LEGAL REMEDIES FOR THE GYPSIES: CAN THE EUROPEAN LEGAL FRAMEWORKS HOLD FRANCE LIABLE FOR THE EXPULSION OF THE ROMA?

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“Let’s make things clear. There can be no dismantling of the fundamental values on which our societies are built.”1

-Viviane Reding

1. INTRODUCTION

The Roma reside at the margins of European society, in life and in art. In popular cultural representations, they are portrayed as temperamental, dark-skinned hyper-sexual beings. Sometimes, they even possess magical powers, such as the ability to tell the future.2 These representations contrast with the ideal European

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2 The Roma are also referred to as the Gypsies.

3 See, e.g., WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA act 1, sc. 1 (describing Cleopatra’s “gipsy’s lust,” which transformed Antony into a “strumpet’s fool”); I VICTOR HUGO, THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME 82 (Carey, Lea & Blanchard 1884) (1831) (“The crowd opened and made way for a bright and dazzling figure. It was the gipsy-girl. . . . This extraordinary creature appeared by her fascination and beauty to exercise her sovereign sway over the Court des Miracles itself.”).

4 See, e.g., CHARLOTTE BRONTÉ, JANE EYRE 169 (Belford & Clarke 1885) (1847) (“[T]he gipsy[s] strange talk, voice, manner had by this time wrapped me in a kind of dream. One unexpected sentence came from her lips after another, till I got involved in a web of mystification, and wondered what unseen spirit had been sitting for weeks by my heart, watching its workings, and taking record of its every pulse.”). European society had a fear of magic and witchcraft. See, e.g., the Witchcraft Act of 1562 (prohibiting “[t]he use practise or exercise [of] any
figure, who is, more than anything else, governed by the faculty of reason. But these representations do not accurately reflect the Roma condition; rather, they contribute to the myth-creating exercise in which European society partakes. Indeed, such representations reflect the “subtle and Eurocentric persistent prejudice” against the Roma. This deep-rooted prejudice has resulted in the persecution of the Roma throughout European history, most recently during World War II.

These prejudices persist in Europe today, particularly in France, which has become the most visible platform for their expression and implementation. On July 16, 2010, a gendarme shot and killed Luigi Duquenet, a 22-year-old Roma, at a police checkpoint located in the small town of Saint Aignan. Officials say that the car in which Duquenet was a passenger knocked over a policeman. His cousin was the driver, and he refused to pull over because he did not possess a valid driver’s license. Also, Duquenet had committed a robbery that day and did not want an...
encounter with the local authorities. The next day, several French Roma, armed with metal rods and axes, attacked the local police station. The mob hacked down trees and burned many cars. The riot escalated to such proportions that it took two squadrons of gendarmes to take control of the situation.

Soon afterward, President Nicolas Sarkozy held a meeting in which he ordered that three hundred illegal squats be dismantled within three months. According to Sarkozy, the camps were “of profoundly shocking living standards,” and were sites of begging, prostitution, and crime. “Interior Minister Brice Hortefeux said . . . he would use decrees to dismantle about 300 camps, of which 200 belong to Roma.” France has sent these Roma back to Romania and Bulgaria where they suffer much discrimination. Digital fingerprint technology would be used to ensure that those who had committed a public order offense had no chance of returning to France. Within a month, nearly one thousand Roma were sent

13 Id.
15 Id.
16 See Boegner, supra note 10 (explaining the extent of the tension, and the need for two squadrons for the French Police to regain control of the situation).
18 Q&A: France Roma Expulsions, supra note 14.
19 Saltmarsh, supra note 17.
20 See, e.g., CTR. ON HOUS. RIGHTS & EVICTIONS, WRITTEN COMMENTS OF THE CENTRE ON HOUSING RIGHTS AND EVICTIONS (COHRE) AND THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES ASSOCIATION TO THE COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION AT ITS 74TH SESSION ON THE OCCASION OF THE PERIODIC REVIEW OF BULGARIA 4, ¶ 3 (2009), available at http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedh/docs/ngos/COHRE_EOA_Bulgaria74.pdf (describing that the Roma face discrimination in the housing sphere in Bulgaria in the form of forced evictions, racial segregation, and poor living conditions); see also Jack Greenberg, Report on Roma Education Today: From Slavery to Segregation and Beyond, 110 COLUM. L. REV. 919, 936 (2010) (describing the school segregation system in Eastern European countries where the Roma were placed in the same classroom as students with mental disabilities).
21 Saltmarsh, supra note 17.
back by plane to Romania or Bulgaria, putting France at the center of the debate regarding the treatment of Europe’s largest minority.

Since the expulsion, President Sarkozy has received much criticism from the French population, even from within his own administration. For instance, Defense Minister Hervé Morin, head of the small New Centre party, described the expulsion as reflecting “the policy of hate [and] of fear . . . .” Some have viewed this deportation as a calculated, political move by a President worried about his low approval ratings. But the French authorities remain resistant to such criticisms, and according to the authorities, the Roma have left or are leaving voluntarily. The Roma are taking a resettlement payment of $385 and a plane ticket instead of facing forcible expulsion one month later. France insists that the expulsions do not target an ethnic group; rather each expulsion is handled individually. Robert A. Kushen, executive director of the European Roma Rights Centre (hereinafter “ERRC”), has criticized this as a false choice: “the French are trying to insulate themselves from legal challenge, arguing that those who leave are doing so voluntarily and are not being expelled as a group.”

22 See EU: A Key Intervention in Roma Expulsions, HUM. RTS. WATCH (Sept. 14, 2010), http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2010/09/14/eu-key-intervention-roma-expulsions (stating that 979 Bulgarian and Romanian Roma were sent back between July 28 and August 27, 2010).

23 See id.


25 See Q & A: France Roma Expulsions, supra note 14 (explaining how the government has adopted “hardline security measures” due to the government’s increasing unpopularity).

26 See Steven Erlanger, France Intensifies Effort to Expel Roma, Raising Questions, N.Y. TIMES, Aug. 20, 2010, at A4 (reporting that, according to the French government, the Roma flew back to Romania voluntarily).

27 See id. (describing various families who have faced this “false choice”). See also EU May Take Legal Action Against France Over Roma, BBC NEWS EUR., Sept. 14, 2010, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-11301307 (explaining that France paid 330 euro per adult and 100 euro per child to Roma in order to repatriate them to other countries).

28 See id.

29 Erlanger, supra note 26.
Although this maneuver might help France insulate itself from legal challenge, the international community has been quick to voice its concerns. The United Nations ("U.N."), for instance, expressed grave reservations regarding the Roma expulsion. At its annual session in 2010, The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination expressed worry that France was not individually reviewing each expulsion case. Pope Benedict XVI also joined the debate and urged France to treat the Roma with more compassion. But French authorities seemed unmoved and undeterred.

The European Union ("EU") Commissioner for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship, Viviane Reding, has also sharply criticized the expulsion. She has labeled the deportations a "disgrace." Commissioner Reding has even said that the

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30 See Interview by Yvette Morris with Pierre Richard Prosper, Vice Chair, Comm. on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, in Geneva, Switz. (Aug. 30, 2010) ("Now whether France is actually taking the time to interview and go and process each person one by one, you know, that may be the case, but all we're doing is raising awareness, raising concerns, and hope that the state does the right thing.").

