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EU strategy on Roma inclusion

P7_TA(2011)0092

European Parliament resolution of 9 March 2011 on the EU strategy on Roma inclusion (2010/2276(INI))

(2012/C 199 E/15)

The European Parliament,

— having regard to the Charter of Fundamental Rights, in particular Articles 1, 8, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, 35 and 45,

— having regard to international human rights law, notably the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the 1992 UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child,

— having regard to European conventions protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms, notably the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR) and the related case law of the European Court of Human Rights, the European Social Charter and the related recommendations of the European Committee of Social Rights, and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of the Council of Europe,

— having regard to Articles 2 and 3 of the Treaty on European Union, which lay down the fundamental rights and principles underpinning the European Union, including the principle of non-discrimination and free movement,

— having regard to Article 5(3) of the Treaty on European Union, which provides a legal basis for Union action if the objectives of the proposed action cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States but can be better achieved at Union level,

— having regard to Article 6 of the Treaty on European Union, which deals with fundamental rights in the Union,

— having regard to Article 7 of the Treaty on European Union, which provides for sanctions and the suspension of rights in case of serious breaches of Union law,

— having regard to Articles 9 and 10 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which obliges the Union to take into account – as a horizontal requirement – the promotion of a high level of employment, the guarantee of adequate social protection, the fight against social exclusion, a high level of education, training and protection of human health and the combating of discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin,

— having regard to Article 19 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which gives the Council the power to take appropriate action to combat discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin,

— having regard to Article 151 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which defines the promotion of employment, improved living and working conditions, and proper social protection as objectives of the Union and the Member States,

— having regard to Article 153 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which defines the fields in which the Union is to support and complement the activities of the Member States, and in particular to Article 153(1)(h) on the integration of persons excluded from the labour market and Article 153(1)(j) on the combating of social exclusion,

— having regard to Title XVIII of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which deals with economic, social and territorial cohesion,

— having regard to Article 352 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union ('flexibility clause'), which provides for the adoption of appropriate measures to attain one of the objectives set out in the Treaties,

— having regard to Articles 3, 8, 16, 18, 20, 21 and 157 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

— having regard to the Council of Europe Recommendation 1355 (1998) on Fighting Social Exclusion and Strengthening Social Cohesion in Europe,

— having regard to the Council of Europe's European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, which recognises regional or minority languages as integral parts of Europe's cultural heritage, as well as the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities,

— having regard to its resolution of 28 April 2005 on the situation of the Roma in the European Union ([1]),

— having regard to its resolution of 1 June 2006 on the situation of Roma women in the European Union ([2]),

— having regard to its resolution of 15 November 2007 on application of Directive 2004/38/EC on the right of EU citizens and their families to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States ([3]),

— having regard to its resolution of 31 January 2008 on a European Strategy on the Roma ([4]),

— having regard to its resolution of 10 July 2008 on the census of the Roma on the basis of ethnicity in Italy ([5]),

— having regard to its resolution of 11 March 2009 on the social situation of the Roma and their improved access to the labour market in the EU ([6]),

— having regard to its resolution of 25 March 2010 on the Second European Roma Summit ([7]),

([1]) OJ C 45 E, 23.2.2006, p. 129.
([2]) OJ C 298 E, 8.12.2006, p. 283.
([3]) OJ C 282 E, 6.11.2008, p. 428.
([4]) OJ C 68 E, 21.3.2009, p. 31.
([5]) OJ C 294 E, 3.12.2009, p. 54.
([6]) OJ C 87 E, 1.4.2010, p. 60.
([7]) OJ C 4 E, 7.1.2011, p. 7.

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— having regard to its resolution of 9 September 2010 on the situation of the Roma and on freedom of movement in the European Union ([1]),

— having regard to Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data ([2]),

— having regard to Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin ([3]),

— having regard to Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation ([4]),

— having regard to Directive 2004/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States ([5]),

— having regard to Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law ([6]),

— having regard to Regulation (EU) No 437/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 May 2010 amending Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 on the European Regional Development Fund as regards the eligibility of housing interventions in favour of marginalised communities ([7]),

— having regard to the conclusions of the European Councils of December 2007 and June 2008 and the conclusions of the General Affairs Council of December 2008,

— having regard to the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council's conclusions on the Inclusion of the Roma, adopted in Luxembourg on 8 June 2009, with special regard to the Ten Common Basic Principles on Roma Inclusion annexed to the conclusions,

— having regard to the Commission Communication on the social and economic integration of the Roma in Europe (COM(2010)0133), the creation of a task force ([8]) (on 7 September 2010), the first findings of the Task Force ([9]) and the reports of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights,

— having regard to the Commission Staff Working Document entitled 'Roma in Europe: The Implementation of European Union Instruments and Policies for Roma Inclusion – Progress Report 2008-2010' (SEC(2010)0400),

— having regard to the First European Roma Summit, held in Brussels on 16 September 2008, and the Second European Roma Summit, held in Córdoba on 8 April 2010,

([1]) Texts adopted, P7_TA(2010)0312.
([2]) OJ L 281, 23.11.1995, p. 31.
([3]) OJ L 180, 19.7.2000, p. 22.
([4]) OJ L 303, 2.12.2000, p. 16.
([5]) OJ L 158, 30.4.2004, p. 77.
([6]) OJ L 328, 6.12.2008, p. 55.
([7]) OJ L 132, 29.5.2010, p. 1.
([8]) IP/10/1097.
([9]) MEMO/10/701 of 21.12.2010.

