

# Measures taken by the state to promote the social integration of Roma living in Hungary

Budapest, 2000

Individual chapters were compiled with the assistance of:

Dr. Gabriella Varjú, vice-president for Roma Affairs of the Office for National and Ethnic Minorities, and staff of the Department for Roma Affairs, Mrs. Edit Rauh Hornung, Mrs. Mária Kovács, Dr. Anikó Lázók, Mrs Emoke Asztalos Zsák, Mrs. Éva Szabó and Péter Kovács, Ph.D.,dr.habil, university professor Miskolc University Faculty of Law and Péter Pázmány Catholic University Faculty of Law

Editor: Dr. Toso Doncsev

President of the Office for National and Ethnic Minorities

1133 Budapest, Pozsonyi út 56.

E-mail: [nekh.titkarsag@mail.datanet.hu](mailto:nekh.titkarsag@mail.datanet.hu)

website: <http://www.meh.hu/nekh>

Publisher's reader:

Antal Heizer

Vice-president of the Office for National and Ethnic Minorities

Published by:

Dr. Rudolf Joó

Deputy state secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

## **CONTENTS**

Page

<b>Preface.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Foreword.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>I. Summary.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>II. Historical background.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>III. Social indicators.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>IV. Measures serving to protect and support the national and ethnic minorities living in Hungary.....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>V. State measures promoting the social integration of the Roma population.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>VI. Model programmes.....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Supplement 1: Regulations related to the minorities.....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Supplement 2: List of regulations in force forbidding discrimination.....</b>	<b>57</b>

## ***PREFACE***

We present this publication with the aim of providing a statistically accurate, realistic overview of the situation of the Roma in Hungary, as well as details of all the efforts made by the government and the Hungarian state to promote the social integration of the Roma.

Increasing international attention is focused on the situation of the Roma. Foreign fora and international decision-making organizations are continually engaged in analysing the living conditions of the Roma in general, and the Roma living in Hungary in particular.

It is common knowledge that the protection of minority rights features as one of the Copenhagen criteria, which define the fundamental conditions for Hungary's membership of the European Union. According to the report released by the European Commission in 1997, Hungary fulfils the Copenhagen criteria, but it must take further steps and continue to make strenuous efforts to improve the position of the Roma community. This view was reinforced in both the 1998 annual report and, most recently, in the 1999 annual report published by the Commission.

Thus, improving the living conditions of the Roma and promoting their social integration is a critical task in the immediate future.

The situation of the Roma communities, the largest minority living in Hungary, differs in many respects from that of the other minorities in our country. In the case of the Roma, social, employment, vocational training and educational problems are apparent to a greater extent. The social integration of the Roma is a question of both minority policy and social policy. In order to find a solution to this complex problem,

a medium-term package of measures was passed by the government which took office in 1998, following on from steps taken since the early 90s, thereby creating the framework for the improvement of the living conditions and social position of the Roma. This all-embracing, complex package of measures is concretized within the government's annual action plans, these latter, naturally, being harmonized with the scientifically based long-term minority and social policy strategy currently being worked on.

I am convinced that the social integration of the Roma and the improvement of their living conditions are in the national interest and are tasks for the society as a whole. These tasks can be successfully coped with only through continuous and consistent efforts.

*Dr. János Martonyi*

Minister for Foreign Affairs

## FOREWORD

*This publication has been compiled with the assistance of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Hungary. Through it the reader will be able to gain an insight into the problems, history, demographic characteristics and features of the culture of the Roma living in Hungary, as well as government measures taken in order to improve the living conditions and social situation of the Roma.*

*The Government of the Republic of Hungary endeavours to establish a partnership with representatives of the minorities – among them the Roma – and values their cultural diversity that has roots stretching back several hundred years in the country. It recognises that the conscious nurturing of the cultures of the minorities is not only an international obligation but is actually in the long-term national interest as well.*

*One important task of the Office for National and Ethnic Minorities - as the responsible governmental body - is the preparation of government measures and decisions that can assist in improving the living conditions of the Roma in Hungary, coordination in ensuring their implementation, and establishing minority policy.*

*Such conditions have to be established in Hungary whereby all citizens, and thus the minorities too, are ready and willing to live in our country. Just as with other disadvantaged social groups, the creation of appropriate living conditions in the case of the Roma too is also in the interest and a task of society as a whole. In order to realize this goal the government, local self-governments, the National Roma Self-government, the local Roma minority self-governments, and Roma civil organizations or organizations which wish to assist them have to work together.*

*Integration demands the establishment of a social environment in which the guarantee of the implementation of fundamental civil rights is a basic principle and in the common interest. Within this, particular attention must be directed to those areas where prejudice against the Roma community is manifestly apparent. In order to reduce prejudice and end the discrimination that stems from this, the programmes must involve not only the Roma population, but society as a whole.*

*This document briefly summarizes the position of the Roma living in Hungary, and outlines the endeavours that are being made to bring the majority and minority into harmonic coexistence, to establish and strengthen a minority-friendly environment in our society.*

*Our papers on the situation of the Roma have attracted considerable international interest. I would like to draw your attention to the Office for National and Ethnic Minorities' Internet homepage in Hungarian and English (<http://www.meh.hu/nekh>) where you can find further information, and where we would be pleased to receive your comments and opinions of our publications.*

**Dr. Toso  
Doncsev**

President of the Office for National and Ethnic Minorities

## I.

### **SUMMARY**

This study endeavours to present a relatively comprehensive picture of the actual situation of the Roma living in Hungary, the general and specific legal institutions guaranteeing their interests, their national and international-type institutions ensuring their legal protection, and those initiatives and tendering structures through which the Roma may attain social integration and genuine equality of opportunity. In Hungary, all these goals are being built on the activities and cooperation of the government, local self-governments, civil society and those most concerned, the Roma communities and their organizations.

In its report on Hungary, the Commission of the European Union – besides establishing that Hungary unequivocally meets the so-called Copenhagen political criteria for accession – notes that our state has to take further steps in order to ensure genuine equality of opportunity for the Roma. Hungary concurs with this assessment, and indeed has referred itself to this task in a questionnaire completed at the time of the start of the accession process, while every Hungarian government programme since the change of regime has placed particular emphasis on efforts to ensure equality of opportunity for the Roma.

At the same time it is clear that we are not speaking simply of an isolated Hungarian problem. Rather, this is a complex social-legal-economic problem apparent in several other countries of Europe. It is without question a serious difficulty afflicting Central and Eastern Europe; here the Roma have in fact fallen victim to the economic transformation which followed in the wake of the change of regime, the crisis caused by redundancies, unemployment, the demand for more efficient school training competitive with the European industrial structure, and reductions in social commitments which were crippling state budgets and built on a different state philosophy.

In this part of the world numerous international organisations devote considerable attention to the difficulties of the Roma, with the aim of promoting a European-style solution - both in the geographic and in the conceptual sense - to these problems. Aside from the European Union it is important to highlight the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe and above all Mr. Max Van der Stoep, High Commissioner on National Minorities of the OSCE, the Council of Europe and relevant decisions passed by its Committee of Ministers and Parliamentary Assembly, the monitoring systems detailed in agreements – namely the Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages – drafted under the aegis of this organisation supervising the observance of the rule of law, as well as the activities of the different inter-governmental special committees (for example, the MG-S-Rom looking into Roma affairs), the activities of Roma affairs coordination group and bodies made up of independent specialists such as the ECRI (European Commission against Racism and Intolerance).

The different decrees, proposals, action programmes and other documents of these bodies are closely studied by Hungary, and are then built into programmes functioning in the governmental sphere, in social life and civil society. The different international institutions have acknowledged the progress made so far, but urge continued firm and consistent efforts.

However, Hungary seeks to bring about a gradual improvement in the situation of the Roma first and foremost because it is in its own interest to do so. The rule of law, social cohesion, and a qualification structure providing balanced job opportunities all demand a gradual diminution of the disadvantages burdening the Roma as much as the perspectives of long-term balanced industrial-social development also require.

This publication presents the role of the Roma in social and economic life, as well as those facts which educational, labour and employment policy and social policy planners have to take into consideration in their work. Among these, the question of

the inexactitude of available data is of particularly importance; according to current Hungarian legislation it is solely up to the individual to decide whether he/she belongs to a minority, ethnic group. Taking this into consideration, estimates employed by the government are considerably higher than the census classifications based on “self-disclosure”, in this way guaranteeing more substantial budgetary resources than could be concluded just by studying the census data.

The following two factors can be considered of defining significance in the educational policy affecting the Roma. Firstly, the overwhelming majority of Roma living in Hungary speak Hungarian only. Sociological research conducted in 1971 and then in 1993 shows that the proportion of Romany speakers fell from 21.2% to 4.4%, and the proportion of Beash speakers from 7.6% to 5.5% between the two surveys. Educational opportunities provided for the Roma create the conditions for the teaching of the culture of the Roma and elements of self-awareness primarily in the Hungarian language. However, education in the Romany or Beash languages must be provided if there is demand for such.

Secondly, and of equal importance, is the fact that at present 77% of Roma children complete primary school, but few go on to secondary school in order to prepare them for higher educational studies. Thus today, professional training within the Roma population as a whole means at best a vocational qualification taken without a school-leaving certificate (13%), and within the community the 0.5% holding a higher educational diploma is way below the national average. In today’s job market these factors signal a particularly dire situation.

One can characterise the health and accommodation situation of the Roma as unfavourable. Both matters are closely tied to the dearth of financial resources. Furthermore, a significant proportion of the Roma community lives in disadvantaged or impoverished settlements in Hungary where the local self-governments themselves also struggle with tight budgets, meaning that local building grants are particularly limited. In addition, it is a recognized fact that the birth rate among the Roma is significantly higher than the rest of the population while on the other hand their unemployment rates exceed – and to a considerable degree – that observable elsewhere. Thus for a considerable part of the community the various family supplements and local social allowances represent the single stable source of income for family maintenance.

So how can this situation be changed?

The Constitution of the Republic of Hungary and numerous acts of Parliament expressly outlaw the practice of discrimination, and not only are state organs obliged to respect this constitutional command, but natural persons and legal entities, that is first and foremost the various employers, too.

On the basis of the Act on the Rights of the Minorities, the Roma too may elect their own local minority self-governments and National Roma Self-government, bodies designed to realize the principles of minority autonomy. These bodies wield different consultative, self-governmental and institutional management powers at local and national level, and operate in partnership with the appropriate public authorities. Around a half of all local minorities self-governments were established by the Roma.

Beside the fact that these bodies participate in the decision-making process in questions concerning the Roma, of equal significance is the fact that they form a prepared and responsible local and national Roma public-political corps willing to undertake a role in public life. They also stand as examples to the other members of their own communities, proof of the power of culture, training and self-training in creating equal opportunity. Other residents of the settlements and members of the local public administration are aware of the importance of harmonizing interests and of solidarity.

