forward by the group of Commissioners who are directly or indirectly responsible for the inclusion of ethnic minorities through their employment, social affairs, equal opportunities, justice, freedom, education, culture and regional policy portfolios,
 - be established on the basis of wide-ranging cooperation among existing inter-governmental projects and related NGOs, as well as representatives of academic society, business life, Roma civil society, and political parties,
 - establish sustainable long-term policies using a targeted, but not ethnically segregated, approach,
 - build on analyses carried out together with representatives of Roma civil society,
 - identify and effectively address the practical barriers that Roma face in enjoying their inalienable fundamental rights in the fields of housing, employment, health care and education,
 - set up clear and unambiguous benchmarks, indicators and deadlines for authentic evaluation,
 - establish adequate monitoring mechanisms, such as ex post governmental assessments by Member States and the Commission to ensure the rational, effective and bona fide utilisation of financial tools, labour and time;
4. Reiterates that equal access to quality education should be included in EU-level policies as a fundamental aim; urges the Commission to enhance its efforts to fund and otherwise support actions that require Member States to include Roma children in mainstream education from an early age;
 5. Calls on the Commission to take the leading role and participate in all aspects of the process from planning to evaluation, with regard to:
 - the pre-school education of Roma;
 - the complete desegregation of Roma classes/institutions in elementary education;
 - monitoring and abolishing the illegal practice of placing Roma children in classes for the mentally disabled;
 - enhancing Roma access to vocational training and university studies;
 - drawing up appropriate scholarship schemes for the purpose of educating young Roma according to the highest standards, in order to foster a new generation of leaders for Roma civil society;
 6. Calls on Member States to involve the Roma community at grassroots level with a view to empowering the Roma people to fully benefit from the incentives provided by the EU, whether in the field of education, employment or civic participation, given that successful integration involves a bottom-up approach and joint responsibilities;
 7. Calls on the Commission to make the impact of private investments on equal opportunities a relevant and accountable factor in the release of EU funding, by obliging those individuals and/or legal persons submitting tenders for EU-financed projects to draw up and implement both an analysis and an action plan on equal opportunities;

8. Urges the Commission to establish a Europe-wide crisis-map, measuring and surveying those areas within the EU where Roma communities are hardest-hit by poverty and social exclusion;
9. Calls on the Commission to consider the possibility of a micro-credit scheme as put forward in the 2007 report of the High Level Advisory Group, to encourage the launching of small businesses and to replace the practice of usury that is crippling much of the disadvantaged communities;
10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, and the governments and parliaments of the Member States and candidate countries.