

Introduction

This submission addresses the failure of the "Equipped Village" La Barbuta in Rome and other similar camps established in Italy to accommodate Roma. It argues that the establishment of segregated camps is an anomaly which has been repeatedly criticised at an international level and is contrary to Italy's own "National Strategy for Social Inclusion of Roma, Sinti and Caminanti" published in February 2012 by UNAR¹ which looks to the future and explicitly rejects previous practices, including the construction and maintenance of segregated camps.

The submission also point out that the practice of building segregated camps for Roma is out of step with the approach on the same issue within the European Union. In this context, this paper examines:

- some of the isolated actions taken by local authorities other EU states which tend to impose or promote segregation of Romani communities and the reactions to these events;
- a number of concerted integration and social inclusion policies implemented in other EU states, which are in direct contrast to the policies of construction of camps such as La Barbuta.

The submitting organisation

The European Roma Rights Centre² (ERRC) is a public interest law organisation committed to fighting racism against Roma and the abuse of human rights through strategic litigation, research, advocacy and training of Romani activists. The ERRC was founded in 1996 and has consultative status at the Council of Europe and the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. The ERRC has represented Romani victims of human rights violations in fifteen domestic jurisdictions and in international courts, where they have won several landmark cases at the European Court of Human Rights and UN treaty bodies. The ERRC's research activities make it a leading expert on the situation of Roma throughout Europe. It recently wrote important papers on policy implementation on behalf of the European Commission (Roma in an enlarged European Union³) and the Fundamental Rights Agency (housing conditions of Roma and Travellers in the EU and the situation of EU citizens of Roma moving and settling in other Member States⁴)

Historical policies for Roma in Italy

¹ http://www.eu-inclusive.eu/sites/default/files/UNAR_LIBRO_STRATEGIA_ROM_SINTI_ING.pdf

² www.errc.org

³ <http://www.errc.org/research-and-advocacy>

⁴ http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/629-ROMA-Movement-Comparative-report_en.pdf

Since the 1980s, Italian official policy has been to accommodate so-called 'nomads' (in reality Roma⁵) in segregated camps and often to manage those camps with a high level of monitoring and control of the personal freedoms of residents, with many characteristics of prison facilities. This treatment of Roma persisted for several decades, through numerous governments, culminating in the now defunct State of Emergency (2008-2011).

In 2000 the submitting organisation undertook a major research in Italy, in which it described the situation as follows: "Most of Roma in Italy live in a state of separation from mainstream Italian society. For over half of Italy's Roma, this separation is physical: Roma live segregated from Non-Romani Italians. In some areas, Roma are excluded and ignored, living in filthy and squalid conditions, without basic infrastructures. These Roma "squat" abandoned buildings or set up camps along the road or in open spaces. They can be evicted at any moment, and frequently are. A racist society pushes these Roma to the margins and hinders their integration. Their settlements are often called "illegal" or "unauthorised". Where Italian authorities have expended energy and resources on Roma, these efforts have in most cases not been aimed at integrating Roma into Italian society. Quite the opposite: as the third millennium dawns, Italy is the only country in Europe to boast a systematic, publicly organised and sponsored network of ghettos aimed at depriving Roma of full participation in, or even contact or interaction with, Italian life. These Roma, in Italian parlance, live in "camps" or squalid ghettos that are "authorised"⁶.

In more than a decade of further research and monitoring in Italy, the submitting organisation has noted a continuation of this situation and indeed deterioration, which is naturally associated with practices which promote physical segregation and social exclusion.

Further to the view of the submitting organisation, numerous recommendations, references and reports from the international community criticise the practice of accommodating Roma in segregated camps and show that Italian policies have been and are still inefficient in order to promote a genuine inclusion. Such criticism emanates from several international bodies and some is noted below.

The Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities repeatedly expressed its concerns about the conditions of Roma in Italy throughout the last decade. In its first opinion on Italy in September 2001, it stated: "For years the Roma have been isolated from the rest of the population by being assembled in camps where living conditions and standards of hygiene are very harsh. Numerous concurring reports suggest that problems of overcrowding persist: in several camps some huts have neither running water nor electricity and proper drainage is often lacking. While some Italian Roma do undeniably continue to lead an itinerant or semi-itinerant life, the fact remains that many of them aspire to live under housing conditions fully comparable to those enjoyed by the rest of the population. Far from effectively aiding integration of the Roma, the practice of placing them in camps is liable to

⁵ This term is used so as to incorporate Roma, Sinti and Caminanti (RSC).

⁶ <http://www.errc.org/cms/upload/media/00/0F/m0000000F.pdf>

aggravate the socio-economic inequalities affecting them, to heighten the risk of discriminatory acts, and to strengthen negative stereotypes concerning them (see comments relating to Article 6). Considering the seriousness of the situation, the Advisory Committee feels that the government should envisage a comprehensive and coherent strategy at national level, no longer to be centred on the model of separation in camps” and concluded “The Committee of Ministers concludes that for years the Roma have been placed in camps, and that this policy does not duly favour their integration into Italian society. The Committee of Ministers recommends that Italy envisage a comprehensive and coherent strategy at national level for co-ordinating the numerous measures entailed by the integration of Roma”⁷.

Seven years ago in its second opinion, in October 2005, the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, reiterated its message: “Roma, Sinti and Travellers still face widespread discrimination and continue to be confronted with particular difficulties in the fields of education, health care, employment and housing. Furthermore, a great number of them are still isolated in large camps at the outskirts of major cities, where living conditions are deplorable. This regrettable state of affairs is partly due to the attitude of the authorities themselves, which tend to consider the placement of Roma, Sinti and Travellers in camps as an appropriate way through which these persons can continue to live as “nomads”. Against this background, resolute action should be taken at the state level to ensure legal protection for the Roma, Sinti, and Travellers and efforts should be intensified to remedy sub-standard living conditions in the camps. There is a pressing need to develop a long-term comprehensive strategy of integration with particular emphasis on education, through which the state authorities would ensure proper co-ordination between the various initiatives taken at municipal and regional level in consultation with those concerned. Concerns remain about the lack of participation of Roma, Sinti and Travellers, which should be addressed as a matter of priority”. In the end, the Advisory Committee recommended Italy to “Intensify existing measures to enable Roma, Sinti and Travellers to enjoy adequate living conditions and design, in consultation with those concerned, a comprehensive strategy of integration at national level focusing on access to housing, employment, education and health care”⁸.

In its third opinion on Italy, in October 2010, the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, noted the deterioration of the situation of Roma, saying: “The situation of Roma and Sinti and the lack of a comprehensive strategy for their protection remain a source of deep concern. The living conditions of these persons have continued to deteriorate and their marginalisation and social exclusion have increased. Although only very few members of these communities share a nomadic lifestyle, they continue to be placed in ‘camps for nomads’, which perpetuates their segregation and marginalisation. Roma and Sinti are faced on a daily basis with poverty, extreme hardship and discrimination in all fields: access to housing, employment, health care, education and other social rights. They are confronted with hostility and even, in some cases, violence by members of the majority population. Frequent expulsions from the camps, in many cases without

⁷ http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/minorities/3_FCNMdocs/PDF_1st_OP_Italy_en.pdf

⁸ http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/minorities/3_FCNMdocs/PDF_2nd_OP_Italy_en.pdf

prior information or consultation and without adequate rehousing options, have left many Roma and Sinti without the most basic living conditions”⁹.

A fourth opinion of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, the content of which surely depends on the persistence of camps such as La Barbuta, is expected in March 2014.

