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Implementation of the recommendation of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe concerning Roma inclusion

Reply to Written question¹: Written question No. 700 (Doc. 13991)
Committee of Ministers

1. Building on the Strasbourg Declaration on Roma (2010) and the findings of the Secretary General's report on the state of democracy, human rights and the rule of law in Europe (2015), the Committee of Ministers recently updated its agenda on Roma issues, by approving a comprehensive Thematic Action Plan for the Inclusion of Roma and Travellers² (2016-2019). This document contains 21 specific action points, focusing on the three political priorities mentioned by the Honourable Parliamentarian. At the core of these principles is the role of the Council of Europe in supporting national, regional and local authorities in their implementation of their commitments with regard to Roma and in the development of inclusive policies. This is a common objective of all the Council of Europe institutions.

2. The Parliamentary Assembly can play an important role in promoting good practice which contributes to combatting prejudice, stereotyping and hate speech against Roma, as well as in promoting Roma inclusion. The Committee of Ministers therefore encourages the Assembly to support the Thematic Action Plan with its own initiatives, for example through the No Hate Speech campaign, by addressing anti-Gypsyism through the No Hate Alliance launched by the Assembly.

3. The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities can also make a most useful contribution to the objectives of the Thematic Action Plan as it is particularly well-placed to take action at grass roots level. The Dosta! Campaign and the Joint Programmes with the European Commission (including ROMED and ROMACT), which all have a strong local focus, will be continued and developed, offering numerous opportunities for the productive engagement of the Congress and its members. The European Alliance of Cities and Regions for Roma Inclusion is expected to develop into a core element for the promotion of innovative practices at local level.

4. The new "European Roma Institute on Arts and Culture" (ERIAAC), currently being established as an independent foundation in Berlin, is expected to offer ample opportunities for co-operation, including with parliaments.

5. The Committee of Ministers will regularly evaluate the execution of the Thematic Action Plan. The Parliamentary Assembly is invited to contribute to this evaluation with regard to its own initiatives.

1. Adopted at the 1262nd meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (6 July 2016).

2. The terms "Roma" and "Travellers" are being used at the Council of Europe to encompass the wide diversity of the groups covered by the work of the Council of Europe in this field: on the one hand a) Roma, Sinti/Manush, Calé, Kaale, Romanichals, Boyash/Rudari; b) Balkan Egyptians (Egyptians and Ashkali); c) Eastern groups (Dom, Lom and Abdal); and, on the other hand, groups such as Travellers, Yenish, and the populations designated under the administrative term "Gens du voyage", as well as persons who identify themselves as Gypsies.

