



Jeff Pachoud/Agence

France-Press — Getty Images—A Roma girl in a camp of the French eastern city of Lyon on Thursday.

PARIS — President [Nicolas Sarkozy](#) has ordered the expulsion of illegal Roma and itinerant immigrants and the dismantlement of their camps in a move that has been labeled by human rights groups as xenophobic and criticized by his political opponents.

After a meeting late Wednesday, Mr. Sarkozy ordered the expulsion of Roma, with generational roots in Romania and Bulgaria, who had committed public-order offenses and said that illegal camps would be taken down. The Élysée Palace said legislation would be introduced before the end of the year to facilitate the process “for reasons of public order.”

Interior Minister Brice Hortefeux said Thursday on RTL radio that over the next three months he would use decrees to dismantle about 300 illegal camps, of which 200 belong to Roma. These camps are the source of “illicit trafficking, children exploited for begging, prostitution or delinquency,” he said.

Those in France illegally or who have committed public-order offenses will be sent “almost immediately” back to their countries of origin without the possibility of returning, Mr. Hortefeux said, promising the use of digital fingerprinting technology to ensure this end.

He said the government was not stigmatizing the Roma, also referred to as Gypsies, but rather responding to concerns about public safety.

The move follows several recent incidents that have alarmed the population about public security.

This month, there was rioting in a suburb of Grenoble, in southeastern France, after the death of a local man as he fled the police, allegedly after holding up a casino. There was also violence in the small town of Saint-Aignan, in the Loire Valley, after Roma attacked a police station following an incident in which a gendarme shot and killed a traveler who had driven through a checkpoint.

As interior minister under President [Jacques Chirac](#), Mr. Sarkozy had a reputation for talking and acting tough against delinquency. In 2005, as he sought to counter an explosion of youth violence in the suburbs, Mr. Sarkozy fueled anger by referring to the culture of “racaille,” a derogatory term variously translated into English as “scum,” “thugs,” “rabble,” “scoundrels,” “lowlife” and “riffraff.”

But Mr. Sarkozy emerged from that episode with polls showing he took the right approach in putting down the unrest. Now, confronted by stubbornly high unemployment and pushing tricky financial and social reforms, Mr. Sarkozy faces declining popularity in opinion polls and an election in 2012 against a strengthening Socialist Party.

La Ligue des Droits de l'Homme, a rights group, said the steps would “reinforce negative repressive measures.” The government is “mixing up the situation of the European Roma with the travelers who have French nationality” and, “as a result of a few cases, developing the idea that there is an ethnic solution to the problem of delinquency.”

[Amnesty International](#) estimates that there are 400,000 itinerants or travelers with French nationality, and 20,000 Roma, in the country. They are mainly more recent immigrants with roots in Central and Eastern Europe.

The crackdown on travelers is not in itself new. Since last year, a number of camps have been dismantled. In October 2009, 200 to 300 Roma were expelled by riot police officers from their camp north of Paris on the orders of a judge. Mr. Hortefeux, the interior minister, said 9,875 Romanian and Bulgarian Roma were expelled from France last year.

Communes with more than 5,000 inhabitants are obliged by law to set aside areas for travelers. According to Amnesty International, fewer than half of them actually do so. As a result, many travelers set up illegal camps, usually on scrub or waste land on the outskirts of towns. Such camps are a common sight in small towns in the Paris region and beyond.

According to advocacy groups, many legitimate travelers already suffered discrimination before this latest crackdown, for example regularly having to present themselves at police stations, facing steps to deny them their voting rights and having difficulty educating their children.

Compounding the sense of discrimination, representatives of French Roma said that they were not invited to the presidential meeting Wednesday.

Throughout Europe, Roma were persecuted by the Nazis during World War II, with many rounded up and sent to concentration camps. The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum estimates that 200,000 were killed in this way; some estimates are many times higher.

Romania has an estimated one million Roma, the most of any other European country.

Bulgaria and Romania joined the [European Union](#) in 2007, enshrining free movement of people. But citizens from Bulgaria and Romania are subject to transitional provisions in France, requiring them to obtain a permit in order to work in certain professions.

Romania's prime minister, Emil Boc, said Thursday that all European countries had a “common obligation” toward the millions of Roma on the Continent, The Associated Press reported.

Mr. Sarkozy also proposed that France bring in Romanian and Bulgarian police officers to work in the Paris region and send the French police to Romania and Bulgaria to help fight trafficking and other crime by Roma.

