

I'm Dijana Pavlovic, I'm Roma activist and I am spokesman for the organizing committee of the popular law for the recognition of the historical linguistic minority of Roma and Sinti in Italy.

In Italy in the 2008 we had the Nomad Emergency. Usually the states proclaims a state emergency when there is a huge disaster, a huge earthquake... therefore for the Italian state the presents of 140 000 people of whom more than half area Italian citizens (in Italy from the 14th century) and more than half area children, represented the problem similar to a huge earthquake.

The proclaimed Emergency provoked the ethnic-based census, the criminalization of all Roma population present on Italian territory and in spite the State Council decided in 2011 that the emergency is not legal, the consequences of this action are still dramatic in the daily life of Roma people.

Segregation in so-called nomad camps, continue evictions of roma the settlements with no alternative solutions (I will give just one example only for the city of Milan: in the last three years the center-left administration done 1370 evictions on a population of 2000 people, of which about half are children, 1.3 evictions a day.)

The National strategy for the Inclusion of Roma and Sinti is simply not implemented at the moment in the most of Italian regions. No wonder that the Ministry of Education has published shocking dates: In Italy only 248 Roma children are enrolled in secondary schools.

We believe that there is an underlying problem that needs to be addressed and resolved as a precondition for any intervention or any inclusion policy.

I do not think I exaggerate when I say that the biggest problem of the Roma in Italy is institutional discrimination. And for this reason that the remedy can not be the simple policy of inclusion that mostly remain on the paper, but it must go through a formal recognition. The state that recognizes you can not discriminate you.

Since 1999 Italy formally recognizes 12 historic linguistic minorities living on the Italian territory. The only non-recognized minority, despite one of the largest in Italy, is Roma and Sinti minority. The non-recognition of minority status is in contrast to the same Italian Constitution and is a legislative gap, but above all, it is the main reason why in our communities living conditions worsen dramatically from year to year. Without this condition there will be no inclusion policy that works, no possible true participation and the real dialogue.

We need Italian state to understands and accept our dignity and our identity, that we are not vulnerable group, we are not a security problem or emergency, we are people, distinct ethnic group, with their own language and their own cultural identity which is important part of the Italian culture and identity. For this on behalf of 43 Roma and Sinti organizations that promoted the proposal of the popular law for the recognition of historical linguistic minority of Roma and Sinti I ask the Italian government at least to put on the agenda the discussion of the this law in parliament and speak clearly on this issue. – positively or negatively- but clearly .