Census: Forced evictions of migrant Roma in France

(April – May – June 2014)

1. Press release

**France Continues to Evict Roma on a Massive Scale**

**Budapest, Paris, 10 July 2014:** France continues with its unlawful and costly policy of evicting Roma who have made use of their right to freedom of movement within the European Union from countries such as Romania. Between 1 April and 30 June 2014, 3,807 Roma were evicted from 40 different places. Fires in two settlements left 51 Roma homeless, while the French authorities implemented forced evictions in 38 settlements.

According to the findings of a survey conducted by the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) and the Ligue des droit de l’homme (LDH), there were 28 evictions due to court orders (eviction procedure started by landowners), eight evictions following an ordinance by the local mayor or prefect citing security reasons, and two settlements where people chose to leave, under the threat of imminent forced eviction.

During the first three months of 2014, the French authorities forcibly evicted a total of 3,428 Roma. The new figures gathered by the ERRC and the LDH clearly reflect that, despite commitments and criticism, the French authorities pursue their eviction policy rather than seeking ways to ensure full integration of Roma into French society.

Eviction policies violate the fundamental rights of Roma, secured by domestic legislation, including the French Constitution, as well as international law by which France is bound. Evictions should be
accompanied by rehousing and social support for the affected people, as set out in French government guidance published on 26 August 2012. In practice, temporary accommodation is offered to some families chosen using unclear criteria, but not to others. It is impossible under these conditions to implement any integration policy. The authorities do not fully adhere to their own guidance, in particular when it comes to measures aimed at integration. The guidance is nothing more than window dressing and evictions are in fact the automatic response of the authorities. These evictions are costly and do not bring any sustainable or fair solution to the problem of Roma living in slums. Furthermore, the eviction policy hinders all the integration efforts promised by the French Government in its National Strategy and increases the vulnerability of Roma, pushing them further to the margins. Dehumanising evictions, coupled with racist comments by officials (including high-level politicians) claiming, for example, that Roma are unable to integrate, pave the way for violent actions such as the brutal attack on 13 June 2014 when a 16 year-old Romani boy was nearly beaten to death by a mob.

The ERRC has challenged France’s eviction policy before the European Court of Human Rights. On 22 May 2014, the ECtHR decided to hear the case of Hirtu and others v France, about the forced eviction of Romani families in early 2013. The Court will scrutinise France’s practice of forced evictions and the way the French courts have responded to this practice. The Court has given the case priority treatment, a measure reserved for the most serious category of cases. The Ligue des Droits de l’Homme is seeking permission to intervene in the case as a third party.

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Note:
This survey is the result of joint work between the ERRC and the LDH. The figures are not comprehensive, but the census aims be as accurate as possible in the absence of official data. The figures were gathered through media monitoring and reports from NGOs.
2. Results

During the second quarter of 2014, 3,807 people living in slums were made homeless (3,756 people were forced by the authorities and 51 after a fire on the settlement). 40 sites have been evicted and partial alternative accommodation was offered 18 times. There were 28 evictions due to Court orders (eviction procedure started by landowners), 8 following a Mayor or Prefect bylaw for security reasons and in 2 cases, people chose to leave the settlement themselves, under the threat of imminent forced eviction. Analysis of the results shows that evictions mainly occurred in four regions of France since the beginning of the year (96% of the evictions): Ile de France (70%), Rhône-Alpes (13%) Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (9%) and Nord-Pas-de-Calais (4%).

Alternative accommodation solutions are very rare, although in this census they are recorded when they are offered, even to a minority of inhabitants. Evictions continue to provoke violent ruptures of education, support and medical care, job search. Every integration project is destroyed after an eviction.

We continue to monitor the distribution of expulsion orders (obligation de quitter le territoire français – OQTF), including to European Union citizens. Very often the distributions of these orders are linked with the eviction of the settlement.

