

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

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Facts of shame Discrimination, forced evictions, segregation and violence against Roma in the European Union

Between 10 and 12 million Roma live in Europe; approximately half of them in EU member states. Eight out of 10 Roma households in the EU are at risk of poverty.

Three quarters of Europeans recognize that the Roma are at risk of discrimination. The majority of Europeans, 53 per cent, believe society could benefit from better integration of the Roma.

In 2012, 34 per cent of Europeans believe that citizens in their country would feel uncomfortable and 28 per cent only 'fairly' comfortable if their children had Roma schoolmates.

In Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Bulgaria there have been more than 120 serious violent attacks against Romani people and their property in the period from January 2008 up to July 2012, including shootings, stabbings and Molotov cocktails.

Bulgaria – The estimated 750,000 Roma represent 9.94 per cent of the population. More than 70 per cent of urban Roma live in segregated neighborhoods. In 14 attacks against Roma and/or their property between September 2011 and July 2012 at least three Roma died and at least 22, including a pregnant woman and two minors, were injured.

Czech Republic – The estimated 200,000 Roma comprise 1.9 per cent of the population of the country. About one third of them -- 60,000-80,000 -- live in approximately 330 segregated Roma settlements where unemployment is over 90 per cent. Romani children comprise 32 per cent of pupils attending schools for pupils with "mild mental disabilities" following a reduced curriculum. At least five Roma were killed and at least 22, including three minors, were injured in violent attacks between January 2008 and July 2012.

France – There are about 500,000 Travellers living in France, most of them have French citizenship. Between 15,000 and 20,000 Roma from Bulgaria and Romania are estimated to live in France. Roma migrants living in squats and informal settlements are targeted with forced evictions and with return to their countries of origin. In 2012 11,803 evictions of Roma have been carried out, 80 per cent of them were estimated to be forced evictions. Only ten per cent of Roma have completed upper secondary education.

Hungary – Of the about 750,000 Roma comprising 7.49 per cent of the population, only 20 per cent of Roma adults are educated beyond primary level compared to 67 per cent nationally. Only 0.3 per cent of the Roma population holds a university or college degree. 61 violent attacks against Roma and/or their property took place in Hungary between January 2008 and September 2012, nine of them fatal, including two minors. The attacks left dozens of people with injuries, ten of which were life-threatening.

Italy – There are about 150,000 Roma, Sinti and Caminanti in Italy, representing 0.25 per cent of the

population of the country. These communities include people from other European Union countries (mostly Romania, from the former Yugoslavia, an undefined number of stateless people and Italian citizens (about 50 per cent). Only about 3 per cent of them are itinerant. More than a quarter of them (40,000) live in camps, either informal or built by the authorities, and are at risk of forced evictions. In Rome and Milan, over 1,000 evictions were reported in the past 6 years. On average, it is roughly one eviction every other day. An absolute majority of them were forced evictions. Fifty-one per cent of the population believe that society would not benefit from better integration of the Roma.

Romania – The estimated 1,850,000 Roma living in Romania represent 8.63 per cent of the total population. About 80 per cent out of the Roma in Romania live in poverty. Close to 60 per cent of them live in segregated communities without access to basic state services. 23 per cent of Roma households - in comparison with about 2 per cent of non-Roma households - suffer multiple housing deprivations, including no access to improved water sources, sanitation and lack of security of tenure.

Slovakia – Around 490,000 Roma represent 9.02 per cent of the total population of the country. Over one third (36 per cent) of Roma children are reported to be in segregated Roma-only classes, and 12 per cent of Roma pupils are reported to be in special schools. In the space of a generation, the attendance rate of Roma at special schools has more or less doubled. In 16 attacks against Roma and/or their property between January 2008 and July 2012 five Roma were killed and 10 were injured.

Slovenia – The estimated 8,500 Roma represent 0.41 per cent of the population. 20 – 30 per cent of Roma settlements in the south-eastern part of the country have no access to water in contrast to nearly 100 per cent of the majority population. While the average water use per person per day is 150 litres rising up to 300 litres in urban centres, some Roma families are only able to collect 10 – 20 litres for each member.

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