

P R A X I S



Roma Housing in Serbia

May, 21 2012, Skopje

Roma settlements – general picture

- Approximately more than 600 settlements
 - Not classified (slums, settlements that could be legalized, etc.)
 - One of the activities in Strategy for the improvement of the position of Roma in Serbia
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Access to other rights for inhabitants of informal settlements

- Permanent/temporary residence
 - Health care
 - Social protection
 - Registration in birth registry books
 - Access to energy
 - ...
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Gouvernement of the Republic of Serbia activities

- ❑ Legalization of informal Roma settlements – slowly ongoing process
 - ❑ Improvement of living conditions in informal Roma settlements – initiative from NGOs/ some of the local municipalities
 - ❑ Social housing – not enough for Roma housing needs
 - ❑ Relocation (eviction) of informal Roma settlements that could not be improved/legalized – affected more than 3000 Roma
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Evictions of informal Roma settlements – legal framework (1)

□ Difficulties

- Domestic legal framework does not stipulate procedures for conducting evictions of informal settlements
 - Without safeguards
 - Poor direct application of international standards (i.e. ICESCR, UN Guidelines on Development-based Evictions, etc.)
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Evictions of informal Roma settlements – legal framework (2)

□ Possibilities

- Constitution of Republic of Serbia – direct application of human rights standards
 - Recommendations from IOs and UN Treaty-bodies (CERD 2011, ECRI 2011, EC 2011)
 - ECtHR Case Law (Oneryildiz, Yordanova, etc.)
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Forced evictions of informal Roma settlements:

- ❑ 17 since 2009 (affected more than 3000 Roma)
 - ❑ All of them were conducted in Belgrade
 - ❑ Not in accordance to international standards (ICESCR, ICERD, ECHR)
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Eviction of informal Roma settlement Blok 72, Belgrade – example 1

- ❑ November 2011 – March 2012
 - ❑ Affected 33 families (app. 1/2 of them IDP families)
 - ❑ Without prior plan of the eviction
 - ❑ Involvement of the Directorate for Human and Minority Rights
 - ❑ Consultation with families, workgroup – positive steps!
 - ❑ Without clear criteria for alternative accommodation
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Eviction of informal Roma settlement Belvil, Belgrade – example 2

- ❑ March 2011 (2012) – April 2012
 - ❑ Affected approximately 250 families (1500 people)
 - ❑ Non-transparent process
 - ❑ Action plan for the eviction finished on the day of the eviction
 - ❑ Conducted 10 days before the election, in the middle of school year and SWC strike
 - ❑ Without consultations with inhabitants
 - ❑ Without workgroup before the eviction
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Eviction outcomes

- ❑ Violations of human rights standards
 - ❑ Not adequate alternative accommodation – 14.8 m²metal containers (5 persons)
 - ❑ New segregated settlements – far away from public services, on the outskirts of the city, exclusively for Roma housing
 - ❑ No clear criteria for adequate accommodation for evicted families
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Alternative accomodation – Belvil settlement



Alternative accomodation – Belvil settlement



NGOs responses to forced evictions

- ❑ Direct actions during the evictions
 - ❑ Strategic litigation
 - ❑ Advocacy
 - ❑ Platform for the right to adequate housing – more than 60 NGOs
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What should be done – NGO perspective

- ❑ Strong commitment for stopping all forced evictions
 - ❑ Introduction of legal framework on evictions of informal settlements
 - ❑ New budget funds for Roma housing – improvement of housing conditions and legalizations
 - ❑ Involvement of local Roma communities
 - ❑ Stronger cooperation with international organizations and domestic NGOs
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