31 See Le pape appelle les Français à la tolérance vis-à-vis des Roms [The Pope Asks the French for Tolerance Regarding the Roma], LE NOUVEL OBSERVATEUR (Aug. 23, 2010, 6:33 AM) (Fr.), http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/actualite/societe/20100822.OBS8839/le-pape-appelle-les-francais-a-la-tolérance-vis-à-vis-des-roms.html ("Les textes liturgiques de ce jour nous redisent que tous les hommes sont appelés au salut. C'est aussi une invitation à savoir accueillir les légitimes diversités humaines, à la suite de Jésus venu rassembler les hommes de toute nation et de toute langue." ["The liturgical texts tell us repeatedly that all men are called to salvation. It is also an invitation to learn how to accommodate legitimate differences among humans, just like Jesus came to pull together men of every nation and every language."])].

32 See, e.g., Bernard Kouchner, Op-Ed, A Duty to Act in Truth, N.Y. TIMES, Oct. 7, 2010, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/08/opinion/08iht-edkouchner.html ("A lot of them also illegally occupy public or private land. Like any other government, it is the duty of the French authorities to enforce the law. It is as simple as that.").


Commission would initiate legal proceedings against France, which could result in heavy fines. The role of the Commission, she asserted, was to act as a “guardian of its treaties.” More controversially, Commissioner Reding said that this was a situation she thought “Europe would not have to witness again after the Second World War.” On September 29, 2010, the Commission warned France that it had two weeks to implement the 2004 EU Directive on Freedom of Movement, which guarantees EU citizens the right to freedom of movement within the EU. Otherwise, the Commission threatened that it would initiate proceedings against France in the European Court of Justice (“ECJ”) in Luxembourg. Any targeted discrimination of an ethnic group violates EU law, which includes the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (“Charter”). Two weeks after she issued the warning, Commissioner Reding announced that she was satisfied with France’s timely implementation of her orders.


35 See EU May Take Legal Action Against France Over Roma, supra note 27 (“EU disciplinary action against France could lead to substantial fines.”).

36 Id.

37 Id. See also Sarkozy Denounces EU Commissioner’s Roma Remarks, BBC NEWS EUR., Sept. 16, 2010, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-11332189 (referring to Reding’s comments as “disgusting” and “shameful”).

38 See Reding, supra note 34 (explaining that France is in breach of the Free Movement Directive); see also Directive 2004/38/EC, of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the Right of Citizens of the Union and Their Family Members to Move and Reside Freely within the Territory of the Member States, 2004 O.J. (L 158) 77.

39 See EU May Take Legal Action Against France Over Roma, supra note 27 (explaining that the case would go before a tribunal in Luxembourg if the Commission decided to institute legal proceedings).


The treatment of the Roma is one of the most urgent human rights crises in Europe. It is particularly worrisome because the Roma, unlike other persecuted minorities, have remained in the shadows of history. The Roma are only associated with the myths that have been conjured in the past; they are not known for the repeated acts of persecution and discrimination that they have endured. Essentially, this Comment seeks to analyze the unique condition of the Roma and the legal remedies that are available to them as a people. Section 2 of this Comment traces the history of the Roma in Europe and in France, which will help place the current situation in France in a historical and political context. Section 3 will examine the legality of the expulsion, using the jurisprudence followed by the ECJ and the European Court of Human Rights (“ECtHR”). If the legality of the expulsion is challenged, the case will likely proceed to the ECJ. However, a comparison of the jurisprudence followed by both courts will highlight the legal challenges that the Roma, as prospective litigants, would face. Under the jurisprudence of the ECJ, France has to show that its anti-discriminatory conduct, which involved targeting the Roma more than other groups in the illegal camps, was necessary and appropriate to satisfy a legal interest. This is a demanding standard to meet. The ECtHR standard, by contrast, is more lax since it allows France to pursue a rational aim in targeting the Roma. While the two courts interpret anti-discrimination differently, they both categorically prohibit collective expulsion; France would need to show that it did not engage in this type of expulsion at all. This claim of collective expulsion is the strongest legal argument available to the Roma.

Section 4 of this Comment critically evaluates the legal claims available to France, and whether France can insulate itself from legal challenge. For instance, France can rely on the Directive on the Freedom of Movement, which holds that an EU member state under the EU’s Free Movement Directive into French legislation by early 2011. France has thus done what the Commission had asked for.”)

42 See EU May Take Legal Action Against France Over Roma, supra note 27 (explaining that legal proceedings could end up in a European Court of Justice tribunal in Luxembourg).
43 See infra Section 3.2.
44 See infra Section 3.2.
45 See infra Section 3.2.
can deport an individual to her or his country of origin after that individual has remained in the host member state for more than three months and has not been able to secure employment. An EU member state can also deport an individual if that individual is a public security risk. Even though France has these options, it must show that it followed the procedural safeguards and engaged in the proper decisionmaking process. I argue that France will not be able to demonstrate compliance with these safeguards, and thus, even France’s strongest legal arguments will not prevail in any court.

The Roma endured much discrimination and persecution in the course of the twentieth century, and little has been done to ensure them a life of respect and dignity. Indeed, Jack Greenberg notes that “after centuries of subjugation, including slavery, second-class citizenship, ethnic cleansing, oppression under communism, and stigmatization in the modern world, the Roma must launch a movement to claim their freedom. The Roma must take steps to cast off their shackles.” To some extent, this Comment explores and evaluates a few of the tools needed to break those shackles.

2. PAST AS NARRATIVE OF PERSECUTION AND DISCRIMINATION

2.1. The History of the Roma in Europe

The Roma are a nomadic group of people, believed to have arrived in Europe from the northwest of India at the beginning of the eleventh century. After their arrival, the Roma were subject to discrimination, if not outright persecution. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, several laws were enacted in Europe that banned Roma customs, language, and dress. This was done in order to compel assimilation, but soon after, more oppressive orders were promulgated. The first official repression of the Roma

46 See infra Section 4.
47 Greenberg, supra note 20, at 1001.
50 Id.
in France took place in 1539, when there was an order expelling the Gypsies from Paris. In 1569, England followed France’s suit and expelled Gypsies under the threat of death.\footnote{Id.}

Louis XIV of France promulgated a law in which “those who are called Bohemians or Egyptians\footnote{The term “Gypsy” is a variation of the word “Egyptian,” reflecting the common belief during the Middle Ages that Gypsies hailed from Egypt. \textit{Id.}} . . . shall leave the Kingdom within one month, under penalty of the galleys or other corporal punishment.”\footnote{\textit{CLÉBERT}, supra note 7, at 60.} Moreover, in 1682 Louis XIV again ordered that Gypsies were to be sent to the galleys “without other form of trial” and would serve there “in perpetuity.”\footnote{\textit{Id.} at 62.} The women and children, however, were treated differently.\footnote{\textit{Id.} at 61 (noting that Gypsy women and children received different punishments).} The women’s heads were shaven and the children were taken to “poor-houses” where they were raised like other French children.\footnote{\textit{Id.} (explaining that Gypsy women were shaved while children were removed from their families).} In 1740, however, the Gypsies were encouraged to find work, such as in agriculture; according to Louis XIV, banishment proved to be impossible.\footnote{\textit{Id.} at 62 (discussing the policy of Louis XIV to encourage Gypsy participation in agriculture).} But not all of Europe treated the Roma similarly. For instance, beginning in the seventeenth century, many Roma were forced to become slaves in Hungary and Romania; these slaves were only freed in 1855 under the influence of the Western abolitionist principles.\footnote{See \textit{Hilli}, supra note 49 (noting that the Roma’s “final liberation” in Hungary and Romania came in 1855); see also \textit{Greenberg}, supra note 20, at 924 (assessing the impact of the abolitionist movement on the emancipation of Roma slaves).}

In the middle of the eighteenth century, several measures were taken to compel Roma to conform to the social norms of European society. Many Roma children were separated from their families and were subsequently made to live with non-Romani families.\footnote{See \textit{EMP’T & SOC. AFFAIRS, EUR. COMM’N, THE SITUATION OF ROMA IN AN ENLARGED EUROPEAN UNION} 7 (2004), available at http://academos.ro/sites/default/files/biblio-docs/293/roma04_en.pdf (highlighting efforts undertaken to compel Roma conformity with European social norms).}
At that time, other Roma were sent to institutions where they were supposedly corrected and purged of their “deviant traits.” Further, the idea of “Gypsy crime” developed along with the development of police practices, which further made the Roma the target of needless prosecution, and hence, persecution.