The Parliamentary Commissioner for national and ethnic minorities disposes of the rights of ombudsman for all the minorities living in Hungary as listed in the minorities act, and proceeds on his/her own initiative or on the basis of complaints brought to his/her attention. Until now the lion's share of the activities of the parliamentary commissioner involved examining complaints related to alleged injustices perpetrated against the Roma. In central public administration, the Office for National and Ethnic Minorities (under the supervision of the minister of justice) drafts the government's minority policy decisions and harmonises the operation of the other state administrative bodies. One of the vice-chairs of the Office also has special responsibility for Roma affairs. The Inter-ministerial Committee on Roma Affairs operating under the chair of the minister of justice, with the role of vice-chair filled by the president of the Office for National and Ethnic Minorities, coordinates the work and programmes of the ministries and organizations with a national sphere of authority aimed at promoting the social integration of the Roma.

The responsibility of the state also manifests itself in making financial support available for the self-organization of the minorities, and for their educational and cultural activities and operation. In particular, it is worth highlighting the Public Foundation for National and Ethnic Minorities in Hungary, the Public Foundation for Roma in Hungary, and the Gandhi Public Foundation, all of which make available financial support for the realisation of Roma cultural, educational, employment etc. programmes. Representatives of the Roma community are themselves also responsible for deciding on the allocation of available resources.

The government drafted its medium-term programme – designed to improve the living conditions of the Roma – with the active input of the National Roma Self-government. The aim of the medium-term measures is to reduce social inequalities of opportunity and prejudice, halt discrimination, and to strengthen the identity and cultural activities of the Roma communities. The programme, which clearly defines the deadlines and responsible ministries, was drawn up in coordination with the National Roma Self-government. Tasks devolved to the individual ministries are concretized in annual action programmes.

As regards Roma minority education, the medium-term programme places stress on the development of the content of primary level education, and stemming the drop-out rate in secondary and higher education, as well as promoting attainment of final certificates and nurturing talent. Besides arranging pre-school schooling and organizing various forms of halls of residence adjacent to schools, the programme also considers the formation – where demand for such is apparent on the part of the Roma minority – of new educational centres. Particular attention is paid to the introduction of various special educational forms: here the programme endeavours to

reduce the deficiencies but in such a way as to avoid educational segregation. All these schemes are complemented by a variety of scholarships, school fee assistance and other supports available at the more advanced educational levels.

Both the government and the National Roma Self-government consider one of their most important objectives the strengthening of Roma culture and recognition of their values. Besides the National Roma Information Centre, the multi-functional Roma minority community houses operating in some 30 settlements have proved themselves to be a successful initiative. They have also been found to promote social integration at a local level. Several Roma or Romany-language papers are published with the support of the Public Foundation for the National and Ethnic Minorities in Hungary. Hungarian Radio and Hungarian Television broadcast Roma programmes on a weekly basis.

When looking at employment policy, besides the different job creation, public works, training-retraining and support schemes it is worth highlighting the programmes managed by the Public Foundation for Roma in Hungary. The aim of these programmes is multifold: to stimulate and support agricultural and local entrepreneurial initiatives that serve to provide the Roma with a living, as well as plans and programmes which help the Roma access land and in the process promote the achievement of civic status of the Roma; to promote and support the employment of Roma and the launching of small enterprises with a structured business plan; to continue self-supporting household plot-type farming activities in agriculture and animal husbandry. The different support systems have thus provided several thousand Roma families with the opportunity to conduct agricultural activities, thereby reducing their sense of despair and improving their integration into the local community.

In the field of regional development, programmes designed to create jobs and improve living conditions feature in the abovementioned governmental task plan, in harmony with the system established within the European Union, in the form of medium-term regional programmes. Roma representatives participate in the work of the Regional Councils and operative institutes.

Social and health programmes have been drafted to improve the state of health of the Roma inhabitants, to extend the compass of preventative screening-health care services, and, in the interest of ending discriminatory practices in the provision of health services, the programmes aim to improve the relationship between the health care services and the concerned inhabitants.

The National Roma Self-government has itself drafted a housing construction trial programme. Based on these experiences, a comprehensive, special programme looking at problems concerning flat-acquisition and accommodation will be prepared.

In the course of strengthening social integration and acceptance, and due to the presence of complaints launched by Roma, it is critical that attention be directed to the training and post-graduate training of police officers – educational material has been prepared by the Ministry of the Interior – as well as training courses for Roma representatives working within the local self-government structure, and the extension of their professional knowledge. In order to shape a realistic view of the Roma in



society as a whole, strategic plans are being drafted with the active input of professionals from the written and electronic media and Roma representatives.

This brief overview is only capable of touching on the most important relevant facts, institutions and measures; you will find that our publication, through analyses, the presentation of background statistics and budgets, covers each of the issues in depth.

Finally, at the end of the publication we present details of a few public foundations, local and national initiatives. The supplements list legal regulations concerning the Roma which guarantee their rights, are related to their social and other relations, or which serve their institutions and the operation of the outlined programmes.

## II.

### Historical background

Current research indicates that large numbers of Roma, fleeing the spread of Islam (700-1000), left north-west India in several waves from the 10<sup>th</sup> century on. It is possible to trace this movement from records written in a language similar to Sanskrit. After departing their original homeland they spent a long period in Persia, and appear in the work "Sáhnáme – The Book of Kings", by Persian poet Firdausi (940-1025).

The very first news of the arrival of the Roma in Europe dates from some time around 1100, in a report by a monk on Mount Athos who mentions a group called the *Atsingani*. This name spread to several other countries, and by the time they left Greece they were called Gypsy. On the basis of research conducted so far, they travelled to the Balkans by two routes, via Persia and Armenia, and from the Middle East and Lesser Egypt (Cyprus). It is presumed that the names 'Gypsy' in English and 'Gitanos' in Spanish originate from the hill of Gyppe close to the town of Medon in Lesser Egypt.

Roma did not arrive in Hungary in one single wave; rather their settlement here took place over several centuries. Some researchers believe that their first appearance coincided with the rule of the House of Árpád. It is supposed that in the course of military campaigns to the Holy Land undertaken by Andrew II (1205-1235), several Roma companies joined the returning Hungarian troops in 1218. We can also deduce the time of their appearance in Hungary from conclusions drawn after an examination of the names of settlements; around this time several settlements named Cigány, Cigánd (in Hungarian, "Cigány" = Roma or Gypsy) or similar e.g. Egyházás–Czigány, took their name from the arriving settlers.

A larger influx of Roma into Hungary can be dated to around the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. In comparison with other countries, the feudal situation in Hungary provided relatively better and secure circumstances for the Roma. Several monarchs and lords (e.g. Sigismund, Holy Roman Emperor 1410-1437, and king of Hungary 1387-

1437) issued their caravans with letters of safe conduct in 1417, guaranteeing their safety while crossing the country's territory, as well as ensuring that the local authorities provided members of the caravan with work in those places where they encamped. During the 16-17<sup>th</sup> centuries these letters of safe conduct guaranteed them free passage, they were not forced to integrate, nor were they forbidden from practising their traditional culture.

During the Ottoman occupation (1526-1686) they took part in the struggle on the side of the Hungarians, primarily as makers and repairers of weapons, but their caravans which covered great distances played an important part in the transmission of news and messages between outlying castles.

Roma living in the territory of Hungary also took part in fighting during the Rákóczi war of independence (1703-1711). On the basis of an order from the prince, voivodes were named as leaders of the Roma; these voivodes were charged with collecting taxes and the Roma swore an oath of obedience to them. It was at this time that the so-called Roma instrumental music became famous. Several renowned violinists were charged to give heart to the troops of the prince. The camps also had serving Roma soldiers, blacksmiths and weapons makers.

During the 17-18<sup>th</sup> century individual groups settled, but they continued to maintain certain of their customs and traditions. The work these settled Roma typically conducted met the demands of the towns and villages. In the waning years of Ottoman rule in Hungary a new wave of so-called "Oláh Roma" arrived from Wallachia, Moldavia, among the many that came to resettle the depopulated countryside. In comparison with the partly settled and integrated "Hungarian Roma", these Oláh Roma suffered serious disadvantages. The "Roma question" was raised at several national assemblies at this time and successive Habsburg sovereigns – on the initiative of Maria Theresa (1740-1780) and then her son Joseph II (1780-1790) – drafted legislation specifically related to the Roma. Measures introduced between 1758-1783 were primarily aimed at the settlement of the migrating "travelling Roma" (by breaking up families, by forbidding the use of the folk costume, language, passports, keeping of horses, music and Roma names, and the enlistment into the imperial army of male Roma). Several decrees forbade their resettlement from Transylvania.

The Age of Reform (1830-1848) did nothing to ease these strained relations. However, in Transylvania attempts were made to resolve serious problems in the East of the country related to the Roma, but due to the passive approach of the Habsburg court these endeavours came to nothing.

The Roma once again took part on the side of the Hungarians during the 1848-49 Revolution and War of Independence. There was particular call in the Hungarian army for traditional Roma skills. Many Roma participated in the revolution 'armed' with their violins, and they were of even greater importance in the period immediately following the collapse of the War of Independence. The fame of Roma violinists spread throughout Europe and as far as America.

Thanks to the detailed population census carried out in the winter of 1893 we have a great deal of information on the situation of the Roma population living in the territory of Hungary at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Of the 274,940 Roma who appear

in the census nearly 90% carried on a completed settled way of existence. One hundred and five thousand Roma lived in Transylvania, representing 5% of the population, but in those areas predominantly settled by Romanians their proportion exceeded 10%. The single most important characteristic of national instructions affecting the Roma was that each one was supposed to be a temporary regulation, which in time would become a finalized decree. This did not happen. The counties drafted their own regulatory instructions that were drawn up primarily to safeguard public order.

The 1900s were also a time of enormous social change and transformation generating social tensions, in the course of which negative public opinion against the Roma tended if anything to strengthen, although one can discover instances of ethnic tolerance and a willingness to accept others. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century their skills (*musicians, clay-brick makers, metal smiths, trough makers, traders and intermediaries*) made them a decisive factor in the peasant-crafts strata of Hungarian society. As a consequence of mass production following in the wake of the Industrial Revolution, this traditional link was broken and became irrelevant. Among the reasons one can mention that the development of industrial production reduced demand for the work of Roma who travelled from village to village selling their handicrafts, and this led to a section of this stratum being reduced to an existence without income of any sort.

During the periods of major historical upheaval, that is during World War I, the ensuing peace treaties and loss of large swathes of territory, and then World War II, the country suffered a series of enormous shocks, and in every instance the impact was magnified in the Roma community.

As nazism came into the ascendancy between July 1944 and April 1945, documents show that several thousands of Roma were deported from Hungary to Nazi concentration camps, from where only very few returned. Between the abovementioned dates the authorities did not have exact data on the number of Roma inhabitants, and thus we can reasonably multiply several times over the estimated number of Roma deported from Hungary or executed. Six hundred thousand European Roma were murdered in Nazi concentration camps.

After 1945 the socialist system dealt with the Roma question as a problem of the stratum or a social problem. The wording of the relevant decrees denied virtually all Roma any participation in agrarian land reforms. The adult population of working age was attracted to the larger industrial and construction centres sited far from their home settlements by the possibility of finding employment, and some even commuted. Socialist industrialization and full employment ensured work for many Roma. The majority of Roma were employed in those areas of a temporary, seasonal nature offering job opportunities for those with limited skills or qualifications. According to some research studies they took the role of classical guest workers. Their low educational qualifications only gave them the opportunity of realizing limited wages and a lowly social status.