— having regard to the reports on Roma, racism and xenophobia in the Member States of the EU in 2009, published by the Fundamental Rights Agency ([1]), and to the reports by the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, Thomas Hammarberg,

— having regard to the related recommendations, opinions and declarations made by the Council of Europe, such as the conclusions of the Council of Europe High-level meeting on Roma (Strasbourg, 20 October 2010) ([2]),

— having regard to the proclamation in 2005 of the Decade of Roma Inclusion and the establishment of the Roma Education Fund by a number of EU Member States, candidate countries and other countries in which the Union institutions have a significant presence,

— having regard to the recommendations adopted by the UN Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination at its 77th session (2-27 August 2010),

— having regard to the Council of Europe report entitled 'Fourth ECRI Report on France', published on 15 June 2010,

— having regard to Rule 48 of its Rules of Procedure,

— having regard to the report of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs and the opinions of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, the Committee on Regional Development and the Committee on Culture and Education (A7-0043/2011),

A. whereas a large proportion of Europe's 10-12 million Roma – most of whom are EU citizens – have suffered systematic discrimination and therefore are struggling against an intolerable degree of social, cultural and economic exclusion as well as human rights violations, and experience severe stigmatisation and discrimination in public and private life,

B. whereas there are still economic and social disparities between the various regions of the European Union and whereas a significant proportion of the Roma community live in regions which are among the least economically and socially advanced in the Union,

C. whereas the European Union is founded on the principles enshrined in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and in the EU Treaties, which include the principles of non-discrimination, the specific rights intrinsic to EU citizenship, free movement and equality,

D. whereas the EU trio in their joint declaration at the second Roma Summit held in Cordoba on 8-9 April 2010 committed themselves to advancing the mainstreaming of Roma issues in European and national policies on fundamental rights and protection against racism, poverty and social exclusion; improving the design of the roadmap of the Integrated Platform on Roma Inclusion and prioritizing key objectives and results; and ensuring that existing financial instruments of the European Union, in particular the Structural Funds, are made available to the Roma,

([1]) Report on Racism and Xenophobia in the Member States of the EU in 2009; European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey, Data in Focus Report: The Roma in 2009; The Situation of Roma EU Citizens Moving to and Settling in Other EU Member States; and Housing Conditions of Roma and Travellers in the European Union: Comparative Report.

([2]) CM(2010)133.

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E. whereas the exclusion of Roma children from the education system has an adverse impact on the other rights of members of the Roma community, in particular the right to work, and whereas this exacerbates their marginalisation,

F. whereas the communities that wish to maintain their traditional nomadic lifestyle within Europe are those most affected by illiteracy, and whereas there are therefore cultural barriers to the schooling of their children,

G. whereas the material conditions required for the schooling of Roma children must be provided, and whereas this must include the appointment of school mediators,

H. whereas the EU has developed a range of useful tools, mechanisms and funds to foster the inclusion of Roma, but these are scattered across policy areas and have not been properly monitored, and therefore their effect and benefit remain limited and hard to measure; thus, despite the existence of numerous cooperation mechanisms and institutions, the problems and challenges regarding the inclusion of Roma have so far not been met effectively, and therefore the no-change option is unsustainable,

I. whereas a 'Decade of Roma inclusion' was launched in 2005 to combat discrimination and improve the economic and social situation of the Roma, and whereas the signatories to the Declaration of the Decade – Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Montenegro, the Czech Republic, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – undertook to work toward eliminating discrimination and closing the unacceptable gaps between Roma and the rest of society,

J. whereas true integration of the Roma is possible only by means of mutual recognition of the rights and obligations of the communities concerned,

K. whereas repatriations and returns of Roma have been taking place in several Member States and are often accompanied by the stigmatisation of Roma and general anti-Gypsyism in political discourse,

L. whereas non-discrimination – although indispensable – is still an inadequate answer to a history of structural discrimination affecting the Roma and whereas it is therefore necessary to complement and reinforce equality legislation and policies by addressing the specific needs of the Roma regarding the full respect, protection and promotion of fundamental rights, equality and non-discrimination, the full and non-discriminatory application of legislation, policies and mechanisms to monitor and sanction violations of the rights of Roma, as well as the fulfilment of and equal access to their specific human rights to employment, housing, culture, health care, participation in public affairs, training, education and free movement by means of an EU-level strategy,

M. whereas the soft policy approach of the Open Method of Coordination relying on the voluntary participation of the Member States and without any hard incentive to induce effective performance proved to be insufficient in fostering Roma inclusion and this limitation may be partially obviated by tying EU funding mechanisms more closely to peer review processes,

N. whereas women from ethnic minorities and especially Roma women face much more serious multiple discrimination than men from the same ethnic group or women from the majority, and whereas the employment rate of Roma women is even lower than that of Roma men, whilst on the other hand, given their role in the family, women can be the cornerstones of the inclusion of marginalised communities,

O. whereas it is necessary to pay particular attention to minors and children when working out a European strategy for the integration of the Roma,

P. whereas the EU Strategy on Roma Inclusion shall address all forms of violations of the fundamental rights of Roma – including discrimination, segregation, hate speech, ethnic profiling and unlawful fingerprinting, as well as unlawful eviction and expulsion – by ensuring the full transposition and stronger implementation of all related directives and EU law,

Q. whereas growing stigmatisation of Roma and anti-Gypsyism in political discourse and general public are causes for concern, whereas the questionable repatriations and returns of Roma that have been taking place in several Member States have created fear and anxiety amongst the Roma population as well as worrying levels of racism and discrimination,

R. whereas the chances of the Roma accessing the same rights and obligations as citizens of a Member State are largely dependant on their being provided with legal documentation of citizenship,

S. whereas access for the Roma people to high-quality education and vocational training, the sharing and understanding of their culture, their values and their cultural heritage, their involvement in associations and better representation for their community are essential strands of a holistic approach to the implementation of national and European strategies for their inclusion and involvement in society,

