Reply to the questionnaire from the UN Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living and on the right to non-discrimination in this regard

The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) is a human rights body of the Council of Europe, composed of independent experts, which monitors problems of racism, xenophobia, antisemitism, intolerance and discrimination on grounds such as “race”, national/ethnic origin, colour, citizenship, religion and language (racial discrimination); it prepares reports and issues recommendations to member States.

During its 4th country monitoring cycle (2007-2013) ECRI monitored equal access to adequate housing as part of its analysis of racism and racial discrimination against vulnerable groups (such as Roma, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, members of Black and Jewish communities, Muslims, as well as other religious minorities). See here below two examples of ECRI monitoring findings.

**Adequate housing for migrants**: In its 4th monitoring report on the **Netherlands** (2013) ECRI found that “Eastern European workers” were living “in a ghetto-like environment” and “were offered by temporary employment agencies “old abandoned buildings” “with poor sanitary conditions”. ECRI recommended that “housing regulations are complied with as concerns the accommodation offered to Eastern European temporary workers and that they carry out inspections in this respect”. (Paragraphs 90-91)

**Decent accommodation for Roma**: In its Conclusions on the implementation of a number of recommendations made in its previous report on **Italy** (2015), ECRI found that the process in which the Italian authorities dealt with Roma communities” had “not yet fully ensured that all the Roma who may be evicted from their homes enjoy the guarantees needed” including the possibility of being rehoused in decent accommodation (pp 6-7).

Under the ongoing 5th country monitoring cycle (2014-2019) ECRI analyses equal access to adequate housing as part of its review of national integration measures. See below an example of ECRI monitoring findings.

**Access to housing for irregular migrants**: In its 5th monitoring report on Greece (2015) ECRI found that “irregular migrants, if not detained, are left to fend for themselves, without any social protection..”. “Many have resorted to squatting in abandoned houses and derelict apartment buildings in inner-city Athens”. “ECRI was informed that providing housing to irregular migrants is illegal and persons or organisations doing so can face prosecution. This leads to a situation in which charitable organisations, which would be prepared to offer some form of accommodation to irregular migrants are prevented from doing so”. ECRI recommended “that the authorities de-criminalise the provision of accommodation to irregular migrants in order to enable charitable organisations to provide assistance to irregular migrants who suffer from homelessness”. (Paragraphs 137-139)

For more examples of ECRI monitoring findings see: <http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/activities/countrybycountry_en.asp>