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Plenary sitting

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B7-0555/2013

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to Question for Oral Answer B7-0528/2013

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

on the progress made in the implementation of the National Roma Integration Strategies
(2013/2924(RSP))

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on behalf of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs

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United in diversity

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B7-0555/2013

European Parliament resolution on the progress made in the implementation of the National Roma Integration Strategies (2013/2924(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Articles 2, 3 and 6 of the Treaty on European Union and Articles 8, 9, 10 and 19(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
- having regard to the Charter of Fundamental Rights (hereinafter ‘the Charter’) and in particular Article 21 thereof,
- having regard to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination of 1965, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities of 1992,
- having regard to the relevant CJEU and ECtHR case-law,
- having regard to Council Directive 2000/43/EC implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin,
- having regard to Directive 2004/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States,
- having regard to its resolution of 1 June 2006 on the situation of Roma women in the European Union¹,
- having regard to Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law (the Framework Decision on Racism and Xenophobia),
- having regard to its resolution of 9 September 2010 on the situation of Roma and on freedom of movement in the European Union²,
- having regard to its resolution of 9 March 2011 on the EU strategy on Roma inclusion³,
- having regard to its resolution of 11 June 2013 on social housing in the European Union⁴,

¹ Texts adopted, P6_TA(2006)0244.

² Texts adopted, P7_TA(2010)0312.

³ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2011)0092.

⁴ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0246.

- having regard to its resolution of 14 March 2013 on strengthening the fight against racism, xenophobia and hate crime⁵,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 5 April 2011 on an EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020 (COM(2011)0173) and to the European Council conclusions of 24 June 2011,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 21 May 2012 entitled ‘National Roma Integration Strategies: a first step in the implementation of the EU Framework’ (COM(2012)0226),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 26 June 2013 on steps forward in implementing national Roma integration strategies (COM(2013)0454),
- having regard to the Commission proposal for a Council recommendation of 26 June 2013 on effective Roma integration measures in the Member States (COM(2013)0460),
- having regard to its study of January 2011 on measures to promote the situation of Roma EU citizens in the European Union,
- having regard to the survey by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights presented in May 2012, entitled ‘The situation of Roma in 11 EU Member States’,
- having regard to the hearing on the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies held at the European Parliament on 18 September 2013,
- having regard to the Commission report of 4 September 2013 on health inequalities in the European Union (SWD(2013)0328),
- having regard to its resolution of 4 July 2013 on the impact of the crisis in access to care for vulnerable groups,
- having regard to the Commission staff working document of 20 February 2013 on investing in health (SWD(2013)0043),
- having regard to its resolution of 8 February 2011 on reducing health inequalities in the EU (2010/2089(INI)),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 20 December 2009 entitled ‘Solidarity in Health: Reducing Health Inequalities in the EU’ (COM(2009)0567),
- having regard to the question tabled to the Commission on the progress made in the implementation of the National Roma Integration Strategies (O-000117/2013 – B7-0528/2013),
- having regard to Rules 115(5) and 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,

⁵ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0090.

