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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to Questions for Oral Answer B7-0013/2010, B7-0014/2010,
B7-0202/2010 and B7-0203/2010

pursuant to Rule 115(5) of the Rules of Procedure

on the Second European Roma Summit

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on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

European Parliament resolution on the Second European Roma Summit

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the international human rights conventions which prohibit discrimination on grounds of racial and ethnic origin, in particular the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR), both signed by all the EU Member States,
- having regard to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the revised European Social Charter of the Council of Europe,
- having regard to Article 4 of the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities,
- having regard to paragraph 3 of Recommendation 1557(2002) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, which underlines the widespread discrimination against Roma and the need to strengthen the monitoring system on discrimination against them,
- having regard to Article 8 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), which commits the Member States to ensuring equal opportunities for all citizens,
- having regard to Article 19 TFEU, which enables the European Community to ‘take appropriate action to combat discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin’,
- having regard to Directive 43/2000/EC implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin¹,
- having regard to its resolution of 27 January 2005 on the Holocaust, anti-Semitism and racism²,
- having regard to its numerous resolutions on Roma-related issues adopted during previous parliamentary terms, and in particular to its resolution of 11 March 2009 on the social situation of the Roma in the EU³,
- having regard to the UNHCR's Eligibility Guidelines for Assessing the International Protection Needs of Individuals from Kosovo of November 2009,

¹ OJ L 180, 19.7.2000. p. 22.

² Texts adopted, P6_TA(2005)0018.

³ Texts adopted, P6_TA(2009)0117.

- having regard to the proclamation of the ‘Decade of Roma Inclusion’ (2005-2015) and the establishment of a Roma Education Fund, which aim to increase the efficacy of policy and funding concerning the Roma and are currently focused on a number of European States, including a number of EU Member States, candidate countries and other countries in which the European Union institutions have a very significant presence,
 - having regard to the reports by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) entitled ‘The situation of Roma EU citizens moving to and settling in other EU Member States’ (November 2009) and ‘Housing Conditions of Roma and Travellers in the European Union’ (October 2009),
 - having regard to the EPSCO Council conclusions on the inclusion of the Roma of 8/9 June 2009 and to the Common Basic Principles on Roma Inclusion, as discussed at the first meeting of the integrated European platform on Roma inclusion held in April 2009,
 - having regard to the questions of 12 February 2010 (O-0017/2010 – B7-0013/2010, O-0018/2010 – B7-0014/2010) and 24 February 2010 (O-0028/2010 – B7-0202/2010, O-0029 – B7-0203/2010) to the Council and to the Commission on the Second European Roma Summit,
 - having regard to Rules 115(5) and 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas 12-15 million Roma living in Europe, 7-9 million of them in the European Union, suffer multiple discriminations; whereas anti-Gypsyism is still widespread in Europe, with Roma regularly being the targets of racist attacks, hate speech, physical attacks by extremist groups, unlawful evictions and police harassment, and in general being denied their rights as citizens,
 - B. whereas a recent report by the FRA establishes that Roma are victims of multiple discriminations, of racially motivated crimes and marginalisation, that they are not aware of their rights, and that they very often do not report their experiences of personal victimisation,
 - C. whereas, according to that report, on average one in four Roma respondents had been victims of personal crimes and one in five victims of racially motivated personal crimes – including assaults, threats and serious harassment – at least once in the previous 12 months,
 - D. whereas Roma continue to be discriminated against, in particular in the field of healthcare, and whereas there are still cases of segregation in maternity wards and sterilisation of Roma women without their consent,
 - E. whereas Roma access to preventive healthcare services is inadequate: over 25% of Roma children do not keep to the vaccination schedule, over 40% of women over 15 have never been to a gynaecologist for reasons other than pregnancy or labour, and 30% of the Roma population have never been to a dentist,