The European Committee of Social Rights stated in 2005 in its decision in *ERRC v Italy* that: “The temporary supply of shelter cannot be considered as adequate and individuals should be provided with adequate housing within a reasonable period” and that “by persisting with the practice of placing Roma in camps the Government has failed to take due and positive account of all relevant differences, or adequate steps to ensure their access to rights and collective benefits that must be open to all”. Finally, the Committee found that Italy had failed to show that: “it has taken adequate steps to ensure that Roma are offered housing of a sufficient quantity and quality to meet their particular needs” as well as “it has ensured or has taken steps to ensure that local authorities are fulfilling their responsibilities in this area”. The Committee concluded that Italy was in violation of Article 31§1 of the European Social Charter taken together with Article E¹⁰.

In 2010, another decision of the European Committee of Social Rights, in *COHRE v Italy* has strengthened the earlier decision of 2005, underlining how Italy failed to comply with that previous decision, stating: “The Committee therefore finds that the living conditions of Roma and Sinti in camps worsened following the adoption of the contested “security measures”. As, on the one hand, the measures in question directly target these vulnerable groups and, on the other, no adequate steps are taken to take due and positive account of the differences of the population concerned, the situation amounts to stigmatisation which constitutes discriminatory treatment. The Committee holds that the situation of the living conditions of Roma and Sinti in camps or similar settlements in Italy constitutes a violation of Article E taken together with Article 31§1 of the Revised Charter”. Indeed, the Committee, in its decision, goes on to argue that: “From the information provided by the authorities, the Committee considers that there is no evidence to establish that Italy has taken sustained positive steps to improve the situation. The Committee is aware of the financial resources allocated by the Italian authorities to specific initiatives and projects referred to by the respondent State in its written submissions and during the public hearing. Still, the Committee considers that it has not been demonstrated that such resources were aimed at improving access of Roma and Sinti to social housing without discrimination. In fact, in contrast with the examples provided by COHRE with detailed descriptions of the precarious situation and substandard conditions in many Roma camps throughout Italy, the representative of the Government only mentioned during the public hearing an isolated concrete case of effective access to social housing (“centro per l'emergenza abitativa”) in the city of Brescia for a nomadic population of 227 persons”. In the end, the Committee concludes its assessment remarking that: “Thus, ultimate responsibility for policy

⁹ http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/minorities/3_fcnmdocs/PDF_3rd_OP_Italy_en.pdf

¹⁰ http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/socialcharter/complaints/CC27Merits_en.pdf

implementation, involving at a minimum oversight and regulation of local action, lies with the Italian State”¹¹.

Following a visit to Italy in May 2011, Thomas Hammarberg, then European Commissioner for Human Rights, noted the situation of the Roma, Sinti and Travellers in Italy in a report of 7 September 2011. The report strongly encouraged the Italian authorities to strengthen the element of social inclusion in their policies in the field of housing rights for the RSC and stated: “It has to be stressed however, that for such a strategy to have a chance to produce long-term results, a genuine effort is needed in Italy to shift paradigm in dealing with issues relating to Roma and Sinti: the focus must be much more on social inclusion, non-discrimination and combating anti-Gypsyism and less on coercive measures such as forcible evictions and expulsions”¹².

A report from the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) published on 21 February 2012 again continues their long-stated message on Roma policies in Italy. It states at the outset that: “Most Roma in Italy experience severe marginalization and discrimination in terms of access both to housing and to other social rights. The general climate regarding Roma is strongly negative: many stereotypes and prejudices exist concerning them, which are sometimes reflected in, and even reinforced by, the attitudes and policies adopted by politicians. In its third report, ECRI noted with regret that no or very little progress had been achieved in virtually all the fields already highlighted in its second report. It can but be noted that the situation has scarcely improved since; on the contrary, it has worsened in some respects”.

