Fundamental rights aspects in Roma integration in the EU: fighting anti-gypsyism

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The Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs adopted an own-initiative report by Soraya POST (S&D, SE) on the fundamental rights aspects in Roma integration in the EU: fighting anti-Gypsyism.

Despite efforts at national, European and international level, persistent anti-Gypsyism can be detected at all levels of European society throughout all of Europe on a daily basis.

In general, Members stated that in order to fight against the subconscious societal consensus to exclude Roma, it is essential to **educate mainstream societies** about the diversity of Roma, their history and culture. Members States are called, in this context, to take full responsibility for their Roma citizens and launch long-term awareness raising campaigns.

Reconciling and building trust: Members urged the Commission to set up a **truth and reconciliation commission** at EU level to acknowledge the persecution, exclusion and disownment of Roma throughout the centuries. Member States are encouraged to make the history of Roma part of the curricula in schools and to commemorate the victims of the Roma Holocaust and to mark 2 August as Roma Holocaust Memorial Day.

Performance checks: most mainstream programmes fail to reach out to the most disadvantaged, in particular the Roma. The Court of Auditors should carry out performance checks of EU programmes, such as Erasmus+ and the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI), in a more thorough manner and on a regular basis.

The Commission is called on, *inter alia*, to: (i) assess EU programmes and funding opportunities; and (ii) reform European Structural and Investment Fund to provide financial support for the fight against anti-Gypsyism in a more proactive way.

Securing equal rights and fighting anti-Gypsyism through training: Member States are called on to:

- implement and enforce Council Directive 2000/43/EC in order to effectively prevent and eliminate all forms of discrimination against Roma;
- implement and enforce the Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA as it provides the means for a successful fight against anti-Gypsyist rhetoric and violence against Roma.

Members urged the Commission and Member States to intensify their work with NGOs to deliver **best practice training** on countering prejudice as well as on the effective countering of hate speech campaigns through the mapping of NGO partners' specific needs and demands in this respect.

Members expressed deep concern at the number of stateless Roma people in Europe, resulting in the complete denial of their access to social, educational and health care services and pushing them to the very margins of society.

Member States are called on to:

- **end statelessness**;

- carry out birth registration without discrimination;
- ensure access to all the essential basic services, including healthcare, housing and education;
- condemn **forced sterilisation** and provide compensation to Roma women having been subject to state-supported sterilisation accompanied by a public apology to the victims of this crime against humanity;
- ensure the equal treatment of Roma in access to employment opportunities;
- provide non-discrimination-related training courses for all public officials, who are key to the correct implementation of EU and Member State legislation.

National Roma integration strategies: Members noted with concern that the efforts and financial means which have been invested in the Roma community have not contributed significantly to the improvement of their living conditions and have not advanced Roma integration, in particular at the local level. Member States are called upon to fully implement the integration strategies and **updated them regularly**.

Members called for the EU institutions to **mainstream Roma rights in the context of external relations** and insisted strongly on the need to fight anti-Gypsyism and promote Roma rights in the candidate countries and potential candidate countries.

Political groups in Parliament and political parties in the Member States are urged to respect the revised charter of European political parties for a non-racist society, and for them to regularly renew their commitment and to condemn and sanction hate speech.

Lastly, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights is called on to prepare a **study on anti-Gypsyism** in the EU and candidate countries, to focus on anti-Gypsyism during their work on Roma issues and to monitor it in all relevant fields.