



PREMIER MINISTRE  
MINISTÈRE DE LA COHÉSION DES TERRITOIRES

**dihal**

DÉLÉGATION INTERMINISTÉRIELLE  
À L'HÉBERGEMENT ET À L'ACCÈS AU LOGEMENT

# SLUM CLEARANCE

*Presentation of the national action plan for support and monitoring of slum clearance within the framework of the 25 January 2018 government instruction*



SEPTEMBER 2018

Over the past 20 years, **slums have begun reappearing in metropolitan France**, concentrated in large urban agglomerations in the form of **illegal settlements or squats**. Their inhabitants are **predominantly poor European migrants**, living in deplorable conditions that put their health and security at risk. This situation creates tensions with neighbouring communities and undermines public order.

Despite repeated evacuations, **the number of campsites and inhabitants has fallen only slightly since 2012**. In 2017, 500 slums were still home to over 15,000 slum-dwellers.

The French government has decided to address this issue by shifting the policy framework and by setting the clear objective of a sustained decrease in the slum-dwelling population in France. This objective is laid out in the 25 January 2018 government *instruction*, which aims to give a new impetus to the clearance of slums and illegal camps.

**Read the 25 January 2018 government instruction >> <https://bit.ly/2MgkMaX>**

## A CHANGE OF PARADIGM

The new policy framework (as defined by the 25 January 2018 government *instruction*) calls for a paradigm change. **The emphasis shifts from a narrow focus on slum evacuations** to a much broader approach for public intervention every step of the process, from initial slum formation to final slum clearance, including the prevention of slum formation.

The trigger for public intervention must be the slums themselves, and not be restricted to evacuation procedures. Solutions must be multi-dimensional, **conforming with the laws of the French Republic and residence rights, while including integration programs, return programs to the country of origin, and transnational cooperation**.



## A HUMANE, PRAGMATIC AND EFFICIENT RESPONSE

The policy framework laid out in the 25 January 2018 government *instruction* includes the **principles of human rights, respect for the laws of the French Republic, and new pathways for effective public action**. It draws inspiration from local-level experiments carried out in *départements* that have succeeded in sustainably reducing the number of slums on their territories. The framework hinges on three main strategic orientations:

1. **A clear objective of a sustainable reduction** in the number of slums and slum-dwellers.
2. The implementation of **effective solutions favouring the integration** (education, health, accommodation, and work) **of inhabitants, in accordance with the laws of the French Republic**.
3. The establishment of **territorial partnership strategies, particularly with local authorities**.

## LOCAL INITIATIVES

The 25 January 2018 government *instruction* drew inspiration from an evaluation of local initiatives and measures implemented over the past years. The evaluation highlighted a number of effective local experiences, such as **the case of Strasbourg where slums with a population of over 300 have been sustainably cleared in the past five years, or Toulouse, which has seen a 60% decrease of its slum population over four years**. It is through the diffusion of such successful local strategies that the government *instruction* aims to reach its national goal of a sustainable reduction in the number of slums and the number of slum-dwellers.

For a full presentation of these initiatives, see the photos of the Dihal workshop at the National Assembly, held in March 2019.

 <https://youtu.be/DjR3LVtK7RY>

## PATHS TO INTEGRATION

The 25 January 2018 government *instruction* is concerned with slums whose populations predominantly originate from Central and Eastern Europe. Slum dwellers in France are often poor European citizens, thus entitled to free movement within the EU yet primarily sedentary (in contrast to Travelers). Integration – either into French society or country of origin – is a realistic aim, based on the number of successful cases. Contexts and situations are much more diverse than current representations lead us to think. In some cases, the path to full integration is rapid, in other cases, it is a much longer process which requires **solid social support**.

For more information, see our video presentation on a **study of paths to integration**.

 <https://youtu.be/ckECEDbAffl>



## STRATEGIC DIRECTION #1

Implementation of territorial strategies for the handling of illegal settlements and slums, with the longer-term aim of their clearance

- **Involve all relevant state agencies, local authorities and civil society**
- Base the strategy on a **clearly-defined territory**, harness field knowledge, include an action plan and cover a wide range of issues
- Implement a partnership agreement between local authorities, including a monitoring program

## STRATEGIC DIRECTION #2

Development of differentiated solutions according to camp and population profiles

- **Emphasize monitoring and diagnosis**, if possible starting from initial slum formation, regardless of existing evacuation plans
- **Define a broad plan of action (including security, camp organisation, legal issues)** and a provisional timetable with the longer-term aim of total slum clearance
- Develop inclusive solutions, taking into consideration the camp and population profiles, including status, personal situation, health, abilities and aspirations, and paying particular attention to children and their situations

## STRATEGIC DIRECTION #3

Targeting extreme poverty, in accordance with the laws and rights of the French Republic