When the Nationalist Socialists assumed power in Germany in the early twentieth century, the persecution of the Roma reached its zenith. For example, the Roma were initially a part of social experiments. Adolf Hitler wanted to preserve two Gypsy tribes, as he thought they were the direct descendants of the primitive Indo-Germanic race; these tribes were meant to be sent to a region where scholars would be able to study them. Nomadic Gypsies were sent to “residence camps” located near large cities. A Nazi institution was established for the study of Gypsies, called the Race Hygiene Population Control Center of the National Health Office. Notwithstanding the expressed intention to preserve the purity of the German blood, the Gypsies, along with the Jews, were sent to concentration camps where they were subject to heinous treatment. Several pieces of legislation were passed during this period, which further reduced the Roma to second-class citizens.

60 Id. (noting that Roma were also placed in institutions to rid them of such traits, and to “end the common existence of the ethnic group itself”).

61 Id. (stating “the development of modern police practices brought with it the development of ideas of ‘Gypsy crime,’ and with it, comprehensive police registers of Roma”).


63 See CLÉBERT, supra note 7, at 205 (explaining that Gypsies were subject to appalling “biological research”).

64 Id., at 206; see also Letter from Gaultier Portschy of Steiermark to Dr. Lammers, Reichs-Minister (Jan. 9, 1938), reprinted in CLÉBERT, supra note 7, at 206 (“[B]ecause [the Gypsies] are inveterate criminals who constitute parasites in the bosom of our people . . . it is fitting in the first place to watch them closely, to prevent them from reproducing themselves and to subject them of forced labor in the labor camps.”).

65 See KENRICK & PUXON, supra note 62, at 15 (explaining that the center was established in 1936 by Dr. Robert Ritter as the main Nazi institution concerned with research into Gypsies).

66 See Greenberg, supra note 20, at 925 (noting that Nazis created a program to exterminate the Roma, similar to their “final solution” to eliminate the Jews.”).

67 See KENRICK & PUXON, supra note 62, at 21 (explaining the impact of the Nuremberg Laws and the Decree to Prevent Crime on the Roma community); see also id. at 21 (describing the passage of the Decree on the Fight to prevent Crime in
It is a well-known fact that more than six million Jews were killed at Nazi concentration camps during World War II. But few recall, remember, or even know, the number of Roma killed.Interestingly, few races can claim that they were both held in slavery and were victims of the Holocaust. In fact, according to Thomas Acton, a Professor of Romani Studies, “when Romani people from Eastern Europe meet Romani people from North-Western Europe today, it is the descendents of the survivors of slavery meeting the descendents of the survivors of genocide.”

Whereas the situation for the Jews improved after the Holocaust, the same cannot be said of the Roma. Indeed, post-War Eastern European governments never provided any type of aid to those Roma who did survive the Holocaust. Communist countries were especially hostile toward the Roma. For instance, Czechoslovakia adopted a coerced sterilization policy towards Roma women; the practice officially ended in 1990, after the collapse of the communist state. Depriving Roma of further dignity, concrete walls were built around the Roma villages in Slovakia. Bulgaria also adopted a segregationist policy, sending

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68 See Greenberg, supra note 20, at 925 (presenting an estimate of the number of Roma killed at 1.5 million people, excluding the number of Roma killed by Nazi-allied regimes, during the Roma Holocaust).


70 See On the Road: Centuries of Roma History, BBC NEWS, Jul. 8, 2009, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/8136812.stm (denoting that the lack of aid was characteristic on both sides of the Iron Curtain).


Roma children to schools established for children with mental disabilities.73 There were also efforts to eliminate the supposed anti-social traits of the Roma.74 Poland and Czechoslovakia attempted to end nomadism amongst the Roma by transforming them into a more homogenous proletariat.75 To some extent, these state efforts were successful because a new generation of Roma elite was born, and many held high positions in state institutions.76

The Roma did not fare any better in Western Europe. For example, in Norway and Sweden, there were measures adopted to force sterilization of both men and women, as well as to place Romani children in state care.77 Recently, however, Sweden and Switzerland have provided compensation to many Roma.78

The anti-Romani sentiment particularly increased throughout Europe after 1989. In Eastern European countries, the Roma were blamed for a breakdown of public order.79 Many Roma migrated to Western Europe but were resented by the countries that harbored them.80 In 1999, the Roma community suffered one of the greatest threats to its existence since World War II.81 When North Atlantic Treaty Organization (“NATO”) forces withdrew from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, ethnic Albanians initiated a smear campaign advocating ethnic cleansing of the Roma, and those whom they perceived as “Gypsies.” Notwithstanding the U.N.’s presence in Kosovo, there have been attacks on Romani property,

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73 See EUR. COMM’N AGAINST RACISM AND INTOLERANCE, COUNCIL OF EUR., THIRD REPORT ON BULGARIA 22 (June 27, 2003), available at http://hudoc.ecri.coe.int/XMLEcri/ENGLISH/Cycle_03/03_CbC_eng/BGR-CbC-III-2004-2-ENG.pdf (noting that Roma children in Bulgaria were sent to schools designed for mentally disabled children).

74 See EMP’T & SOC. AFFAIRS, EUR. COMM’N, supra note 59, at 8 (discussing steps taken after World War II to eliminate Roma nomadism).

75 Id. (describing assimilation efforts by Soviet Block countries and their limited effect on the eradication of racism).

76 Id. (identifying the resulting high numbers of Roma in state institutions).

77 Id., 8–9 (identifying the forced sterilization practices in Norway and Sweden).

78 Id. (discussing the Swiss government’s recent efforts to compensate the Roma victims of these practices).

79 Id. (describing the intensity of anti-Roma sentiment including systematic persecution of Roma, racist movements, and violence).

80 Id. (noting that much anti-Roma sentiment follows alarmist media reports).

81 Id. (leading to the displacement of eighty percent of Kosovo’s Romani population).
as well as grenade attacks. Roughly 120,000 Roma are displaced within Kosovo.

More than a decade into the twenty-first century, the Roma still occupy the margins of European society. After the fall of the Iron Curtain and the accession of Central and Eastern European countries to the European Union, many Roma traveled to other EU Member States in search of a better life, but have been disappointed time and time again by the obstacles they have encountered along this search. Today, most Roma live in dire conditions, often with no electricity or running water. They have few, if any, employment opportunities. Forty-seven percent of Roma do not know that laws exist that ban discrimination in access to housing, and few think that they would see any tangible benefit even if they did report discrimination. There are often forced evictions of Roma residents even if they are regular rent-payers. These are just some of the problems that plague the Roma. Even more troubling, the recent economic crisis has greatly affected the Roma population because they are more likely to be affected by such downturns. What is worse, there is little reason to believe that the grim socio-political and economic situation of the Roma will improve in the near future.