The socialist Hungarian economy drew close to bankruptcy during the 80s, major state investments and construction projects were halted, and factories started sacking workers. Despite the democratic transformation and establishment of a constitutional

state after 1989, this process speeded up and the marginalization of the Roma population only increased. The Roma have been one of the big economic losers since the change of regime.

### III.

#### Social indicators

##### *Population*

Looking at the estimated Roma populations of 38 European countries, Hungary stands in fourth place behind Romania, Bulgaria and Spain.

The Roma represent the largest minority among all the minorities living in Hungary today. In the 1990 population census, 142,683 Hungarian citizens declared they were of Roma nationality. However, the most authoritative estimates suggest that there are 400,000-600,000 Roma in Hungary, some minority organisations reckon the true figure is 700,000-800,000, and some even say the figure is close to one million. In a generally ageing and declining population the Roma population shows a significantly younger trend.

<i>Minority</i>	<b>1990 population census (persons)</b>	<b>Estimated figure (persons)**</b>
<b>Roma</b>	<b>142 683</b>	<b>400 000-600 000</b>
Germans	30 824	200 000-220 000
Slovaks	10 495	100 000-110 000
Croatians	13 570	80 000-90 000
Romanians	10 740	25 000
Poles	*	10 000
Ruthenians	*	6 000
Serbs	2 905	5 000
Slovenians	1 930	5 000
Bulgarians	*	5 000
Greeks	*	4 000-4 500
Armenians	*	3 500-10 000
Ukrainians	*	2 000

Other minorities*	19 640	
<b>Total:</b>	<b>232 751</b>	<b>845 500 – 1 092 500</b>

\* Note: combined figure for the Armenian, Greek, Bulgarian, Polish, Ukrainian and Ruthenian minorities

\*\* Source: estimates from the minority organizations

### ***Regional distribution***

The Roma live scattered across the entire country, but this distribution is not even. Roma live in some 2,000 of Hungary's 3,200 settlements. Looking at regional distribution, 120,000 – the largest single number – live in the three northern counties. Currently there are 100,000 Roma in the east of the country, and 60,000 in the Great Plain region. Ninety thousand live in the Budapest area, and 115,000 in southern Transdanubia, while there are considerably fewer Roma living in the west of the country, around 15,000 persons. More than two-thirds of the country's population lives in urban settlements while 40% of Roma live in towns and cities. Compared to figures for 1970, the proportion of Roma living in urban settlements has increased dramatically, but Roma typically continue to live in provincial communities, and within these commonly in the most backward small settlements in the country.

### ***Culture***

From language and cultural aspects the Roma population is a strongly divided minority, and thus care has to be taken to preserve the several languages and cultures. In essence, the existing tradition preserving Roma communities are the lasts such groups in Hungarian society in which folk art represents an integral part of everyday life.

Written literature is new to the Roma culture. One problem faced by the Roma culture is that it does not have a mother country, which could support, culturally and financially, the Roma living in Hungary.

There has recently been something of a renaissance in discovering the many values of Roma culture.

From a cultural and linguistic point of view the Roma living in Hungary can be divided into three main groups:

- The first and largest group is the so-called “Romungro” Hungarian Roma group that has Hungarian as its native language. In the period prior to World War II, these people supported themselves as musicians, clay-brick makers, plasterers and brick kiln workers, but primarily as agricultural day-labourers. They constitute more than 70% of all Roma in Hungary.
- The second large group comprises the Romany-speaking “Oláh Roma” who between the two world wars made a living as travelling craftsmen, bell and

cow-bell makers, copper-smiths, blacksmiths, traders, for instance as animal traders, and partly as day-labourers. They constitute approximately 20% of the Roma population.

- The third group is the Bea Roma who live primarily in the south-west of the country, speak an archaic form of the Romanian language, and who survived between the two world wars as trough makers and wood workers as well as day-labourers. They represent 10% of the population.

One can observe a gradual decline in the use of the native language among the Oláh and Bea groups.

### *Schooling*

According to sociological surveys conducted in 1971, 39% of the Roma population above the age of 14 was illiterate, while among the non-Roma population there were practically no examples of over-14s being unable to read and write. Comparable data for the year 1993 show a more favourable situation in this regard, and the proportion of those who had never been to school was down to 9%. Comparisons of the results of national, representative studies of the Roma done in 1971 and 1993 looking at the schooling levels of Roma show dramatic differences. According to the data from 1971, 26% of 25-29-year-old Roma had completed eight classes in primary school, while the 1993 study showed this proportion had increased to 77% among the identical age group.

According to Ministry of Culture and Education statistics for the 1992/93 school year – before the passage of the Act on the Protection of Personal Data and the Publicity of Data of Public Interest which declared nationality affiliation special data – 74,241 Roma students studied in primary schools. 7.12% of all pupils attending primary school were of Roma origin. Fifty-six percent of Roma students studied in village school in 1992, and 42% of these attended school where their proportion of all students in the school exceeded 22%.

Today around 91.4% of non-Roma students' go on to secondary education, while among the Roma this proportion is 33.6%. Thirteen percent of the Roma population holds a certificate from a vocational secondary training course and 1% a school-leaving certificate. However, holding a certificate in a vocational skill does not necessarily improve the chances of finding employment because the vocational structure is barely adjusted to the changes taking place in the labour market, and so there is great potential unemployment. A total of 22,000 study in the approximately 300 special vocational training schools offering classes running for two years. Twenty-five percent of these students are of Roma origin. The shortfall in higher education is similarly great: while in higher education the proportion of over-35s with a college qualification exceeds 0.5%, this proportion among the under-35s hovers around 0.3%.

Social reasons lie behind school failures and the early school dropout rate of many Roma. Experience over the past several decades shows that Roma children who regularly attend pre-school for three years are then capable of going on and

successfully completing primary school education. However, current regulations state it is obligatory for a child to attend pre-school for just one year in Hungary. Furthermore, free pre-school and primary school instruction-education does not at the same time mean free school books, school equipment, clothes or meals.

***Situation on the labour market***

Employment studies conducted during the 1970s looking at the proportion of active to non-active persons show a similar situation among the Roma and non-Roma population. In 1989, 60-80% of male Roma were employed, and 35-40% of female Roma held jobs. Since the social and economic transformation they have been squeezed out of the labour market at a speed and to a level the like of which has never been seen before. In short, the Roma have lost their previously established, low level bases for making a living. In the wake of the change of regime more than half (72%) of the Roma population previously employed and capable of working have lost their jobs.

Employment among the Roma and non-Roma population during the 1970s

	<b>Total population</b>	<b>Roma</b>
Active	87.7%	85.2%
Inactive, incapable of working, student or other dependant	12.3%	14.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

The active and non-active proportions in 1993

	<b>Non-Roma</b>	<b>Roma</b>
Employed	54.8%	28.7%
Unemployed	9.0%	28.8%
Inactive	36.2%	42.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Kemény – Havas – Kertesi: To be a Roma... Hungarian Academy of Sciences Sociological Institute, 1993

According to studies carried out nationally, the proportion of long-term unemployed among young Roma school-leavers is more than 40% greater than that of identically qualified non-Roma of the same age who are also starting out on a career. Young

Roma just out of vocational training school are more than twice as likely to be unemployed for longer periods – indeed almost from the moment they leave school – than their non-Roma counterparts, a fact which speaks volumes about the significant restrictions the young Roma generation face in life.

### ***Housing, health***

On the basis of a national survey of the Roma in 1971, nearly two-thirds (65.1%) of households lived in isolated settlements amidst poor living conditions. And this despite the fact that the settlements and living conditions of the Roma had, compared to their earlier situation, improved thanks in part to the programme started in the 1960s and continued through until 1988 of colony demolition, and related preferential credit constructions. Today roughly 14% of Roma inhabitants live in isolated, partly re-developed colony-like surroundings with a low level of infrastructure. The payment of arrears on public utilities is not easy for many Roma families in difficult circumstances, as is keeping up with high interest charges on credit repayments for building work carried out earlier.

Data on the state of health of the Roma population show that their situation is worse than the national average. They have a far higher incidence of suffering from chronic illnesses. Many live in unhealthy, damp, dark, poorly heated, low standard accommodation, where it is difficult to maintain average hygiene standards, and where the crowded conditions increase the risk of infection. In the past a significant proportion of Roma workers worked in unhealthy work environments, carrying out heavy physical labour, and this is why a higher proportion are disabled and have been pensioned off. Infant mortality is higher, and the life span among the Roma population is 10 years shorter than the average.

### ***Discrimination***

Events of the past few years have shown that the great majority of society is not aware of the problems the Roma inhabitants face, and is not interested in improving their situation. The existence of prejudice in local society has to be reckoned on as a fact of life. This makes the social integration of the Roma population extremely difficult; in order to change their situation it is essential to expose the reasons for the rise and intensification of prejudice.

Parliament elected the Parliamentary Commissioner for the rights of national and ethnic minorities in order to protect the constitutional rights of the minorities in July 1995.

Reports drafted by the parliamentary commissioner for minority rights examining Roma affairs also refer to the existence of discrimination. In the educational system Roma students suffer discrimination deriving from segregation and the inappropriate teaching methods employed in classes. In many cases the detrimental discrimination within the school is not prejudice directed towards Roma students, but rather a lack of appropriate conditions and preparedness. This visible school practice extends from reduced value education to different levels of segregation.



The Labour Code contains sections forbidding discrimination in working conditions. This is backed up by procedural guarantees unique in the Hungarian legal system. In the event of a dispute related to the violation of prohibitions on discrimination, the law states that the responsibility and burden of proving the case falls on the employer.

A new regulation was established in 1997 designed to put a stop to discrimination in the area of employment. It imposes heavy sanctions on employers found to have discriminated against an employee. However, the regulation of enforcing the right, which can be employed in cases of illegal, discriminatory job refusals, is not appropriate because an action can be initiated only in legal disputes between parties concerning an already established job. An employee who has suffered some grievance can only initiate a court action when rights related to the individual have been infringed in some way.

The Roma also suffer from discrimination in police procedures; the number of complaints of this sort is still high, but the first signs of a more favourable trend can now be observed as a result of central measures.

#### **IV.**

### **Measures serving to protect and support the national and ethnic minorities living in Hungary**

Basically, measures to protect and support the minorities are connected to three areas: legislation, the establishment of new legislative institutions, and financial support for the minorities.

#### ***Legislation***

A key part of conducting legislative tasks is the provision of basic constitutional rights and fundamental human rights and the monitoring of their implementation. In the area of minority policy, the promulgation into law (with a 96% majority) in 1993 of Act LXXVII on the Rights of the National and Ethnic Minorities was of prime importance.