- F. whereas racially-segregated school systems are still in place in several Member States and candidate countries, as a result of which Roma children are, at best, taught lower-quality curricula and, at worst, placed in institutions reserved for the mentally disabled,
- G. whereas Roma face structural discrimination in the labour market and with regard to housing, leading to poverty and social exclusion, and in some EU Member States face serious social security benefit reductions,
- H. whereas Council Directive 2000/43/EC has not been adequately transposed or fully implemented by all the Member States, even though it constitutes an important element in strategies for promoting the integration of communities which are often subject to discrimination,
- I. whereas Roma continue to be underrepresented in governmental structures and the public administration in Member States and candidate countries where they make up a significant percentage of the population,
- J. whereas in some Member States and candidate countries press and other media coverage and also government action on Roma minorities remains hostile and discriminatory, often violating EU anti-discrimination law,
- K. whereas the EU has a variety of mechanisms and tools that can be used to improve Roma access to high-quality education, employment, housing, healthcare, social services, political participation, social inclusion and the benefits of regional and employment policies; whereas the social inclusion of Roma communities is a goal yet to be achieved, and whereas EU instruments need to be brought to bear to achieve effective and visible change in that area,
- L. whereas Roma who are citizens of the European Union frequently face racial discrimination in the exercise of their fundamental rights as EU citizens, particularly as regards freedom of movement and establishment,
- M. whereas the incorrect application of the Free Movement Directive (2004/38/EC) by national authorities at various levels of administration can be responsible for the de facto withdrawal of certain rights and entitlements from Roma, particularly in the area of social assistance, social benefits and social protection,
- N. whereas the province of Kosovo remains an unsafe place for all ethnic non-Albanians, in particular for Roma, whereas ethnically motivated assaults continue to go unreported there, and whereas some Member States have carried out forced returns of refugees – many of them of Roma origin – to Kosovo, even if the safe conditions for such a return are not guaranteed, because Roma face homelessness and discrimination in the areas of education, social protection and employment,
- 1. Welcomes the EPSCO Council’s conclusions and the Common Basic Principles on Roma Inclusion; emphasises, however, that serious efforts by the European Union and its Member States are needed to implement these principles by means of appropriate political action;

2. Welcomes the Second European Roma Summit, to be hosted by the Spanish Presidency on 8 April 2010 in Cordoba; regards it as an opportunity to review Roma inclusion policies implemented so far and to agree on further action;
3. Welcomes the EPSCO Council's undertaking that the integrated platform on Roma inclusion will be horizontally supported by Community instruments (e.g. the Structural Funds) and policies (e.g. in the areas of fundamental rights, gender equality, anti-discrimination, poverty and social exclusion, education, housing, health, employment, social services, justice, sports and culture, and also in the EU's relations with third countries);
4. Urges the Commission to continue its efforts to encourage Member States and candidate countries to make appropriate use of these Community instruments and policies for the benefit of the Roma;
5. Looks forward to the presentation of the 2010 mid-term report by the EURoma Network on the Structural Funds (2007-2013) and the social inclusion of the Roma; hopes that this report will provide a thorough assessment of the achievements of and obstacles to Roma inclusion policies and recommendations for improving and better implementing the policies pursued under the integrated platform on Roma inclusion;
6. Condemns the recent rise of anti-Gypsyism (Romaphobia) in several EU Member States in the form of regular instances of hate speech and anti-Roma attacks;
7. Considers that fighting discrimination against the Roma, who constitute a pan-European cultural community, requires a comprehensive approach at European level, whilst acknowledging that primary responsibility for the protection of fundamental rights for Roma citizens and the promotion of their social, economic and political inclusion rests with the governments of the Member States;
8. Expects the Second European Roma Summit in Cordoba to take the EURoma Network's evaluation and recommendations seriously into account when reaching conclusions on further action;
9. Considers, however, that some Member States still seem to be reluctant to use Structural Fund programming to promote Roma inclusion, so that progress towards the policy goals of the integrated platform on Roma inclusion is very uneven; takes the view, therefore, that Member States should develop concrete targets and schedules for improving Roma inclusion;
10. Points out that a recent study commissioned by the Open Society Institute (2008) identified a number of common problems relating to EU funding for Roma projects in the new Member States: a top-down approach and isolated interventions with no proper involvement of Roma communities, high entry and continuation barriers for community development organisations in the form of complex application procedures, a lack of strategic focus, insufficient funding to make a lasting impact and generate a heritage, etc.;
11. Suggests that future policies on the integrated platform on Roma inclusion should develop strong tools and incentives for developing and implementing 'good practice': adequate

preparation, a bottom-up approach, multidimensionality, institutional linkages, a rights-based approach and efforts to deal with 'hard' political issues by addressing the root causes of discrimination and exclusion; stresses that all measures designed to end Roma discrimination should be planned, carried through and evaluated with the direct involvement of the Roma communities affected;

