



GREECE FORCED TO MOVE FROM PLACE TO PLACE

In June 2007, more than 100 Romani families living near the centre of Athens were forcibly evicted from the land where they had been living for 10 years in Aghiou Polykarpou Street in the Votanikos area. According to local NGO Greek Helsinki Monitor, this was not the last time that these families would be evicted from their homes.

With no alternative accommodation offered by the authorities, the families moved into an abandoned factory in Iera Odos. They were forcibly evicted from there by the police just a few days later. Again, the authorities made no attempt to provide them with adequate alternative accommodation.

A few months later, they were forcibly evicted for the third time after they moved to land owned by a private company in Aegaleo, Athens. This time the eviction was ordered by the Magistrates Court of Athens. In January 2008, they relocated again to an unattended plot nearby. The families say that they were visited and harassed by the police shortly afterwards. They were then ordered to move again.

The families were forcibly evicted four times, yet not once were they consulted or offered alternative accommodation. Sixteen members of the community have now appealed to the European Court of Human Rights and are seeking justice.

This is only one story of one Romani community. Local authorities in Greece have forcibly evicted a large number of Romani families in the past decade and are continuing to ignore their obligations under international law.

