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The impact of Covid-19 on the health of Roma minorities

Motion for a resolution

tabled by Ms Yelyzaveta YASKO and other members of the Assembly

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

Apart from the predictable impact on healthcare systems, Covid-19 has had numerous indirect consequences for certain minorities. Those indirect effects include but are not limited to an intensification of existing inequalities in regard to healthcare, housing and employment, as noted by [Resolution 2339 \(2020\)](#) of the Parliamentary Assembly “Upholding human rights in times of crisis and pandemics: gender, equality and non-discrimination”. It is not a coincidence that the groups most exposed to discrimination, scapegoating, poverty, and social exclusion, such as Roma, have become the most vulnerable to the aforementioned ramifications of the pandemic.

Prior to the pandemic, Roma minorities already faced shorter life expectancies and higher rates of contagious diseases. These pre-existing health inequalities have only been reinforced by Covid-19 and anti-pandemic measures in place in many member States. A widespread lack of access to running water, to the documentation required for access to healthcare, and increased stigmatisation resulting in difficulties in securing housing, put Roma communities at risk of a disproportionately higher mortality rate, as well as longer-term health problems. As vaccination programmes begin to be rolled out across Europe, the need for inclusive treatment of Roma in healthcare becomes ever more pressing. But the long-term effects of these inequalities will not only be felt in the healthcare sphere if concrete action is not taken. Roma young people risk losing out on education, since many lack the internet access, technology, and even sometimes the electricity, required for effective home-schooling. Thus, while healthcare should be an immediate priority, the Assembly should equally focus on limiting future social exclusion of Roma resulting from the pandemic.

The Assembly should be more vocal in opposing discrimination against Roma and should urge the member States of the Council of Europe to make a concerted effort to secure sufficient medical care, social services, and access to vaccination programmes for such minorities, in order that the future of Roma communities does not become collateral damage of the pandemic.

Signed (see overleaf)



*Signed*¹:

YASKO Yelyzaveta, Ukraine, EPP/CD
BILOZIR Larysa, Ukraine, EPP/CD
BOER Margreet, De, Netherlands, SOC
COTTIER Damien, Switzerland, ALDE
DALLOZ Marie-Christine, France, EPP/CD
HEINRICH Frank, Germany, EPP/CD
KAMELCHUK Yuriy, Ukraine, EPP/CD
KRAVCHUK Yevheniia, Ukraine, ALDE
KRISPER Stephanie, Austria, ALDE
LĪBIŅA-EGNERE Inese, Latvia, EPP/CD
LUBINETS Dmytro, Ukraine, EPP/CD
MARTÍNEZ FERRO María Valentina, Spain, EPP/CD
MEZENTSEVA Mariia, Ukraine, EPP/CD
MUNYAMA Killion, Poland, EPP/CD
NICK Andreas, Germany, EPP/CD
ROBLES Gonzalo, Spain, EPP/CD
SCHENNACH Stefan, Austria, SOC
SCHWABE Frank, Germany, SOC
SHEPPARD Tommy, United Kingdom, NR
SOBOLIEV Serhii, Ukraine, EPP/CD
SONIK Bogusław, Poland, EPP/CD
VOLOSHYN Oleg, Ukraine, SOC
ZINGERIS Emanuelis, Lithuania, EPP/CD

1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
SOC: Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group
NR: Representatives not belonging to a Political Group