

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3873/08

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to the Commission

Subject: Cataloguing of travellers in Italy

During a hearing of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs of the Italian Chamber of Deputies on 25 June 2008, the Minister of the Interior, Roberto Maroni, discussed the initiative provided for in the 'security package' (a raft of measures proposed by the Italian Government in the field of security) to fingerprint the residents of travellers' camps, most of whom belong to the Roma and Sinti community, and including minors, with a view to recording and cataloguing the profiles of the residents of the camps concerned.

The Minister stated the following: *'We will also take minors' fingerprints, by way of derogation from the current rules, specifically to prevent situations such as begging. This will not be ethnic cataloguing, but a genuine survey to ensure that those people who are entitled to stay can live in decent conditions'*. The survey is due to start shortly and will be a second measure taken by the government, following the appointment by the prefects of Milan, Rome and Naples of special commissioners for the 'traveller emergency'.

Most of the traveller population are of Italian nationality, while others are Community citizens.

Does the Commission not consider that this measure could be viewed as violating the principle of non-discrimination, since it is based on the criterion of belonging to an ethnic community, to conflict with the right to a private life (as defined in the Treaty and the Charter of Fundamental Rights) and to breach international provisions on the protection of minors?

Does it not feel that this measure, if aimed at ascertaining who is 'entitled to stay' rather than being expelled, violates the principle of proportionality with regard to the rules and case law of the Court of Justice in the field of citizens' right to mobility and the 'fundamental status' of European citizens?

What steps will the Commission take vis-à-vis the Italian institutions to clarify this situation?