12. Supports the EPSCO Council's view that focusing on the Roma people as a target group should not lead to the exclusion of other people facing similar socio-economic circumstances; considers, however, that explicit targeting of Roma inclusion in the broader framework of Community instruments and policies could be more effectively and efficiently promoted via the creation of a horizontal, interdepartmental Roma Unit in the Commission that monitors and coordinates action under the integrated platform on Roma inclusion and helps to ensure that all relevant bodies mainstream Roma issues;
13. Agrees with the EPSCO Council's view that Roma inclusion policies should aim at the mainstream of society; however, wishes to raise Member States' awareness of the fact that aiming at the mainstream of society should not be confused with assimilation and requires a strong commitment to an intercultural learning approach which places both sides on an equal footing - the majority population and the Roma minority;
14. Points out that policies on the social inclusion of the Roma should avoid a 'creaming the poor' approach which benefits only those sections of the Roma population best able to achieve good results in terms of formal education, training and 'employability' requirements and neglects the need to integrate the large majority of Roma people who may not be able to cope with such requirements that easily;
15. Points out that social economy projects are an important tool to promote Roma employment and entrepreneurship; in that connection, deplors the fact that the Social Economy Directorate in the Commission was disbanded and its functions scattered, and that the EQUAL programme, which hitherto had provided an important funding stream for social economy projects, was abandoned; calls on the Commission and the Spanish Presidency to reinvigorate efforts to promote the social economy, also with a view to Roma inclusion;
16. Considers that the Commission - utilising the structure of the integrated platform on Roma inclusions - should develop a Framework Strategy on Roma Inclusion, which lays down common minimum standards and indicators for social inclusion policies targeting Roma across the European Union, and also Roma from third countries;
17. Stresses that the allocation of resources under the EU Structural Funds should be made strictly conditional on the implementation at Member State level of action programmes based on equal opportunities and desegregation plans, especially as regards housing, education and universal access to preventive healthcare;
18. Calls on the Member State governments to take steps to increase the number of Roma educators and teachers' assistants, and to ensure that educational texts include material on Roma history and culture, especially in regions and localities with substantial Roma populations;

19. Calls on the Member States to bring an end to school segregation; points out that integration will remain an elusive goal as long as Romani children continue to be separated and sent to specific schools and classes in some Member States;
20. Calls on the Member States and candidate countries to guarantee the Roma the right to work and labour market access, through measures including financial support for training and retraining, measures to foster positive action on the labour market and rigorous enforcement of anti-discrimination laws in the field of employment, and the right to benefit from a social security system which guarantees them an adequate standard of living;
21. Calls on the Member States sporadically to collect disaggregated data which allow conclusions to be drawn about the situation of Roma, subject to the proviso that a sufficient level of data protection is guaranteed;
22. Calls on the Member States to apply the Free Movement Directive (2004/38/EC) in a way which ensures that Roma EU citizens exercising their right to free movement enjoy full civil rights;
23. Urges all the Member States, without delay, to end and adequately remedy: (i) the systemic exclusion of certain Roma communities from healthcare, including those communities in isolated geographic areas; (ii) extreme human rights abuses in the healthcare system, where these have taken place or are taking place, including racial segregation in health facilities and the forced sterilisation of Roma women;
24. Calls on the Council, Commission and Member States to support systemic national programmes aimed at improving the health situation of Roma communities, especially for children, pregnant women, mothers and disabled people, to ensure universal access to preventive healthcare services and to draw up action plans which place special emphasis on dental health, the promotion of healthy eating habits, child vaccination and women's health;
25. Points out that market-oriented housing policies, such as privatisation of state-owned housing, cutbacks in social housing, rent increases and forced relocation under the pretext of urban modernisation, have had a particularly negative effect on Roma and have frequently caused Roma to lose their accommodation or to exchange their existing accommodation for markedly inferior housing;
26. Points out that in some countries Roma face particular barriers to obtaining housing allowances because their chosen accommodation, such as a caravan, does not meet the definition of a house;
27. Points out that in some Member States laws or policies act specifically to limit or infringe the right to adequate housing enjoyed by Roma, such as Italian laws and government policies which segregated Roma and Sinti in substandard camps for 'nomads' and made them targets of discriminatory or violent treatment, criminalisation and evictions, or laws regulating Roma camps and evictions in France, Ireland or the UK; calls on the Member States to reverse these laws and policies;

28. Calls on the Member States to ensure that housing policies affecting Roma should be implemented only on the basis of prior broad consultation and involvement of the Roma communities affected by them; Community co-funding of such housing policy measures should be made strictly conditional on the fulfilment of such criteria and the provision of adequate compensation, and should also aim to provide adequate and affordable housing and housing development plans, including access to education and training, health, employment and leisure facilities;
29. Insists that Member States must ensure that any measures that have a direct or indirect impact on EU citizens of Roma origin are consistent with the principles set out in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and with the Racial Equality Directive that explicitly prohibits direct and indirect discrimination;
30. Urges the EU Member States not to carry out any forced returns of Roma originating from countries or regions where they might face persecution or discrimination, for example Kosovo; Roma Kosovar refugees should be provided with guarantees if they agree to return voluntarily; they should also be given the opportunity to stay in the host country, if they so wish, and provided with the means to integrate into society there;
31. Emphasises that about 500 000 Roma were murdered during the Nazi occupation of Europe in the Second World War and many others were victims of atrocities and deportation to concentration camps; suggests that the EU Roma inclusion strategy should also promote initiatives to keep the public memory of these crimes against humanity alive in the spirit of anti-fascism, and to support Roma survivors, who very often received humiliatingly small compensation for those crimes;
32. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments of the Member States and the Council of Europe.