

4th Session of the Forum on Minority Issues Permanent Mission of Hungary on Item II

Thank you very much madam Chair. The Roma have been belonging to the European civilisation for over a thousand of years. Today with the estimated population of 10 to 12 million constitutes the largest minority group in Europe. Many members of this vast population have had to face prejudices intolerance and discrimination, social exclusion in everyday life; and the majority of them live in the margins of the society in rudimentary social and economic conditions. European public opinion became acutely aware of the seriousness of this problem and controversial decisions regarding the Roma in a number of European countries suddenly became a hot topic in the political discourse [prompting governments to take action]. The EU thus became convinced that [soon] and effective measures needing to resolve the deeply-rooted Roma problem. The government of Hungary decided to build on the momentum and place the issue at the centre [presidency] of the Council of the EU, which resulted in the unanimous adoption on the 21 June 2011 of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies for [after 2020]. The EU initiatives endeavours to the living conditions of the Roma by creating a single European Framework aimed at the social and economic inclusion while at the same time paying attention to the full respect of their human rights. The EU framework encourages member states to implement the principle of equity in four crucial areas: education, employment, healthcare, and housing. More specifically in the area of education the goal is to ensure that all Roma children have access to high quality education and do not face discomfort or national segregation. As a minimum all Roma children should complete primary school in the area of employment the sizable gap between Roma and non-Roma employment rates has to be addressed who can now be enterprise development in the raising the rate of employment of disadvantaged people with lower education levels. Thirdly, similarly to healthcare for Roma in general must be made more equal for those living in slums and isolated settlements specifically targeted design programs must [even out]. The health visitor system must be sanctioned. Finally, on housing and visit services the member states must ensure that all Roma households are connected to water and there are visiting [methods]. Housing maintenance must be assisted including through debt-management counselling. Settlement programs social urban rehabilitation and access to social housing must be facilitated. The EU framework invites all member states to prepare their comprehensive strategies on the inclusion of the Roma by the end of this year. These instruments need to focus on the targets laid down in the EU framework and demonstrate how member states wish to reach them by concrete measures. They equally need to address public security issues including the fight against human trafficking of the Roma. To ensure that these programs achieve the EU Roma Integration Goals and that money intended for Roma integration reaches its final beneficiaries. The Framework lays down the foundations of a robust monitoring mechanism. The assessment will be carried out soon, the data collection in collaboration with the institutions like the World Bank and the EU agency for fundamental rights. The results will be submitted to an annual report and reach the European Parliament and the European Council will be informed. Member states should devote special attention to the interests and difficulties of Roma women and girls who face multiple forms of discrimination and thus a gender perspective needs to be applied in all

policies and actions for advancing for Roma inclusion. In conclusion, the issue of Roma inclusion is a very complex matter encompassing many different aspects of social and economic life. The EU framework provides a useful road map to address the social and economic integration within the regional perspective while allowing individual member states to prepare national strategies taking into account the considerable differences.