Resolution on the progress made in the implementation of the national Roma integration strategies

2013/2924(RSP) - 12/12/2013 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution tabled by the Committee on Civil Liberties on the progress made in the implementation of the National Roma Integration Strategies. It strongly condemned discrimination and racism against Roma, and called 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. It condemned any attempts to unlawfully limit the right to free movement of Roma and called on Member States to stop illegal expulsions.

Member States were urged to 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. Specific training programmes should be created for police and other public officers working with Roma communities.

Funding: Members called on the Commission and its Roma Task Force to continue assessing **how Member States spend EU funds earmarked for Roma inclusion**, and 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.

Member States must **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 National Roma Integration Strategies (NRIS).

In addition, Parliament wanted to see special grant schemes in the form of small and flexible funds for community projects and for mobilising local communities on social inclusion issues.

Implementation of NRIS: Parliament called on Member States to set out in their NRIS concrete targets, timelines and allocated budgets, and 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. The Commission was asked to define a timeline and clear and measurable targets and indicators for the implementation of the NRIS, to assist Member States in improving their absorption capacity for EU funds, and to prepare country-by-country reports and country-specific recommendations.

Gender: Members urged 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.

Data: Member States were asked to produce disaggregated data 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.

Education: Parliament stressed the need to eliminate segregation in the field of education and the illicit placement of Roma children in special schools, to address early school-leaving among Roma pupils, and to provide training for teachers so that they are able to address specific situations which may arise when working with Roma children. It also wanted inclusive support structures such as tutoring and mentoring to Roma students in order to prevent them dropping out of secondary or tertiary education.

Employment: the resolution noted the high levels of unemployment among Roma and called for the removal of all barriers to accessing employment, including by using existing mechanisms such as the Youth Guarantee and the flagship initiatives of the Europe 2020 strategy. Member States were asked to create **specialised training programmes** to facilitate access to the job market, including the proportionate representation of Roma in public services. The European institutions were asked to create internship programmes and employ Roma in all institutions.

Health: lastly, Member States and the Commission were asked to address the prevalent discrimination regarding Roma 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.