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PRESS RELEASE

European Parliament Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup (ARDI)

Today the European Parliament united in its demand for a stronger fight against antigypsyism:

545 MEPs' votes lead to adoption of the 'Report on the implementation of National Roma Integration Strategies'

Brussels, 17.09.2020: Today MEPs voted in favor of the 'Report on the implementation of National Roma Integration Strategies: combating negative attitudes towards people with Romani background in Europe'. For the first time in the history of the European Parliament, a report proposes to the Commission to table a legislative proposal focused on fighting poverty and antigypsyism and improving living and health conditions of Romani people. The report says no to discrimination and school segregation, insists on inclusive education, early childhood development, access to healthcare and compensation for victims of forced sterilization, among other challenges addressed.

ARDI Co-President MEP **Romeo Franz** (Greens/EFA), rapporteur, said: "17 September 2020 remains a day of reference for Romani people. On this day, the European Parliament adopted with a consistent majority of 545 a historical resolution I worked on. The resolution asks for an EU Law for the Equality, Inclusion, Participation of Romani People and Combating Antigypsyism. The beginning of a significant change in the lives of my people. I will continue until the law will become reality."

ARDI Vice-President MEP **Peter Pollak** (EPP) welcomed the report and explained: "It comes in right timing, just one month before the planned adoption of the new EU initiative on Roma inclusion and equality up to 2030 by the European Commission. It reflects the situation and

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challenges still to be addressed, similarly as the [EPP position paper](#) on Roma inclusion adopted in June this year.”

ARDI Co-President MEP **Evin Incir** (S&D) applauded the report and its conclusions: “I am very happy to see such a strong report and calls for binding legislative tools. The fight against antigypsyism, discrimination and marginalization needs to intensify in all member states. The lack of progress is astounding and it is unacceptable to continue this political apathy towards Romani people in our member states. All Europeans have the right to education, healthcare, housing and a decent life; it is up to decision makers to make inclusion a priority. I expect them to take this to heart and to actively include Romani people in the process of attaining equality.”

ARDI Co-President MEP **Cornelia Ernst** (GUE/NGL) pointed out that “terrible situation of Roma people exists because of centuries of persistent racism, as well as because of present day oppressions”. MEP Ernst commented: “This report is right to emphasize intersectional or multiple oppressions that Romani women and girls experience. Moreover, I wish also to invite EU to celebrate other strong stands of the report, such as a call for developing defunding policies for those entities that engage in discriminatory practices towards Roma. Finally, we call for the binding nature of the so-called inclusion process. The current EU Roma Framework has failed because of its non-binding nature”.

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