Pouria Amirshari, the Socialists' national secretary for human rights, told the *Nouvel Observateur* that the president was “following a xenophobic logic.” He described Mr. Sarkozy's intervention as “populist and demagogic.”

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/30/world/europe/30france.html?fta=y>

**THE NEW YORK TIMES -Dispute Grows Over France's Removal of Roma Camps- By STEPHEN CASTLE and [KATRIN BENNHOLD](#)-Published: September 16, 2010**



Nikolay Doychinov for The New York Times-Children reflected in a puddle of water in Ferentari, a suburb of Bucharest inhabited mostly by Roma.



Nikolay Doychinov for The New York Times-A Roma woman spoke to children in Barbulesti, the first town in Romania to elect a Roma mayor.

BRUSSELS — A meeting of [European Union](#) leaders that was intended to help promote Europe's role on the global stage, instead descended on Thursday into open discord over the expulsion of thousands of Roma from France.

After heated exchanges, President [Nicolas Sarkozy](#) of France vowed to keep dismantling illegal immigrant camps and rejected complaints that the French authorities were racist and deliberately targeted the Roma for deportation.

The disagreement underlines how migration within the 27 nations of the European Union has become a combustible issue in the wake of the European economic crisis. The union's latest expansion, which brought in the relatively poor and underdeveloped nations of Romania and Bulgaria in 2007, has renewed concern about [immigration](#) and integration, particularly during an economic downturn that has spurred many to migrate in search of work.

The dispute came to a head in a clash at lunch between Mr. Sarkozy and [José Manuel Barroso](#), the president of the [European Commission](#), which has threatened legal action against Paris over its deportation of Roma, also known as Gypsies.

The French leader denied there had been any direct clash, but his account was contradicted by other leaders and diplomats.

“There was a big argument — I could also say a scandal — between the president of the European Commission and the French president,” the Bulgarian prime minister, Boyko Borisov, said, according to the Bulgarian daily Dnevnik.

Asked about the hour-long exchange, the German chancellor, [Angela Merkel](#), said “the lunch was good — but only regarding the food.”

One European diplomat, not authorized to speak publicly, described the debate as “heated.” Another said: “Voices could be heard through the door.”

But Mr. Sarkozy was unswayed. “We will continue to dismantle the illegal camps, whoever is there,” Mr. Sarkozy told a news conference. “Europe cannot close its eyes to illegal camps.”

Mr. Barroso seemed disinclined to continue the debate after lunch, saying, “Let’s put this behind us, let’s work now on substance.”

Alongside the already heated debate over the place of Muslim, African and Asian immigrants in European societies, the debate about the Roma could call into question one of the basic tenets of the European Union: the rights of its 500 million citizens to cross internal borders.

Since the birth of European integration, the free movement of workers across boundaries has been considered a fundamental right. This was given added legal force in European legislation adopted in 2004.

But France failed to write the 2004 directive into its national law, which has prompted the European Commission to threaten legal action.

Meanwhile the importance of social protection — including nondiscrimination — was incorporated into the [Lisbon Treaty](#) passed last autumn with strong backing from the French.

When the laws on free movement were conceived, “it was assumed that this would be about highly qualified, multi-lingual, economically mobile work force moving across borders — not about Roma,” said Hugo Brady, senior research fellow at the Center for European Reform.

It is tempting for politicians like Mr. Sarkozy, whose fortunes are flagging, to play the immigrant card, but that also risks raising public passions, Mr. Brady said, possibly undercutting support for European institutions among a public that is already skeptical about integration.

“Nobody will thank the E.U. for upholding its one real citizen-friendly right of free movement,” Mr. Brady said. “Immigration has stepped into the post-[Lehman Brothers](#) world and the E.U. is probably seen by ordinary people as more part of the problem than the solution.”

Romania and Bulgaria, though full members of the E.U., are outside its passport-free travel area, known as the Schengen zone, and the crisis is likely to set back their aspirations to join next year. France may argue that more needs to be done to integrate Roma communities in their home countries.

Mr. Sarkozy, who began a high-profile police crackdown on illegal Roma encampments in the summer, was seeking to rebuild his electorate on the far right at a time when his approval ratings were tanking.

