Press release | 19.10.2010

Roma expulsions

France must not be let off hook for discrimination of Roma

The European Commission today announced that it would no longer pursue an infringement procedure against France over its non-implementation of the free movement directive (1). The Greens expressed concern that the Commission could let France off the hook over its opprobrious collective expulsion of the Roma community, and called on the Commission to launch an infringement procedure on the core issue of discrimination. Following the announcement, French Green MEP **Hélène Flautre** said:

"The Commission must not simply back down and meekly crawl back to its corner on the issue of collective Roma expulsions in France. With ever more evidence emerging that the French authorities were clearly targeting the Roma minority, France must not be let off the hook.

"The Commission should have launched infringement proceedings against France on the basis of discrimination in the first place, and not simply on the grounds of free movement legislation. Given there is now further evidence that France's opprobrious collective expulsions were deliberate discrimination, following reports that the police used ethnic databases, the Commission cannot continue to sit on its hands. An infringement procedure against France for non-compliance with EU rules on non-discrimination (as set out in the Charter for Fundamental Rights) should be launched without delay."

Spanish Green MEP **Raül Romeva** added:

"It is also now clear that France is far from alone in pursuing discriminatory policies against the Roma minority, with other countries, like Italy, using ethnic databases and pursuing collective expulsions of the Roma. The Commission, as the guardian of the European treaties, cannot turn a blind eye to these serious infringements. It must launch infringement procedures against France and other member states that flout EU rules on non-discrimination."

(1) Announcement by Viviane Reding available at http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/10/502&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en

* The European Parliament will discuss the question of the Roma and ethnic databases this evening with the European Commission.

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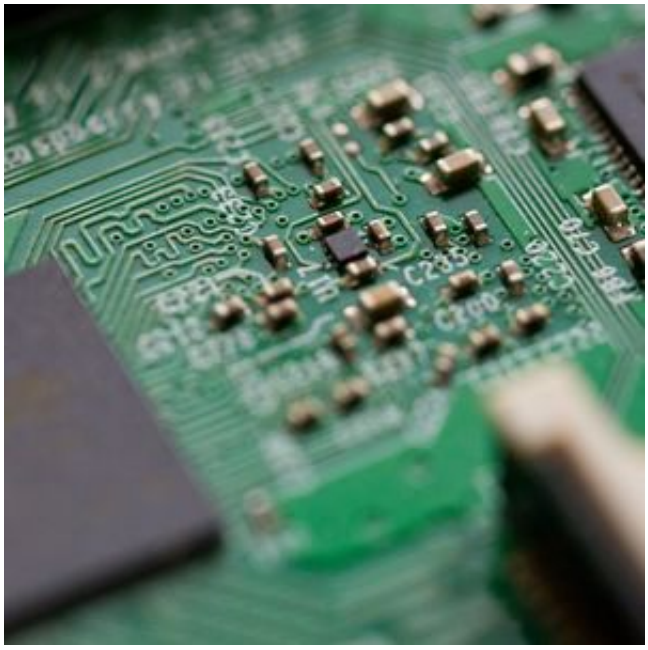


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