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82 Id.
83 Id.
84 See EUR. UNION AGENCY FOR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS [FRA], THE SITUATION OF ROMA EU CITIZENS MOVING TO AND SETTLING IN OTHER EU MEMBER STATES 5–9 (2009) [hereinafter FRA, SITUATION OF ROMA EU CITIZENS], available at http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/attachments/Roma_Movement_Comparative-final_en.pdf (assessing whether the right of free movement within the European Union has been respected as regards the movement of Roma throughout Europe).
85 See On the Road: Centuries of Roma History, supra note 70 (describing the poverty-stricken lives of the majority of Roma).
87 Id. at 6; see also FRA, THE STATE OF ROMA AND TRAVELLER HOUSING IN THE EUROPEAN UNION: STEPS TOWARDS EQUALITY 6 (2010), available at http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/attachments/ROMA-HOUSING-SUMMARY_EN_Web.pdf (noting that the Roma are often forced to live in low value sites, such as near waste dumps, which create health hazards).
88 See FRA, SITUATION OF ROMA EU CITIZENS, supra note 84, at 8 (noting the impact of the economic crisis on the Roma).
2.2. France’s Treatment of the Roma

Like most of Europe, France has generally adopted harsh measures that have targeted the Roma. Even though ninety-five percent of the Roma in France are French citizens, they are treated like foreigners.\(^89\)

In 2000, however, France enacted the Besson Law, which requires that every municipality of at least five thousand residents create a stopping area for travellers.\(^90\) The law defines travellers as those with mobile homes. The Roma are not mentioned in the law, but, because many Roma are mobile, the law clearly applies to

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\(^89\) For example, in the debates over 2003 anti-Roma legislation in the French Senate, Senator Bret argued:

Nous ne pouvons que réaffirmer notre opposition la plus ferme à cet article, qui tend à faire des gens du voyage une catégorie à part, une nouvelle classe de personnes dangereuses, . . . au seul motif que leur mode de vie diffère de celui de la plupart des Français.

Mais . . . les gens du voyage n’en sont pas moins français eux aussi, à 95 % qui plus est ! Pourquoi chercher à tout prix à les marginaliser dantage en offrant aux maires des moyens supplémentaires pour les chasser de leur territoire communal ?

[We can only reaffirm our firmest opposition to this article [19], which strives to make the Travellers [Roma] a separate category, a new class of dangerous persons, . . . the only reason for which is that their way of life differs from that of the majority of French citizens.

But . . . the Travellers are themselves no less French, 95% of them are at that! Why search at all costs to marginalize them more by offering local governments additional means to evict them from their communal territory?].


\(^90\) See Loi 2000-614 du 5 juillet 2000 relative à l’accueil et à l’habitat des gens du voyage [Law 2000-614 of July 5, 2000 concerning the Reception and the Settlement of Travellers], JOURNAL OFFICIEL DE LA REPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE [J.O.] [OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF FRANCE], July 6, 2000, p. 10189 [hereinafter French Law 2000-614] ("Dans chaque département, . . . un schéma départemental prévoit les secteurs géographiques d’implantation des aires permanentes d’accueil et les communes où celles-ci doivent être réalisées. Les communes de plus de 5 000 habitants figurent obligatoirement au schéma départemental." ["In each department, . . . a departmental scheme provides for geographic areas for the establishment of permanent camp sites and the communes where they are to be established. Communes with populations greater than 5000 inhabitants must be included in the departmental scheme.")]
them. It was enacted in large part to improve access to economic activities in which the travellers can participate, as well as to improve access to education for their children.\footnote{Id. ("[A]u vu d’une évaluation préalable des besoins et de l’offre existante, notamment de la fréquence et de la durée des séjours des gens du voyage, des possibilités de scolarisation des enfants, d’accès aux soins et d’exercice des activités économiques . . . ." ["F]ollowing a preliminary evaluation of needs and existing services, including amongst others the frequency and duration of the stays by Travellers, the possibility of the education for children, access to healthcare and the exercise of economic activities . . . "]).} Although the Besson Law is admirable and ambitious,\footnote{But see id. art. 9 ("En cas de stationnement effectué en violation de l’arrêté prévu au I, y compris sur le domaine public, le maire peut . . . saisir le président du tribunal de grande instance aux fins de faire ordonner l’évacuation forcée des résidences mobiles." ["When parking is in violation of the order envisaged in [paragraph] I, including on public property, the mayor may . . . refer the matter to the president of the superior court for the purpose of ordering the forcible evacuation of mobile residences."])}. This failure to implement the law on a local level effectively illustrates France’s general indifference, if not antipathy, towards the Roma. Examples of such antipathy are countless. For instance, many mayors of small towns have denied educational access to Roma children.\footnote{See EUR. ROMA RIGHTS. CTR., ALWAYS SOMEBODY ELSE: ANTI-GYPSYISM IN FRANCE 142 (2005) [hereinafter “ERRC"], available at http://www.errc.org/cms/upload/media/01/A5/m000001A5.pdf (examining the precarious housing and civil rights situation faced by European Roma, with a particular focus on their poor treatment in France).} And while the Besson Law afforded the Roma some dignity in spirit, France soon reversed course when it adopted Sarkozy Law II in 2003,\footnote{Id. at 20.} which criminalizes Roma who have not set up their mobile homes at a legal halting area. Together, the Besson Law and the Sarkozy Law II have resulted in a Catch-22
situation: because there are too few legal halting areas, many Roma could face criminal prosecution. Or, more ironically put, “it is as if you have a game of musical chairs with one chair for five persons and the four who remain standing risk six months in prison.”

In the legislative discussions regarding the Sarkozy Law II, a Senator referred to the Roma as a “plague of tomorrow . . . . They are anti-social people who have no respect for private property, no references, and for whom the words we use have no meaning.”

Moreover, Paul Girot de Langlade, the Prefect of Vaucluse, at a public meeting two months after the Senate debates of Sarkozy Law II, said, “I have no particular tenderness for those people. They live at our expense; from pillage too, everyone knows it. When they invade a piece of land, believe me, I am always ready to use all means to expel them.” Not all Senators expressed aversion towards the Roma, however. Indeed, another Senator, Robert Bret, noted that the Sarkozy Law II essentially equated travellers with other dangerous peoples. He also argued that it did not make sense to penalize travellers when the goal of the Besson Law has hardly been realized; the absence of punitive sanctions for mayors who did not uphold the Besson Law ensured its non-compliance.

The failure of the Besson Law and the enactment of the Sarkozy Law II have made the issue of housing a particularly pressing problem for the Roma of France. Today, they are made to live in sub-par conditions, with housing typically close to factories, waste dumps and polluted rivers. Often, they have little access to clean

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96 ERRC, supra note 93, at 13 (citing Gens du voyage: la répression et l’absurde (Canal Plus television broadcast May 10, 2004)).
97 Id. at 32.
98 Id. (“In France, a Prefect is named in each Department by the Government through a decree of the President, based on propositions from the Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior. The Prefect is the representative of the Prime Minister and all of the Ministers in the Department and thus acts as a link between the State, the Government and the Department.”).
99 Id.
100 See Statement of Robert Bret, supra note 89.
101 Id.
102 See ERRC, supra note 93, at 132 (describing the substandard conditions and segregation in halting areas for Travellers and Gypsies in France).
drinking water.\textsuperscript{103} Many of these halting areas are not fit for human habitation.\textsuperscript{104} And when the Gypsies are evicted, they are not well-treated. For instance, there are police raids early in the morning, and the police often subject them to physical and verbal abuse.\textsuperscript{105} Because of their illegal occupation of land, the travellers are told to leave the town immediately.\textsuperscript{106}

The housing problem has made it difficult for travellers even to access basic services. For example, many Roma parents are afraid of enrolling their children in school in case they are subsequently evicted.\textsuperscript{107} The deplorable conditions of various settlements, such as the lack of water, have made it difficult for parents even to send their children to school on a daily basis.\textsuperscript{108} Many school officials simply refuse to admit them even though the children have a legal right to an education.\textsuperscript{109} In short, the French laws have made it difficult for Roma to find a settlement where they are free from harassment, and this in turn has an effect on other areas of their lives, such as their access to free education.

