



# PARLIAMENT OF ROMANIA

## CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES

### DECISION

**approving the opinion on the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions -  
Assessing the implementation of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies and the Council Recommendation  
on effective Roma integration measures in the Member States - 2016  
COM(2016) 424**

Pursuant to Articles 67 and 148 of the Romanian Constitution, republished, Law No 373/2013 on cooperation between Parliament and the Government in the area of European affairs, and Articles 160 to 185 of the Rules of Procedure of the Chamber of Deputies, republished,

the Chamber of Deputies hereby adopts this Decision.

Sole Article. Having regard to Opinion No 4c9/1104 adopted by the Committee for European Affairs at its meeting of 27 September 2016, the Chamber of Deputies:

Welcomes this Communication since:

- it presents for the first time a parallel assessment of the implementation of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies (adopted in 2011) and the Council Recommendation on effective Roma integration measures in the Member States (adopted in 2013), as since 2012 specific recommendations have been sent to the 5 Member States in which there are the largest Roma communities, setting out the way in which general policies can be formulated that are more favourable to Roma integration;
- the accompanying Working Document contains a detailed reporting template to be used by all the Member States, to support Member States' in their reporting activity;
- the aim of the document is to align the legal, political and financial instruments at European level with the launch of the 2014-2020 financial programming period;
- the public intervention measures to improve the situation of Roma are based not just on considerations of justice and social protection, but are also aimed at the sustainable economic and social development of the Roma community, bearing in mind the considerable human resources it provides (the community is one of the youngest in the European Union).

Supports this Communication because:

- the ways in which the EU countries address the problems of the multiple deprivation and social and spatial

marginalisation of the Roma are marked by the historical configurations of social states, national legislation on fundamental human rights and anti-discrimination, cultural policies with regard to the recognition of ethnic diversity and the political representation of ethnic minorities; a unified approach at European level can therefore be achieved only by creating a unanimous European framework accepted by the Member States;

- notes the progress made, but at the same time less satisfactory aspects, since certain objectives have not been met in the context of the current migration problems;
- the document is a complex one, reporting the measures adopted and examples of good practice, but also areas where additional efforts are needed by the Member States;
- under the objective of the EU 2020 strategy of 'inclusive growth', social inclusion is regarded as a key horizontal priority, with a significant macro-economic impact in the context of the structural reforms;
- it will continue to demonstrate greater concern with regard to Roma integration and adopt measures to ensure full compliance with anti-discrimination legislation and to combat anti-Gypsyism, and ensure that there is a dialogue at the highest level and that policy guidelines are provided;

Considers that:

- the Roma community has the highest risk of social exclusion if we consider the differences in education, employment, health and housing;
- the social integration of the Roma is a process that must be included in all the areas of activity on the agenda of all local and central public institutions, since these institutions, together with civil society, play a key role in the process of social development, and will implicitly contribute to improving the situation of the Roma;
- the European Union's role with regard to the situation of the Roma has changed with the setting up of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies (SNIR, 2011) for the 2014-2020 programming period. This framework introduces monitoring and assessment instruments allowing the European Commission to draw up specific recommendations for each EU Member State;
- the implementation, monitoring and reporting of the activities carried out under the national Roma integration strategies are extremely important in order to ensure the effectiveness of the measures that have been or are to be adopted both at national and EU level;
- the efforts made with a view to the social integration of Roma should focus on 4 main priority areas: education, employment, health and housing.

Considers that:

- constant progress needs to be made in reducing the discrepancies between the Roma minority and the rest of the population, based on systematic actions that are periodically assessed;
- in spite of the efforts made, there has not been real progress on the ground in reducing the gaps between the Roma and non-Roma populations; the statistics available show that there are interrelated differences in all the essential social components defining the quality of life of Roma and non-Roma;
- educational policies become more effective when financial support is granted to ensure that the measures are sustainable, when the legislative framework is improved on the basis of socio-economic developments in the country concerned and when there is increased cooperation between the various public and private institutions;
- it is particularly important that the document emphasises, in addition to the pillars of Roma integration (education, health, employment and housing conditions), the means of combating discrimination, 'anti-Gypsyism', hate speech and hate crime;
- the key role of the National Roma Contact Points in coordinating the implementation of EU provisions and the use of EU funds should be consolidated;
- the way in which the Member States have defined the coordination structures is beneficial, as is the introduction of targeted and general measures in response to the Commission's recommendation and the allocation of financial resources to the processes, which are harmonised with the national situation (e.g. the emphasis placed on early education, the correlation between the priorities for integrating Roma and the funds allocated under the Structural Funds for the 2014-2020 financial framework, the consolidation of the role of the National Contact Points, etc.).