What he had not anticipated, according to French officials, is the international criticism that has all but drowned out his agenda for global reforms under the presidency of the [Group of 20](#) nations, which France is about to assume. From the United States Congress to the [United Nations](#) to various European institutions and personalities, the French deportation policy has been met with sharp rebukes, leading some to question Mr. Sarkozy’s strategic vision.

“There is a huge contradiction between Nicolas Sarkozy’s goal to reinvent himself on the international scene as a G-20 president and his goal to reinvent himself at home by playing to far-right voters,” said Dominique Moïsi of the French Institute for International Relations. “He should have realized that he can’t do both at the same time.”

**Related-[Roma, on Move, Test Europe's 'Open Borders'](#) (September 17, 2010)**

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**BBC News - 29 September 2010 Last updated at 10:33 ET -EU warns France of action over Roma**



France's demolitions of Roma camps have been widely criticised in the EU. The European Commission has told France that it faces action over its expulsion of Roma (Gypsy) migrants if it fails to adopt EU rules on freedom of movement by 15 October.

France welcomed the fact that the EU was not accusing it of discrimination.

But Justice Commissioner Viviane Reding said France had not respected a 2004 EU directive on freedom of movement.

The controversial expulsions of thousands of Roma led to a serious row between Brussels and Paris.

Recently Ms Reding compared France's action to events during World War II.

The accusation drew a sharp rebuke from French President Nicolas Sarkozy.

"France is not enforcing European law as it should on free movement, so we are launching an infringement process against France," Ms Reding told France 24 television.

***France Roma row***

- 19 July: A French Roma mob riots in the Loire Valley town of Saint-Aignan after police shoot a Roma man dead
- 29 July: President Sarkozy orders the clearing of 300 illegal Roma and traveller camps within three months
- 9 September: With about 1,000 foreign Roma already deported from France, the European Parliament demands an end to the policy; France vows to continue
- 14 September: EU Justice Commissioner Viviane Reding draws parallels with WWII
- 16 September: President Sarkozy tells EU summit Reding's words were "disgusting and shameful"

Ms Reding says France has failed to transpose into law a [2004 EU directive on freedom of movement](#), which sets out procedures for deporting migrants deemed to be staying illegally.

The Roma sent home to Romania and Bulgaria are EU citizens, so they have the right to move to another EU country. But host countries can deport people considered to be a public security risk or a burden on the welfare system.

President Sarkozy says the illegal Roma camps threaten to become shanty towns. He launched the crackdown in late July, calling the camps breeding grounds for people trafficking, prostitution and child exploitation.

More than 1,000 Roma have been deported since Mr. Sarkozy announced that the camps would be torn down.

### Row over memo

A leaked memo from the French interior ministry infuriated Ms Reding earlier this month.

It showed the authorities had been instructed to target Roma camps, rather than deal with migrants on a case-by-case basis, as the French migration minister and the minister for Europe had assured the European Commission.

The deliberate targeting of an ethnic minority, if proven, would violate EU anti-discrimination laws and the [EU Charter of Fundamental Rights](#).

"France did not correctly transpose the rules on free movement of European citizens and, as a result, she has robbed these citizens of essential procedural guarantees," Ms Reding said on Wednesday.

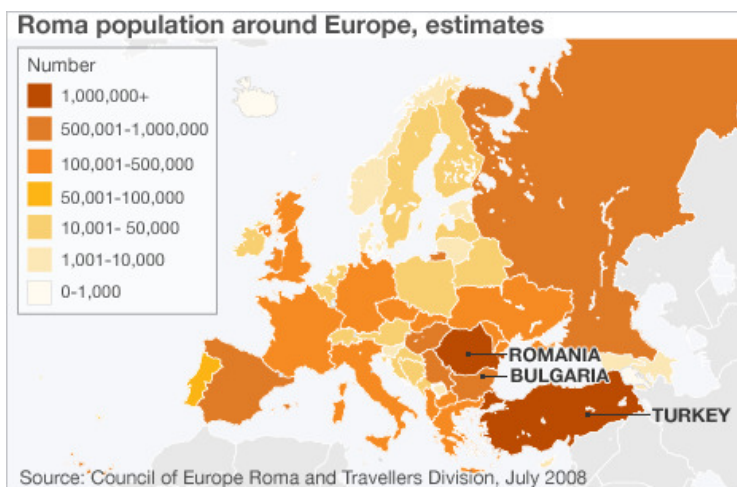
"This must be corrected and that is why the Commission has acted firmly."