T. whereas high-quality education and training has an influence on an individual's future life, in both personal and professional terms, and on his or her involvement in society, and it is therefore essential to ensure that everyone has the same access to education and training without discrimination of any kind, and whereas the inclusion of cultural diversity and action to combat stereotypes in school curricula from a very early age is an important tool for Roma integration and mutual understanding,

U. whereas on 19 October 2010 the Commission announced the presentation of an EU framework for national Roma strategies in April 2011 ([1]),

1. Calls on the Commission to propose and the Council to adopt an EU Strategy on Roma Inclusion (hereinafter: 'the Strategy') as an EU-wide, indicative, inclusive and multilevel action plan, which will be prepared and implemented at all political and administrative level and can evolve as needed, builds on the fundamental values of equality, access to rights, non-discrimination and gender equality and is based on the tasks, objectives, principles and instruments defined by the Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights, as referred to above, as well as the relevant EU legislation and is furthermore based on shared competences, as well as the supporting, coordinating and complementary actions of the Union;

2. Recognises that Roma communities face discrimination and/or frequent prejudice in several Member States and that this situation is exacerbated by the current economic and financial crisis, resulting in loss of employment; stresses that the inclusion of the Roma population is both the responsibility of all the Member States and the EU institutions; calls on the Member States to fully cooperate with the EU and representatives of the Roma population in setting up integrated policies, making use of all the EU financial resources available under the EU funds, and in particular under the ERDF, ESF and EAFRD, to promote Roma inclusion at national, regional and local level; invites the Commission to pay particular attention to requests for technical assistance in a bid to improve the effectiveness of all available instruments for the integration of Roma communities;

3. Recalls that European programmes and funding are available and can be used for the social and economic integration of the Roma people but that improved communication is needed on all levels within the local authorities, civil society and the potential target groups so that Roma people are informed about them; furthermore, encourages the use of existing EU funds for building new houses or renovating existing ones, improving the engineering infrastructure, local utilities, communication systems, education, measures for access to the job market, etc.;

([1]) MEMO/10/502.

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4. Calls on the Commission to:

(a) adopt *priority areas* for the Strategy, above all:

— fundamental rights, in particular non-discrimination, equality and free movement,

— education, vocational and lifelong training,

— culture,

— employment,

— housing, including a healthy environment and adequate infrastructure,

— healthcare, and improving the health situation of Roma, and

— political and civil participation of Roma civil society, including young Roma;

(b) present in the Strategy a roadmap for introducing binding minimum standards at EU level for the priority areas of education, employment, housing and healthcare;

(c) define the *objectives* of the Strategy linked to the priority areas, above all by:

— adopting and strengthening effective anti-discrimination legislation and measures to protect against discrimination in all fields of life, including multiple discrimination, and to guarantee, protect and promote fundamental rights, equality and non-discrimination and the right to free movement, including awareness-raising actions targeting Roma and non-Roma, in order to eradicate discriminatory obstacles,

— combating anti-Gypsyism, prejudices, stereotypes, racism and xenophobia, stigmatisation and hate speech against Roma, notably by ensuring full implementation of relevant legislation and imposing appropriate punishment for racially-motivated crimes,

— ensuring that the media do not disseminate prejudice against the Roma community and that they promote a positive image of diversity, as well as allowing a more proportionate participation of Roma in the media,

— preventing human rights abuses and protecting victims, ensuring that legal aid and effective legal remedies are provided for them, with particular attention to the situation of Roma children and women, who are often subject to multiple discrimination,

— introducing preventive measures against trafficking in human beings, victims of which are over-represented among the Roma,

— training of persons involved at all levels of administration, justice and police services on non-discriminatory practices,

— setting up dialogue between local authorities, judicial bodies, police and the Roma community in order to abolish discrimination in the judicial sphere, improve confidence and combat ethnic profiling,

— ensuring equal access to quality education for all,

— providing equal access to adult vocational training and access to lifelong learning,

— ensuring equal access to social services and basic care infrastructure, such as child care and care of the elderly,

— abolishing school and classroom segregation, also by creating an inclusive school climate and employing Roma school mediators,

— providing equal access to adequate preparation for competitiveness in the job market,

— providing equal access to early childhood education,

— ensuring the education of girls,

— providing intercultural education,

— facilitating dialogue between families and schools, particularly through mediators,

— increasing the number of Roma teachers and ensuring the protection of the language and identity of Roma children by making education available in their own language,

— introducing measures to prevent early school-leaving and academic failure,

— introducing measures to send children who have dropped out of the school system back to school, such as by the creation of second-chance programmes,

— providing equal access to quality secondary and higher education and scholarship programmes,

— combating the over-representation of Roma in special schools,

— combating child poverty, reducing children's separation from their families and preventing their placement in foster homes and special care as a result of poverty,

— ensuring effective access to the labour market and developing and making available micro-credit for entrepreneurship and self-employment,

— ensuring equal access to affordable and healthy housing and abolishing territorial segregation,

— guaranteeing the right to a registered address, including the possibility of registering through a civil society organisation, and guaranteeing a complete and up-to-date register of births, marriages and deaths for all Roma citizens, as well as combating discrimination in the issuing of administrative documents,

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— combating health inequalities by providing equal access to quality health care and health promotion, particularly in order to reduce health inequalities with special emphasis on the protection of vulnerable groups including women, children, the elderly and people with disabilities,

— empowering Roma civil society, including by means of a capacity-building policy and by strengthening administrative capacity at national, regional and local level as well as encouraging the civil and political participation of Roma people,

— enhancing active citizenship, involving Roma in all spheres of public and political life and strengthening their representation in institutions and elected bodies at local, national and EU level,

— introducing an enlargement and neighbourhood dimension of the Strategy, requiring the improvement of the situation of Roma in the acceding and candidate countries as well as potential candidates and those countries involved in the European Neighbourhood Policy; furthermore, prioritising the evaluation of progress in this field in the Annual Progress Reports as well as reviews of EU Neighbour Countries,

