

Question for oral answer O-0213/2010

to the Council

Rule 115

Catherine Grèze

Kinga Göncz, Cornelia Ernst, Lívia Járóka, Renate Weber, Alexander Alvaro, Catherine Bearded, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Lothar Bisky, Eva-Britt Svensson, Leonidas Donskis, Isabelle Durant, Ioan Enciu, Monika Flašíková Beňová, Thomas Händel, Rebecca Harms, Heidi Hautala, Stephen Hughes, Sophia in 't Veld, Andrey Kovatchev, Jean Lambert, Ulrike Lunacek, Monica Luisa Macovei, Claude Moraes, Mariya Nedelcheva, Nadezhda Neynsky, Rovana Plumb, Raül Romeva i Rueda, Jutta Steinruck, Hannes Swoboda, Csaba Sándor Tabajdi, Hannu Takkula, Rui Tavares, László Tókés, Kyriacos Triantaphyllides, Lambert van Nistelrooij, Gianni Vattimo, Marie-Christine Vergiat, Cecilia Wikström, Gabriele Zimmer

Subject: EU recognition of the Roma genocide during World War II

Members of the Roma community suffer from discrimination and exclusion all over Europe: they are regularly the target of racist comments and attacks, harassment from police forces and the denial of their fundamental citizens' rights. Discrimination against them is prevalent in all walks of life, mainly in the field of education, employment, housing and health care.

The ignorance of the majority of society concerning Roma history contributes a lot to the prejudice Roma people suffer from, and it also represents an obstacle to their integration within the European Union.

It is not widely known that during World War II, like Jews, the members of the Roma community were oppressed for racial reasons by the Nazi regime; tens of thousands of Roma were murdered in the occupied Eastern territories and thousands of them were killed in extermination camps. In occupied Europe, although the fate of the Roma varied from country to country, they were persecuted.

Some Member States of the EU, such as Germany in 1982, have already recognised the genocide of the Roma during World War II. The same act by the European Union would be a historic event for the members of the Roma community and for Europe.

On 27 January 2011, the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz will be commemorated. This event constitutes a historic opportunity to remind European citizens of the horrors of the Holocaust in relation to all the victims of the Nazi system.

Does the Council consider that Roma have the right to see their troubled common history recognised by the European Union? What is the Council planning to do to build better understanding among the European population of the history they share with Roma?

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Forwarded: 16.12.2010

Deadline for reply: 6.1.2011