The official notification about an infringement procedure will be sent to Paris if France does not tell the Commission within two weeks how it is transposing the directive into law and present a timetable for doing so.

The Commission heard presentations on Wednesday from Ms Reding and two other commissioners on France's expulsions of Roma.

"The Commission is analysing the situation of all other EU member states under the Directive on Free Movement, to assess whether it will be necessary to initiate infringement proceedings also in other cases," a [Commission statement](#) said.

It warned that infringement cases would be opened against other countries if they were found to be ignoring the directive.



**Shame, a dangerous one-Tereza SPENCEROVÁ -Source: Literární noviny-Date: 20.09.2010**

"Until recently we were taught by the West to say Roma instead of gypsy and to change the relevant legislative as well. Now the melodramatic tone has changed and steps had been taken, that Bucharest, Bratislava, Budapest, Sofia, Zagreb nor Beograd would not dare to even think of." Thus spoke about the deportation of Balkan Roma from France Romanian paper Adevarul. At the same time, the editorial of Evenimentul Zilei pointed out the evident, when reminding Paris, that "none should be deported just because of his ethnicity."

After a month of awkward silence even the European Union got it. The commissar for justice and basic rights Viviane Reding labeled the deportations as shameful and added that "discrimination based upon ethnicity or race has no place in Europe." The European commission will thus "have no other way than to start a disciplinary process

against France, for breaking the agreements."

Vivian Reding had been under pressure from the members of the European parliament, who wanted to know about the legal side of French deportations.

The question is, whether they had really been afraid about the human rights of Roma, or they just wanted to know, if the same steps could be used in other countries.

Paris replied with "atonement," but denied to enter an open fight. Previous justifications had been repeated about the character of the deportations, which are not absolute nor targeted towards Roma, even though there had been already 100 Roma camps destroyed and 8000 Roma "flown" back to Romania since the beginning of the year. Plus had president Sarkozy been accused of lie by a document form 5th august, that got into media - the government appeals to regional deputies to speed up the procedures against "primarily Roma camps."

"I deeply regret, that the political reassurances, that I got from French ministry for European issues and immigration, Pierre Lellouche and Erik Besson are now officially discredited" answered Reding to the contents of the "speed up document." "It is a situation that I hoped Europe will not ever have to face again, after the world war two." The same Reding made herself heard just two weeks ago, that "it is not possible to have a war against any European member state." But France is obviously ready to finish its plans. The question is, can the European Union afford to be redivided to East and West again?

### **Can Sarkozy kick the Roma out? Europe is desperate-Source: Hospodářské noviny-Date: 06.09.2010**

Sarkozy's fight against criminality covers mostly Roma. European extreme right wing supports this movement, the MEP disapprove.

President Nicolas Sarkozy evidently made a wrong step: France finds itself in the middle of a crisis and has to deal with critique. When announcing his fight against criminality connected to illegal settlements of Roma at the end of July, what he had in mind was mainly his domestic electors and his increasing popularity. A month after this, two of his ministers had to deal with explaining Bruxelles the reasons of Roma deportation to Romania and Bulgaria and tomorrow, the European parliament will be dealing with this issue.

Stiff discussions are awaited at Strasbourg. Four fractions of the European parliament are preparing a joint resolution suggestion, which spares no word to condemn the Paris policy. Socialists party, Liberals and the ultra left are convinced that the departure of 900 Bulgarian and Romanian Roma from France back to their original homelands was forced and in all cases, the steps of police and authorities did not meet the European Union rules. The president of the fraction of the European Socialists, Martin Schulz said that the campaign against the Roma took place for "populist, prior election" reasons.

Paris can find support at the Europe's Christian Democrats and Christian Democrats, who occupy the biggest number of chairs in the euro parliament. The vice-President of their fraction, Manfred Weber said that of course no one can be punished because of his origin, but that in his opinion, "France complied with European laws."

It is not at all certain whether there are going to be any consequences for Sarkozy and his policies in Strasbourg, The official position of the European People's Party is unsure. "It's completely open, because the middle right-wing hesitates. It is questionable whether I will have any desire or courage to sit next to Mr. Sarkozy," said Dutch Liberal MEP Sophie Veldo.

