



ROMANIA: MORE LIES, STILL NO ACHIEVEMENTS

June 6th 2013

During the second cycle of the Universal Periodic Review of Romania, Ireland made the following recommendation to Romania:

109.144: Implement an expanded social and voluntary housing programme for Roma families, and in this regard, enhance collaboration with civil society and full participation of all relevant stakeholders

Romania did not accept this recommendation recalling the Pilot Program “Social Housing for Roma Communities” With regards to this programme, it does, indeed, exist, on paper. It was approved through Government Decision 1.237/2008. However, as already mentioned in Romania’s Government national report it only includes 300 houses. In addition, five years after, in 2013, according to the information we have¹, the housing projects and documentation are still in various phases of approval.

While Romania accepted other recommendations in the area of Roma housing (109.61, 109.62, 109.63, 109.64), recommendations on legislative amendments and generally ensuring access to housing in a non-discriminatory manner, it did not accept the recommendation made by Ireland. This recommendation would have implied a concrete, tangible programme with clear financial allocations. As an argument for not accepting to implement an expanded housing programme, Romania invoked a limited pilot programme which has not been implemented five years after its adoption.

Roma continue to face serious disadvantages in housing: from significant gaps as compared to the majority population in housing conditions² to insecurity of tenure and the extreme cases of slums and living in shacks in segregated communities, some of these communities having been formed with the active contribution of state authorities who perform forced evictions.³ These particular problems Roma face today in housing, as in other areas of life, are the consequences of centuries-old discrimination which continues to exist today with impunity.

The attitude of the Romanian state when rejecting this recommendation speaks to its intentions to go on as until now: paying lip service to Roma rights at international level, adopting strategies and projects on paper, and doing nothing to effectively tackle discrimination of Roma.

¹ Address of the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration No. 20416/22.03.2013 to the Centre for Legal Resources.

² Fleck G. and Rughiniş C. (2008) *Come closer. Inclusion and exclusion of Roma in present-day Romanian society*, Bucharest, Human Dynamics, p. 117-122, available at: www.anr.gov.ro/docs/Publicatii/Come_closer.pdf and UNDP, *The housing situation of Roma communities, Regional Roma survey 2011*, available at: http://issuu.com/undp_in_europe_cis/docs/housing_2_web (accessed at: 03.06.2013)

³ See information on extreme housing cases of Roma communities in Amnesty International, *Mind the legal gap: Roma and the right to housing in Romania*, 23.06.2011, available at: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR39/004/2011> (accessed at: 03.06.2013)