Subsequently, ECRI continues assessing the housing situation of Roma in Italy in relation to the formal policy of the camps, saying: “In its third report, ECRI noted that about one third of the Roma and Sinti, whether citizens or non-citizens, lived in camps for “nomads” segregated from the rest of society and often even without access to the most basic facilities. It strongly recommended that the Italian authorities address the housing situation of the Roma population in close co-operation with the communities concerned and reminded them that it was important not to base their policies concerning Roma and Sinti on the assumption that the members of these groups lead a nomadic lifestyle. There are some authorised settlements, put in place by local authorities. These are generally located in peripheral urban areas, far distant from city centres, or in industrial zones. Although they avoid the worst health-related problems, since they offer access to running water and electricity, these sites are often densely packed with containers, arranged in straight lines, each of which is intended to house up to four or five people. In the case of a container that is home to four people the average floor area per person is less than half that recommended by the Building Code standard; at the same time, the families concerned often have more members than the number of persons the container is officially intended to house. Although the general living conditions in the settlements are not insalubrious, this overcrowding poses clear health problems. Moreover, authorised settlements are often surrounded by a fence or even a wall that is higher than the average adult, and access is restricted solely to

¹¹ http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/socialcharter/complaints/CC58Merits_en.pdf

¹² <https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=1826921>

residents holding an identity badge; non-residents can enter the settlements only after showing an identity document to the guards on duty. ECRI notes with concern that these conditions – although they often constitute an improvement in sanitary terms compared with the situation prevailing in the illegal settlements – are tantamount to segregation, stigmatise people living on these sites, pose serious problems of integration of the Roma in Italian society and are also less favourable than the situation of persons who are not considered as “nomads” and who live in public housing”.

Finally, ECRI concludes its view on housing for Roma in Italy recommending: “that the Italian authorities firmly combat the segregation suffered by Roma in the field of housing, notably by ensuring that the housing solutions proposed to them do not cut them off from the rest of society but on the contrary, promote their integration. ECRI again stresses to the Italian authorities the importance of not basing their policies towards Roma and Sintis on the preconceived notion that they live a nomadic lifestyle”¹³.

The present Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, Nils Muiznieks, published a report on September the 18th, 2012, which followed a visit he had in our country in July 2012. In this report, the Commissioner clearly addresses the situation in the La Barbuta camp, stating: “The Commissioner was informed that the local authorities indicated on several occasions that they considered the camp of via di Salone as a model camp, and that the newest “equipped village” of *La Barbuta* follows the same model. However, in the opinion of the Commissioner, the segregated conditions in these camps offer no prospect of gainful employment to the inhabitants or even the possibility to interact with non-Roma persons and integrate into society. He also personally witnessed the sub-standard living conditions in a former authorised camp (Salviati II), which serve as an illustration as to the speed with which conditions can deteriorate in such segregated settings”. The Commissioner continues, then, by saying “Thus, the Commissioner particularly regrets the information received during his visit that forced evictions to *La Barbuta* had already started, some taking place while he was in Rome. In the Commissioner’s view these actions can hardly be reconciled with the shift in policy required by the National Roma Inclusion Strategy, which is now in force in Italy. Instead, they show a regrettable continuity with previous official policy based on emergency”. In the end, the Commissioner states: “The camp-based approach and the evictions associated with it were hallmarks of the “Nomad emergency” policy, and should be overcome together with the corresponding Decree”.¹⁴

It is striking how many years have passed in which Italy consistently been noted by the high-level international organisations working in the field of human rights to be pursuing inappropriate housing policies in respect of Roma. Segregation in camps and the presence of security measures have been singled out amongst the greatest problems

¹³ <http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/country-by-country/italy/ITA-CbC-IV-2012-002-ENG.pdf>

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<https://wcd.coe.int/com.instranet.InstraServlet?command=com.instranet.CmdBlobGet&InstranetImage=2143096&SecMode=1&DocId=1926434&Usage=2>

and deterioration of the situation of Roma has been noted and attributed to the use of such camps.