The last few years have seen new legislation introduced and several modifications to existing regulations. The 1996 amendment to Act LXXIX of 1993 on Public Education detailed regulations under which local and national minority self-governments could establish and maintain public education institutions. The public education act, in paragraphs on minority education, states that the language of education in Hungary is Hungarian and the languages of the minorities living in the country. The national and ethnic minorities have the right to receive native language education. The organization and maintenance of minority education is obligatory in every case where the parents of at least eight children or students belonging to a minority so demand. The minority act has an outstanding role to play in the further development of minority education, because it guarantees the minority self-governments rights of opinion and accord that guarantee the minorities self-determination in the area of education too. These legal areas were included in

modifications made in 1996 to the education act. National minority self-governments may also operate educational institutions, although the professional and financial conditions for this are not given in every instance.

The Decree No. 32/1997 of the Ministry of Culture and Education, on the issuance of the guidelines for the pre-school instruction and the school education of national and ethnic minorities is of fundamental importance in defining the content of minority education, in regulating native language and dual language instruction and education, and in the teaching of the minority languages, as well as tasks related to the instruction and education of the Roma minority. A compulsory element of minority education is to teach pupils about the history of the given people, their geography, culture, traditions and minority rights.

Parliament recently passed another highly significant act that affects the minorities. Act CXL of 1997 on the Protection of Cultural Goods, on Museums, Public Library Services and Public Education aims, among others, to preserve the cultural traditions of the national and ethnic minorities, to continue these traditions in a worthy manner, and to improve the personal, spiritual and economic conditions of community and individual education.

Minority points of view have also appeared in other legislation passed in the Republic of Hungary over the last few years, and modern acts have been created which are fully in line with today's requirements as regards guaranteeing the minorities' basic constitutional rights.

### *New public law institutions*

Policies supporting the minorities in Hungary have also resulted in the establishment of new public law institutions.

In line with the Constitution and Act LIX of 1993 on the Parliamentary Commissioner for civil rights, the institution of the parliamentary commissioner for the protection of national and ethnic minority rights was established. The minorities ombudsman is responsible for investigating/having investigated any kind of abuse of the rights of national or ethnic minorities that comes to his/her attention and initiating general and individual measures in order to remedy it. Citizens are able to turn to the minorities ombudsman in those cases in which, in their judgement, they have suffered injury due to the infringement of their constitutional rights as a consequence of the proceedings or measures of some authority or public service organization or their failure to take measures, as well as in those cases in which there is a danger that their constitutional rights may be violated.

At the administrative level a new institution with a national sphere of authority appeared in 1990: the Office for the National and Ethnic Minorities. The Office prepares analyses on which the government bases resolutions concerning the minorities and drafts minority policy concepts. It continuously assesses the situation of the national and ethnic minorities and the implementation of their rights. It harmonizes the implementation of tasks of the government programme related to the minorities, and it closely follows the implementation of those minority tasks and duties which belong to the state administrative bodies. It maintains continuous contact

with representatives of the minorities, and it creates the appropriate institutional frameworks for this purpose. From 1998 the vice-chair of the Office has also coordinated Roma affairs. The Minister of Justice supervises the activities of the Office.

The minority act, in creating the minority self-government system, applied a special and unique method even on an international scale. With the establishment of the minority self-government system the minorities living in Hungary received the right whereby they could legitimately integrate into the self-government system so that, during the course of conducting public affairs of local interest, the rights of the national and ethnic minorities living in the given settlement would also be upheld. These special legal institutions are dealt with in a subsection below.

### ***Financial support for the minorities***

The state provides financial support for the self-organization and activities of the minorities through a multi-channel system which splits operational and programme costs, respectively the support available to the minority self-governments and civil organizations.

Financial means from the central budget allocated for the national self-governments and public foundations appear in the budget of the Ministry of Justice, and support for the local minority self-governments in the budget of the Ministry of the Interior, while support available to minority civil organizations appears in Parliament's budget. Other resources come from the budgets of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of National Cultural Heritage. Support allocated to the minority self-governments has increased. The national self-governments received HUF 306 million in 1997, HUF 398 million in 1998, HUF 506 million in 1999 and HUF 546 million in 2000. Local minority self-government support from the state budget ran to HUF 300 million in 1997, HUF 350 million in 1998, HUF 730 million in 1999 and HUF 803 million in 2000.

The state provides for the free use of headquarters for the national self-governments, while the minority act guarantees property allocation.

The single largest amount of specified minority-targeted budgetary support goes on supporting education for the minorities.

In Hungary the prevailing budget provides supplementary state contributions within the framework of normative financing for those settlement self-governments which maintain institutions conducting minority instruction and education programmes. The budget law for 1999 provided a total of HUF 4.6 billion for the pre-school instruction, school education and support for the residential halls of pupils and students belonging to the national and ethnic minorities.

The following public foundations are further important institutions of the budgetary minority finance support system: the Public Foundation for National and Ethnic Minorities in Hungary, the Public Foundation for Roma in Hungary, and the Gandhi Public Foundation. With the establishment of public foundations the government has not only involved representatives of minorities in the decision-making process (the

majority of boards of trustees are formed from members of the concerned minority), but it has also created the opportunity to realize task-financing with an eye to the different situations and demands of the minority communities.

## V.

### **State measures promoting the social integration of the Roma population**

The Constitution of the Republic of Hungary states that the national and ethnic minorities living in Hungary, and thus the Roma minority too, “share in the power of the people and constitute part of the state”. The Constitution guarantees the minorities the right to nurture their own cultures, the use of their native languages, education in their native languages, the right to use their names in their own languages, and collective participation in public life.

The Roma living in Hungary are Hungarian citizens, the situation of the Roma is not aggravated by unsettled citizenship relations, and in the wake of state measures directed at the creation of equality of rights and equal opportunities, the system of legal regulation ensures the rights of all citizens, and within this the rights of minorities, without distinction. The Government constantly strives to promote the full practical implementation of these rights, and to this end to establish a minority-friendly social environment. Its aim is to end all forms of discrimination and exclusion. It takes firm steps against perpetrators committing acts injurious to the minorities, whether individuals or communities. It provides priority status and development for areas of key importance – and within this particular stress is placed on public education, vocational training, higher education and employment – which are defining from the point of view of the social integration of the Roma. Particular emphasis is given to the social, health and employment rehabilitation of those groups that have dropped onto the peripheries of society or experience long-term unemployment.

#### ***Minority self-government system***

Act LXXVII of 1993 on the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities ensures – in a manner unique in European practice - the 13 minorities that are native to Hungary individual and collective minority rights, the right to personal autonomy and the right to establish self-government bodies. The act gives the minorities the right to form local and national self-governments. The minority self-government is a completely new legal entity, the latest element of the Hungarian public law system.

As far as the minority self-governments are concerned, the achievement of cultural autonomy means the right – enshrined in the act – to independently decide in their own sphere of authority on the establishment, take-over and maintenance of institutions, in particular in the areas of local public education, the local press and electronic media, the nurturing of traditions and in culture.

The first minority self-government elections took place in 1994-95, at the same time as self-government elections. All the electorate in the given settlement are allowed to participate in the elections, and may vote for the given minority candidate. During the first parliamentary term a total of 738 minority self-governments were formed. Of these, 477 were Roma minority self-governments, giving nearly 1,500 Roma a role in public affairs.

Total number of minority self-governments and number of Roma minority self-governments, by county, 1998

Budapest

County average

Other minorities

Roma 56%

As a result of increased public participation, Roma participation in public affairs was further strengthened and the means whereby their political interests could be realized were employed with even greater efficiency during the 1998 local minority self-government elections. The number of local minority self-governments nearly doubled in comparison to the previous term. Seven hundred and fifty-three local Roma minority self-governments operate within the 1,367 local and nine municipal minority self-governments established after the elections. This means that today nearly 3,000 Roma have a role in public affairs at local level. The results of the elections clearly prove that the citizens of Hungary have accepted and are taking full advantage of the new opportunities offered by the minority legal institutions.

The right to air an opinion and right of accord cover a very wide area. At settlement level, in the area of the creation of decrees regarding the given minority – local education, local media, nurturing of traditions and culture, and the collective right to the use of the language – the minority self-governments have rights of accord. In the case of local self-government decisions covering the education and instruction of pupils belonging to the minorities, the appointment of the management of the institution requires the agreement of the minority self-government.

The national minority self-governments – in the present instance the National Roma Self-government – elected by the local electorate represent the given minority at national level. The minorities thus have the means to voice their views on draft regulations concerning them (including county and municipal self-government decrees). In questions affecting minority groups, they can request information from the public administrative bodies can table recommendations and initiate measures. They participate in the professional monitoring of minority educational institutions (primary, secondary and higher). The national minority self-governments have rights of accord as regards the drafting of legislation related to the preservation and cherishing of the minorities' historical settlements and architectural monuments, as well as participation in the formation of the principal educational material used in minority education.

According to the programme of principles of the National Roma Self-government, the Roma people cannot be excluded from the processes of achievement of civic status in Hungary and the creation of civic welfare. It is necessary to have a democratic and realistic Roma policy, and to establish responsible cooperation with society, the government, settlement self-governments and civil social organizations.

Of the various forms of minority self-government it is worth paying particular attention to the type that is at one and the same time settlement self-government and minority self-government. Minority settlement self-government status confers the same rights as regional autonomy, opening the way to providing the most efficient means for the realization of the interests of minorities. At present there are 63 modified minority settlement self-governments in Hungary, the majority operating in German, Croatian, Slovakian, Slovenian and Romanian villages, but one settlement, Pálmajor has registered a Roma minority settlement self-government.

The finance necessary to cover operational costs of the minority self-governments derives from several sources. The annual support received from the central budget is complemented by support forthcoming from the county and local self-governments. Minority self-governments are able to use the property at their disposal, to start up their own enterprises, to receive grants and, through their projects, to obtain tender support.

Despite initial difficulties and operational hitches, the model has proved its worth and can show results. One experience (also important with an eye to the future) has been that the minority self-governments have proved to be really effective where they have built on civil self-help schemes and minority activities conducted even before the formation of the minority self-governments. Looking to the future, one important result of the structure of the self-governments is that several active, devoted personalities will become involved, sometimes returning to minority public life both at a local and national level.

It can be stated that the minority self-government system in Hungary is a functional, efficient means of interest representation, guaranteeing the minorities wide-ranging participation in local and national affairs that affect them.

The positive feedback shows that the minority self-government system has contributed to the strengthening of the national and ethnic minorities, and has been effective in promoting minority public affairs activities. Citizens belonging to the minorities now more consciously and more openly affirm their identity. The ability of the Roma to have their interests represented and realized is stronger now, and there are settlements in which – unlike former times where they were not involved in working out resolutions to problems – the opinions of the minorities are also taken into consideration and decisions affecting the Roma are reached with their agreement and input. The operation of the Roma minority self-governments promotes Roma social integration, resulting in better communications between Roma and non-Roma inhabitants of the same settlement, the establishment of cooperation, and the speeding up of the process of Roma embourgeoisement.

Sufficient time has passed since the creation of the minority self-government system for not only the benefits but also the operational problems and deficiencies to surface. One of the biggest conflicts apparent in the model is that the organizations thus formed hold a stronger legislative status than their actual room for manoeuvre and possibility to act.

