



Slovensko predsedstvo EU 2008  
Slovenian Presidency of the EU 2008  
La Présidence slovène de l'UE 2008

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## **Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the European Union**

**Permanent Council No. 708  
10 April 2008**

### **EU statement on International Roma Day**

On the occasion of the International Roma Day on 8 April 2008, the European Union would like to reiterate the importance it attaches to the improvement of the situation of Roma and Sinti and its strong support for the effective implementation of the OSCE Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area. The EU is pleased with the emphasis that the Finnish Chair is placing on the issue of social inclusion of Roma and Sinti and appreciates its close cooperation with the Council of Europe on this matter.

At the European Council in December 2007, the Heads of States and Governments of the EU recognised the "very specific situation faced by the Roma across the Union" and invited Member States to "use all means to improve their inclusion". The European Commission was requested to examine existing policies and instruments and to report to the Council on progress achieved before the end of June 2008.

Acknowledging that the situation of Roma and Sinti and discrimination they may face is a European concern requiring a common European response, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights announced, in a statement made on the occasion of the International Roma day, that it will make a strong contribution to support any common effort to help Roma and Sinti realise their right to equal opportunities in the EU.

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The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia\* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area Iceland and Norway, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Armenia align themselves with this statement.

\* Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process

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