3. THE LEGALITY OF THE EXPULSION UNDER THE ECHR AND THE CHARTER

3.1. The Relationship Between the ECHR and the Charter.

Hypothetically, two different courts, applying two different controlling documents, could review the legality of the Roma expulsion. First, the European Convention on Human Rights (hereinafter “Convention”), drafted in 1950, is an international treaty that protects human rights and fundamental freedoms in Europe.\textsuperscript{110} The Council of Europe drafted the Convention, and it came into effect in 1953. The Convention also created the European Court of Human Rights (“ECtHR”), which acts as a court of last resort to which litigants can bring claims that assert

\textsuperscript{103} Id.
\textsuperscript{104} Id. at 134.
\textsuperscript{105} Id. at 181–82.
\textsuperscript{106} Id.
\textsuperscript{107} Id. at 238.
\textsuperscript{108} Id. at 235.
\textsuperscript{109} Id. at 236.
violations of a Convention right. The Convention binds contracting members of the Council of Europe, including France.

The European Court of Justice could also review the legality of the expulsion. The ECJ is the judicial branch of the EU. It reviews the legality of acts of EU Member States; it ensures that these States, including France, comply with EU law; and it interprets EU law at the request of States. The Charter, drafted in 2000, encompasses political, social, and economic rights for EU citizens and qualifies as EU law. The Charter was not initially binding, but in 2009, the Treaty of Lisbon gave it absolute legal weight. Thus, one of the roles of the ECJ is to enforce the Charter.  

The relationship between the ECJ and the ECtHR, as well as the relationship between the Charter and the Convention, is to some extent unclear. First, both courts seem to have jurisdiction over similar cases. Second, there is a great degree of overlap between the Charter and the Convention since both contain anti-discriminatory provisions. Notwithstanding these differences, the two bodies differ in many ways, such as the extent to which they permit indirect discrimination. That is, although both the Charter and the Convention contain similar provisions, courts have interpreted them differently. Also, EU law, such as the Charter, has more legal weight than the Convention. For instance, if there is a conflict between a directly effective EU provision and a national law, the EU provision is controlling. In fact, national courts must interpret their legislation in light of EU law. This is not the case with the Convention. The Convention grants

112 BAMFORTH ET AL., supra note 111, at 50.
113 Id. For a discussion of cases that involve an overlap between the two courts, see HELEN TONER, PARTNERSHIP RIGHTS, FREE MOVEMENT, AND EU LAW (2004).
114 BAMFORTH ET AL., supra note 111, at 50.
115 Id.
116 Id.
117 Id.
118 Id.
citizens of signatory states the right to a remedy where a Convention right has been violated, but only to the extent the constitutional system of the signatory state allows. Contracting States are afforded a "margin of appreciation in conforming with their obligations under the [Convention]." 

3.2. A Comparison of the Anti-Discriminatory Provisions in the Charter and the Convention

The principal way the Convention protects against discrimination is through Article 14, which provides that: "The enjoyment of rights and freedoms set forth in this Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status." The Article itself does not directly confer substantive rights, but rather, it does so only in conjunction with another Article in the Convention. It is not necessary that the plaintiff show that another Convention right has been violated; he need only show that the matter falls within the ambit of a Convention right. Even though Article 14 contains no explicit mention of disability or sexual orientation, the phrase "or other status" suggests that the Convention may be read as applying to other discriminated groups that the Council of Europe had not considered when drafting the Convention. However, frustratingly, the Convention does not define discrimination. The French version contains a broader definition than the English version: "sans distinction aucune." In spite of these shortcomings, Article 14 has the potential to address discrimination given its broad language.

119 Id.
120 Id. at 51 (citing Smith & Grady v. United Kingdom, 29 Eur. Ct. H.R. 493, ¶ 135 (1999)).
122 Ellis, supra note 110, at 320.
123 Id.
124 Id.
125 See id. at 321 (within the context of the Article, "sans distinction aucune" means "with no discrimination whatsoever").
In construing Article 14, the main inquiry is whether there is a difference of treatment between two persons in similar situations.\textsuperscript{126} The ECtHR held that the equality treatment principle is breached if the “distinction has no objective or reasonable justification.”\textsuperscript{127} The justification should “be assessed in relation to the aims and effects of the measure at issue.”\textsuperscript{128} Also, national courts are given a “margin of appreciation,” which refers to the “the room for manoeuvre the Strasbourg institutions are prepared to accord national authorities in fulfilling their obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights.”\textsuperscript{129} The ECtHR in \textit{Handyside v. United Kingdom} described the rationale behind the margin of appreciation:

\begin{quote}
[Because] of their direct and continuous contact with the . . . forces of their countries, State authorities are in principle in a better position than the [ECtHR] judge . . . to give an opinion on the . . . content of these requirements as well as the “necessity” of a “restriction” . . .\textsuperscript{130}
\end{quote}

This level of inquiry is similar to rational basis review in U.S. constitutional jurisprudence, which is the lowest level of inquiry.\textsuperscript{131} The combination of margin of appreciation and the reasonable aim inquiry makes it easy for signatory states to condone anti-discriminatory conduct.\textsuperscript{132} However, at times, the margin of appreciation can be narrowed depending on the type of discrimination alleged.\textsuperscript{133} Indeed, the proportionality rule, or the level of inquiry used, depends on the type of discrimination

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
  \item Id.\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{126}}
  \item Id. (citing Case “Relating to Certain Aspects of the Laws on the Use of Languages in Education in Belgium” v. Belgium (Merits) [hereinafter Belgian Linguistics Case], 34 Eur. Ct. H.R. (ser. A) at 34 (1968)).
  \item \textsc{Bamforth et al., supra} note 111, at 73.
  \item \textsc{Handyside v. United Kingdom, Eur. Ct. H.R. (Ser. A) ¶ 48 (1976).}
  \item See \textsc{United States v. Carolene Products, 304 U.S. 144, 152 n. 4 (1938)} (articulating rational basis review).
  \item \textsc{Bamforth et al., supra} note 111, at 73.
  \item The ECtHR is not willing to give national legislatures a wide margin of appreciation in sexual orientation discrimination claims. \textit{Id.} at 76.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
claim. For instance, in the Belgian Linguistics Case, the Court held that the right to a fair hearing, found in Article 6 of the Convention, does not compel states to establish an appeals system, nor does the right to education, found in Article 2, compel states to establish a particular kind of educational establishment. This shows that signatory states do have a wide margin of appreciation in their interpretation of the Convention.

The ECtHR’s interpretation of Article 14 has developed over time. For instance, although Article 14 historically only precluded direct discrimination, it now bans indirect discrimination. Also, a facially neutral blanket rule, if it disproportionately affects a particular group, such as one with a particular religious belief, could run afoul of Article 14.

The Charter’s provision pertaining to discrimination is worded differently from the parallel provision in the Convention. There are two main differences between the two. First, Article 14 of the Convention requires another Convention right to be violated in order for a litigant to have a viable claim that she has been discriminated against, whereas Article 21 of the Charter, in contrast, is free-standing. Second, Article 21 includes a list of more groups that are deemed to be worthy of protection, which is not included in Article 14 of the Convention. An example of this is the sexual orientation suspect group.