Amendment to of the minority act requires a two-thirds majority of the House, and this will demand consensus between the governing parties and the opposition. For this reason Parliament's Committee for Human Rights, Minority and Religious Affairs set up an ad hoc committee to examine the amendment to the minority act in preparation for its further refinement. During the course of its work the committee – with professional input from governmental bodies, among them the Office for National and Ethnic Minorities – continuously coordinates its positions with representatives of the national minority self-governments. According to plans, the proposed modifications completed at the end of 1999 will be put before Parliament in 2000.

### *Government measures*

The problems of the social integration of the Roma are considered both as questions of minority policy and social policy. Their problems are not primarily of a language or cultural nature, but far more those of a social, employment, vocational training and educational character. The compounded accumulation of problems demands complex solutions, conceptual measures and, given the intricate nature of the issue, other type of state measures.

As from 1995, the following tasks were defined and important resolutions passed by the Government of the Republic of Hungary in an effort to improve the situation of the Roma.

Government Decision 1120/1995 (XII. 7) established the Coordination Council for Roma Affairs, in order to harmonize the conceptual activities of the ministries and bodies with national spheres of authority in matters related to the Roma.

Government Decision 1121/1995 (XII. 7) was passed to establish the Public Foundation for Roma in Hungary in order to promote the social integration of the Roma and to provide support for local subsistence programmes.

Government Decision 1125/1995 (XII.12) defined governmental measures that can be realized in the main areas of state responsibilities in order to reduce – based on an appropriate examination of the facts – the social inequality of the Roma.

Government Decision 1093/1997 (VII. 29) defined the tasks of the medium-term package of measures for the improvement of the living conditions of the Roma, employing parts of action programmes of the concerned portfolios and bodies with a national sphere of authority. The medium-term programme was completed with the input of the National Roma Self-government.

By defining new tasks, Government Resolution 1107/1997 (X. 11) on the Measures Intended to Improve the Situation of the Roma Minority clearly sets out the requirements of the package of measures.

Implementation of the action programmes concerning the Roma population is characterized by a policy of continuity. After assuming office in 1998, the new civic government immediately launched an analysis of the implementation and efficiency of the medium-term package of measures passed by the previous government in 1997, as a result of which a new package of measures was drafted and adopted by Government Decision 1047/1999 (V. 5) on the Medium-term Package of Measures to Improve the Living Standards and Social Position of the Roma Population.

In the course of defining the guiding principles for the promotion of equality of opportunity for the Roma, the government built upon the results and experiences of earlier years. On the one hand the aim of the medium-term measures is to reduce social inequalities of opportunity, prejudice and discrimination, and on the other hand to strengthen the identity and culture of the Roma communities. This programme differs in many respects from previously announced programmes which were generally of a campaign-type character. The most important differences are that tasks are brought to fruition in harmony with the National Roma Self-government and the responsible ministries and precise deadlines are also clearly defined.



Measures have been taken in order that the several portfolios concerned in the programme can carry out their tasks in harmony.

In order to promote this the government – through Government Decision 1048/1999 (V. 5) – created the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Roma Affairs which is tasked with promoting the social integration of Roma, and coordinating the related activities of the ministries and bodies with a national sphere of authority in the interest of the efficient implementation of the medium-term package of measures.

The Committee's chair is the minister of justice with supervisory responsibility for minority affairs, and the vice-chair is the chair of the Office for National and Ethnic Minorities. Its permanent members comprise the ten deputy state secretaries in the responsible ministries, and the chair of the National Roma Self-government. The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities is a permanent invited representative of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Roma Affairs. Ad hoc members include the chairs of the advisory boards of the Public Foundation for Roma in Hungary and the Gandhi Public Foundation.

The Office for National and Ethnic Minorities carries out the secretarial duties of the Committee and maintains continuous coordination with the relevant bodies. The Inter-Ministerial Committee on Roma Affairs meets four times a year.

The development and realization of solutions to the complex nature of the package of measures calls for comprehensive methods which interconnect and build on one another. In order to ensure their efficient implementation it is essential to work out pre-planned, costed, detailed programmes. The ministries prepare annual action plans in order to realize measures; these measures have to harmonize with the medium-term package of measures and the long-term strategy which is to be finalized by September 2000.

The action plans lay out the essential elements for the realization of the plan, the affected settlements and regions, the target groups, the planned costs and resources, the schedule, the organizational and institutional background, and the harmonization steps to be taken with the different partners. The expected achievements and the potential risks have been set out, the viability of the programme has been touched upon, and the method of assessment, the monitoring mechanism and the communications plan related to the realization of the concrete tasks have also been set down.

The social integration of the Roma communities living in Hungary can only be realized in the long-term, over a period of some decades. Therefore, it is vital to have a long-term strategy designed to improve the living conditions and social position of the Roma. The long-term strategy is based on the acquired and systemised experiences gained from scientific research and the implementation of governmental measures.

In the autumn of 1998 the Office for National and Ethnic Minorities – with support from the Council of Europe – commissioned 11 experts to survey scientific research related to the Roma in order to serve as a keystone in the formulation of the long-term strategy. In-depth backup came from a wide range of independent experts,

consultants, researchers, minority representatives and professionals with grassroots experience. The Office for National and Ethnic Minorities receives assistance for the work in the 1999-2000 period from an international expert commissioned by the Council of Europe.

Several conferences covering the subject have been organized: "Questions of the national and ethnic minorities living in Hungary at the turn of the Millennium" was held in the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in April 1999; "Minorities in a United Europe" was jointly organized by the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Budapest and the Office for National and Ethnic Minorities in June 1999; a jointly organized symposium by the Institution of European Comparative Minority Research was held in June 1999 in order to examine the opportunities for Roma integration; the theme of a conference sponsored by the Project on Ethnic Relations (PER) Foundation in June 1999 was 'the minority self-government system functioning in Hungary'.

### ***Content of the medium-term package of measures***

Government Decision 1047/1999 (V. 5) on the medium-term package of measures is an action programme applying a complex approach to the question. It includes tasks in education and culture, employment, agriculture, regional, social, health and housing affairs, anti-discrimination measures and mass communications. In the course of its execution it is designed to improve coordination activities promoting the implementation of the medium-term package of measures, as well as to widen the financial resources serving the implementation of the package of measures.

### ***Education***

As regards the education of the Roma minority, the most important tasks are developing the content of primary level education, and stemming the dropout rate in secondary and higher education, as well as promoting graduation opportunities and nurturing talent at these levels. To further these aims the Ministry of Education, besides maintaining educational programmes and institutions which are already functioning, also aims to develop the number of places in halls of residence required for secondary education, as well as to establish new educational centres where these are required by the Roma minority. The budget for 2000 opens the opportunity for the initiation of construction of two new halls of residence, respectively the expansion of capacity in existing halls of residence.

Another important task, taking into account a report on minority education by the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities, is the need to increase the proportion of Roma children participating in pre-school instruction, school education and instruction. In the interest of promoting the full practice of minority rights related to education, the Office for National and Ethnic

Minorities organizes training courses for representatives from the minority self-governments in order that they can take full advantage of their rights enshrined in legislation.

An amendment to the act on education offering new opportunities designed to ease the transition from pre-school to school by introducing a preparatory school year in the lower class, by allowing for individual rates of progress, and through the creation of preparatory vocational school qualification, also affects the Roma minority.

The establishment of the Office of the Ministerial Commissioner for Educational Rights within the Ministry of Education was a significant step forward in the area of education. It promotes the realization of the due educational rights of children, pupils, students, researchers, pedagogues, educationalists, parents and communities.

Another great advance in the field of education has been the introduction and development of the quality assurance system. It can have an enormous influence on promoting the operation of effective, anti-segregationist Roma minority educational programmes.

In the framework of the medium-term package of measures, Roma students attending university or college can apply for grants - offered by the Ministry of Education in tender form - to offset the cost of studies. A new form of scholarship appearing in the framework of a tender started in 1998. It provides scholarships to young Roma who are students attending an institute of higher education licensed by the state to issue diplomas and who undertake to assist educational or social institutes, public utility civil organizations, or organizations whose activities extend to helping the Roma, in activities related to their studies, in any Roma community. Grants are also available to Roma students attending university or college who, within the framework of the programme designed to nurture talented Roma, help these Roma students in their studies.

In the act on the budget for 2000 Parliament approved a HUF 100 million supplementary fund – designed to complement earlier resources – to provide young Roma with scholarships.

(Detailed information on initiatives connected to education can be found in the chapter on Model programmes.)

## ***Culture***

In culture, the aim is to develop the system of cultural institutions related to the cultural activities and group organization of the Roma, and the system of specialist institutions set up to preserve cultural values.

The National Roma Information and Cultural Centre plays a key role in this work. The institution, operated through the National Roma Self-government, started up at

the beginning of 1999 in order to establish and operate resources guaranteed by the central budget.

The first national conference of Roma writers, poets, journalists and artists was organized in the Centre, at which it discussed the most important tasks connected to Roma culture for the millennium and in years to come. In 1990 the government established the Public Foundation for the National and Ethnic Minorities in Hungary in the interest of strengthening the cultural autonomy of the domestic minorities.

In the framework of the development of institutions engaged in Roma cultural activities, the Ministry of Culture and Education, the Office for National and Ethnic Minorities, the Public Foundation for Roma in Hungary and the Ministry of Welfare supported the formation and operation of the multi-functional Roma Minority Community Houses with the aim of promoting local social integration. Currently some 30 Community Houses function across the country; each plays an important, non-segregationist role in strengthening relations between majority and minority individuals in their respective settlements. The Ministry of National Cultural Heritage has drafted a training programme for professionals working in the community houses, and this will be brought into operation during the year 2000.

From 1990 several Roma newspapers have been published, the majority with state support e.g. Phralipe (Brotherhood), Lungo Drom (Long Road), Világunk (Our World), Amaro Drom (Our Road), Kethano Drom (Common Road) and Cigányfűró (Gypsy drill, nickname of the hand-drill). Publishers are supported by the Public Foundation for National and Ethnic Minorities in Hungary.

The Roma Half-Hour minority programme is transmitted on Hungarian Radio weekly, and Roma Magazine is broadcast on Hungarian Television once a week.

### ***Employment***

Continuing the programmes started up in the employment field, the Ministry of Social and Family Affairs aims to promote central employment and training programmes of the long-term unemployed, the support system for young people just starting on a career, and the expansion of new public utility and public works programmes in the sense of the professional cooperation agreements between the county employment centres and the Roma minority self-governments and organizations. It is also necessary to stimulate entrepreneurial opportunities among the particularly disadvantaged inhabitants.

In 1999 the National Employment Public Foundation advertised a restarted programme to promote organizations dealing with the social care of unemployed people with limited qualifications, their training, and finding them employment. It also covers the realization of complex programmes helping these people adapt to the social employment market. The programmes of the National Employment Public Foundation typically involve target groups with a disadvantaged position on the

employment market, and frequently groups that state and self-government institutions find difficult to approach. The programmes always take into consideration the individual difficulties and ambitions of unemployed people.

The government established the Public Works Council in order to assist in the creation of job opportunities for the long-term unemployed and those fit and able persons who regularly claim social benefits. Public works programmes were assessed on the basis of questionnaires. The results of these assessments show that public works are virtually the only opportunity persons – the vast majority of whom are over 40 – with limited school qualifications and no entitlement to benefits have of earning an income.