— ensuring respect for culture and cultural preservation,

— ensuring gender equality mainstreaming by addressing the specific needs of Roma women while involving them in the development of policies; stopping the practice of child marriages,

— stopping returns of Roma to countries where they might be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;

5. Stresses that complex programmes and programmes adapted to the specific needs of Roma communities living in different circumstances are crucial, and that in this context there is a need to provide the Roma with access to personalised services on site;

6. Recalls that adequate income support, inclusive labour markets and access to quality services are basic pillars of the active inclusion strategy presented in Recommendation 2008/867/EC;

7. Stresses that social assistance, decent housing and clothing, accessible high-quality early development programmes and non-segregated, high-quality education with an inclusive climate and a willingness to involve parents are essential to ensure equal opportunities, the chance of full participation in society and the lack of future discrimination; stresses the need to combat truancy and early school leaving and to provide grants and financial support; maintains that education, training opportunities and job assistance offered to adults are crucial to support the recruitment and continued employment of the Roma in order to avoid the reproduction of social exclusion;

8. Urges that the prevention of marginalisation should begin in early childhood, so that as soon as a child is born it is entered in the population register in such a way that its nationality is recognised and it comes within the sphere of all social services; considers in particular that Roma children should be guaranteed high-quality early education services and that special measures should be taken to support their schooling;

9. Recalls the challenges that Roma, especially women and girls, face in terms of extreme poverty, discrimination and exclusion, resulting in lack of access to high educational levels, employment and social services; asks the Commission and Member States to address the particular needs of Roma women and girls by applying a gender perspective in all policies for Roma inclusion, and to provide protection for especially vulnerable subgroups;

10. Calls on the Member States to take concrete action to inform their citizens about the historical and current situation of the Roma, using amongst other things the reports from the FRA as a source of material for this purpose;

11. Underlines that the EU Strategy on Roma inclusion should also include measures to ensure the monitoring of the situation of Roma in relation to the respect and promotion of their fundamental social rights, equality, non-discrimination and free movement in the EU;

12. Stresses that access for the Roma people to high-quality education and vocational training, the sharing and understanding of their culture, values and cultural heritage, their involvement in associations and better representation for their community are essential strands of a holistic approach to the implementation of national and European strategies for their inclusion and involvement in society;

13. Emphasises that quality education and training influence an individual's future personal and professional life, and that it is therefore essential to ensure equal access to effective education and training systems, without discrimination or segregation of any kind;

14. Stresses the importance of endorsing the Strategy and overseeing its implementation in a transparent manner with the primary responsibility falling on democratically accountable ministers within the Council, and emphasises that the Strategy should in no way be divisive for the EU, creating splits among Member States, but on the contrary should contribute to the reinforcement of community integration;

15. Underlines the importance of appropriate use of the funds allocated to the individual Member States in the priority sectors provided for by the Strategy;

16. Highlights the need for the objectives of the Strategy to be subjected to checking and measurement with regard to the degree of attainment so as to introduce award criteria in favour of compliant Member States and penalties for non-compliance;

17. Calls on the Commission to:

— take the leading role in strategic coordination regarding progress in the priority areas and the fulfilment of the objectives relating to the Strategy, in partnership with the Member States and in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity,

— establish the task force as a permanent body to take responsibility for supervision, coordination, monitoring, reporting, evaluation, facilitation of implementation, mainstreaming and follow-up, thereby meeting the need for an independent, multi-sector body serving as an 'external facilitator' which can assess and balance the various national and sectoral interests in a manner acceptable to all,

— review and update the Strategy as appropriate on a regular basis, and seek endorsement from the European Parliament and the Council for the changes made,

— take into account the priority areas and objectives of the Strategy in all its relevant policy initiatives and programme planning at EU level,

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— report on the implementation and progress of the Strategy and the national action plans, with an evaluation of results including benchmarks and indicators, and keep the Council and Parliament informed on an annual basis, noting that policy effectiveness and ex post evaluation should become a criterion for providing prolonged support,

— ensure the collection and dissemination of necessary statistical data and ensure the consolidation and up-scaling of locally developed good practices,

— validate the conformity of national plans with the EU strategy,

— change the regulatory framework of cross-financing, decrease bureaucratic burdens, simplify and accelerate procedures for EU funds, and also require the Member States to introduce simple and normative funding procedures and utilise Global Grants,

— gradually introduce compulsory institutional guarantees for the mainstreaming of non-discrimination and anti-segregation measures, taking into account Directives 2000/43/EC and 2004/113/EC, and also monitor such measures and fight stigmatisation,

— ensure the involvement of concerned stakeholders at all levels and stages and Roma communities from all levels through the European Roma Platform, and work in partnership with the other institutions, Member States, regional and local authorities, international financing institutions, transnational programming bodies and intergovernmental organisations, as well as non-governmental organisations and inter-governmental initiatives, noting that it is necessary to improve coordination and collaboration between concerned policy actors and policy networks to avoid duplication and enhance the mutually-reinforcing effects of policy actions in the field and to eliminate the risks of policy overlap and policy conflict stemming from the proliferation of stakeholder networks;

18. Recalls that the Commission has a special responsibility for promoting an EU Strategy on Roma inclusion, but that this strategy has to be implemented at local level;

19. Calls on the Commission and Member States to mobilise existing EU strategies and instruments with a view to securing the socio-economic inclusion of Roma, and to design and implement all relevant policies by taking into account, where appropriate, the Common Basic Principles on Roma Inclusion;

20. Considers that stronger collaboration among Roma leaders, local authorities and EU bodies is crucial for determining the main challenges and solutions that both the EU and its Member States are facing regarding socio-economic inclusion for the Roma population;