134 See id. at 76–80 (mentioning the importance of the proportionality requirement in Article 14 cases).
136 BAMFORTH ET AL., supra note 111, at 77; see also D.H. v. Czech Republic, 43 Eur. Ct. H.R. 144 (2007) (banning indirect discrimination in a case in which Roma children were disproportionately educated in “special” schools).
137 BAMFORTH ET AL., supra note 111, at 78; see also Thlimmenos v. Greece, 2000-IV Eur. Ct. H.R. 263, 278-80 (finding that a facially neutral law criminalizing people for not wearing military uniforms violated Article 14 when a Jehovah’s Witness was sentenced to prison for refusing to wear a uniform and then later denied employment on that basis).
138 See Charter, supra note 40, art. 21 (“Any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prohibited.”).
The ECJ determines whether there has been a case of discriminatory conduct by applying the proportionality test. The ECJ requires that a “measure be suitable or appropriate, as well as necessary, to achieve the desired end, as well as . . . proportionate to that end . . .”

This is strikingly different from the standard used by the ECtHR in interpreting Article 14 of the Convention. The ECJ’s review is a heightened level of scrutiny, similar to the strict scrutiny followed in U.S. constitutional jurisprudence. Furthermore, the level of scrutiny employed also depends on context. For economic matters, the court’s level of inquiry is more relaxed, but if a litigant claims that her or his fundamental rights have been violated, the ECJ is willing to examine the alleged violation closely; the Charter also bans indirect, as well as direct, discrimination.

Article 21 of the Charter will likely prove to be more helpful to the Roma than Article 14 of the Convention. First, the Charter adopts a more heightened level of inquiry, which means that France would have to demonstrate that the expulsion was necessary and appropriate in order to ensure that no one was occupying its national territory illegally. Second, Article 21 of the Charter is freestanding and does not need to hook onto another Charter right in order to be validly applied. Although France claims otherwise, its expulsion qualifies as direct discrimination. A memorandum that circulated within the French equivalent of the Department of Homeland Security basically called for the targeting of Roma. This leaked memorandum is a crucial piece of
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evidence since it proves that the Roma were not the target of indirect discrimination, but rather, they were the target of direct discrimination. Even if this memorandum were not available, two hundred out of the three hundred dismantled camps were occupied by the Roma.144 It might be possible to prove that Sarkozy’s expulsion order had a disproportionate impact on the Roma and therefore, this would be an act of prohibited indirect discrimination. Still, the memorandum highlights the fact that the Roma were the target of direct discrimination, and therefore, they should be able to allege successfully France’s violation of Article 21 of the Charter.

3.3. Comparison of the Collective Expulsion Provisions in the Convention and the Charter

Article 19 of the Charter states that: “(1) Collective expulsions are prohibited; [and] (2) No one may be removed, expelled or extradited to a State where there is a serious risk that he or she would be subjected to the death penalty, torture or other inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.”145 If a person is expelled without the case having been reviewed individually, that expulsion is an instance of collective expulsion.146 This Article is concerned more with the procedural dimensions of expulsion. The European Commission of Human Rights (“the Commission”)

144 Saltmarsh, supra note 17 (“Interior Minister Brice Hortefeux said . . . he would use decrees to dismantle about 300 illegal camps, of which 200 belong to Roma.”).

145 Charter, supra note 40, art. 19. See also JUSTICE Commentary on Art. 19 Protection in the Event of Removal, Expulsion, or Extradition, EU CHARTER FUNDAMENTAL RJTS., http://www.eucharter.org/home.php?page_id=94 (last visited Apr. 16, 2012) (noting that each decision on deportation is meant to be based on a specific examination, and that “no single measure can be taken to expel all persons having the nationality of a particular State”).


147 The role of the Commission is to review admissibility of applications and ensure that domestic remedies have been exhausted, as well as to review the applications themselves. See Jonathan L. Black-Branch, Observing and Enforcing Human Rights Under the Council of Europe: The Creation of a Permanent European
has held that such an individual treatment must, most notably, entail an objective weighing of the interests of the individual and the authority seeking the expulsion.148

The collective expulsion provision was enacted because of two ECtHR cases: Soering v. UK149 and Ahmed v. Austria.150 In the Soering case, the plaintiff was to be sent to Virginia where there was a strong possibility that he would be executed; execution is a violation of Article 3 of the Convention. The ECtHR held that a state must consider the consequences of returning an individual to another country where he might endure punishment that breaches the Convention.151 In the Ahmed case, a Somali refugee, upon being convicted of attempted robbery, was to be deported to Somalia, but the Court found that since he would face degrading treatment there, he could not be legally deported.152

In the Soering case, the ECtHR considered whether, if the plaintiff was sent to Virginia, there was a chance that his Article 3 right would be violated. The Article states: “No one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.”153 The Court held that the possibility of execution qualified as “inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;” “inhuman” treatment includes premeditated treatment, which was “applied for hours at a stretch and ’caused, if not bodily injury, at least intense physical and mental suffering . . . ‘”154 Moreover, the term “degrading” refers to treatment that is likely to “’arouse in [its] victims feelings of fear, anguish and inferiority capable of humiliating and debasing them and possibly breaking their physical or moral resistance.’”155

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155 Id.
Here, it is certain that the Roma will be subject to humiliating treatment upon their return to Bulgaria or Romania. For example, “70% of Roma children have either never attended school or dropped out of the overcrowded ‘Gypsy schools’ in the early grades.” Also, the Roma must often deal with the vexing problem of segregated housing. But it is unclear whether such acts of discrimination rise to the level of an Article 3 violation. Even though it is difficult to show that there is an Article 19(2) violation, Article 19(1) unequivocally states that collective expulsions are prohibited. At this point in time, it is unclear whether the French authorities are individually reviewing each case of expulsion, and engaging in the objective weighing of the individual’s interests and the state’s interests. France expelled roughly a thousand people within a span of one month. It is hard to imagine that each of these expulsions was based on an objective balancing of interests. Further, the leaked memorandum highly suggests that no balancing of interests ever took place.

Protocol 4, Article 4 of the Convention also unequivocally prohibits collective expulsion of aliens. The legislative history of

156 See, e.g., CTR. ON Hous. RIGHTS & EVICTIONS, supra note 20, at 4-5, ¶ 7 (noting that the Roma face discrimination in the housing sphere in Bulgaria in the form of forced evictions, racial segregation, and poor living conditions: “The informal nature of the housing occupied by some Roma is put forth by Bulgarian authorities as justification for their failure to assist Romani residents and, at times, to harass them and/or to subject them to invasive practices incompatible with the international human rights standards to which Bulgaria has voluntarily agreed to be legally bound, including ICERD.”); see also Greenberg, supra note 20, at 936 (describing the school segregation system in Eastern European countries under which the Roma were placed in the same classroom as students with mental disabilities).


158 See id. at 46 (“Like Roma in many other parts of the former East bloc, the Bulgarian Roma face segregation and discrimination in employment, housing, education, health care, criminal justice, and the military.”).

159 See EU: A Key Intervention in Roma Expulsions, supra note 22 (979 Bulgarian and Romanian Roma were deported between July 28 and August 27, 2010).

160 See Memorandum from Brice Hortefeux, supra note 143; Willsher, supra note 143.

the Protocol suggests it was drafted in response to the “relatively clear-cut mass expulsions of ethnic Germans and Eastern Europeans after World War II.”

