Press release | 07.09.2010

Roma expulsions

A crucial test for Europe and the European Commission

The European Parliament today debated the current Roma expulsions in France and the targeting of Roma elsewhere (1) with the European Commission. Green MEPs were critical of the European Commission's response to the situation. French Green MEP **Hélène Flautre** said:

"The scandalous situation in France has been allowed to drag on for far too long. The lack of urgency in the Commission's response to the situation is disturbing, as is its readiness to pander to the French authorities and accept their verbal assurances, instead of calling for an immediate halt to these abhorrent expulsions.

"The expulsions are a crucial test for Europe and the respect of the basic rights set out in the Charter of Fundamental Rights. It is common knowledge that France is contravening EU law. The European Commission must stop sitting on its hands. It must publish its initial analysis and undertake a more thorough analysis based on comprehensive consultation. In the meantime, it must call for all member states to stop Roma expulsions.

"Beyond this, there is a need to define a more comprehensive European Roma Strategy, which would address the social exclusion and discrimination of Roma people and ensure that there is a coherent approach to their integration.

"Finally, it is regrettable that some centre-right MEPs want to try and hush-up this scandal and are proposing that the parliament adopt a resolution that fails to criticise the French government."

(1) The debate took place on Tuesday, 7 September, with a resolution set to be adopted on Thursday, 9 September.

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