

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1384/09

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to the Commission

Subject: Measures taken by the Commission in response to acts of xenophobia and discrimination against Romanians in Italy

A number of offences committed by Romanian citizens in Italy have recently provoked a wave of xenophobia and hostility directed at the Romanian community in that country. The situation is giving increasing cause for concern, having been blown out of all proportion by the Italian mass media, which do not hesitate to give pride of place to any article seeking to denigrate Romanians resident in Italy.

Similarly, a number of political figures have made remarks which are offensive not only to Romanians who have committed offences but to all Romanian citizens in Italy, giving the impression that, in Italian, 'Romanian' is synonymous with 'law breaker'. The situation appears to be spiralling out of control, with Romanian children suffering bullying and discrimination in Italian schools, while members of the extreme right 'Forza Nuova' are committing acts of violence and destruction against Romanian citizens and their property.

Statistics provided by the UNAR (National Office for the Prevention of Racial Discrimination) show that complaints from Eastern European citizens have been registered principally by Romanians (45.8%), followed by Albanians (16.7%) and Poles (9.7%).

Recently the Italian authorities have tabled a bill requiring doctors to disregard professional secrecy rules and inform on those present in Italy without residence permits. This could constitute a contravention of Article 6 of the EU Treaty concerning the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms of European citizens.

This is an unprecedented state of affairs, particularly since these xenophobic actions are a source of diplomatic tension between Italy and Romania.

1. In view of the Commission's decision to assess the situation of Romanians in Italy, what have been its findings to date?
2. What measures does the Commission intend to take to prevent discrimination against Romanians and ensure compliance by the Italian Government with Directive 2004/38/EC<sup>1</sup> and Article 6 of the EU Treaty?

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 158, 30.4.2004, p. 77.