Current policies for Roma: National Strategy for the Inclusion of Roma, Sinti and Caminanti

The policies of segregation described were consigned to history by the Italian government's 2012 "National Strategy for Inclusion of Roma, Sinti and Caminanti" (the Strategy).¹⁵ The Strategy, adopted in February 2012, the importance of such pan EU approach, and its economic repercussions, has been stressed even by the World Bank in 2008.¹⁶ The Strategy rejects projects which promote segregation and social exclusion and better aligns Italy with a pan-EU approach underlining social inclusion of Roma.

Not only does the Strategy look forward to policies aimed at social inclusion, it also explicitly rejects the policy of consigning Roma to segregated camps. The Strategy expresses the strong hope of "definitively overcome the emergency phase, which has characterised the past years, especially when intervening in and working on the relevant situation in large urban areas".¹⁷ It declares: "In particular, it is increasingly recognised by local authorities themselves to exceed the Roma camps, as a condition of physical isolation, which reduces the chances of social inclusion and economic communities RSC. The liberation from the camp as a place of relational and physical degradation of families and people of RSC and their relocation to decent housing is possible, even if successful experiences are now in Italy"¹⁸.

The fate of La Barbuta camp may be considered a litmus test for genuine commitment to the Strategy and a new phase in which the national institutions are promoting integration for Roma.

Policies of segregation in other EU states

The submitting organisation notes that all EU states have now adopted NRIS, as Italy has done. Notwithstanding this, it also notes that in some EU states there have been isolated instances of segregation of Roma by state authorities. It is noteworthy, however, that never have these policies been nationwide policies, as in Italy. They have, rather, been isolated, local incidents and have each attracted considerable criticism.

One example is the building of walls in Slovakia, which physically separate the Roma from non-Roma. This practice has been criticised by the European Commissioner for Human Rights in his report of 2011 following his visit to that country: "A relatively new

¹⁵ Ibid 1.

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<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/ECAEXT/0,,contentMDK:21903186~menuPK:258604~pagePK:2865106~piPK:2865128~theSitePK:258599,00.html>

¹⁷ Ibid 1, page 5

¹⁸ Ibid 1, page 81

tendency enhancing segregation in Slovakia appears to be the building of walls to separate Roma from non-Roma areas, a trend which civil society organisations link notably to increased concerns in public and political discourse around “Roma criminality”. The Commissioner understands that such walls were erected, in some cases with municipal funds, in a number of towns around the country, including Ostrovany, Michalovce, Lomnička, Trebišov and Prešov. In Plavecký Štvrtok, the residents of the Roma settlement showed to the Commissioner a wall that had recently been built across a nearby street and indicated that as a result, children were obliged to take a long de-tour to go to school. The Commissioner notes that the Ombudsman and, more recently, the Deputy Minister for Human Rights and the Slovak Centre for Human Rights have spoken out against the building of these walls”.¹⁹

Another, again localised, instance of housing for Roma being segregated and physically separated from non-Roma by a wall was in the municipality of Beja in Portugal. This contributed to a breach of Article E taken together with Article 31§1 of the Revised Charter in *ERRC v Portugal* in June 2011.²⁰

In a more elaborate policy to promote segregation of a Romani community, the local authorities in Cluj-Napoca evicted a community to ‘Pata-Rat’, an area outside of town where there is a huge waste dump where, in December 2010. Around 350 people were evicted from a town-centre location and transferred. This action is more similar to the widespread housing policies in Italy. The new “homes” provided to persons evicted consisted of containers without heating, hot water, kitchen and toilet facilities and the establishment of Pata-Rat appears, to date, the biggest ghetto built on a dump in Europe with an estimated population of about 2000 people, almost all of Roma ethnicity. This case sparked strong reactions. It was categorically criticised by Amnesty International²¹ and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP Romania) “expresse[d] its concern about the precarious living conditions of Roma communities in the Pata Rat in district in the Cluj Metropolitan Area. The Inhabitants of the small community of Pata Rat are mostly unemployed and make a living by doing small jobs and recycling waste. The children often cling to garbage trucks as they enter the site so they might have first pickings from the truck’s load. The practical experience of UNDP in working with Roma communities at the local level underlines the need for integrated area-based approaches that address Roma inclusion issues from different angles.”²². Nearly 250 individuals who were moved to Pata-Rat have initiated legal proceedings against their treatment and the case is pending before the Romanian courts.