- A. whereas the European Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights;
- B. whereas the Roma suffer discrimination throughout Europe and whereas their socio-economic and fundamental rights situation is in many cases worse than that of non-Roma in comparable situations;
- C. whereas recent events in EU Member States, acts of violence against Roma, the lack of proper inclusion policies, the use of biased anti-Roma rhetoric, structural and systemic discrimination, clear breaches of the European Convention on Human Rights and of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and the lack of judicial investigation and prosecution when violations of fundamental rights occur have demonstrated that anti-Gypsyism is still prevalent in the EU and that it needs to be tackled more vigorously at all levels;
- D. whereas poverty and social exclusion among many Roma has reached a critical level which limits the life prospects of Roma families and puts young Roma at risk of falling into poverty from a very early age;
- E. whereas negative attitudes on the part of non-Roma towards Roma and overt discrimination contribute to the exclusion of Roma;
- F. whereas the growing exclusion of Roma is detrimental to growth and increases public budget deficits;
- G. whereas social inequalities and regional disparities result in a deteriorating quality of life for rural communities; whereas poorly managed urban development accentuates and contributes to growing urban poverty;
- H. whereas the Commission communication of 2013 on steps forward in implementing national Roma integration strategies shows that little progress has been achieved by the Member States in the implementation of their National Roma Integration Strategies (NRIS), even for the establishment of structural preconditions for the effective implementation thereof;
- I. whereas the internal task force set up by the Commission in 2010 has examined the use of EU funds for Roma inclusion in 18 countries and found that Member States do not properly use EU money and that although EU funds have a considerable potential for bolstering Roma inclusion, bottlenecks at national, regional and local level prevent them from fostering the effective social and economic integration of Roma;
- J. whereas in most Member States the legitimate representation of Roma and the involvement of the relevant civil society organisations in planning, implementing and monitoring national strategies remain insufficient;
- K. whereas the involvement of local and regional authorities in developing, implementing, monitoring, evaluating and reviewing Roma policies is a key element for the effective implementation of the NRIS, considering that they form the level of governance with most of the practical responsibilities for the integration of Roma but that the level of their involvement by Member States is low;

- L. whereas the allocation of targeted financial resources should be accompanied by genuine political will on the part of the Member States, as this is an absolute precondition for the success of the implementation of the strategies, and whereas only a few Member States have an integrated approach to allocating resources from EU and national funds, while in others the implementation of the national strategy is delayed owing to the underutilisation of EU funds, especially in the absence of concrete measures;
- M. whereas the total amount of European funds dedicated specifically to the integration of Roma populations remains unclear; whereas it is therefore crucial that the Commission continues to monitor how Member States spend EU funds and obtains guarantees on the proper use of those funds;
- N. whereas sound monitoring and systematic and consistent assessment of the results of Roma integration measures represent a crucial factor for efficient implementation of the NRIS, and whereas fewer than half of the Member States have envisaged some mechanism for regular reporting and evaluation;
- O. whereas the EU Framework provided for the setting up of National Contact Points for Roma integration in each Member State and stressed that they should be fully empowered to effectively coordinate Roma inclusion across policy areas;
- P. whereas Member States should take all necessary measures to ensure that Roma are not discriminated against and that their human rights, as enshrined in the Charter and the European Convention of Human Rights as well as in EU law, are respected, protected and promoted;
- Q. whereas Roma suffer from discrimination and social exclusion and special attention should be paid to minors and women within Roma communities, in particular with respect to their fundamental rights, including their rights to education and to physical integrity, as well as to the prohibition of slavery and forced labour, as enshrined in Articles 3 and 5 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights;
- R. whereas the effective fighting of anti-Roma prejudices and negative attitudes requires strong awareness-raising campaigns, initiatives that foster intercultural dialogue and cooperation, and cultivating majority support in favour of Roma inclusion;
- S. whereas the Roma who are citizens of the European Union should fully enjoy and be able to exercise the rights and duties associated with European citizenship;
- T. whereas the Roma share responsibility for their current dire situation with the wider society, and whereas Roma communities need to tackle the wrongs and problems within their communities;
1. Strongly condemns discrimination and racism against Roma, and regrets the fact that in the European Union the fundamental rights of Roma persons are still not always fully upheld; calls on the Commission and the Member States to fight discrimination and ensure that the relevant EU directives, such as Directives 2000/43/EC⁶ and 2012/29/EU⁷, are

⁶ Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons

properly transposed and implemented;

