

URGENT ACTION

ROMA STILL HOMELESS AFTER FORCED EVICTION

Around 500 Roma people, including around 150 children, pregnant women and older people, were left homeless after being forcibly evicted by authorities from their settlement in the municipality of Giugliano in Campania, in southern Italy, on 10 May. The families have since found shelter in an industrial area but urgently need adequate alternative housing solutions. Authorities must urgently comply with European mechanisms' request that Italy adopts immediate measures to eliminate the risk of serious and irreparable harm and guarantee Roma families' rights and safety.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

President of the Council of Ministers

Mr Giuseppe Conte

Palazzo Chigi, Piazza Colonna 370

00187 Roma, Italy

Email: presidente@pec.governo.it

Twitter: @GiuseppeConteIT

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GiuseppeConte64/>

Dear President of the Council of Ministers,

I am writing to express my concern over the situation of around 500 Romani people, including some 150 children, pregnant women and older people, who were left homeless in the Ponte Riccio locality after being forcibly evicted by the local authorities of Giugliano in Campania on 10 May 2019. The families have now found some shelter in an improvised campsite in an industrial area outside Giugliano town, in conditions which raise serious concerns in relation to access to basic rights and services.

These Romani families have already been victims of a catalogue of human rights violations at the hands of national and local authorities in recent years, including previous forced evictions, and for almost three years now, the authorities have failed repeatedly to guarantee the families an adequate sustainable housing solution.

Following a recent decision of the European Court of Human Rights in relation to the Roma community, the Italian authorities committed to refrain from carrying out further evictions of the families; activated a social services task force; and have offered temporary housing solutions to some of them. However, a sustainable long-term housing solution is not yet in place. Furthermore, on 5 July, the European Committee of Social Rights accepted Amnesty International's collective complaint against the treatment of Roma by the Italian authorities, which refers also to the Romani community of Giugliano, and decided to take 'exceptional steps to request immediate measures to eliminate the risk of serious and irreparable harm to the Roma who have been evicted'.

In view of the above, I urge you to:

- **Take swift action as requested by the Committee to ensure that the Roma people of Giugliano, and all other people affected by an eviction, are provided with adequate housing and living conditions;***
- **Ensure that all relevant authorities engage immediately with the community to genuinely consult on and identify long term adequate alternative housing for all families, in line with international and regional human rights laws and standards and the National Strategy for Roma Inclusion.***

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On 10 May 2019, following a decision of the Municipality of Giugliano, around 500 Roma people – approximately 350 adults and 150 children – were rendered homeless after being [forcibly evicted](#) from their homes in a former fireworks factory in Ponte Riccio locality, in Giugliano in Campania, in the Province of Naples, southern Italy. The families had been living there, in highly inadequate conditions, since June 2016 after being [forcibly evicted](#) from a segregated authorized camp in Masseria del Pozzo, located next to a toxic landfill. Amnesty International documented in [previous reports](#) the inadequate conditions of the housing situation in Ponte Riccio locality, largely due to the failures by the authorities to protect the right to adequate housing of the community.

The 10 May forced eviction was carried out on the basis of Municipal Order no. 29 of 5 April 2019 that required the immediate eviction of the camp for reasons of public health and safety. The authorities did not engage in a process of genuine consultation with the community to identify a suitable housing alternative to the current location. They only provided scant information to the families and the only alternative offered was a one-off payment to contribute towards rent for housing on the private rental market.

Being rendered homeless after the forced eviction, the families sought shelter in various locations in the surroundings of Ponte Riccio. However, they were faced with hostility by the municipalities in the area. Eventually, the families settled in an improvised campsite in an industrial area outside the town of Giugliano. According to reports by human rights organizations European Roma Rights Centre and Associazione 21 Luglio, the current housing situation of the families is inadequate, with limited access to basic services. Fearing another eviction and with no adequate sustainable housing solution being offered by the authorities, the Roma families, supported by Associazione 21 Luglio and the European Roma Rights Centre, [made a request to the European Court of Human Rights](#) for 'interim measures to require the State to provide them with adequate accommodation and to suspend any further eviction'. Such request was granted by the Court who decided 'to apply an interim measure indicating to the Italian government that it should provide temporary accommodation for the minors involved and their parents, without separating them'.

Following communication with the European Court of Human Rights, the Italian authorities subsequently committed to refrain from further evictions against the Romani families now living in the industrial area. According to reports by Associazione 21 Luglio, the authorities also installed chemical toilets for the families and reportedly activated a task force of social services in support of the families and offered temporary housing alternatives to some of the families. Following the commitment made by authorities not to evict the families, the European Court of Human Rights suspended the interim measures pending the submission of an [application by the families to the Court](#) for violations of their rights by Italian authorities in relation to the forced eviction.

Furthermore, on 18 March, in response to the ongoing scandal of the housing situation of Roma in Italy, including the situation of the Roma community in Giugliano, [Amnesty International filed a complaint with the European Committee of Social Rights](#). Drawing on years of research by the organisation, the complaint presented [comprehensive evidence](#) alleging how the housing situation of Roma in Italy amounts to a series of breaches of the European Social Charter. These include widespread forced evictions, the continued use of segregated camps featuring substandard housing and lack of equal access to social housing. On 5 July, the European Committee of Social Rights accepted Amnesty International's complaint and moreover decided to take [exceptional steps](#) to request 'immediate measures to eliminate the risk of serious and irreparable harm' to the Roma who have been evicted from Ponte Riccio locality.

The situation of the Roma community of Giugliano remains in the spotlight of several international and regional mechanisms given the grave concerns around their access to housing and other rights. Italy, as a state signatory of a range of international and regional human rights treaties, including EU legislation (Race Equality Directive) which guarantee the right to adequate housing and protection against all forms of discrimination based on ethnicity and race, has an obligation to ensure the rights of these Roma families are respected, protected and fulfilled with no further delays.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Italian and English.

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 22 August 2019

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Roma community of Giugliano

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/EUR30/0354/2019/en/>