The aim of the Public Foundation for Roma in Hungary is to stimulate, assist and provide all-round support for agricultural or any other initiatives that serve to provide the Roma with a living, as well as plans and programmes which help the Roma access land and in the process promote the embourgeoisement of the Roma, the employment of Roma, and the development of small enterprises. The Public Foundation supports the training and employment of strata with a disadvantaged position on the labour market.

### *Agrarian programmes*

Among the highlighted tasks of the agrarian programmes is the promotion of a reasonable livelihood for families in particularly disadvantaged positions through the continued operation and expansion of the social land programme. The transformation of participants of the social land programmes into farmers, sharecroppers and entrepreneurs is supported - with training and specialist advisory services - by the Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development, the Ministry of Social and Family Affairs, and the Public Foundation for Roma in Hungary. The social land programme is a support system which tackles provincial unemployment and other social disadvantages. Through discounted services and benefits it provides the opportunity for socially disadvantaged families who do not have, or have only limited property suitable for agricultural production, to become household small producers or animal breeders, utilizing available individual, community and local resources. Within the frame of the land programme, supported Roma families or communities produce the majority of their own needs.

A fundamental principle of the social land programme is not one of providing financial support, but rather of offering the opportunity for people to make a living from their own resources. Of the programmes' many positive aspects it is especially important to mention – over and above the economic advantages – the social benefits, which are apparent in a reduction in the number of people on social support, positive changes in how people judge the Roma, and a reduction in the feeling of despair so common among disadvantaged groups. Although traditionally the Roma have not engaged in agricultural production, still the many basic ideas of the social land programme suit the cultural traditions of the Roma, strong family and community ties, and the sharing of problems and of successes. The various support systems have given several thousand Roma families the opportunity to take up agricultural activities.

### *Regional development tasks*

Looking at regional development tasks, it is apparent that county regional development councils and the county employment centres have to work out support systems which will be able to launch complex development programmes to improve the employment conditions of those particularly disadvantaged sections of society – among them the Roma. The Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development has established a special form of support to realize the regional development programmes by complementing the self-help ratios of the regional, county and local crisis-management programmes.

The employment and regional policy institutional system affecting the living conditions of the Roma population underwent extensive change in 1996. In order to harmonize employment policy and regional policy aims, Parliament passed a decree in April 1997 defining the overall principles of regional development supports. Among the guiding principles for the use of the regional development provision, outstanding importance was attached to the need to support developments that create jobs and improve living conditions in those beneficiary regions (from a regional development point of view) where, within the population as a whole, there are significant proportions of minority groups living in circumstances that are poorer than the average.

Representatives of the National Roma Self-government also participate in the work of the National Regional Development Council. The National Roma Self-government received HUF 100 million support from the central budget of the regional development provision in order to provide a complementary support resource for local communities to create their own share necessary to gain the regional development supports.

Sixty-four tenders were received in 1998 for invitations to tender published by the National Roma Self-government, of which 38 won support.

The realization of regional and rural development in Hungary in the coming few years will, in line with the system established in the European Union, take place in the form of medium-term regional programmes. The Regional Council runs the programme, while operative institutes implement the programme. Representatives of the Roma communities also take part in the work.

### ***Social, health affairs and housing programmes***

Among the important tasks of the social, health affairs and housing programmes are the replacement of colonies or colony-like housing environments, or the development of their infrastructures and institutions. In order to improve the health of the Roma population the Ministry of Health aims to improve their ability to access services. A research programme has been launched to uncover and end discriminatory practices in the provision of health services.

Methodological material has been drafted in the interest of promoting the supply of immunization pharmaceuticals to disadvantaged sections of society, to improve their health culture, and to ensure regular attendance at screening sessions. Within the frame of pre-school health protection particular emphasis has been placed on those programmes which deal with the formation of hygienic conditions. In overall health

affairs, stress has been put on dental health programmes carried out among the Roma population.

In line with housing policy guidelines, the National Roma Self-government launched an experimental housing programme with state support to further develop the assistance programmes designed to resolve the housing problems of the disadvantaged sections of society, and within these the Roma too.

Following an assessment of the National Roma Self-government housing programme and based on the experiences thus garnered, proposals have been forwarded to resolve the housing problems faced by disadvantaged families.

### ***Programmes to combat discrimination***

Of the several programmes to combat discrimination in the medium-term package of measures the government focuses on the practical implementation of legislation outlawing discriminatory policies, as well as ensuring the totally legal conduct of the police in connection with the Roma minority. The Office for National and Ethnic Minorities and the Public Foundation for Roma in Hungary support legal aid organizations and institutions conducting conflict prevention and management tasks.

Central budgetary support in the form of invitations to tender is available for the professional further training and preparation for public activities of representatives of the local Roma minority self-governments, as well as members of Roma social organizations. The aim of programmes based on the particular demands of the locality is to strengthen cooperation between Roma minority self-governments and organizations and the settlement self-governments and public administrative organizations, and to reinforce dialogue between the different strata in public life.

There are several human rights civil organizations and charitable associations in Hungary, which undertake to represent the interests of the Roma minority. Among them it is worth mentioning the human rights and legal aid activities of Lungo Drom, the Roma Civil Rights Foundation, the Roma Parliament, the Phralipe Independent Roma Organization, and the Professional Association of Roma Leaders. The abovementioned social organizations play a major role in looking after the interests of the Roma minority, but they do not provide direct legal representation for affected parties.

The other type of civil organization protecting rights also acts as a legal representative in a direct way through its staff. The Office for the Protection of the Legal Rights of the National and Ethnic Minorities has operated successfully in Hungary for years now; in fact its legal protection activities function in the form of a legal practice.

The Ministry of the Interior has put together educational material serving as a basis for police training covering literature on the subject. This is the "Bibliography for police studies on minority affairs". This is the first publication to summarize

international and domestic anti-discrimination legislation, decisions passed by the state administration, results of research conducted in this field, the statements of the minority ombudsman, the Roma organizations and Roma civil organizations protecting legal rights, as well as a selection of publications outlining the relations between the police and the Roma communities. Police training organizations use the publication as educational material.

### ***The communications plan for the implementation of tasks***

The Office for National and Ethnic Minorities has drafted a communications plan to promote the implementation of the programme package. In the interest of improving the situation of the Roma, the medium-term package of measures not only aims to increase the equality of opportunity among the Roma but is also directed at all of society and the institutional system. The National Roma Self-government and professionals in the media are drawing up a strategic plan designed to establish a realistic view of the Roma in society as a whole.

It is essential to improve communication and cooperation between the Roma population and the different institutional systems (institutions charged with providing public educational, health, social, public administrative and other services). In this regard, programmes are being set up and launched which will do much to reduce Roma discrimination and this type of infringement of rights, as well as to change the prejudiced social environment. The construction of a local conflict prevention and management network and staff training to ease these problems is ongoing.

### ***Schedule for the implementation of the medium-term package of measures***

The minister of justice presented to the government the Inter-ministerial Committee's first report on the timetable for the implementation of the package of measures on 15 September 1999. The report establishes that the schedule for the implementation of the tasks is running according to plan. As such the portfolios have also planned the financing structures for the implementation of the tasks set for 2000. Financing for the realization of the tasks in the package of measures comes from the individual budgets of the ministries.

The portfolios have to plan for the resources for the implementation of tasks defined in the medium-term package of measures in the chapters of their own budgets.

Cash to finance improvements in the living conditions of the Roma minority can derive from three different sources. Firstly, there are resources expressly aimed at the development of, for instance, educational, cultural, employment, anti-discriminatory programmes and services for the Roma communities. Secondly, there are support forms available, which are provided for all the national and ethnic minorities.

Finally, resources also available to the Roma are included in those resources targeted at disadvantaged strata and designed for the implementation of other professional tasks; of the total sum devoted to public works programmes, some 40-50% reaches the Roma communities.



Governmental bodies presented two tenders concerning Roma affairs - aimed at extending the financial resources and strengthening the impact of planned programmes - to the European Union's 1999 PHARE Country Programme. The joint programme of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social and Family Affairs won PHARE support; the programme is designed to promote the social integration of socially disadvantaged young people, primarily Roma youth.

The Office for National and Ethnic Minorities submitted a PHARE tender under the title Roma social integration programme. It is expected to form part of the PHARE Country Programme in the year 2000.

The implementation of the medium-term package of measures is submitted to close scrutiny every year, and armed with the experiences of this examination adjustments are made to the programme where necessary.

The situation of the Roma in Hungary stands at the forefront of world attention. A report by the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance states that Hungary is aware of the problems of the Romany community, and is making strenuous efforts in several areas – housing, education, employment etc. – to remedy the situation as well as to examine and reduce forms of racial discrimination against the Romany community. Four conferences organized in Hungary between 1996 and 1998 with the support of the Council of Europe's Coordination Group for Roma Affairs looked at questions surrounding the social integration of the Roma in Hungary, the opportunities to join the decision-making mechanisms, the self-governments, and the formation of the long-term government strategy.

Chapters dealing with minority rights and minority protection in European Union documentation published in relation to Hungary's accession to the EU mention that in addition to the recognized achievements the Roma in Hungary frequently have to struggle against considerable difficulties, and their situation is afflicted by numerous problems. The documents speak favourably about the medium-term package of measures designed to improve the situation of the Roma and accepted in 1999, but the reports find that despite the improving trends apparent in the schooling of Roma there has actually been a growth in inequalities of opportunity between the Roma and non-Roma population. Hungary meets the political criteria set down in Copenhagen, but it must continue to make strenuous efforts to improve the position of the Roma community.

The government of Hungary remains fundamentally committed to continuing this consensus-style minority policy. The definition of the tasks of this minority policy can only be established with the input of the minority self-governments and minority interest-representation organizations. The government's stated purpose is the establishment of a minority-friendly environment in which citizens belonging to the minorities settled in Hungary can live freely with rights enshrined in law.

The government considers the conscious nurturing of the culture of the minorities as not only a duty deriving from international commitments it has undertaken, but also as a long-term national interest. It supports the strengthening of the identity of minority

groups, the development of the minority self-government system, and the realization of the cultural autonomy of minorities. The cultural diversity that goes back centuries in this country is at the same time a common value of all of us.

## VI.

### MODEL PROGRAMMES

(Selection)

#### 1. *Public Foundation for Roma in Hungary*

The Public Foundation for Roma in Hungary was established in order to support the preservation of the identity of the Roma living in Hungary, promote social integration, reduce Roma unemployment, increase the opportunities in education both inside and outside schools, and protect human rights, all in the interest of creating equality of opportunity. Its main areas of activity include supporting agricultural-type initiatives designed to provide a livelihood for Roma living in villages as well as the realistic business schemes of Roma small entrepreneurs, to finance such programmes which promote the advancement of the studies of Roma children, and to establish prejudice-free legislation and a minority-friendly social atmosphere.