### **Satisfied extremists**

Philip Claes, the Belgian MEP from the Flemish nationalist interests consider the liquidation of illegal camps and deportation of Romanian and Bulgarian Roma as "fully adequate" solution. Claes with his colleagues vowed to defend France during the debate. Jean-Marie Le Pen, the chairman of the French extreme-right National Front also agrees with the deportations. According to him, the whole case was caused by the European Union, by abolishing the boundaries between nations.

Nicolas Sarkozy is definitely considered to be one of the traditional European right wing politicians. But in the thick atmosphere caused by the movement against illegal Roma camps extreme solution proposals gain a lot of attention.

Hungarian extreme-right national party Jobbik announced a plan, according to which "anti-social" Roma should be placed in special camps. Csanad Szeged, who is the MEP for Jobbik, which became the third strongest political force in Hungary in this year's elections, made himself heard that: "We want to get those families away from the places where they live, and to relocate them to special camps. In order to maintain public order".

### **European Commission in doubts**

The debate bursting suddenly put France to a position against Romania and Bulgaria, against a large part of the European Parliament and a number of organizations defending human rights. The European Commission, whose task is to supervise compliance of EU rules also found itself in an awkward position. Vice-President of the greens fraction Rebecca Harms declared that the chairman of the commission José Manuel Barroso went through the whole situation "just watching, doing nothing."

A month ago, the speaker of Viviane Reding, the commissionaire who is in charge of justice and fundamental rights, stressed, in connection with the reported deportations of Romanian and Bulgarian Roma, that "it is the duty of the EU Member States to monitor their territory and fight against crime."

Last week, however, a message leaked to the media, about a report from legal experts ordered by the committee according to which Paris should justify, "explain in detail" the steps taken, to make it clear, that all deportation cases are assessed individually and that there was no collective punishment at stake.

### **Unsolved problems - Deadly attacks in Hungary**

In August, police handed out the results of investigations of the series of murderous attacks to the prosecutors. During these attacks, which took place throughout last year six Roma died and five were seriously injured. Charges were raised against three men and one accomplice. The attacks shocked by their brutality, because the UTOCNIK pushed the victims out of their houses by throwing incendiary bottles on them and then put them under open fire. Meanwhile in Czech Republic perpetrators of the attack on Roma family in Krnov were finally convicted. It was during this attack that the little girl Natalie was badly burned. Last year cases of attacks towards Roma family were also seen in Northern Ireland.

### **The Belgian law of 18 century**

In August, unusual procedures were taken by the Belgian authorities. In order to justify the destruction of illegal Roma camp, they appealed to one of the 18 century laws, which prohibits prolonged stay in one place, meaning longer than 24 hours to all nomadic families. During springtime the same authorities had to deal with a different regulation, according to which the asylum seekers who cannot be provided by shelter from the State would be entitled to receive 500 Euros compensation a day.

### **Denmark deportations**

In July, European Centre for Roma rights drew attention to the expulsion of 23 Roma from Denmark. The statements of Danish politicians, including Minister of Justice and the mayor of Copenhagen who associated Roma with criminality, were also pointed out.

### **Camps are destroyed also in Italy**

The Mayor of Rome, Gianni Alemanno ordered the removal of an illegal Roma campsite in the Italian capital last Wednesday. The campsite residents are to return to their homeland, Romania.



**Roma and impotent democracy-POINT OF VIEW-Author: Karel Holomek, Roma activist-Source: Lidové noviny-Date: March 9, 2010**

Deportation of the Roma - now back from France - show the fragility of European democracies and how easily they collapse encountering first serious problems. Are Roma the cause again? They become, unwillingly, the touchstone of democracy, surprisingly even the traditional ones. They reflect who we really are. It should be rather praised than vilified, as history will certainly appreciate it!

Almost everything had been written about the Roma deportations. I'm not going to repeat myself. I want to add a different point of view, not mentioned yet, as well as add an important insight to the context.

Sweep your own mess first! Our foreign minister Karel Schwarzenberg had expressed strong disapproval towards the French authorities. More realistic disapproval has been also given by our prime minister Necas. I bow to them in this context; they are right and not afraid to be so. But at the same time, I'm going to be highly critical, because they too have their issues unsolved.

Let's spare Schwarzenberg who, still being an exception among our politicians, was always empathetic with Roma and did good and practical things for them. It is a bit different with Necas. Reduction of the human rights agenda and the selection of his advisory board (I mean all the advisors, not just Roman Joch) speaks a clear language. Why to cover? Effective implementation of human rights agenda creates a framework for the successful integration of Roma into the society. This was not the case of Czech Republic and the Prime Minister played a fairly important role in all that, previously and today again.

