



ITALY

NO HOMES, NO RIGHTS, NO SAY

For the past decade, Roma and Sinti communities have been repeatedly subjected to forced evictions by the Italian authorities. Since 2007, evictions have become more frequent than ever.

Romani settlements in Italy fall under three categories. Some are “authorized” and maintained by local authorities; some are “tolerated” and receive some support; some – the vast majority – are considered “irregular”. Residents in “irregular” settlements live in hastily constructed shacks and have limited access to basic services such as water and sanitation. They are also the most vulnerable to forced evictions.

Forced evictions are often carried out at short notice and without any prior consultation. The authorities do not inform residents about alternatives to eviction and do not offer adequate alternative accommodation. Many are evicted before they have the opportunity or the time to challenge their eviction. The majority are forced to find shelter in unauthorized areas where they may be evicted again.

In May 2008, a Presidential Decree declared a “Nomad Emergency” and gave special powers to prefects (government officials) in several regions. The “Nomad Plan” in Rome is the first scheme based on these special powers. It paves the way for the forced eviction of thousands of Roma in the capital.

The plan, developed without any genuine consultation with Roma and with scant regard for rights, provides for resettlement of Romani communities in new or expanded camps on the outskirts of the city. These camps will continue a pattern of Roma living in poor and segregated conditions and will disrupt the lives of the communities. Disturbingly, official estimates envisage at least 1,200 people, most of them foreign nationals, being left out of the resettlement process. The real figures are likely to be higher.

