Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

**Recommendation 563 (1969)[1]**

# Situation of Gypsies and other travellers in Europe

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Noting that the situation of the Gypsy population of Europe is severely affected by the rapid changes in modern society, which are depriving the Gypsies and other travellers of many opportunities to carry on with their traditional trades and professions, and worsening their handicaps with regard to literacy and educational and professional training;

2. Believing that an integration of the Gypsy population into modern European society is called for and that such integration requires concerted action by the Council of Europe member governments;

3. Deeply concerned that in many cases efforts to improve the situation have failed owing to discrimination against Gypsies, on the ground that they belong to a particular ethnic group, which is incompatible with the ideals underlying the European Convention on Human Rights and the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights;

4. Realising that the lack of adequately equipped camping sites or houses, as well as work areas, for Gypsies and other travellers, and the lack of educational facilities and work opportunities has caused wide-spread friction between the travellers' families and the settled population;

5. Considering that permanent residences for Gypsies and other travellers are almost necessary conditions to enable them to receive a proper education and to adapt to modern society;

6. Considering that lack of education, resulting mainly from the Gypsies' and other travellers' nomadic way of life, has far-reaching repercussions, over and above the purely material or financial factors, on their life and social climate, which threaten to prejudice in the long term their integration in modern European society and their acceptance as citizens with equal rights;

7. Considering that programmes designed to improve the situation of the Gypsies should be prepared in co-operation and consultation with their representatives,

8. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers urge member governments:

8.1. to take all steps necessary to stop discrimination, be it in legislation or in administrative practice, against Gypsies and other travellers;

8.2. as a minimum measure, to promote actively the construction by the authorities concerned, for Gypsies and other travellers, of a sufficient number of caravan sites which should be provided with sanitary installations, electricity, telephones, community buildings, and fire precautions, as well as working areas, and should be situated near to schools and villages or towns;

8.3. to ensure, wherever possible, that local authorities provide houses for travellers' families, especially in regions where climate conditions make caravans unsuitable for permanent residence;

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1. Assembly debate on 30 September 1969 (9th Sitting) (see Doc. 2629, report of the Committee on Social and Health Questions). Text adopted by the Assembly on 30 September 1969 (9th Sitting).

8.4. where attendance at existing schools is not possible, to encourage the provision of special classes near caravan sites or other places where groups of travellers gather regularly to facilitate the integration of children from travellers' families into normal schools and to ensure that the educational programmes for the children from travellers' families link up satisfactorily with those of secondary school or other forms of continued education;

8.5. to create or improve the possibilities for professional education of adult Gypsies and travellers with a view to improving their employment opportunities;

8.6. to support the creation of national bodies consisting of representatives from governments, Gypsy and travellers' communities as well as voluntary organisations working in the interests of Gypsies and other travellers, and to consult these bodies in the preparation of measures designed to improve the position of the Gypsies and other travellers;

8.7. to adapt existing national laws with a view to ensuring that Gypsies and other travellers have the same rights as the settled population with regard to social security provisions and medical care.