Not surprisingly, the Czechs are mentioned side by side with Romania and Bulgaria in foreign analyzes of the situation in France. Quoting: "The Roma are leaving Romania, Bulgaria and the Czech Republic, as in these countries they suffer from discrimination and have difficulties to access education, health care, housing and other services" (reaction to the expulsion of Romanian and Bulgarian Roma from France, the Canadian media).

And so what? Sweep your own mess! We have a great opportunity now. Czech Republic holds the presidency of the European project Decade of Roma Inclusion (2005-2015). I have noticed no favorable response from the government, if any, about the ways of dealing with this duty, even though we promised to do so. For the uninformed, I just mention that the principle of the Decade is to create and implement programs for Roma integration into the society structures.

We cannot deny the factual claim coming from France, that it is the duty of the countries of the origin of Roma, to have these programs implemented, and thus prevent the problems. And what are the results of first five years of the Decade? Better no to ask. It could all be a little bit different, if at least some of the quite reasonable suggestions were taken into account. Which has not been the case in the Czech Republic, nor in any other country included in the Decade.

Certainly, the issue of Roma integration into society is hard and long. I don't intend to be immensely critical. I just want to remind us, that the French case is not only French, but ours, common European trouble and we are handling it no better than the French.

I'm turning my own direction, since the participation of Roma in all this is important - and the truth is it is not exactly encouraging either. The facts say that the gens du voyage ("traveling people" - no ethnic connotations), that is, those Roma who are in France for several generations count up to 600 thousand. Roma arriving from Romania and few from Bulgaria, count 12-15000, which means 2.5 percent. How come that this represents a major problem of France? Especially when 8,500 Roma were already deported (even though we must admit, many of them are coming back). These French Roma do not give a helping hand to those who come from elsewhere. Although having the same ancestors and being able to communicate, they refuse to play their part in the integration process, on the contrary.

I'm sorry to say so, but the situation is similar to ours. I come from the original Czech and Moravian Roma, who had been living here for centuries. Most of the real Czech and Moravian Roma perished in the concentration camps, so it is mostly Roma of Slovak origin living here nowadays. I see how my family members regard themselves as superior to Slovak Roma. I'm sorry for that, but it is the case. The same situation exists in France. It's a problem of

competition during which even he integrated ones are endangered. How many times did we warn against unacceptable generalization? And this is what is happening in France. All of the Roma are being deported, not only the ones guilty of crime.

I bitterly regret this lack of solidarity. Condemning also those Roma-jobber (moneylenders) and Roma bosses, who benefit from this situation and the police, who just stands by watching.

To conclude I add: The European Roma representation addresses this issue with realizing all the limitations, being aware of its own disabilities. These voices are not to be heard in Czech Republic, but still they exist. Decade of Roma Inclusion is an unprecedented opportunity to put this matter openly and critically, and to finally escape the formalism entering it ever since. I deeply regret to see that this formalism is actually the case of the current plenipotentiary Michael Kocab, including his proposals to governments. Which are unfortunately not heard.

**About Roma without us-COMMENT-Author: ZBYNĚK PETRÁČEK, LN intern, e-mail: -bynek.petracek@lidovsky.cz -Source: Lidové noviny-Date: 06.09.2010**

Identification of today's euro meeting with Munich covers, that this is also our real problem.

Is Sarkozy a racist or not? Is France deporting ethnic minority, or not? Many are satisfied, that the French problems with the Balkan Roma offer crucial questions for newspaper interviews and space for statements. The very words like racism and deportations sound so strong, that no one dares to belittle them. Consider: On the one hand there is the obvious fact that France returned three thousand people, breaking French rules, to their countries of origin. And on the other one there lies the statement (engraved by politicians and media) about the Roma deportations from France, which cover the entire ethnic group. (The head of the European Parliament Jerzy Buzek: "Nobody can be expelled from the country just because he belongs to the Roma minority.") And now tell me: Which of these two facts presented weighs more? The one which smells of racism and deportations, naturally. Such is the history and Auschwitz lesson.