- Develop solutions **compatible with French citizenship rights** and existing mechanisms
- **Ensure access to accommodation within the framework of local schemes in the départements**
- **Provide housing and accommodation within existing procedures and in line with the national “Housing First” programme** (launched in September 2017, this programme aims to transform access mechanisms to housing and accommodation)

## € STRATEGIC DIRECTION #4

Mobilisation of state funds and search for co-financing

- Allocate funds from the Dihal national envelope (3 million euros) to serve as catalysts for the development of a territorial strategy, and for activating new sources of a financing
- Rely on state funds from different ministries and relevant agencies
- **Search for co-financing options, in particular through partnerships with local authorities**
- **Mobilise of European structural funds (ESF, EFRD) in conjunction with regional and departmental councils, as well as the Direccte (regional directorates for business, competition, consumption, labour and employment)**

### A GOVERNMENT *INSTRUCTION* FOR A GLOBAL AND INTERMINISTERIAL FRAMEWORK SIGNED BY 8 MINISTERS

The 25 January 2018 government *instruction* expands the 26 August 2012 circular concerning the anticipation and accompaniment of dismantling of illegal campsites. The new *instruction* is signed by 8 Ministers (Internal Affairs, Justice, European and Foreign Affairs, Labour, National Education, Gender Equality), which highlights its aim for broad and cross-sectional action. The *instruction* simultaneously targets access to basic rights (accommodation, healthcare, education and employment), child protection, women’s rights, and addresses the fight against crime and human trafficking, the safeguard of public order, and residency rights.

The *instruction* is the result of a collaborative partnership between public authorities, local representatives of the State, non-profits, State-mandated operators, researchers and field actors. The Dihal (interministerial delegate for accommodation and access to housing) will be in charge of monitoring the proper implementation of the *instruction* and its strategic directions.

## NATIONAL SUPPORT FOR TERRITORIES

The Dihal provides two types of support for territories engaging in slum clearance:

### 1. Technical support :

The Dihal provides information about existing measures, shares best practices, provides legal and technical advice, removes institutional barriers when necessary, and intervenes in the field to mobilize local partners.

### 2. Financial support :

An annual national envelope of 3 million euros is allocated from two funds; the programme against social exclusion (managed by the General Directorate for Social Cohesion) and the housing programme (managed by the Directorate for housing, urban planning and landscapes). The envelope is dedicated to support actions related to slum clearance, and is managed by the DIHAL. Funds are allocated with the aim of assisting local territories, favouring initiative and experimentation, and activating co-financing possibilities.

## CONTACT POINTS IN THE DÉPARTEMENTS

The 25 January 2018 government *instruction* states that each département must designate a local contact point for the Dihal, in charge of monitoring the territorial strategy for slum clearance (list available on demand).

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION CARRIED OUT BY THE DIHAL

The Dihal ensures the monitoring and the evaluation of local actions for slum clearance. The mechanism set up for this purpose has three dimensions:

### 1. A national census of slums and slum-dwellers, carried out twice a year.

**2. An impact-evaluation of slum-clearing and social support activities** subsidized by the Dihal envelope. The Dihal carries out this assessment via field trips, regular contact with départements and the use of performance indicators. The Dihal publishes an annual report of these activities.

### 3. Monitoring of the number of evacuations.



## THE NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR MONITORING SLUM CLEARANCE

A National Commission for slum clearance has been charged with monitoring the effective implementation of the 25 January 2018 government *instruction*, particularly the progress made towards achieving the goal of total and sustainable slum clearance.

The Commission is composed of 30 members, representing all stakeholders (local authorities, préfetures, non-profits, signatory ministries, members of parliament, and independent administrative authorities) and serves as a collaborative body for policy co-construction and co-evaluation.

The Commission was officially installed on 20th June 2018 by Sylvain Mathieu, the interministerial delegate for accommodation and access to housing, who will also serve as its head. Participants included representatives for the cities of Strasburg, Toulouse, and Nanfès, a member of parliament, the Abbé Pierre Foundation, Médecins du Monde, Collectif Romeurope, various national bodies, and former inhabitants of slums.

The Commission has established seven thematic working groups on housing conditions, work, schooling, health, the fight against discrimination, participation, and international cooperation.



## A EUROPEAN ISSUE

The reappearance of slums in France is connected to European migration from Central and Eastern Europe.

The actions carried out in France fall under the 2011 European framework for Roma Integration of the European Commission. However, in accordance with the Constitution, the French approach is universalistic and ethnically neutral: extreme poverty policies and precarious housing measures do not target groups based on their ethnic origins.

The French approach seeks to expand the current European framework on the issue of poverty-driven migration. Solutions must involve both host countries and countries of origin, and work within the existing European framework to include integration programmes and transnational cooperation.

The Dihal is the national contact point for Roma before the European Commission and the Council of Europe, and upholds this mission within European institutions and with its European partners.

## «SLUM CLEARANCE» DEPARTMENT

The "Slum clearance" department is a department of the Dihal placed under the direction of :

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