21. Calls on the Member States to endow decision-making bodies with the powers necessary to secure complex and development-oriented EU funding supporting good local initiatives and responding to the diverse local needs of the Roma people; stresses the importance of identifying and exchanging good practices with regard to Roma integration and of increasing the visibility of the success stories; also calls for the development of institutional capacity to provide necessary assistance (administrative and project management assistance) at local level;

22. Deems that concerted action and responsibility should be taken throughout the whole process by Roma and non-Roma organisations, local, regional and national authorities and EU bodies building on best practices, on the existing vast knowledge bases compiled by the Member States and on the experiences of the first period of the Decade of Roma Inclusion; stresses the importance of organising awareness-raising campaigns, particularly for regions with large Roma communities;

23. Considers that social inclusion of the Roma is not possible without creating and strengthening their interest representation, including in political decision-making, and their civil activities through NGOs at national and European level;

24. Strongly advises EU bodies to secure greater involvement of the national level in consultations and in the decision-making mechanism in order to achieve a future strategy that can be beneficial for all parties involved; also draws the attention of the Commission and the Member States to the fact that it is necessary to design, develop, implement and evaluate Roma inclusion policies in cooperation with regional and local authorities, with Roma and non-Roma population groups, representatives and civil society organisations, and with the Committee of the Regions and international organisations in order to improve acceptance and effectiveness of policies;

25. Calls on the Commission to collect and disseminate information on the experience gained and the action taken in the various Member States, in particular in the educational and cultural spheres;

26. Calls for better assistance to project organisers eligible for European funding for the integration of Roma people by creating platforms for information, analyses and exchanges of good practices;

27. Maintains that part of the solution lies in the full commitment of the Member States to provide effective support for project organisers and that the Member States, in conjunction with the Commission, have a role to play in encouraging local authorities to select projects to integrate Roma people;

28. Calls on the Member States to develop cross-sectoral poverty reduction strategies that take into consideration the often sensitive issue of the coexistence of the Roma community and the majority community, which are both affected by lack of employment, poverty and marginalisation; highlights the importance of incentive measures that provide visible benefits to encourage the poor to enter the labour market rather than live off social benefits and perhaps work on the black market; emphasises that programmes promoting mutual understanding and tolerance towards each other are of utmost importance;

29. Calls on the Commission to incorporate an enlargement dimension into the Strategy by developing pilot projects in candidate countries and potential candidates which guarantee the development of national action plans in line with the EU Strategy;

30. Calls on the Member States to appoint a high-level government official or an administrative body to act as national contact points for the transparent and efficient implementation of the Strategy, equipped with executive powers and responsible for the implementation, coordination, monitoring, mainstreaming and enforcement of the Strategy at national, regional and local level by ensuring minimum bureaucracy and efficient management and control of funds, as well as transparency of the reporting;

31. Calls on national education ministries and the Commission to establish innovative and flexible grants for nurturing talent and to increase support for existing grants and programmes;

32. Calls on the Commission and the Council to adopt the augmented and detailed components of the Laeken indicators in measuring social and territorial exclusion as well as to evaluate progress; stresses that the horizontal divisions of the Laeken indicators must be extended also to the smallest statistical-administrative units (LAU 1 and LAU 2); moreover, points out that the Laeken indicators could be added to the future indicators in the Cohesion Policy, especially regarding the social dimension;

33. Calls on the Commission to complement the indicators by a system of targets and benchmarks in order to have real political commitment for progress; stresses furthermore the urgent need for progress in the collection of disaggregated data so as to be able to measure progress towards targets/benchmarks/indicators and to develop evidence-based policies as well as enhance effectiveness and evaluation;

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34. Calls urgently for the development – with the help of best practices – of benchmarks, indicators, independent monitoring and impact assessment mechanisms to support and evaluate the efficiency and the tangible results of the programmes rather than purely checking that projects in receipt of grants have met the procedural formalities, and calls for effective monitoring of the use of funds so that the financial resources genuinely end up improving the living conditions, health care, education and employment of the Roma;

35. Considers that the structured cooperation of the Member States in the existing open methods of coordination in the fields of employment and social inclusion is of vital importance for advancing the full inclusion of the Roma and asks the Commission to organise exchanges of good practice and experience between the Member States and all parties concerned with Roma issues;

36. Calls – in the interest of ensuring that funds with precisely-stated and specified objectives effectively reach the Roma in need and bring about long-lasting advances in their lives – for real commitment on the part of the Commission and the Member States to launching more target- and development-oriented, complex, flexible and sustainable programmes with a longer time coverage and greater territorial relevance, focusing on the most disadvantaged micro-regions in their geographical, socio-economic and cultural context, while also addressing the problem of suburban and rural poverty and segregated Roma neighbourhoods, and placing special emphasis on improving substandard housing (lacking, for example, drinking water, heating, electricity and sanitation) and on providing further assistance to families to maintain their improved housing situation; also calls on the Commission to monitor the outcomes of the projects after their funding has run out;

37. Calls on the Member States to improve the economic opportunities of Roma, including the promotion of the microcredit facility among entrepreneurs; calls on the Member States to build on the experience of successful projects, for example where undeclared businesses have been turned into legal economic activities with the help of experts;

38. Calls on the Member States and the Commission to frame clear policies for the inclusion of the Roma in the labour market and to devise and adopt measures to combat the adverse effects of prolonged dependence on the social welfare system;

39. Recognises that most Roma are employed in undeclared jobs, and, given the need to ensure the sustainability of the social security systems, calls on the Member States, in cooperation with the social partners, to effectively combat this phenomenon;

40. Calls on the Member States to commit themselves to involving public actors such as SMEs and micro-companies in the implementation of inclusion measures for the Roma population regarding employability;

41. Stresses the important role that SMEs and micro-companies can play in Roma integration and advocates measures to reward those that contribute to this goal;