This is the background for today's European meeting held on migration and the role of Roma in it. Unfortunately France as the host country invited only Germany, Britain, Italy, Spain, Canada, Greece and later, Belgium holding the presidency of the EU. They forgot about the countries primarily concerned by the problem - Romania and Bulgaria. Neither did they invite Czech Republic, which holds now the Presidency of the Decade of Roma Inclusion. Yes, it is unfortunate, but the more unfortunate, the easier for those who want to make France responsible for the Roma problem.

Meeting held to debate a problem, which does not invite the source countries, but its Western arbiters, seems to bear the slogan "about us without us (taking decisions that concern us, without allowing our active participation)". Even if Romea.cz would not be the first to refer to the problem as to Mnichov, others would do so, because it is handy. Lets blame "the munichers," and keep our "oppressed" position, staying untouched (even as the source countries of the trouble).

Bloody strong quotes about Munich cannot be underestimated, says the Czech experience, and we are to defend ourselves by any means. And, similarly to our most favorite soap opera heroes, wearing their strong weapons hanging low, our politicians do the same with their strong statements, hanging them also maybe too low.

Even Minister Schwarzenberg who usually stays calm and diplomatic, talked about "racist attitude" of Nicolas Sarkozy (until he changed it to "racist impression"). And our no less prudent prime minister opposed him by addressing the Romanian Roma lifestyle as "unacceptable in France." But uhm, as we look at how France willingly or not accepts the lifestyle of millions of local Muslims, it becomes evident, that the answer lies elsewhere.

In France's relationship to the Romanian Roma we will hardly find traces of racism that we want to see there. Not saying that the French police acts as a multicultural propaganda, but simply that they are trying to ensure the compliance of the rules. A country where rules are given even for nomadism, where cities are legally equipped by campsites for travelers, deports people, not because of being Roma or Travellers, or preferring a certain lifestyle, but because they violate the rules and laws. They are being relegated for illegal camping, for exceeding the visa-free

stay, for theft, and not for the ethnicity.

If we really want to seek for some analogy with the Czech situation, we are not going to find it in the unfortunate cases of Nestemice (famous conflict street) or in Litvinov, nor in the case of Roma migration to Canada, but in the last years camping of dozens of Roma Travellers from Europe in front of the hospital in Prague, who wanted to be near to their dying " Prince ". A year ago the citizens of Prague complained about problems. And now, try to imagine that the number of nomads would not count in dozens, but in thousands. And that it is not a week long camping, but months. If we have experienced this and did not deport these people, then would be entitled to preach Sarkozy about racism or non-acceptance of other lifestyles.

The argument that France is doing the same things she criticizes us for is odd. France relegates the citizens of other states who broke French rules. One can certainly argue that there are other foreigners not as visible as the Romanian Roma who break the rules of residence as well, without being deported. But strictly put, there is nothing to object against the enforcement of the rules. And it is not surprising, that France wants to prevent problems.

With a bit of arrogance, there are certainly no ultimatums resulting today's meeting. Such parallel to Munich was not intended to take place, even though France threatens to prolong Romania's access period to Schengen. But in the critical question, Paris is absolutely right. The position of Roma in post communist countries should be resolved within these societies, not in France.

French and Canadian authorities don't care about the reasons for Roma migration. May it be the discrimination or migration business of local mafia; they are not to solve a problem that arose elsewhere. If there was a bit less of arrogance and less of a Munich atmosphere, it would probably make their appeal more palatable. However, we, the ones to blame, could admit that without the Romanian Roma doing "mess", this problem would hardly be discussed in France.

### **Nomadic Europeans- Author: Andre Glucksmann-Source: Respect-Date: September 20, 2010**

The French president tried to move the mountain, but it seems that it came tumbling down on him. He believed to gain points in the presidential campaign, dealing with the topic which is in fact a matter of police and border authorities.

It seems to be a big mistake. Roma issue is not a question of police or social security, but first and foremost a psychological safety issue. Which is not purely French, but European.

In 1990, after the fall of the Iron Curtain, an American newspaper, Los Angeles Times carried out one of the first public opinion surveys in Eastern Europe. Its results revealed that eighty percent of Czechs, Slovaks, Hungarians, Romanians, Bulgarians, Poles project the source of all the foreign evil within Gypsies. But the anti-Gypsy hatred is known to West as well. Literature and the Opera of the 19th century - Victor Hugo and Verdi - left a testimony of anxiety caused by the clash between settled society and people on the move, "not living like us." Who were throughout the centuries connected to poverty, misery, robbery and tales about stolen children, mysteries and repulsion. Hysteria was driven to the edge by the Nazis, when they condemned the "sub-humans" to death in gas the chambers in Auschwitz.

