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Roma migrants in Europe

Committee Opinion¹

Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

Rapporteur: Mr Miloš ALIGRUDIĆ, Serbia, European Democrat Group

A. Conclusions of the committee

1. The Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy welcomes Ms Groth's report on "Roma migrants in Europe" and concurs with the principal conclusions contained in the draft recommendation tabled by the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons.
2. It recalls the concern expressed by the Parliamentary Assembly in its [Resolution 1760 \(2010\)](#) "Recent rise in national security discourse in Europe: the case of Roma".
3. The committee proposes an amendment intended to improve and supplement the text of the draft recommendation without affecting its main conclusions.

B. Proposed amendment

Amendment A (to the draft recommendation)

In the draft recommendation, before paragraph 1, insert the following paragraph:

"The Parliamentary Assembly underlines that States have a justifiable interest in managing migration, and to see to it that the asylum system is not abused. "Migration management" must, however, take place in compliance with the relevant rules, which currently may not always be the case."

C. Explanatory memorandum by Mr Aligrudić, rapporteur for opinion

1. I wish to congratulate our colleague Ms Groth on her report on "Roma migrants in Europe". I believe that the principal conclusions contained in the draft recommendation tabled by the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons should be supported. It has the merit of drawing our attention to the discrimination faced by Roma migrants in Europe.
2. In this context, I should like to recall Assembly [Resolution 1760 \(2010\)](#) "Recent rise in national security discourse in Europe: the case of Roma", and the report presented by our colleague Ms Anne Brasseur on behalf of the Political Affairs Committee.

1. Reference to committee: Bureau decision, Reference 3722 of 8 October 2010. Reporting committee: Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons. See [Doc. 12950](#). Opinion approved by the committee on 26 June 2012.



3. I fully agree with the conclusions of the rapporteur of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons, and in particular when she states that “[o]n the whole, States have a justifiable interest in managing migration, and to see to it that the asylum system is not abused” and I propose to include this also in the draft recommendation.

4. In its [Resolution 1760 \(2010\)](#) the Assembly noted that “European countries which offer better living conditions and have more generous social protection systems attract migrants from countries in a less favourable situation, sometimes creating pressure for the social institutions of the states concerned”.

5. It noted also that “while a community should obviously not be singled out for opprobrium, but should be helped, there is no point in denying the problems, as this would play into the hands of extremism. The underlying causes of the marginalisation of Roma should therefore be addressed”.

6. There are undoubtedly stereotypes and prejudices against Roma in Europe. However, I could not find evidence of the so-called “three deep-rooted prejudices” mentioned in the draft recommendation or for such prejudices being at the basis of discrimination against Roma. I am more inclined to believe that such prejudice and discrimination are based rather on “the widespread tendency to make a generalised link between Roma and criminality”, which Ms Roth also notes.

7. Finally, in paragraph 12 of the explanatory memorandum, the rapporteur states that “there is no such thing as a legal or illegal migrant” and refers to Assembly [Resolution 1509 \(2006\)](#). However, what that resolution states is that “The Assembly prefers to use the term ‘irregular migrant’ to other terms such as ‘illegal migrant’ or ‘migrant without papers’”. One may not agree with all the legislation concerning migrants, but to the extent that such legislation exists, those migrants who do not abide by it are in breach of the law.

8. In the light of the above observations, I have proposed one amendment intended to improve and supplement the text of the draft recommendation by putting its main conclusions into perspective, without affecting them.