3. Changes compared to the previous period

The following charts detail the different figures and their evolution. This analysis shows that the number of people evicted during the second quarter of 2014 remains extremely high.
### Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>nbr of evictions by authorities</th>
<th>nbr of fires</th>
<th>nbr of evicted settlements</th>
<th>Partial altern. accom.</th>
<th>People evicted by authorities</th>
<th>People evicted by fires</th>
<th>Nbr of people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1T 2013</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3007</td>
<td>1007</td>
<td>4014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2T 2013</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5762</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>6292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3T 2013</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>5203</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>5703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4T 2013</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5408</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>5528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>165</strong></td>
<td><strong>22</strong></td>
<td><strong>187</strong></td>
<td><strong>74</strong></td>
<td><strong>19380</strong></td>
<td><strong>2157</strong></td>
<td><strong>21537</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1T2014</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2904</td>
<td>575</td>
<td>3428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2T2014</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3756</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>3807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>65</strong></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td><strong>76</strong></td>
<td><strong>35</strong></td>
<td><strong>6660</strong></td>
<td><strong>626</strong></td>
<td><strong>7235</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: These figures do not include either people expelled after an administrative decision (OQTF) or charter flights to send individuals back to their country of origin (for the record, at least 446 people were repatriated in group with 4 charter flights in 2013).

### 4. Violence and hate speech against Romani migrants

The list below is not exhaustive and gives only a few examples of violent cases.

**April to June 2014:**

- The report\(^1\) of the National Consultative Commission on Human Rights (CNCDH) delivered on 1 April 2014 to the Prime Minister denounced a "brutal and biologizing" racism in France and warns the PM about the rise of anti-Roma racism.
- A study of U.S. research centre, "Pew Research Center,"\(^2\) shows that in Europe the rejection of Roma is much higher than that of Muslims and Jews. In France, two in three respondents have unfavorable opinions of Roma according to the survey.
- An Amnesty International report\(^3\), published on 8 April 2014, denounces police violence against Roma in France and the failure of European institutions to defend the rights of its citizens.
- A memo\(^4\) from the police of Paris discovered on May 5 ordered police officers from the 6th arrondissement of Paris to identify “Roma families living in the streets and evict them systematically.” Asked about this, the government spokesman, Stéphane Le Foll said: "We must try to make them go back where they came from, Romania or Bulgaria."
- Police harassment: three members of the security forces remove the mattress of a Roma family living on the street in Paris. These facts were filmed\(^5\) on 2 April 2014.
- A 17-year-old boy was lynched and left unconscious along the National Highway 1 in Pierrefitte-sur-Seine on 13 June 2014. The young boy is still in a coma on 30 June and perpetrators have not been arrested yet.\(^6\)

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\(^1\) *La lutte contre le racisme, l’antisémitisme et la xénophobie, Année 2013*, avril 2014, CNCDH

\(^2\) *A fragile rebound for EU image on eve of European parliament elections, Chapter 4, Views of Roma, Muslims, Jews*, 12 mai 2014, Pew research center

\(^3\) "Nous réclamons justice », l’Europe doit protéger davantage les roms contre les violences racistes*, 8 avril 2014, Amnesty International

\(^4\) *Une note révèle des pratiques discriminatoires des policiers*, 15 avril 2014, C. Fouteau, Mediapart

\(^5\) *Video shows French police « stealing » a Roma’s family mattress*, 7 mai 2014, C. Fouteau, Mediapart

\(^6\) *Lynchage d’un jeune Rom : non à l’indifférence*, 18 juin 2014, Éditorial, Le Monde

9 July 2014
## 6. Detailed results for first quarter of 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adresse ou lieu-dit</th>
<th>Commune(s)</th>
<th>Dpt</th>
<th>Région</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Trim</th>
<th>Nbr total de personnes évacuées</th>
<th>Nbr de personnes évacuées par les autorités</th>
<th>Nbr de personnes évacuées suite à incendies ou autres</th>
<th>Présence ORP ou PAF (Total)</th>
<th>Sot. de relég. (Superficie)</th>
<th>Amtel / PAF</th>
<th>Maire / 48h flagrance</th>
<th>Logement TGI ou TA sous pression</th>
<th>Source/Réaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Appendix

1. Description of data used in the survey and definitions

Only the most reliable and precise sources are kept: they come from press articles and media, press releases, direct testimonies to ERRC or LDH or forwarded by other NGOs such as CNDH Romeurope.

The survey includes data on the name of the place, the city, the number of people evicted, the reason for the eviction, the housing solutions offered, the legal basis of the eviction and the source of the information in each case. The place evicted can be a settlement made of hand-built shacks or caravans, or a squatted building. The date mentioned is always the date of the forced eviction and the number of people comes from the sources.

Only information we could double-check is included in this survey.