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“The European Union and the Roma/Gypsies deportations from France and Italy”

Roma/Gypsy people have suffered persecution over many hundreds of years. Throughout the 20th century and until the Fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, they mostly resided in the former Central and Eastern European communist countries. After the 1989 they became one of the communities that became a scapegoat for post-Communist society's ills. Despite much rhetoric Roma/Gypsy communities were not welcomed into the West and much of the persecution they endured in the East they saw repeated in the West. The European Union has sought to place Human Rights as a focal point of its approach in all matters including the issue of Roma/Gypsy communities. Moreover since 2007 Romania and Bulgaria, two states with large numbers of Roma/Gypsy, have become members of the European Union. During 2010 (and before), both France (and by implication other European member states like Italy and Germany) have been cautioned on their activities of persecution and expulsion of Roma/Gypsy people from their borders. Not only have these actions contravened the European Union charter on Human Rights, but equally as serious France and Italy have expelled citizens who are members of another European Member State. This paper seeks to examine and investigate the actions of European members States (France and Italy primarily) and establish the agenda and motivation of this perennial persecution of a vulnerable people which has at the same time provided sharp controversy within the institutions of the European Union.