Accounts of the Public Foundation for Roma in Hungary (HUF '000)

Aims	1996	1997	1998	1999 (planned)
Livelihood programmes	61 135	75 901	84 991	85 000
Entrepreneurial programmes	19 824	33 370	50 407	80 000
Support for studies, scholarship programme	30 000	25 000	29 290	50 000
Community house programme	0	0	19 767	15 000

Legal protection support programme	4 980	10 362	12 080	10 000
Public life training programme	0	6 720	0	23 000
Health protection programme	0	0	0	25 000
Teachers workshop programme	0	0	4 000	19 000
Public life prize	0	0	300	2 000
Crisis management programme	0	0	0	25 000
Fixed reserve	15 000	17 000	25 000	32 500
Chair budget	500	500	500	500
Monitoring expenses	2 069	4 017	4 628	5 000
Operational expenses	7 947	18 064	21 585	27 500
<b>Total</b>	<b>141 455</b>	<b>190 934</b>	<b>252 548</b>	<b>399 500</b>

Livelihood programmes

Entrepreneurial programmes

Support for studies, scholarship programme

Community house programme

Legal protection programme

Public life training programme

Health protection programme

Teachers workshop programme

Public life prize

Crisis management programme

Fixed reserve

Chair budget

Monitoring expenses

Operational expenses

1999 planned

Of the several programmes, which have received entrepreneurial support from the Public Foundation for Roma in Hungary, we have chosen to present the R.J. pallet production enterprise in Hajdúszovát. Hajdúszovát is a small settlement with 3,200 inhabitants in Hajdú-Bihar County, a few kilometres from the county town. It has no rail connection, and the bus only rarely stops there. One-fifth of the inhabitants of the village is Roma, of whom virtually 100% are unemployed. People here are prepared to accept any sort of work in order to live. R.J. responded to an invitation to tender published by the Public Foundation for Roma in Hungary as part of its entrepreneurial programme. In 1996, R.J. received a HUF 1 million interest-free loan. After the six-month grace period repayments on the loan started. Currently the concern employs 15 people in the pallet works, of whom 11 are of Roma origin. The entrepreneur considers the greatest success to be that every single one of his employees, without exception, has worked with him from the very start.

## **2. *Public Foundation for National and Ethnic Minorities in Hungary***

The President of the Office for National and Ethnic Minorities also acts as the chair of the trustees of the Public Foundation. The government provided the Foundation with HUF 395 million in 1997, HUF 474 million in 1998, and HUF 530 million in 1999 in order for it to realize its objectives. The Public Foundation for National and Ethnic Minorities in Hungary provides the single largest amount for the cultural programmes of the national and ethnic minorities. Its operation is required because of the demands and the political and social significance of the state public task. Representatives from all 13 minorities in Hungary take part in the work of the board of trustees.

*Support provided by the Public Foundation for National and Ethnic Minorities in Hungary, according to aim*

<b>Tender topics</b>	<b>Support (HUF)</b>		
	<b>1998.</b>	<b>1999.</b>	<b>1999 Roma tenders</b>
Publications, distribution, translations	19 463 890	27 040 300	7 128 400
Theatre	4 156 420	6 999 740	2 238 000
Library, public collection, monuments	11 560 363	9 090 467	1 912 917
Local media	15 120 198	8 557 150	1 444 900
Child and youth programmes	38 353 536	41 000 000	17 257 090
Religious life	5 564 240	6 000 000	861 000
Training of professionals for public life	7 530 106	10 000 000	3 347 000
Tradition-preserving and community events	63 869 708	70 854 893	16 969 323
Publication of annuals, calendars	6 300 000	7 422 000	
Scientific events, research		10 684 000	4 085.000
Research, art scholarships	14 833 000	15 000 000	6 000 000
Invitations to tender	3 000 000		
Scholarships	76 000 000	79 000 000	39 000 000
Nationally distributed press	177 500 000	206 642 850	33 385 000
Chair budget	3 000 000	3 000 000	1 205 200
<b>Total</b>	<b>446 251 461</b>	<b>498 620 877</b>	<b>134 833 830</b>

In 1999 the amount of support directed to Roma tenders in the frame of the target tender system assisting the cultural programmes of the national and ethnic minorities was HUF 55.2 million, which represents 28% of the total sum of supports given out.

Among the programmes of the Public Foundation, support was provided in the form of study scholarships for young people belonging to the national or ethnic minorities studying in intermediate and higher education institutes. In the 1998/99 school year, 540 secondary and 103 college students of Roma origin received scholarships of HUF 50,000 and HUF 100,000 respectively.

According to information we received as we went to press, 562 young Roma secondary school students and 111 higher education students had received scholarship awards for the 1999/2000 school year.

**DETAILED RESULTS OF THE SCHOLARSHIP TENDERS FOR THE  
1998/99 SCHOOL YEAR\***

According to minority and based on applications which met the prescribed conditions

MINORITY	Participants in SECONDARY EDUCATION		Participants in HIGHER EDUCATION	
	Winning tenders	support (HUF/school year)	Winning tenders	support (HUF/school year)
BULGARIAN	-		5	500 000
<b>ROMA</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>27 000 000</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>10 300 000</b>
GREEK	-	-	3	300 000
CROATIAN	26	1 300 000	27	2 700 000
POLISH	1	50 000	4	400 000
GERMAN	146	7 300 000	177	17 700 000
ARMENIAN	-	-	2	200 000
ROMANIAN	23	1 150 000	18	1 800 000
RUTHENIAN	-	-	3	300 000
SERB	3	150 000	11	1 100 000

SLOVAK	18	900 000	29	2 900 000
SLOVENE	3	150 000	3	300 000
UKRAINIAN	-	-	<b>3</b>	300 000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>760</b>	<b>38 000 000</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>38 800 000</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>1,148 PERSONS RECEIVED SUPPORT IN THE</b>			

	<b>1998/99 SCHOOL YEAR</b>  <b>AMOUNTING TO HUF 76,000,000*</b>
--	---

\* Figures reflect the position as at the end of December 1998.

### 3. *The Gandhi Public Foundation*

The aim of the Gandhi Public Foundation (established: 1995) is, through the foundation and maintenance of pre-schools, primary and secondary schools, to promote the training of open-minded young Roma who are responsive to the sciences and are attached to their people and native language. The Public Foundation operates the exemplary Gandhi High School and Halls of Residence in Pécs, which currently has 183 students.

The high school's first preparatory term was launched in 1994. The school functions as a six-class high school. 95% of the students are Roma, and thus the school receives supplementary minority funding from the state budget. The Gandhi High School aims to become multicultural educational institution. It wants to bring up committed intellectuals interested in Roma affairs. Since in the school's specified catchment area the majority of residents speak the Beash language, Beash and Romany languages and cultures are taught in the school, and English and German as foreign languages.

The 1995 Roma Educational Development Programme was aimed at establishing a regional network to nurture talented Roma. The Gandhi Public Foundation – with the input of professionals – drafted its own educational concept for the Gandhi High School.

### 4. *Collegium Martineum – Mánfa*

While the Gandhi Halls of Residence are integrally linked to the Gandhi High School, there are halls of residence, which accommodate young Roma attending different secondary schools. Such an establishment is the Collegium Martineum, founded in the summer of 1996 by the Alsószentmárton Roman Catholic Congregation, the Witten St. Marthin Charity, the Pécs Diocese Charity, the Amrita Student Circle and three private individuals in order to look after and provide an opportunity for disadvantaged children to pursue studies at the better secondary schools, and then later at universities or colleges. From September 1998, 30 young people live in the halls of residence in 15-person, family-like small communities. It is planned that eventually the establishment will have 60 students. The Collegium Martineum has opened the opportunity for many children to continue their studies. It assists first and foremost those children who would like to continue their studies in Pécs. Students attending the Collegium study in different high schools depending on their abilities. One of the most important pedagogical tools is that third- and fourth-class (17-18-year-old) students can tell seventh- and eighth-class (13-

14-year-old) primary school children what opportunities are open to those who continue their studies.

5. *Szent Márton Pre-school – Alsószentmárton*

The inhabitants of Alsószentmárton (population: 1,050) comprise a homogeneous Beash Roma community. Unemployment stands at 80%, and the only source of earning a living is in agriculture. The parish priest of the settlement acts as the informal leader of the Beash Roma community. On his initiative the Szent Márton Pre-school, maintained by the Pécs Diocesan Authority, opened its doors to children in September 1998. The school implements a Catholic, Roma nationality pedagogical programme, which is person-centric and builds on the values of Roma families. The 74 children attending the pre-school study in two languages (Hungarian and Beash) which are continually used in everyday life. The head of the institution and the majority of the staff in the pre-school speak these two languages. The aim of the pedagogical programme is to strengthen the children's sense of identity and to prepare them for primary school.

6. *“Kedves House” – Nyírtelek*

Another type of residential hall is that which serves to provide accommodation for pupils attending primary schools. The “Kedves House” next to the Nyírtelek Primary School is just such a tried and tested model. The local self-government maintains the school, but since the support thus available cannot cover all the institution's costs, the school resorts to finance available through tenders. It is an eight-class primary school with both Roma and non-Roma pupils. Non-Roma pupils outnumber the Roma pupils. The school catchment area is one of eastern Hungary's most disadvantaged regions. The institution brings up the children in a spirit of tolerance and coexistence with the aim of seeing ever more of its children win places in secondary education. The halls of residence are available to those children who come from severely disadvantaged backgrounds and who through their studies show particular promise. The school has a special Roma programme whereby children are brought up to a unified level in a separate class for the first two years, and then from the third year their studies are integrated with the other children.

7. *Szolnok Roma Opportunity Alternative Foundation Vocational School*

The establishment of the Szolnok Roma Opportunity Alternative Foundation Vocational School is unique of its kind and to date has no other example. This was the first time that the Roma took their future into their own hands and established an educational institution, which provides an opportunity not only for Roma but also for non-Roma young people in similarly difficult circumstances. At the end of 1996 a group of specialists brought together with the assistance of the National Roma Self-government started to formulate the concept of establishing a school which would offer an alternative to those children who drop out of school but are still in the age when they have to



attend school. It provides the opportunity for Roma and non-Roma young people who have dropped out of secondary school training to improve their opportunities of finding work and making a livelihood through vocational skill training.

#### 8. *Nagykanizsa “Bogdán János” Roma Community House*

The Community House was established on the initiative of the Nagykanizsa County Town Roma Self-government in 1997. Its purpose is to provide the Roma and non-Roma inhabitants of the area with a variety of different services. The activities of this multifunctional institute range from providing information on cultural, educational, employment and health matters, on home nursing programmes, and the provision of legal and other advice.

The important charitable influence the Community House exerts extends not only throughout the local Roma community, but actually far beyond this to the wider community. It works to reduce prejudices, cultivate an understanding of the values of Roma culture, and its programmes have led to a variety of cooperative contacts. The Community House is located in the town centre, which does much to ensure that the widest possible circle of inhabitants are able to take advantage of its several services and join programmes run by it. Visitors will find a book and document library, temporary and permanent art exhibitions, youth and pensioner programmes. Roma unemployed school-leavers can join carpentry vocational training courses organized and realized within the frame of a retraining programme operated in cooperation with the County Employment Centre.