The good practices of integration and desegregation

How has been repeatedly highlighted, ERRC sees this process as an opportunity for Italy to finally break away from a past made of bad policies, which was only able to

¹⁹ <https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=1885987>

²⁰ http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/socialcharter/Complaints/CC61Merits_en.pdf, paras. 42 and 48

²¹ <http://www.amnesty.org/en/appeals-for-action/Coastei-Street>

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<http://www.undp.ro/libraries/Roma%20resettlement%20and%20housing%20and%20inclusion%20program%20in%20Pata%20Rat%20is%20needed.pdf>

worsen the living conditions of the Roma and their segregation throughout the national territory, and to move towards a future of better planned inclusive policies.

In the most recent report on Italy, issued in January 2012, the submitting organisation underlined that: “The continuing misperception that Roma are nomadic implies that Romani settlements are not intended for long-term use, as reflected by the official housing policy directed at them since the 1980s. The Italian authorities have instituted a system of “camps”: the so-called formal camps are segregated settlements constructed and authorised by the authorities, while the other settlements in which people live, often without permission but sometimes for many years, are known as informal camps. Formal camps, authorised by the authorities and located on the periphery of cities and towns, are home to around one third of the Roma living in Italy. Municipalities are supposed to ensure that they are built in areas beneficial to the Romani community: “areas that avoid urban marginalisation; those which facilitate access to education, health and social services; those which encourage the participation of the inhabitants of such settlements in the area’s social life.” Regional laws also require municipalities to provide basic utilities for the camps, including fencing, electricity, clean water, waste disposal and playgrounds. However, the municipalities that construct camps frequently do not meet these conditions, and the living conditions provided for Roma are often inadequate and even harmful to the well-being of Romani families”. In the end, ERRC recommended that: “Stop the use of public funds and resources for the construction of new formal camps, which deepen segregation, but rather work to decrease the segregation of Roma in Italy, ensuring them access to adequate, integrated housing”²³

Furthermore, in its report commissioned by the Agency of Fundamental Rights titled “The situation of Roma EU citizens moving to and settling in other EU Member States”, issued in November 2009, ERRC stated that “In Italy the official policy regarding Roma and Sinti housing (with or without Italian citizenship) consists of building authorised ‘camps for nomads’ equipped with prefabricated houses or caravans. Since 1984, 12 Italian regions have enacted laws for the ‘protection’ of the nomad populations and their culture and established ‘camps for nomads’”²⁴.

Much has been made of the deficiencies of the Italian policies of moving Roma to segregated camps. There are, however, several positive examples of practices aimed at integration, social inclusion and desegregation of Roma from Italy itself and elsewhere in Europe.

From Italy, these “good examples” were pointed out in Italy’s Strategy. They are local practices set up by individual municipalities in order to overcome the so-called camp approach (“campizzazione”). These examples include the project “Dal Campo alla Città” established in Reggio Emilia in 2007 and other projects set up in Modena, Padova, Messina, Torino, Genova, Firenze and Bologna.

²³ <http://www.errc.org/cms/upload/file/italy-cerd-submission-27-january-2012.pdf>

²⁴ Ibid 3

Even though these projects have enjoyed varying degrees of success and differ from each other on how they promote integration, social inclusion and housing, common features can be found among them. All these examples are characterised by a more comprehensive approach in which Roma themselves have a voice and take part in decision-making. Furthermore, in all these examples, public authorities have played a role of mediation between different actors and have spent their resources to promote integration's patterns in an organised way and with proper mid-to-long term plans. All of these projects have aimed at facilitating the closure of camps and putting an end to the marginalisation of numerous Romani families while not simply relocating them but effectively including them into the Italian society with a great benefit for Roma as well as non-Roma people.