42. Believes that better prospects for Roma people, in particular with a view to their access to the labour market, can be ensured through increased investment by the Member States in education and training – with a particular focus on new technologies and the Internet – incorporating measures endorsed by the international scientific community, foundations and NGOs working in the field of education and social inclusion at regional and local level;

43. Calls on the Commission to draw up a European crisis map which identifies, measures and surveys those micro-regions within the EU where the inhabitants are hardest hit by poverty, social exclusion and discrimination, at least on the basis of the following attributes:

— accessibility of workplaces,

— distance from city centres or problematic over-concentration close to the city centres,

— high rate of unemployment,

— inadequate public services,

— inappropriate environmental conditions,

— lack of nearby companies,

— lack of proper infrastructure,

— low income,

— low level of education,

— low-level human resources,

— poor/expensive transport infrastructure,

— social tensions,

— capacity of the local public administration to manage poverty,

— situations of serious violations of human rights, discrimination, evictions, expulsions, racism, targeting of the Roma population by local or regional authorities or third parties;

44. Calls for the involvement of the Member States in providing data regarding the socio-economic situation of the Roma (mainly regarding their education, health, housing and employment) and invites international organisations (e.g. the ILO and the OECD) to elaborate on these issues as part of their general surveys, and to help set specific targets concerning, for example, the percentage of the Roma community who complete secondary and tertiary education, are employed in public administration or are represented in different sectors of social and political life, and asks the European Commission to help set up a clear and viable EU strategy on Roma inclusion with the help of these data;

45. Calls therefore on the Commission to bring specific support, including financial support, to these micro-regions and directly develop pilot projects that include the participation of mediators in line with the Council of Europe programme and a specific follow-up of the evolution of the implementation of the Strategy;

46. Calls on the Commission to encourage, within the Strategy, the Member States, relevant international and European institutions, NGOs, Roma communities, other stakeholders and the public to use the terms 'Roma' / 'Roma and Sinti' whenever referring to this minority;

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47. Calls on the Commission and the Council to allocate dedicated funding in the Cohesion Policy within the next Multiannual Financial Framework explicitly to support the Strategy by creating a performance reserve for the EU Strategy on Roma;

48. Takes the view that current EU fund absorption rates are too low; calls therefore on the Commission to analyse the reasons for this phenomenon and to elaborate a more efficient approach to monitoring the absorption of EU funds, in particular those funds specifically intended for marginalised groups; above all, calls urgently for the collection of data – with due consideration for the data protection directives – on the effectiveness of EU funds, in order to develop evidence-based policies;

49. Highlights the fact that the social exclusion of the Roma has a very strong territorial dimension of poverty and marginalisation which is concentrated in underdeveloped micro-regions that severely lack the financial resources required to make their own contribution to the Community funding for which they are eligible and which generally lack the administrative capacity and human resources to make good use of the funding; emphasises the need for specific efforts to be focused on these micro-regions that are often peripheral intra-regional areas and for the substantial simplification of bureaucratic red tape so that the maximum possible allocation of resources can be achieved under the umbrella of the Cohesion Policy;

50. Deems that there is also a need for new regulations on the allocation of the Structural Funds to set conditionality concerning the elimination of segregation and the assurance of equal access of the Roma to public services; takes the view that equal opportunity and anti-segregation plans should also be prepared at local level, based on measurable indicators and concrete actions;

51. Urges the Commission to provide appropriate instruments to guide the Member States in securing complementarity among the ESF, the ERDF, and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and invites the Member States to utilise other programmes, such as the PROGRESS programme, the Lifelong Learning programme, the Culture programme (2007-2013) and the Health programme (2008-2013) in the interests of Roma inclusion;

52. Calls for delegating EU development support bodies under the supervision and control of the Roma Task Force, in order to:

— secure development-oriented EU funding in support of good local initiatives,

— identify and report misuse of funds in time,

— perform regular checks on the consistency and efficiency of the use of funding in relation to the expected result, including for the purposes for which funding is allocated under the Strategy,

— serve as advisor by capitalising on the complex EU-wide knowledge, elaborating on indicators, impact assessment etc., and

— provide targeted support of local initiatives, projects and complex programmes best fulfilling the objectives of the Strategy and generating efficient solutions to the concrete problems of Roma communities;

53. Calls on the Commission and Member States to apply both participatory monitoring evaluation which involves Roma communities and helps to develop the capacity of the stakeholders on the one hand and external expertise in order to gain a realistic and objective view of the overall success or failure of different measures and instruments on the other; furthermore requests that the Commission provide Parliament with a list of projects financed by the Commission benefitting Roma since 2000, presenting indications about the results achieved;

54. Calls on the Member States to implement the horizontal priority 'Marginalised Communities' within the framework of the EU Structural Funds and to participate in the EU-Roma network working on the good implementation of structural funds for Roma social inclusion; underlines that existing measures, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms must be significantly improved; stresses furthermore that agencies and organisations implementing projects co-financed by the Structural Funds and targeting Roma directly or benefitting Roma indirectly must be held accountable and implement actions in a transparent manner; furthermore, calls for an ongoing cost-benefit analysis of the proportion of funds dedicated to and spent on the actual programmes and running expenses;

55. Calls on the Commission and the Council to extend the scope of EU funding so that, besides development, the provision of quality public services also becomes eligible; stresses furthermore that co-financing should be reviewed and possibly differentiated to better reflect the diversity of actions and beneficiaries, and thus projects targeting Roma could be required to have a lesser share of co-financing from the country, with a higher share from the EU;

56. Stresses that coordination among related EU policies must be significantly improved in order to foster synergies and complementarities; bureaucratic and implementation rules must be substantially simplified and all barriers between the various funds must be eliminated so that the maximum possible allocation of resources can be achieved by all the instruments;

