



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 26 November 2008 (28.11)  
(OR. fr)**

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**"I/A" ITEM NOTE**

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from :            Presidency  
to :                COREPER (Part 2)/COUNCIL

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Subject :        **Inclusion of the Roma**  
                    –     **Draft Council conclusions**

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Delegations will find attached the draft Council conclusions as drawn up by the Presidency in the light of the discussions within the Working Party on Social Questions on 21 November and the Antici Group on 25 November 2008.

COREPER is invited to agree to this draft with a view to its adoption by the Council.

**Draft Council conclusions on inclusion of the Roma**

THE COUNCIL,

1. Taking into account the conclusions of the European Council of December 2007 and June 2008;

ACKNOWLEDGING THAT

2. although the Roma within the European Union and its neighbouring countries have the same rights and duties as the rest of the population, they in fact form a group that is disadvantaged in several respects and is particularly vulnerable to social exclusion, poverty and discrimination;
3. the renewed Social Agenda package presented by the Commission on 2 July 2008 aims at giving a new impetus to policies to combat poverty and exclusion and combating discrimination against all vulnerable groups including the Roma;
4. these policies for Roma should be developed with reference to the age of the different audiences targeted, so as to support solidarity between generations whilst breaking the transmission of poverty from one generation to the next. They must also take account of the problems specific to Roma women;
5. better results may be obtained when vulnerable groups are closely involved in drawing up policies intended to improve their situation and to promote and protect their fundamental rights;

## WELCOMES

6. the report <sup>1</sup> presented by the Commission in its communication of 2 July 2008 which reviewed existing policies and instruments contributing to the inclusion of the Roma people and advocated a more systematic use of such policies and instruments for that purpose;
7. the organisation on 16 September 2008 of the first European Roma summit, in which representatives of the EU institutions and the Member States participated, and the fact that it brought about a considerable mobilisation of civil society which resulted in the adoption of a declaration;
8. the organisation on 29 and 30 September 2008 of the second Equality Summit which provided an opportunity to review the main forms of discrimination often faced by the Roma people in access to education, employment, vocational training and goods and services, and to discuss instruments to combat such discrimination;
9. the inclusion of the situation of the Roma in the European Union amongst the operational priorities of the 2008 annual work programme of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, whose data and expertise are available to the EU institutions and the Member States;

CALLS UPON THE COMMISSION AND THE MEMBER STATES, in close cooperation,

10. on the basis of the conclusions of the report from the Commission, to take account of the situation of the Roma when designing and implementing policies to defend fundamental rights, combat poverty and discrimination and uphold gender equality, and ensure access to education, housing, health, employment, justice and culture, and where appropriate to identify specific actions for 2009 and 2010 to that end;

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<sup>1</sup> 11530/08 ADD 1 + 11530/08 ADD 1 COR 1.

11. to make better use of the Structural Funds, the Pre-Accession Instrument and the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument to promote the inclusion of the Roma, particularly in the fields of education, housing, health, employment and access to justice and to culture;

#### CALLS UPON THE COMMISSION

12. before the end of the first half of 2010, to submit to it a report on progress made;
13. to continue and deepen the discussions and organise a further summit concerning Roma in cooperation with the three presidencies in office from 2010 (Spain, Belgium, Hungary);
14. to organise, initially, an exchange of good practice and experience between the Member States in the sphere of inclusion of the Roma, provide analytical support and stimulate cooperation between all parties concerned by Roma issues, including the organisations representing Roma, in the context of an integrated European platform.