162 Like the Charter, an alleged expulsion under the Convention “must be conducted without individual review.”

One of the chief cases interpreting this Article of the Convention is Čonka v. Belgium, which was the first case in thirty-five years to favor an applicant claiming a signatory state engaged in collective expulsion. In that case, the Roma plaintiffs were expelled from Belgium to Slovakia based on their country of origin. The plaintiffs were called to the police station, along with other individuals of the same origin. At the station, the plaintiffs were told, along with the other Roma families, that they were to be deported. The ECtHR noted that there were several factors that suggest there was a collective expulsion of aliens. First, before the plaintiffs’ expulsion, the political authorities had announced that such an operation would be undertaken. Second, all aliens had to arrive at the police station at the same time. Third, the terms of their arrest were identical. Finally, many of the aliens were unable to get in touch with a lawyer. Thus, the ECtHR found that there was a violation of Protocol 4, Article 4 of the Convention.

It is unlikely that France afforded the Roma the same procedural guarantees the ECtHR mentions in Čonka. For instance,


163 Id.

164 See id. at 121 (analyzing collective expulsion case law and describing the growing receptiveness of courts toward collective expulsion claims).

165 A note concerning immigration policy was approved by the Belgium Cabinet: “‘A plan for collective repatriation is currently under review, both to send a signal to the Slovakian authorities and to deport this large number of illegal immigrants whose presence can no longer be tolerated.’” Čonka v. Belgium, App. No. 51564/99 Eur. Ct. H.R. at 10 [¶ 31] (2002) (citing “Note providing General Guidance on Overall Policy in Immigration Matters” (Oct. 1, 1999)).

166 Id. at 20.

167 Id.

168 Id.

169 Id.
it is probably the case that the Roma families were not able to contact a lawyer. That the Roma were essentially rounded up and returned to either Bulgaria or Romania implies that there was no individual consideration of each case; this is similar to the congregation of the Roma families at the police station in the Conka case. In short, the provision in the Convention prohibiting collective expulsion works very similar to the parallel provision in the Charter. It seems both provisions would support finding France liable for the collective expulsion of the Roma without due consideration of each individual’s case, whereas France maintains that it is targeting breeding grounds for crime.

4. FRANCE’S POSSIBLE DEFENSES

To be sure, France has some strong legal arguments in favor of the deportation of at least some Roma. The main source that President Sarkozy can rely on is the EU Directive\textsuperscript{170} on Freedom of Movement which states that EU citizens can stay after a period of three months only if (1) they are either self-employed or can legally work in the host Member state; (2) they have sufficient resources for themselves and their families such that they are not a burden on the host Member state; or (3) they are enrolled in a public or private institution for studies and have health insurance.\textsuperscript{171} The

\textsuperscript{170} EU Directives are legislative acts of the EU, which require that EU Member states implement the Directive. Nevertheless, states are not directed as to how they should implement the Directive. See Application of EU Law: Directives – Definitions, EUR. COMMISSION, http://ec.europa.eu/eu_law/directives/directives_en.htm (last updated Aug. 17, 2011) (“EU directives lay down certain end results that must be achieved in every Member State. National authorities have to adapt their laws to meet these goals, but are free to decide how to do so.”).

\textsuperscript{171} The EU Directive states:

All Union citizens shall have the right of residence on the territory of another Member State for a period of longer than three months if they: (a) are workers or self-employed persons in the host Member State; or (b) have sufficient resources for themselves and their family members not to become a burden on the social assistance system of the host Member State during their period of residence and have comprehensive sickness insurance cover in the host Member State; or (c) are enrolled at a private or public establishment, accredited or financed by the host Member State on the basis of its legislation or administrative practice, for the principal purpose of following a course of study, including vocational training; and have comprehensive sickness insurance cover in the host Member State.
Directive also states that EU citizens may be expelled because of public policy, public security or public health concerns. Before a host Member state expels an individual based on public policy or security concerns, however, it must take into account a variety of factors, such as his age, extent of cultural integration into the host Member state, family and economic situation, and cultural connections with the country of origin. Moreover, a host Member state cannot expel an individual if that person has lived in the state for the previous ten years or if that person is a minor.

To justify the legality of the deportation of several Roma, President Sarkozy claims that the Roma campsites are a breeding ground of begging, prostitution and other crimes. There is a grain of truth in this statement. For instance, in 2003, police arrested sixty-seven Roma outside Paris for sexual enslavement of children; these children were kidnapped from Romania, raped to make them obey, and sent to the streets of Paris to prostitute themselves. Furthermore, Interior Minister Brice Hortefeux said that the “‘delinquency of Romanian origin’ in Paris had increased ‘by 138% in 2009 and 259% in eighteen months.’” Further, he noted that “‘in Paris, the reality is that almost one thief in five is a Romanian’” and that “‘one theft in four by minors is committed by

State and assure the relevant national authority, by means of a declaration or by such equivalent means as they may choose, that they have sufficient resources for themselves and their family members not to become a burden on the social assistance system of the host Member State during their period of residence; or (d) are family members accompanying or joining a Union citizen who satisfies the conditions referred to in points (a), (b) or (c).


172 Id. art. 28–29 at 115–16.

173 Id. art. 28(1) at 115.

174 Id. art. 28(3) at 115.

175 See Q&A: France Roma Expulsions, supra note 14 (“A statement from the president’s office said the camps were ‘sources of illegal trafficking, of profoundly shocking living standards, of exploitation of children for begging, of prostitution and crime.’”).


a Romanian minor.” However, evidence suggests that such statistics are suspect. Though some Roma may very well commit crimes, it is unclear whether they commit crimes at a greater rate than other minority groups with little access to education and employment.

Even if it were true that twenty percent of all thieves are Roma, the Directive requires that host Member states follow the proportionality principle when considering expelling an individual from the state. This means that France would need to show that the expulsion of such individuals would not be “manifestly disproportionate to the gravity of the infringement.” This is quite a demanding requirement because France would have to show that in each case of expulsion, the individual posed such a security risk to the public that deportation was the necessary and proportionate response. But deportation of an individual for committing a petty crime is not a proportionate response. Further, even if the crime rate is higher within the Roma community, deportation is still unwarranted. Authorities cannot rely on such collective statistics when considering the deportation of a single individual; this falls outside the scope of factors authorities should take into account when considering the expulsion of an individual.

It would be difficult for France to show that each Roma deported was a security risk. A better claim would be that each of the Roma stayed beyond the three-month period, but was not able...

178 Id.

179 See id. (noting that the alleged statistics are far-fetched and that there is no way to verify them); see also C.J. Chido, Peril of Movement: Migrating Roma Risk Expulsion as EU Member States Test Limits of the Free Movement Directive, 20 Tul. Int’l & Comp. L. 233, 252 (2011) (noting that the “more likely explanation [for the expulsion] is that they are . . . Roma who exercised their right to free movement”).

180 See Council Directive 2004/38/EC, supra note 38, art. 27(2), at 114 (“Measures taken on grounds of public policy or public security shall comply with the principle of proportionality and shall be based exclusively on the personal conduct of the individual concerned.”).


to secure employment. However, in France, Bulgarian and Romanian citizens must obtain a work permit, which is determined by the condition of the economic market.\footnote{See Virginie Semedo, \textit{The Deportation of Roma People by France: Or How to Displace a Problem Instead of Solving It}, MIGRANTS’ RTS. NETWORK (Sept. 20, 2010), http://www.migrantsrights.org.uk/migration-pulse/2010/deportation-roma-people-france-or-how-displace-problem-instead-solving-it (describing the restricted freedom of movement of Roma people in France).} This effectively means that France has reduced the type of employment that the Roma can hold “to a list of 150 jobs which are in need of workers.”\footnote{Id.} Therefore, it seems France is making it difficult for the Roma to even satisfy a condition that would enable them to remain for more than three months. Still, even if France expels these individuals who have stayed beyond the three-month period, these expelled Roma can legally return to France.\footnote{See id. (recognizing the absence of a system that would prevent expelled Roma from legally returning to France).} Moreover, the ERRC claims that it was not determined for every Roma expelled whether he or she had been in France for fewer than three months. Therefore, even though France has a right to expel some Roma, it is not clear whether France legally expelled those Roma who were residing in France in violation of the Directive.

