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## **MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION**

further to Questions for Oral Answer B6-0389/2007, B6-0003/2008, B6-0004/2008 and B6-0005/2008

pursuant to Rule 108(5) of the Rules of Procedure

by Jan Marinus Wiersma, Hannes Swoboda, Katalin Lévai, Adrian Severin and Jan Andersson

on behalf of the PSE Group

on a European strategy on the Roma

**European Parliament resolution on a European strategy on the Roma**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to Articles 3, 6, 7, 29 and 149 of the EC Treaty, which commit the Member States to ensuring equal opportunities for all citizens,
  - having regard to Article 13 of the EC Treaty, which enables the European Community to take appropriate action to combat discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin,
  - having regard to its resolution of 28 April 2005 on the situation of the Roma in the European Union, its resolution of 1 June 2006 on the situation of Roma women in the European Union and its resolution of 15 November 2007 on application of Directive 2004/38/EC on the right of EU citizens and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States,
  - having regard to Directive 2000/43/EC implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin and Directive 2000/78/EC establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation, and to the Framework decision on combating racism and xenophobia,
  - having regard to the Report on Racism and Xenophobia in the Member States of the EU for 2007, published by the Agency for Fundamental Rights,
  - having regard to the establishment in 2005 of the ‘Decade of Roma Inclusion’ and a Roma Education Fund, by a number of EU Member States, candidate countries and other countries in which the European Union institutions have a significant presence,
  - having regard to Rule 108(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the 12-15 million European Roma continue to suffer serious structural discrimination and, in many cases, are subject to severe poverty and social exclusion; whereas a majority of European Roma became EU citizens after the 2004 and 2007 enlargements, benefiting from the right of EU citizens and their families to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States,
- B. whereas the situation of the European Roma, being traditionally present in many European countries, is distinct from that of the European national minorities, justifying specific measures at the European level,
- C. whereas many Roma and Roma communities who have decided to settle in a different EU Member State than the one of their national citizenship are in a particularly vulnerable position,
- D. whereas the EU has a variety of instruments that can be used to combat exclusion of Roma,

- E. whereas the past year has witnessed a significant increase in anti-Gypsyism in the mass media and political discourse in some of the EU Member States, as well as an increasing incidence of racially motivated violence against the Roma,
- F. whereas progress in combating discrimination against the Roma as regards fulfilling their rights to education, employment, health and housing in both Member States and candidate countries has been uneven and slow,
- G. whereas most Roma women face double discrimination as Roma and as women,
1. Condemns utterly and without equivocation all forms of racism and discrimination faced by the Roma and others regarded as ‘Gypsies’;
  2. Welcomes the Presidency Conclusion of the European Council of 14 December 2007 which, ‘conscious of the very specific situation faced by the Roma across the Union, invites Member States and the Union to use all means to improve their inclusion’ and ‘invites the Commission to examine existing policies and instruments and to report to the Council on progress achieved before the end of June 2008’;
  3. Considers that the EU and the Member States have a shared responsibility to promote inclusion of the Roma and uphold their fundamental rights as European citizens, and urgently need to increase their efforts to achieve visible results in that area; calls on the Member States and the EU institutions to endorse the necessary measures in order to create the adequate social and political environment for implementing inclusion of the Roma, for example by supporting public education campaigns for the non-Roma population on Roma culture and integration, both in the country of citizenship and in the country of European residence;
  4. Recalls that all candidate countries have committed, in the negotiation and accession process, to improve the inclusion of Roma communities and to promote their rights to education, employment, healthcare and housing; asks the European Commission to make an assessment of the implementation of those commitments and of the current situation of the Roma in all EU Member States;
  5. Regrets that the European Commission has thus far not responded to the European Parliament's request of 28 April 2005 to prepare a communication on how the EU, in cooperation with the Member States, can best coordinate and promote efforts to improve the situation of the Roma;
  6. Looks forward to the European Commission's report to the European Council, before the end of June 2008, examining the existing policies and instruments to improve Roma inclusion and the factors behind the unsatisfactory progress to date;
  7. Welcomes the initiatives announced by the European Commission, including the announcement of a communication on the revised strategy for the fight against discrimination, the forthcoming green paper concerning the education of pupils who have a migration background or belong to a disadvantaged minority, and the intention to take additional measures to secure enforcement of Directive 2004/43/EC; welcomes, in particular, the proposal to set up a high-level Roma forum, as a structure for the

development of effective policies to tackle Roma issues;

8. Welcomes the intention of the Commission to look into the question of recognition of the Roma as a special minority with a transnational character;
9. Considers that fighting discrimination against the Roma, who constitute a pan-European cultural community, requires a comprehensive approach at European level, while acknowledging that primary responsibility for the protection of fundamental rights for Roma citizens and the promotion of their social, economic and political inclusion lies with the governments of Member States; asks the Commission to take a horizontal approach to Roma issues and develop additional proposals to deliver policy coherence at the European level regarding the social inclusion of the Roma, to prompt Member States to greater efforts to achieve visible results and to facilitate the exchange of best practices between Member States;
10. Calls on the Commission to present concrete proposals by the end of 2008 to improve Roma inclusion, for example a Framework strategy for the Roma and a Community action plan on the Roma, with the development of Roma human resources as a priority;
11. Calls on the Commission to designate one of its Commissioners as responsible for coordinating a Roma policy; urges the Commission to ensure adequate administrative resources within its services to coordinate initiatives, by creating a permanent unit headed by a European Roma coordinator;
12. Urges the Commission and Council to make use of existing initiatives such as the Decade of Roma Inclusion and the Roma Education Fund to heighten the efficacy of its efforts in this area;
13. Stresses the importance of involving local authorities to ensure effective implementation of efforts to promote Roma inclusion and combat discrimination;
14. Underlines the necessity of active involvement of Roma representatives and long-term strategies in building their professional capacity in all the initiatives aiming to promote their rights and the inclusion of their communities;
15. Considers that the European Parliament should look into different aspects of European policy challenges regarding Roma inclusion in more detail;
16. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments of the Member States and the Council of Europe.