2. Calls on the Commission to set up an effective EU-wide monitoring mechanism regarding the fundamental rights of Roma, anti-Roma incidents and hate crime against Roma, and to take strong action – including through infringement procedures, where relevant – in cases of violations of the fundamental rights of Roma in Member States, especially violations of access to and exercise of economic and social rights, of the right to freedom of movement and of residence, of the right of access to healthcare and education, of the right to equality and non-discrimination (including from multiple discrimination), of the right to the protection of personal data and the prohibition of the creation of registers based on ethnicity and race;
3. Welcomes the Commission’s initiative to develop an on-line tool to help local authorities understand and apply the free movement rights of EU citizens; condemns, however, any attempts to unlawfully limit the right to free movement of Roma and calls on the Member States to stop illegal expulsions;
4. Condemns all forms of anti-Gypsyism, and in particular hate speech in public and political discourse; urges the Member States to renew their commitment in the fight against anti-Gypsyism, acknowledging its role in undermining the successful implementation of the NRIS; urges all parties to refrain from anti-Roma statements that incite hatred;
5. Calls on the Member States to investigate and put an end to ethnic profiling, police abuse and other human rights violations against Roma, to ensure that bias-motivated offences are punishable and are recorded and investigated properly and that victims are offered proper assistance and protection, and to create specific training programmes for police and other public officers working with Roma communities;
6. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to address the issue of the lack of birth registrations and certificates for Roma residing in the EU;
7. Calls on the Member States to provide an effective response to Roma exclusion by implementing the measures set out in their NRIS with concrete targets, timelines and allocated budgets; calls on the Commission and the Member States to actively involve Roma representatives and civil society in policy development, management, implementation, monitoring and evaluation in respect of the NRIS and the projects affecting their communities, by setting up mechanisms for regular and transparent dialogue in accordance with the principles of the ‘European Code of Conduct on Partnership’; calls on the Member States to identify in their NRIS how exactly they intend to empower and involve the Roma in the process; calls on the Commission to support the efforts of Member States by raising awareness among Roma representatives of the opportunities presented by the NRIS, and to encourage them to play a more active role in the integration process;

irrespective of racial or ethnic origin.

⁷ Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA.

8. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to ensure sufficient funding for building a strong Roma civil society having the capacity, knowledge and expertise to undertake monitoring and evaluation;
9. Calls on the Commission to scale up current efforts to work with Member States, local authorities and other relevant actors in order to ensure effective communication in respect of the implementation of national strategies and the benefits of the social integration of Roma, to promote intercultural dialogue and awareness-raising campaigns that seek to put an end to anti-Roma prejudice and negative attitudes by changing mindsets, and to facilitate initiatives that achieve majority support for policies to promote Roma inclusion;
10. Urges the Commission and the Member States to stress the gender dimension in the NRIS and to involve Roma women as well as Roma youth in the process of implementing and monitoring the NRIS;
11. Urges the Member States to involve local and regional authorities in reviewing, managing, implementing and monitoring their national strategies, and to assist and support the local and regional authorities in the measures they need to undertake for the realisation of Roma inclusion under all four pillars of the NRIS, as well as in implementing anti-discrimination measures;
12. Calls on the Member States to produce disaggregated data with the assistance of the FRA, the UNDP and the World Bank on the socio-economic situation of Roma, the degree to which Roma experience discrimination on the grounds of ethnic origin, and hate crimes committed against them, while fully respecting data protection standards and the right to privacy, and to develop, in cooperation with the Commission, the baseline indicators and measurable targets that are essential for a robust monitoring system in order to ensure reliable feedback on the progress made in the implementation of the NRIS and in improvement of the situation of Roma, with particular regard to minors and women; calls on the Commission to enhance the coordination role of the FRA and fully use its capabilities;
13. Calls on the Commission to define a timeline and clear and measurable targets and indicators for the implementation of the NRIS for the Member States, in line with the Europe 2020 strategy, to assist Member States in improving their absorption capacity for EU funds, and to prepare country-by-country reports and country-specific recommendations;
14. Calls on the Member States to take into account the multidimensional and territorial aspects of poverty, to mobilise sufficient budgetary resources from national budget and EU programmes – primarily from the European Social Fund, the European Regional Development Fund and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development – inter alia through the use of Community-Led Local Development, Joint Action Plans, Integrated Territorial Investments and Integrated Operations in order to carry out the objectives identified in their NRIS, to develop integrated multi-sectorial and multi-fund programmes targeting the most deprived micro-regions, to include Roma integration in the partnership agreements for the programming period 2014-2020, and to establish their Operational Programmes for the promotion of equal opportunities and the prevention of discrimination and segregation;

15. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to introduce special grant schemes in the form of small and flexible funds for community projects and for mobilising local communities on social inclusion issues;
16. Calls on the Member States to bring their general mainstream education, employment, housing, and health policies into line with the objectives of the NRIS;
17. Calls on the Commission and its Roma Task Force to continue assessing how Member States spend EU funds earmarked for Roma inclusion, as well as the impact of their national policies on the lives of Roma, to report their findings to Parliament and the Council on a yearly basis, and to identify concrete ways to improve the effectiveness of EU funds in the reports; calls on the Commission to facilitate structured input from experts and civil society, and to ensure effective cooperation between the Platform for Roma Inclusion and the rotating EU presidencies;
18. Calls on the Commission to conduct a periodical external evaluation of the impact of EU funding on the social inclusion of Roma, and to identify good practices and projects realised with the help of EU funding and safeguard their long-term sustainability;
19. Calls on the Member States to work together with local and regional authorities in order to eliminate spatial segregation, stop unlawful forced evictions and prevent the homelessness now faced by Roma, and also to set up effective and inclusive housing policies, including by providing appropriate housing, and social and health assistance in the case of evictions;
20. Calls on the Member States to use urban planning for integration and desegregation, and to develop the infrastructural and environmental qualities of the cities most markedly affected by social imbalances, as well as to strengthen the links between urban and rural areas with a view to promoting inclusive development;
21. Calls on the Member States to eliminate segregation in the field of education and the illicit placement of Roma children in special schools, where relevant, and to create the necessary infrastructure and mechanisms to facilitate access to quality education for all Roma children, to address early school-leaving among Roma pupils, inter alia by involving parents in the education process, to promote Roma children's access to early childhood education and development services, to provide training for teachers so that they are able to address specific situations which may arise when working with Roma children, to provide inclusive support structures such as tutoring and mentoring to Roma students in order to prevent them dropping out of secondary or tertiary education, to ensure their access to the Erasmus programme, and to promote internship opportunities in order to enable them to gain appropriate work experience;
22. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to address the high levels of unemployment among Roma and to remove all barriers to accessing employment, including by using existing mechanisms such as the Youth Guarantee and the flagship initiatives of the Europe 2020 strategy; calls on the Member States to create anti-discrimination mechanisms, specialised training programmes and programmes to facilitate access to the job market, including the proportionate representation of Roma in public services, encouraging self-employment, mobilising assets for creating more jobs in sectors with the highest employment potential – such as the inclusive green economy, health and

social services, and the digital economy – and creating partnerships between public authorities and employers;

23. Calls on the European institutions to create internship programmes and employ Roma in all institutions;
24. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to address the existing health disparities that Roma face and the prevalent discrimination regarding their access to healthcare, to set up specifically targeted programmes and to allocate sufficient financial resources from national and EU funds, with particular emphasis on child and maternal health;
25. Calls on the Member States to determine precisely the National Contact Points for Roma Inclusion and their responsibilities in the implementation of the NRIS, ensuring that they have sufficient authority, capacity and political and financial support to fulfil their role effectively as well as adequate links with the Roma community and civil society organisations, to ensure that the Contact Points are accessible by clearly identifying them and to ensure that their communication with stakeholders at all levels is transparent;
26. Reminds the Member States that good practices, such as Roma mediators' programmes and the European Alliance of Cities and Regions for Roma Inclusion implemented by the Council of Europe, are successful on the ground, which should encourage Member States to show more political determination in favour of the effective inclusion of Roma;
27. Supports firmly the Commission's proposal for a Council Recommendation on effective Roma integration measures in the Member States, and urges the Council to speedily endorse it;
28. Stresses that integration is a two-track exercise and that every integration effort implies shared but asymmetrical responsibilities of the parties in light of their capacities and their economic, political and social resources;
29. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Governments and Parliaments of the Member States and the Council of Europe.