Draws attention to the following aspects:

- certain EU Member States (France, Germany and Slovenia) have not adopted the Commission's proposed reporting template and have opted to use another reporting template, while others (Denmark, Luxembourg, Netherlands) have not sent any report on the measures undertaken;

- one of the main shortcomings in the educational programmes for Roma is that the policy cycle does not include an impact assessment for the measures implemented; assessments of affirmative action and other educational policies for Roma have usually been carried out by the Roma civil society, and the impact assessments are often incomplete and fragmented and fail to provide decision-makers with all the information needed to adapt policies to the real educational needs of the Roma;
- with regard to the integration of Roma in the labour market, regard must be had to the fact that for the Roma minority, who have a lower level of schooling than the majority population, access to the employment market is more and more limited given the increasing demand for a skilled work force;
- the limited access to jobs increases poverty among the Roma, triggering exclusion mechanisms in many other areas and leading to a vicious cycle of poverty; the lack of sufficient current income undermines long-term investment in the education of children, which in turn reduces the number of educated Roma in future generations, perpetuating exclusion from formal employment;
- additional efforts are needed to involve the local authorities, consolidate cooperation with civil society, monitor the impact of the measures adopted by the Member States and reconfirm the political commitment of all the Member States to implement the current provisions in order to achieve clear results;
- additional efforts are needed by the Member States in order to implement specific legislation to combat discrimination, racism and xenophobia; it is also necessary to prevent forced evictions and remove segregation in education and housing;
- successful initiatives should be multiplied through the use of available funding in the financial period 2014-2020.

Considers that with regard to Romania:

- measures have been notified to the European Commission concerning: removing segregation in education, combating early school leaving, individualised support for pupils, promoting employment for Roma, removing the barriers to the national health system, access to vaccination programmes and public utilities;
- we welcome the setting up of the National Contact Point for the national Roma integration strategy, following the Commission's recommendations, as an instrument to harmonise the national policies and measures proposed and correlate them with the Europe 2020 Strategy;
- solutions have been identified and measures have been adopted to ensure equal access to education and efforts continue to be made to promote these measures and implement them fully; the access of Roma to education and the prevention of early school leaving are still the issues most frequently addressed by intervention research and policies;
- there is support for the valid point made by the Romanian National Agency for the Roma as regards the omission of a reference to affirmative action in education (allocation of special places for Roma pupils and students in high schools and universities); Romania is regarded as a model of good practice with regard to these measures in accordance with the document launched by the Commission; it is therefore proposed to add the country code (RO) in the table included in Section 3.2. (Education) under the heading 'Promote participation and completion of secondary and higher education';
- the elements included in the Council's 2013 recommendation, through which Romania confirmed, inter alia, the adoption of measures as regards: removing segregation in education, combating early school leaving, individualised support for pupils, promoting employment for Roma, removing the barriers to the national health system, access to vaccination programmes and to public utilities;
- efforts have been made to set up an interministerial committee and to involve civil society in implementing the national strategy for Roma, through the National Contact Points for Roma integration;

- there are a number of challenges facing Romania with regard to: combating discrimination, hate speech and hate crime through proper application of existing legislation, fighting poverty, particularly among children, combating violence against Roma women, preventing segregation in education, encouraging the participation of the Roma in the labour market, improving access to medical services, combating segregation in housing and forced evictions, strengthening the capacity of the National Contact Points for Roma and mobilising local authorities, efficient use of EU funds for desegregation; the solutions to these challenges will be priorities for future programmatic documents.

*This Decision was adopted by the Chamber of Deputies at its sitting of 4 October 2016 in compliance with Article 76s(2) of the Romanian Constitution, republished.*



**Florin IORDACHE**

**PRESIDENT  
OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES**

Bucharest, 4 October 2016  
No 91.