57. Emphasises the need for the Structural Funds to combine national and local approaches by acting through programmes that operate concurrently with a national strategy and provide local responses to specific needs; stresses, furthermore, the need to create synergies between the implementation of the Structural Funds and government strategies for Roma, as well as between the managing authorities of the European Social Fund and the specialised Roma units or coordination structures dealing with Roma issues;

58. Calls on the Commission and the Council to improve access to EU funds of local governments and NGOs working on Roma inclusion by simplifying the application process and rules;

59. Calls on the Commission to introduce in the Strategy a mechanism which promotes the hiring of Roma in public administration at both EU and national level, and calls on the Member States to hire Roma staff in public administration, especially in institutions participating in the programming and implementation of EU and nationally-funded programmes for Roma inclusion;

60. Stresses the importance for the Member States to sign and ratify the European Convention of Nationality, which clearly states that no discrimination shall exist in a state's internal nationality law on the grounds of sex, religion, national or ethnic origin;

61. Underlines, in this context, the need to continue EU programmes, such as the Progress Programme to combat discrimination and JASMINE, which promotes investment in capacity building, and calls for such programmes to be further developed beyond 2013;

62. Welcomes the opportunity created through the provisions of Regulation (EU) No 437/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 May 2010, providing up to 3 % of the ERDF allocation to specific programmes or 2 % of the overall allocated budget for the rehabilitation of housing for the benefit of marginalised communities; regrets that no operational plans have so far been changed to reprioritise housing of the Roma population; calls on Member States to make quick and full use of this new opportunity within the framework of the Structural Funds in order to strengthen the prospects of effective social inclusion; calls on the Commission to come forward with a specific action plan on this Regulation to speed up the use of the funds and recommends the preparation of a Commission report on their utilisation; furthermore, calls on the Member States to make effective use of the potential for interaction between the ERDF, the ESF and EAFRD in developing programmes for Roma integration;

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63. Recognises that Roma communities are extremely heterogeneous groups, with the consequence that there can be no single strategy; recommends therefore that the local and regional authorities of the Member States propose effective integration policies that should differ according to their specific backgrounds (geographical, economic, social, cultural); recommends that the Commission make use of the experience acquired by those authorities which have actively contributed to the integration of Roma communities and encourages the use of best practices and recipes for success, with a view to achieving their social inclusion;

64. Recalls that the main prerequisite of successful integration is a joint effort made by both mainstream society and the Roma community; calls therefore on the Member States to help improve the housing and employment situation of the Roma people and recommends that Member States and regional and local public authorities integrate – in accordance with the regulation governing the European Regional Development Fund – the allocation of new housing to marginalised communities into a broader, more complex policy framework of mutual and two-way social commitment, such as community building, which includes the participation of Roma in the process of building the new establishments and mutual efforts to enhance school attendance for children and substantially reduce unemployment; the Member States can thus significantly contribute towards a concrete solution for the location needs of marginalised groups living in poor housing conditions; also urges the Member States to make use of the EU Roma network in order to encourage an exchange of best practices;

65. Calls on the Commission and the Council to make maximum use of the programmes within the European Territorial Cooperation objective, such as cross-border cooperation programmes, transnational cooperation programmes and interregional cooperation programmes, and to exploit the possibilities provided by the European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation;

66. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to analyse and eliminate the barriers to (re)entering the labour market and self-employment of Roma women and furthermore to place proper emphasis on the role of women in the economic empowerment of marginalised Roma and launching businesses; furthermore calls on the Commission and the Member States to ensure the involvement of Roma women in the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the EU Strategy on Roma Inclusion;

67. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to include as a horizontal objective the capacity building and empowerment of Roma women in all the priority areas of the EU Strategy on Roma Inclusion;

68. Calls on the Commission and the Council to include the promotion of gender equality among the objectives of the Strategy as well as combating multiple and intersectional discrimination;

69. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to collect, analyse and publish reliable statistical data disaggregated by gender so as to be able to properly evaluate and update the Strategy as well as measure the impacts of the Strategy's projects and interventions on Roma women;

70. Calls for the inclusion in the Strategy of a mechanism of cooperation, exchange of information and monitoring, not only at EU but also at national level, together with the Fundamental Rights Agency, the Council of Europe, other relevant international and European institutions, NGOs, Roma communities and other stakeholders, in order to address problems and find solutions and to ensure that the Strategy is correctly and fully implemented both at EU and national level by those responsible for it, thereby ensuring the success of the Strategy;

71. Calls on the Commission to offer the technical support needed to improve the administrative capacities of bodies involved in the administration of the Structural Funds, and calls on the Member States to provide advice and administrative assistance, e.g. by organising training and by helping with aid applications and explanations, to make it easier for Roma to obtain information concerning European and national funding programmes in support of entrepreneurship and employment and to submit the relevant applications;

72. Calls on the Member States to lay down concrete and specific targets, and detailed and measurable goals, on the social inclusion of the Roma when transposing Europe 2020 poverty and social inclusion objectives into national programmes, and calls urgently for measures to enforce the achievement of targeted goals;

73. Believes that a better future for the Roma people can be ensured through education and that investing in the education of Roma children and youth is therefore essential; emphasises that schooling is not only a right but also a duty and expresses its support for activities aimed at enhancing the participation of Roma students in schools, including via the active involvement of their families;

74. Believes that promoting knowledge of Romani culture across Europe will facilitate mutual understanding between Roma and non-Roma in Europe while also boosting European intercultural dialogue;

75. Takes the view that the future strategy for the Roma minority should focus on education as the core instrument for promoting social inclusion;

76. Believes that support mechanisms such as scholarships and mentoring arrangements should be established for young Roma in order to inspire them not only to obtain diplomas but also to enrol in higher education and improve their qualifications;

77. Takes the view that a new type of scholarship programme should be developed to ensure the highest-quality instruction for Roma students in order to educate a new generation of Roma leaders;

