Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire

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COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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Ending discrimination against Roma children

Motion for a recommendation
Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination

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

Discrimination against Roma in Europe is widespread and affects members of this community already at a very young age.

School is the first place where children learn both to socialise and the basic tools which enable them, without discrimination, to acquire the skills necessary to have an equal start in society. Unfortunately, in some Council of Europe member states, Roma children are placed in separate classes, or deliberately segregated in schools where the majority of children are Roma or in schools for children with special needs.

Far from laying down the conditions for equal opportunities and integration in society, this discriminatory treatment leads to the further isolation of Roma children and adults in the making, increases the stigmatisation against the Roma community and reduces the chances for Roma to be fully integrated in society at large.

At the same time, some Roma families are reluctant to enrol their children in school, for fear of being identified by the authorities or because they prefer their children to help with domestic tasks or with activities which contribute to bringing an income to their family. Roma girls, in particular, leave school very early and are often forced into early marriages.

The Parliamentary Assembly should address the issue of Roma children, with a view to making recommendations to member states on how to promote their integration, participation and non-discrimination, in society at large and in particular in the education system.