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Roma

EU framework for Roma welcomed but need for stronger EU oversight urged

The European Commission today presented an EU framework for national Roma integration strategies. The Greens have given a cautious welcome to the framework but regretted the failure to put a central focus on discrimination and the weak requirements on member states. The group has stressed the need for the Commission to redouble its efforts to enforce all applicable EU legislation and guarantee the fundamental rights set out in the EU treaties. Commenting on the Commission's proposals, Green MEP and shadow on the Roma strategy **Hélène Flautre** said:

"The Commission has today taken an important step forward in addressing the issue of Roma inclusion in Europe. The principles of inclusion and non-discrimination, as well as the guarantee of fundamental rights to all citizens, are core elements of the EU treaties and EU membership and all EU member states must recognise this.

"The failure to put a central focus on the need to tackle discrimination against Roma is certainly regrettable. Clearly, there is a need to ensure the active participation of Roma in the development of any strategy and we regret the failure to explicitly state this.

"While member states are left to come forward with their own strategies, it is crucial for the Commission to remain vigilant in its role as guarantor of the treaties, and the fundamental rights set out in the treaties, as well as in enforcing applicable EU legislation. The recent anti-Roma activities by right wing groups in Hungary, and the failure of the government to intervene, have underlined the fact that Roma discrimination remains a serious problem in the EU."

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