### **Return of old fears**

By enacting the freedom of movement for all people - finally! - the European Union provoked an opposition wave based upon the fears of our ancestors, bringing back to the old complexes.

In contrast with the disapproval that France has driven upon itself, their response seems disproportionate, as notes the church and NGOs. What is more the cause of these troubles? The Gypsies, or those who cannot stand them? Postmodern Europe proudly fights against all the taboos affecting freedom, but the migrants are apparently not the case. It is a desperate fear of all the foreigners wandering around France, willingly according to their tradition. We understand that it's not so much a rejection of another, but rather its rejection of the self.

The removal of borders, Europeanization, globalization of continents causes that we find ourselves in a universe

where we lack focus and strict standards.

Remember Charles de Gaulle's diagnosis from 1965: "The cloud of general progress had fallen over individual. The essential gaiety of the nation of peasants, who found safety in the land that provides them with average but stable life was overtaken by a dull fear of eradication." The bright side of the uprooting, consisted of 300 thousand young Frenchmen who settled around London City and grew rich on the stock market. The tragic face is drawn by the nomads herded from one camp to another. De facto deprived of the right to travel and beg. The Roma brings fear. He is a picture of our eradication, the scary part of fate.

Fear of Roma is nothing more than a covert fear of ourselves. If we don't admit to travelers their right to live on the move, we are growing our xenophobia and racial hatred towards others.

All the fuss in the media about the more or less voluntary repatriation of hundreds of unfortunates is futile. After all, there are at least two million European citizens waiting in Romania, having their suitcases packed and ready, because they know, that beggars life in France is less of a tragedy than living a life of unwanted bum in central Europe. And it is also vain, trying to settle moving nations by force. Force has been already used others - Nicolae Ceausescu and his accomplices in totalitarian regime. Where the police terror has failed, the Brussels subsidies are not going to help either, especially when being torn to shreds by corruption. So it is unnecessary to carry the Lord's (Sarkozy's) messengers to Bucharest, with the demand for greater integration and assimilation.

Moreover, the Romanian government still isn't able to do it. And the "Gypsies" don't want it. So our affluent nations were left to deal with it: it is upon them to have an intellectual revolution: the recognition of the century lasting transeuropean nomadism. Right of permanent migration is an integral part of democracy. Neither utopianism nor despotism, but the unconditional trust in law tells us to respect the dignity and freedom of those who have not fully complied with it.

### **Port of hypocrisy**

And remember, it's not just the brutal actions of Paris. The officials from Brussels have not done for the anything to ensure the basic human rights of the poorest Europeans. And the green rethors, giving brilliant speeches for the cameras, whenever someone tries to destroy fields with genetically modified crops, are not disturbed by banishing the "wandering" to a public landfill. Save the planet, yes, save the nomads not? It should say it publicly: EU freedoms are not just businessmen, intellectuals and powerful.

No one disputes the free movement of goods and ideas. The task is now to secure it for the weakest of us, those who travel across borders in caravans, those who once captivated musicians and poets. Until we consider Roma being non human, we did not proceed much with the emancipation of the individual in Europe that far.

Enough of hypocrisy. We are witness to a nasty combination of demagogy: on the one hand, abuse of Roma, on the other spitting on France. The Times write about "Gestapo," the Daily Mail announces even a "system of deportation," the Chinese People's Daily walks arrogantly in their footsteps.

Why did the comparisons to Vichy became just a banal phrase? Sarkozy can be opposed even without mentioning Pétain, and without reduced the critique to insults and cartoons. The enthusiasm spreads rapidly. Roma are the victims. Atoning sacrifice of globalization. President becomes a necessary alibi for toothless opposition, who lacks program. And the European and international institutions can go pointing the fingers at French madness.

Everyone has a stone to throw.

I am not into moralistic humanist illusions of the left nor into worried warnings on safety of the right. I'm just interested in Roma, in their scandalous and also unnecessary suffering. Neither the waves of repression nor insults will not help the nomadic population. One or two villages will certainly, under pressure, offer help to a couple of displaced poor people by opening their courts. For eight hours? For the week? A month? And then what? The presidential elections take place in two years. Hopefully, they are not extending this raving and disputes, by which both right and left ridicule Paris.