78. Believes that educational institutions whose underprivileged students win places at higher-level institutions, or whose percentage of students graduating is above average, should be rewarded, and calls on the Commission to develop projects in this area;

79. Stresses that it is crucial that the Member States promote the integration of Roma into the community and cultural life of the places and countries in which they live, and ensure their long-term participation and representation therein, including through measures designed to promote vocational education and training (VET) and lifelong learning programmes aimed at the Roma community, taking into account the cultural heritage and way of life of the various Roma groups in Europe; points out, for instance, that efforts could be made to offer special training for school staff, to promote the hiring of Roma schoolteachers, to foster close cooperation with Roma families and organisations and to provide after-school support and scholarships; notes that this process should actively involve local authorities in the Member States and send a signal to the non-profit sector that its activities should include programmes designed to integrate Roma people into society;

80. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to combat every form of social and educational exclusion of the Roma and to encourage all programmes that invest in education for Roma people;

81. Believes that local governments must take responsibility for reintegrating students who drop out of the school system before reaching the age at which education ceases to be compulsory; notes that, to this end, educational institutions must provide local governments with information about school-leavers;

82. Calls on the Commission to support further initiatives designed to provide early childhood education opportunities and care for Roma children and youth;

83. Believes that kindergartens and/or alternative forms of pre-school care and education should be established in communities where none exist and expanded where there is a lack of places;

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84. Calls on the Commission to support initiatives which have proved effective in preventing any form of segregation and prioritise inclusive projects that promote educational success and involve the participation of Roma families;

85. Expresses its concern at the high rate of illiteracy among the Roma people and deems it essential that programmes are designed and developed which ensure quality primary, secondary and tertiary education for Roma girls and women, including strategies to facilitate their transition from primary to secondary school and promote, throughout the whole process, greater understanding of Roma cultural heritage, history and values among Roma and non-Roma people;

86. Emphasises that low school attendance, high absenteeism rates and low educational achievement may indicate that pupils and parents are not always aware of the importance of school; other relevant factors may include insufficient resources, health problems, lack of quality education on site or of accessible transportation to school, substandard housing and clothing that make school attendance impossible, a non-inclusive school climate and segregated schools that fail to provide adequate preparation with a view to competitiveness on the job market; underlines, therefore, the importance of action aimed at promoting school participation by Roma students and of ongoing, regular dialogue on educational matters with those students' families, the Roma community and all stakeholders;

87. Emphasises the vital role that grass roots and performance sports can play in the process of ensuring the inclusion of the ethnic Roma population;

88. Supports the promotion of teacher training programmes that enhance teachers' ability to engage with children and youth with a Roma background, as well as with their parents and people employed as Roma mediators, particularly in primary schools, as a way to promote regular school attendance by Roma;

89. Suggests that different approaches to educational integration be adapted both to children from Roma families wishing to settle in one place – by monitoring children's regular school attendance, for instance – and to those from families wishing to continue their nomadic way of life – through measures facilitating school attendance inside Roma camps, for example;

90. Stresses the importance of mobility, lifelong learning, vocational training and continuing training programmes with a view to ensuring the inclusion of young people and adults from Roma communities and enhancing their potential to enter the employment market;

91. Believes that the workplace training system must be expanded so as to allow the large-scale acquisition of the necessary skills and abilities;

92. Believes that it is necessary to harmonise the supply of training with labour market demand and calls, therefore, for medium-term national and regional forecasts of expected labour demand;

93. Calls on the Commission to develop and implement joint monitoring systems involving the EU institutions, the Member States and Roma community leaders, in respect of the programmes and projects put into practice within the Member States;

94. Views the Roma culture as an integral part of Europe's cultural mosaic; points out that a key means of understanding the Roma people and their way of life is to increase other Europeans' awareness of the heritage, traditions and language of the Roma and of contemporary Roma culture; strongly supports the promotion and preservation of their creative activities as an essential component of intercultural dialogue;

95. Takes the view that the Roma should make an educational effort to learn about the customs and culture of the peoples with whom they live, thereby facilitating their better integration in the places in which they live;

96. Believes that the promotion of voluntary and sporting activities involving Roma and non-Roma is important in fostering greater social inclusion;

97. Calls on the Commission to promote best practices and positive models and experiences arising from implemented programmes and Roma self-initiatives, with a view to improving the perception and image of Roma within non-Roma communities and boosting active participation by Roma communities and creative collaboration between those communities and the EU, the Member States and local programmes;

98. Calls for better identification and use, at all levels of government, of the existing EU funds available to promote the employment, education and culture of Roma peoples;

99. Recommends that future EU policies for the Roma minority should be based on a differentiated approach, tailored to the specific features of the different Member States and the particular nature of the communities involved;

100. Draws attention to the importance of conducting stricter checks on the use of EU funding for Roma inclusion;

101. Believes that exchanges of experience and good practices between Member States having achieved good results in the area of Roma inclusion and those still faced with this issue would be useful;

102. Recognises that the complexity of paperwork may constitute an obstacle to project organisers; stresses the need to step up work on simplifying grant procedures; stresses the under-utilisation of European funding in this field;

103. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.

Industrial policy for the globalised era

P7_TA(2011)0093

European Parliament resolution of 9 March 2011 on an Industrial Policy for the Globalised Era (2010/2095(INI))

(2012/C 199 E/16)

The European Parliament,

— having regard to Article 173 of Title XVII of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (ex Article 157 of the Treaty establishing the European Community), covering EU industrial policy and referring to, among other things, the competitiveness of the Union's industry,

— having regard to the Commission Communication of 28 October 2010 entitled 'An Integrated Industrial Policy for the Globalised Era Putting Competitiveness and Sustainability at Centre Stage' (COM(2010)0614),