On a regional level, an example of good practice towards Roma inclusion must be seen in Spain, a country with a Roma population four times higher than Italy and estimated of around 650.000. As recalled by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights in its 2009 Case Study on Specific Housing Initiatives for Roma and Travellers – Spain: “Spain has a long history of housing programmes targeting social exclusion, particularly among the Roma population and has implemented initiatives since the early 1980s aiming to improve the housing situation of this ethnic group. Mistakes occurred during early initiatives, but since the 1980s there has been a shift from projects solely focusing on improving housing to programmes aiming to increase social integration by adopting a holistic approach that takes into account other aspects such as employment, education and health”. So, if in the first phase, during the 80's, Roma were moved to “special” or “transition” neighbourhoods in isolated and segregated areas, with the direct result that these eventually became slums, “Since the 1990s, housing policies have focused on eliminating segregated Roma slums by integrating Roma into standard housing in non Roma neighbourhoods. These policies also implement programmes addressing other issues such as health, education or employment. A number of programmes supported by Autonomous Communities, municipal authorities and NGOs have tried various forms of integration through the eradication of slums, the provision of socially integrated housing, arranging for rented accommodation, etc. Research indicates that in the last two decades the situation has significantly improved with the percentage of Roma living in substandard housing reduced from 31 per cent to 11.7 per cent”²⁵.

Another example of national policies genuinely aimed at inclusion and desegregation of the Roma ethnicity can be found in Hungary where, after a long tradition of flawed policies towards Roma, in 2007 the New Hungary Development Plan (NHDP) was adopted. The March 2009 FRA study noted: “In order to improve the situation of the lowest-status social groups, including Roma, the NHDP defines the elaboration of complex programmes as a goal by including programme elements that refer to community development, education, employment, creation of workplaces, improvement of housing conditions as well as development of economy and infrastructure. In multiply disadvantaged regions, it targets the increasing of the mobility of work force, increasing of employment opportunities and attracting of highly skilled professionals. In order to

²⁵ http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/594-RAXEN-Roma%20Housing-Spain_en.pdf

facilitate access of disadvantaged regions to resources, the NHDP orders the application of central programmes, normative subsidies, in some cases global support, since disadvantaged regions are usually unable to apply for resources through tenders. The NHDP sets disadvantaged areas with the overrepresentation of Roma and urban ghettos as target areas for development. The plan defines the fight against self-accelerating social and spatial deterioration processes as a major goal, and includes programmes which focus on the comprehensive improvement of the situation of local residents (including non-Roma). In case of areas with an overrepresentation of Roma, the programme defines the increase of employment opportunities, strengthening of local enterprises and development of education fitting local demands as fundamental goals, together with labour market reintegration programmes²⁶.

Conclusions

This submission illustrates the consistent criticism from several quarters of the practice of segregating Romani communities. It reports the deterioration noted and the harm done to Roma through segregated living in settings such as La Barbuta.

The submission notes some isolated incidents of imposed segregation elsewhere in Europe and the strength of the reaction to such incidents. Nowhere, though, do any segregationist policies match the formalism and scale of those in Italy.

That the use of camps such as La Barbuta is anomalous and damaging to Roma and the wider community, it is submitted, is well established. That there are viable alternatives and that policymakers across Europe and in Italy itself embrace such alternatives, is also clear.

Again this background and at this turning-point in policy, the decision on the continuation of the La Barbuta camp is a mark in the sand as to the path that Italian policies for Roma will take in the future.

²⁶ http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/583-RAXEN-Roma%20Housing-Hungary_en.pdf