Undoubtedly, France has some potentially viable claims against the expelled Roma. For instance, France could assert that each of the Roma expelled posed a security risk and that deportation was the proportionate response to that risk. However, such an argument would hardly be persuasive given that so many Roma were expelled in a short span of time. Further, the high crime rate within the Roma community, even if true, does not necessarily justify the deportation of any one particular Roma individual. Alternatively, France would have to demonstrate that the Roma expelled were living in France beyond the three-month deadline without any security of employment. While this is a legally viable claim, the ERRC has reported several cases in which the Roma were expelled without any meaningful consideration of their cases. Even if France had legal options available, the manner in which the deportations were conducted suggests that it had improperly engaged in collective expulsion of the Roma.
5. CONCLUSION

The Roma have been the subject of persecution throughout history, especially during World War II, where they were killed in large numbers.\(^{186}\) The condition of the Roma has not considerably improved because they have since been subject to segregated housing and schools\(^{187}\) and forced sterilizations.\(^{188}\) The legal remedies available to them have been few and far between. But with the jurisprudential development of the European courts, the ECJ and ECtHR, there are more legal remedies that the Roma can take advantage of now, thereby moving them closer towards the achievement of a life of dignity. The 2010 expulsion of the Roma from France has been one of the most high-profile examples of mistreatment against the Roma. There is some evidence that suggests that a collective expulsion took place, without due consideration of each individual case.\(^{189}\) Indeed, given the swift execution of the deportation of nearly one thousand Roma,\(^{190}\) it is very much likely that there was a collective expulsion. Moreover, France acted in an anti-discriminatory manner because it specifically targeted the Roma when dismantling all the illegal camps.

Both the Charter and the Convention prohibit direct discrimination. The Charter adopts a heightened level of inquiry, which means that France must show that its actions were necessary and appropriate to deal with the Roma’s illegal occupation of its

\(^{186}\) See Greenberg, supra note 20, at 925 (“[O]ne estimate is that the Nazis killed at least 1.5 million in the Roma Holocaust . . . a number that does not include Roma exterminated by Nazi allied states.”).

\(^{187}\) See Vassilev, supra note 157, at 47 (describing the low education and illiteracy problems among Roma people that result from the “deliberate segregation and exclusion of Roma children from ethnic Bulgarian schools and classes”).

\(^{188}\) See Denysenko, supra note 71 (highlighting the allegations that Roma in the Czech Republic were sterilized against their wills).


\(^{190}\) See EU: A Key Intervention in Roma Expulsions, supra note 22 (noting the expulsion of 979 Roma from France in 2010).
The Convention, by contrast, lacks teeth because France need only show that its actions had an objective, rational purpose; its use as a legal shield will not be as effective as the Charter. Furthermore, the Convention allows the signatory states a significant margin of appreciation in their interpretation and implementation of the Convention. Therefore, under the Charter, France will find it difficult to demonstrate the necessity and appropriateness of its discriminatory actions; under the Convention, however, France need only show a rational aim, which is significantly easier to do.

In addition to violating the anti-discriminatory provisions, France has also violated the prohibition on collective expulsion, which is unequivocally prohibited by both the Convention and the Charter. It is doubtful that France engaged in the proper decisionmaking when considering the deportation of each Roma, which requires balancing the interests of the individual with its own interests. The only way France can prevail is by demonstrating that it engaged in no collective expulsion, and indeed, France can even rely on the Directive on the Freedom of Movement to support its claim. For example, those individuals who have been present in France for a period of more than three months and have not secured employment are not legally entitled to remain in the state. Moreover, France can even deport an individual if that individual poses a security risk. However, France would have to show that it applied the proportionality principle; this is an extraordinary hurdle for France to overcome given that nearly one thousand Roma were expelled within a month.

The collective expulsion claim is an important one because the history of Europe is fraught with examples of collective expulsion, most prominently with the expulsion of the Jews from Nazi

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191 See BAMFORTH ET AL., supra note 111, at 113 (providing an overview of the proportionality test).
192 See BAMFORTH ET AL., supra note 111, at 77–78 (observing the court’s holding that states can violate the rights granted under Article 14 when they act “without an objective and reasonable justification”).
193 BAMFORTH ET AL., supra note 111, at 76–77.
This treatment of the Roma is a painful reminder that the specter of collective expulsion haunts us still in the twenty-first century, and that a state indulges in its xenophobic tendencies when it expels groups of aliens en masse. A robust legal framework did not exist when previous collective expulsions had taken place, but legal frameworks exist today to protect those who are politically vulnerable. That the Roma are the “most impoverished, marginalized and discriminated group in Europe” makes reliance on the collective expulsion provisions in both the Charter and the Convention all the more urgent.

The discriminatory nature of the collective expulsion of the Roma highlights the racist motivations behind France’s actions. France might claim otherwise, but its actions serve to ensure that the Roma remain as the “other,” the elusive figure in the shadows of society. The Roma, unlike other peoples, lack the political capital to assert their fundamental human rights, and as a result, cannot escape the shadows into which they have been thrust. Because of the “difficulties surrounding the identification and definition of discrimination,” there is always a danger that the Roma will not be able to successfully assert their political voice.

But after years of discrimination and expulsion from their own settlements, the Roma now stand a good chance of prevailing should EU Justice Commissioner Reding initiate a legal action against France. However, even Commissioner Reding has rescinded the threat of legal action. The legal remedies are

195 See JEAN-MARIE HENCKAERTS, MASS EXPULSION IN MODERN INTERNATIONAL LAW AND PRACTICE 1–2 (1995) (listing notorious cases in the history of mass expulsion including “the expulsion of the Jews from England in 1290, the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492, the expulsion of Moslems from Spain in 1610, the expulsion of Huguenots from France in 1685, the expulsion of Protestants from Salzburg in 1731, the expulsion of Jews from Bohemia in 1744 . . . the expulsion Armenians from the Ottoman Empire (Turkish Armenia) in 1915-1916, and the expulsion of the Jews from Nazi Germany in the period up to 1939”).

196 Morag Goodwin, Multidimensional Exclusion: Viewing Romani Marginalization Through the Nexus of Race and Poverty, in EUROPEAN UNION NON-DISCRIMINATION LAW: COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES ON MULTIDIMENSIONAL EQUALITY LAW 137, 137 (Dagmar Schiek & Victoria Chege eds., 2009).

197 See ELLES, supra note 110, at 3.

198 See Press Release, supra note 41. However, according to Robert Kushen, the inquiry into the Roma expulsion is ongoing. Statement by Robert Kushen, Exec. Dir., Eur. Roma Rights Ctr., France and Roma: If Ain’t Over ’Til It’s Over, (Oct.
available to the Roma, but the international community must take an aggressive, uncompromising stance against France. History shows that many states were able to mistreat the Roma without any fear of consequence, whether legal or political. The recent expulsion of the Roma from France is a chance to, if not remedy the injustices of the past, pave way for a future free of state-sponsored persecution. Indeed, now more than ever, the marginalized Roma have a decent opportunity, to borrow Jack Greenberg’s phrase, at “cast[ing] off their shackles.” 199

199 Greenberg, supra note 20, at 1001.