Weekend classes in folk identity (organized in cooperation with the town's primary schools) were introduced at the day-care centre. Roma specialists teach in this educational programme.

On the initiative of the town's Roma leaders a memorial to Roma victims of the Holocaust was erected in Nagykanizsa, the first such memorial. Every 2 August since 1996, the dead is commemorated at the memorial according to Roma custom, with a vigil and candles.

#### 9. *Tatabánya Lime Works employment policy programme*

On the basis of a decision of the Public Works Council, the Office for National and Ethnic Minorities provided a non-refundable loan of HUF 67,650,000 to launch an experimental public works programme for 100 disadvantaged long-term unemployed people at the Tatabánya Lime Works. The programme (which ran from 1 December 1996 to 30 December 1997) was of particular value as a model since besides providing those included in the programme with a wage it also promoted the formation of a new life-strategy, and furthermore it established new forms of partner relations between social and educational institutions and participants of the public works programme.

#### 10. *Agrarian programme*

The small region social land programme was launched as an experimental model in those small regions recommended by the National Roma Self-government. As a small region model case the self-governments of Bogádmindszent, Gyöngyfa, Hegyszentmárton, Kisasszonyfa, Magyarmecske, Magyartelek and Ózdfalu joined the Ministry of Welfare's social land programme running in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture. The programme involved 150 families.

Ninety percent of the Roma inhabitants capable of working in the village of Rimóc (population: 2,000) were unemployed during the early 90s. The local Roma self-government established in 1994 started up a social land programme involving 20 families.

The settlement self-government placed at their disposal free of charge the use for agricultural purposes of a 6-hectare plot. The settlement self-government also provided for the seed and mechanical work in the first year. The families farm the land independently, deciding for themselves what and how much they produce. Most find that the produce is sufficient to satisfy their personal consumption needs, but there are some who have started producing for the market. The programme which has been running for several years is now self-sustaining, and the basic production costs are covered from own resources.

#### **11. *Regional development model programme***

In response to an invitation to tender issued by the Public Works Council for 1998, the Nyíregyháza County Town won support for public works programmes aimed at 'replacing colony or colony-like housing environments and/or developing the infrastructure'. The support was put into the town's Huszár estate where 10 flats were completely renovated, and several other flats were partially renewed. The Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County Association of Self-governments and the Nyíregyháza Town Roma Self-government co-operated in the realization of the programme. Unemployed Roma living in the Huszár estate carried out the renovation as public workers.

#### **12. *Professional Union of Roma Leaders***

The Professional Union of Roma Leaders was formed in Debrecen in 1995, with the aim of organizing training for the Roma population resident in the region, and providing interest-protection and legal representation and services for conflict and crisis resolution programmes. Their training courses cover the public and professional work of the local Roma self-governments and civil organizations. An employment group – which, under the management of qualified employment organizers, has arranged training courses for young Roma – was established with the cooperation of the County Regional Labour Workforce Development Centre.

During the course of the work, assistance is offered as to how to go about launching agricultural production activities to help maintain a livelihood, how to research potential resources, and how to apply to invitations to tender related to these resources.

As part of the cultural and educational programmes, extra-curricula classes are organized to help nurture talent and develop studies for children and young students. Those studying in these classes undergo continuous assessment, at the end of the school year attention is focussed on ensuring these students spend their leisure time usefully, to which end camps are organized. The Union also operates the Roma Pedagogical Advisory Service. With the involvement of a media trainee in the organization, the Union takes part in the editing of regional radio programmes and the publishing of its own newspaper called ROMINFO. In the frame of the local crisis resolution and prevention programmes it provides regular legal aid services and legal advice.

### ***13. “Másság (Being Different) Foundation”***

#### ***Office for the Protection of the Rights of the National and Ethnic Minorities – Budapest***

The Foundation was launched in 1993, and has since examined about 700 complaints. It disposes of a network of lawyers and experts extending throughout the country. Its aim is to examine fully and objectively all the facts surrounding acts of discrimination perpetrated against Roma. A publication entitled the White Notebook is published every year detailing the work of the Foundation. It is available in Hungarian and English. The office’s operational costs are covered from international and domestic tenders. It engages in close cooperation with government and civil organizations in the interest of creating a discrimination-free society. Both its efforts and its activities are in complete harmony with the anti-discriminatory tasks of the medium-term package of measures.

Supplement 1

## **REGULATIONS RELATED TO THE MINORITIES**

Act XX of 1949, the Constitution of the Republic of Hungary

Act LXXVII of 1993 on the Rights of the National and Ethnic Minorities

Act LXXIX of 1993 on Public Education

Act I of 1996 on Radio and Television Broadcasting

Act LXV of 1990 on the Local Self-governments

Act LXIV of 1990 on the Election of Representatives and Mayors of the Local Self-governments

Act C of 1997 on Election Procedures

Act LXIII of 1992 on Protection of Personal Data and the Publicity of Data of Public Interest

Act XXXIV of 1999 on the promulgation of the Framework Convention of the Council of Europe on the Protection of National Minorities, 1 February 1995, Strasbourg

Act XL of 1999 on the promulgation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, done in Strasbourg on 5 November 1992

Government Decree 116/1995 (IX. 28) on the Day of Minorities

Government Decree 130/1995 (X. 26) on the National Master Curriculum

Government Decree 217/1998 (XII. 30) on the Operational Order of the State Budget

Government Decree 20/1995 (III. 3) on Certain Questions Concerning the Budgets, Financing and Property Allocation of the Minority Self-governments

Government Decree 34/1990 (VIII. 30) on the Office for National and Ethnic Minorities

PM Decree 1/1995 (IX. 28) on the Establishment of the Prize for the Minorities

Government Decree 2023/1999 (II. 12) on the Report of the Republic of Hungary on the Implementation of the Framework Agreement on the Protection of the National Minorities of the Council of Europe

Government Decree 2048/1999 (III. 17) on the Report of the Republic of Hungary on the Implementation of Commitments Prescribed in Article 2, Point 2 of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

Government Decision 1047/1999 (V. 5) on the Medium-term Package of Measures to Improve the Living Standards and Social Position of the Roma

Government Decision 1048/1999 (V. 5) on the Establishment of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Roma Affairs

Government Decision 1121/1995 (XII. 7) on the Foundation of the Public Foundation for Roma in Hungary

Government Decision 2187/1995 (VII. 4) on the Establishment of the Public Foundation for National and Ethnic Minorities in Hungary

Ministry of Culture and Education Decree 32/1997 (XI. 5) on the Issuance of the Guidelines for the Pre-school Instruction of National and Ethnic Minorities and the School Education of National and Ethnic Minorities

Supplement 2

**LIST OF REGULATIONS IN FORCE FORBIDDING DISCRIMINATION.**

*(Containing the most important legal regulations of the relevant legal material)*

Act XX of 1949. The Constitution of the Republic of Hungary

Act XL of 1999 on the Promulgation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages Established in Strasbourg, 5 November 1992

Act XXXIV of 1999 on the Promulgation of the Framework Agreement of the Council of Europe on the Protection of the National Minorities, 1 February 1995, Strasbourg

Act IV of 1959 on the Civil Code

Act IV of 1978 on the Criminal Code

Act XIX of 1998 on Criminal Procedure (from 1 January 2000)

Act I of 1973 on Criminal Procedure

Act III of 1952 on Civil Procedure

Act IV of 1957 on General State Administrative Procedures

Act IV of 1952 on Marriage, the Family and Guardianship, and in a unified structure with Law-Decree No.23 of 1952 on its Entry Into Force and Implementation, and Ministry of Justice Decree 7/1974 (VI. 21) and Ministry of Justice Decree 4/1987 (VI. 14) on its Implementation

Act LXXVII of 1993 on the Rights of the National and Ethnic Minorities

Act XXII of 1992 on the Labour Code

Act LXXIX of 1993 on Public Education

Act IV of 1991 on Job Assistance and Unemployment Benefits

Act XLIII of 1999 on Cemeteries and Burials

Act XLIX of 1998 on the Promulgation of the European Agreement on Television Broadcasts across Frontiers Established in Strasbourg 5 May 1989

Act XXVI of 1998 on the Rights and the Guaranteeing of the Equality of Disabled People

Act CLIV of 1997 on Health Affairs

Act CXL of 1997 on the Protection of Cultural Goods, Museum Institutions, the Supply of Public Libraries, and Public Education

Act CXXXIX of 1997 on Political Asylum

Act LXVI of 1997 on the Organization and Administration of Courts

Act XXXI of 1997 on the Protection of Children and the Administration of Guardianship

Act LXXV of 1996 on the Monitoring of Employment Affairs

Act XLIV of 1996 on the Conditions of National Military Service

Act XLIII of 1996 on the Conditions of Service for Members of the Regular Armed Forces

Act I of 1996 on Radio and Television Broadcasting

Act XL of 1995 on Public Procurement

Act LXXXVI of 1993 on the Entry, Residence in Hungary and Immigration of Foreigners

Act LXXVI of 1993 on Vocational Training

Act LIX of 1993 on the Parliamentary Commissioner for Civil Rights

Act XXXI of 1993 on the Promulgation of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms Established in Rome, 4 November 1950, and the eight appended ancillary protocols

Act LXIII of 1992 on Protection of Personal Data and the Publicity of Data of Public Interest

Act XXXIII of 1992 on the Legal Status of Public Employees

Act I of 1992 on Co-operatives

Act IV of 1990 on the Freedom of Conscience and Religion, and on Churches

Act XXXII of 1989 on the Constitutional Court

Act VII of 1989 on Strikes

Act II of 1989 on Rights of Association

Act XI of 1987 on Codification

Act II of 1986 on the Press, and in a unified structure with MT Decree 12/1986 (IV. 22) on its implementation

Act V of 1972 on the Public Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Hungary

Act I of 1968 on Offences

Act XXV of 1946 on the Condemnation of the Persecution of the Hungarian Jewry and on the Alleviation of the Consequences

Law-Decree 9 of 1985 on the Promulgation of the Agreement on Professional Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons), Established in Geneva on 20 June 1983

Law-Decree 10 of 1982 on the Promulgation of the Agreement on the Ending of All Forms of Discrimination Practised Against Women, Passed in New York on 18 December 1979

Government Decree 45/1993 (III. 12) on the Modification of Government Decree 174/1992 (XII. 29) on the Social Security and Labour Rights Situation of Persons Completing Discriminatory Military Work Service for Political Reasons in the Period Between 1951-1956

Government Decree 174/1992 (XII. 29) on the Social Security and Labour Rights Situation of Persons Completing Discriminatory Military Work Service for Political Reasons in the Period Between 1951-1956

ME Decree 5950/1946 (V. 28) on the Goods Taken Abroad of Hungarian Citizens Belonging under Some Legal Regulations Containing Discrimination Against Jews

Government Resolution 1047/1999 (V. 5) on the Medium-term Package of Measures to Improve the Living Standards and Social Position of the Roma

Government Resolution 1166/1998 (XII. 30) on the Guiding Principles of the Employment Policy for 1999

Parliamentary Political Statement 1/1998 (XII. 16) on the Occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Acceptance of the United Nations Declaration on Universal Human Rights