

Russia

The Roma of Russia : the subject of multiple forms of discrimination

- [english] - Region - Europe & Central Asia - Russia -



Date de mise en ligne : Friday 26 November 2004

Description :

A joint mission of the FIDH and the Centre for the Social and Legal Protection of Roma in Northwest Russia (Memorial Saint Petersburg), was carried out in the region from 31st August to 11th September 2004, with the aim of assessing the living conditions of the Roma population.

Copyright © Worldwide Movement for Human Rights - All rights reserved

A joint mission of the FIDH and the Centre for the Social and Legal Protection of Roma in Northwest Russia (Memorial Saint Petersburg), was carried out in the region from 31st August to 11th September 2004, with the aim of assessing the living conditions of the Roma population.

A "forgotten" people - the Russian Roma

With the enlargement of the European Union to include the central and east European countries, the international community has at last focused greater attention on the often dramatic conditions in which the Roma populations of these countries (Czech Republic, Slovakia, etc) exist. According to a report of the European Commission published in November 2004, their treatment has even become "among the most pressing political, social and human rights issues facing Europe".

But who is concerned with the Roma populations in Russia?

Ignored or despised by the rest of the population, the Roma are amongst the most marginalised minorities in Russia and have been forgotten by the international community.

The conclusions of the fact-finding mission undertaken by the FIDH and the Centre for the Social and Legal Protection of Roma in Northwest Russia (Memorial Saint Peterburg) are of particular concern however. Blatant discrimination is added to the systematic violations of economic, social and cultural rights and, worse, racist violence that goes as far as murder. Many still "survive" in holes hollowed out in the ground itself, or in tents made from simple plastic tarpaulins, often in extremes of temperature, sometimes reaching -40°C. Neglected by the public authorities, the Roma have no - or little - access to medical care, education or employment.

Only a few organisations, such as our partner the Centre for the Social and Legal Protection of Roma come to their assistance in such conditions. With no recognition at national or international level of the precarious state of existence and the violence with which the Roma people of Russia are faced, their situation risks becoming even worse.