

Monitoring research concerning the implementation process of
the objectives indicated by the Decade of Roma Inclusion
Program in Hungary in the period of 2005-2009

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1. Preface

The Open Society Institute Roma Initiative Office announced a call for applications to conduct a monitoring research concerning the implementation process of the objectives indicated by the Decade of Roma Inclusion Program (the Decade) in Hungary in the period of 2005-2009. The Kurt Lewin Foundation was given the opportunity to conduct the monitoring research.¹

This study wishes to present the findings of the research conducted between October 2009 and March 2010, thus providing a comprehensive, detailed review of the Program. The Decade is a form of international cooperation, aiming at the social inclusion of Roma and the improvement of their socio-economic situation, that builds upon the cooperation of governments, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, as well as - primarily Romani - NGOs. During the research we were mostly interested in how the programs function, how successful and efficient they are, what impact they have, had and probably will have on the lives, future and opportunities of Hungarian Roma. Therefore, we found it important to collect information both on an organizational and a personal level from the experts responsible for managing the tasks of the Decade of Roma Inclusion as well as the participants of the programs.

In the study, we provide a brief summary of the situation of the Roma in Hungary based on the most recent researches available. Then we examine the programs in the framework of the Decade that aimed at the improvement of the situation. Afterwards, we outline expert opinions that surfaced during our questionnaire and focus group research on the results, efficiency and problems of the past years of the Decade. Following the perceptions of experts providing a general picture on the Decade, we examine the impact of certain specific programs which we come to understand through the analysis of our in-depth interview and case study research.

¹ The members of the research team were: Erzsébet Bogdán, Gábor Héra, Julianna Kiss and Zoltán Mészáros.

2. Methodology

During the research, the complex application of qualitative and quantitative methodological tools took place. In this chapter, we introduce these tools, also presenting the questions intended to be answered by the collection of data.

1. **Desk research:** in the desk research phase we conducted the review of the existing documentation related to the Decade. During summarizing the available information the following topics were covered:

- The number of Roma in Hungary, definition problems and their consequences
- The perceptions of the majority society about Roma, the degree of discrimination
- The situation of Roma in the four priority areas of the Decade
- Governmental measures in the framework of the Decade of the last five years

2. **Quantitative phase of the research:** A standard international questionnaire² was used in the framework of this research, focusing on measures implemented by member states of the Decade since 2005. The questionnaires focused on the four priority areas of the program, with the representatives of parties, Roma civil society organizations, governmental authorities and independent experts participating. The quantitative research provides a general picture on the successfulness of the Decade based on expert opinions.

3. **Qualitative research phase:** the qualitative research consisted of three parts:

- **Focus group research:** With the application of the focus group method, we intended to provide a picture of whether and with what instruments Hungary has met its own obligations. Besides, we also collected the recommendations of the experts familiar with the topic for the improvement of the efficiency of the Program. This research phase describes the activities of the past five years of the Decade by involving national and international experts, based on their opinions heard at professional meetings.
- **Qualitative interview research:** In-depth interviews were conducted with people who took part in any of the programs related to the Decade as beneficiaries. The objective of the research was gaining information on the functioning, success, impact and efficiency of certain projects of the implementing organizations from the point of view of the individuals participating.
- **Case studies:** Three specific programs connected to the Decade are presented through case studies. By describing the projects of the given settlements, we examined the impact of the measures developed at a governmental level in the reality of every-day life. During deciding on the examples we did not aim at providing a general, comprehensive analysis of the governmental programs, but intended to describe the questions, experiences appearing during the implementation of the given projects by showing the unique, specific details.

The study analyzes the past five years of the Decade of Roma Inclusion by processing and summarizing qualitative and quantitative research data. We do not examine the efficiency and the success of the Program in a representative way but to a great extent through the individual perceptions of the experts and participants. Therefore, the conclusions of the research have to be read with the expectations and reservations that appropriate to the methodology applied.

² The standard questionnaire was already developed, our colleagues only translated to originally existing text.

3. The background of the Decade of Roma Inclusion Program (the Decade)

While analyzing a program aiming at the improvement of the situation of Roma in Hungary, the description of the problems of the target group is necessary. Therefore, in this chapter we describe the present situation of Roma by outlining the number of Roma in Hungary, the perceptions of the majority society and their situation in the four priority areas of the Decade – education, employment, housing and health.

3.1 The number and definition problems of Roma in Hungary

According to the presently normative LXXVII of 1993 Act on the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities:

A national or ethnic minority (hereinafter 'minority') is any ethnic group with a history of at least one century of living in the Republic of Hungary, which represents a numerical minority among the citizens of the state, the members of which are Hungarian citizens, and are distinguished from the rest of the citizens by their own language, culture and traditions, and at the same time demonstrate a sense of belonging together, which is aimed at the preservation of all these, and the expression and protection of the interests of their communities, which have been formed in the course of history.³

Out of the 13 national and ethnic minorities living in Hungary, the Roma are of the highest number, at the same time, the only ethnic minority, as contrary to national minorities, in their case we cannot talk about another motherland outside of Hungary.

The number of the Roma minority cannot be determined unequivocally as according to the Act, it is the right of the individual belonging to a minority “to state in secret and anonymously during a census to which minority group s/he belongs.”⁴ Thus, belonging to a national or ethnic minority is based on voluntary self-proclamation. The Act LXIII of 1992 on the protection of personal data and the disclosure of data of public interest also stresses voluntary data provision, according to which personal data on racial, or national or ethnic minority origin, political opinion or party affiliation, religious or ideological belief, membership in any interest representing organization, state of health, pathological addictions, sexual life or personal data pertaining to criminal records are regarded as special data. Special data can with certain exceptions – e.g. if it „is based on international agreement or is ordered by law in order to enforce fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution or in the interest of the national security, crime prevention or prosecution of crime”⁵ – can only be managed if the individual concerned has consented to it in writing. Besides, the Act XLVI of 1993 on Statistics states that special data can only be collected “only in a manner unsuitable for the establishment of personal identity, furthermore on the basis of a voluntary data supply by the natural person concerned”.⁶

Thus belonging to a national or ethnic minority can only be measured by self-proclamation and not in an obligatory way. According to the 2001 census, the number of people identifying themselves as Roma was 205.720.⁷ However, it is likely that the number of the Roma in Hungary is more

³ See in: Act LXXVII of 1993 Act on the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities, available with subsequent modifications at:

http://www.mtaki.hu/docs/cd2/Magyarorszag/tv1993_77ang.htm

⁴ See in: Act LXXVII of 1993 Act on the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities, available with subsequent modifications at:

http://www.mtaki.hu/docs/cd2/Magyarorszag/tv1993_77ang.htm

⁵ See in: Act LXIII of 1992 on the protection of personal data and the disclosure of data of public interest, available with subsequent modifications at:

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/policy/psi/docs/pdfs/implementation/hu_trans_1992tyv63.doc

⁶ See in: Section (8) par (4) of the Statistics Act.

⁷ See data at: http://www.nepszamlalas.hu/eng/volumes/24/tables/loadcig2_1.html

significant as the number of those stating that they are Roma at a national census – held every ten years – can largely change according to the fear of the respondents from anti-Romani sentiments.

The most recent nationally representative research aiming at estimating the number of Roma calculates with a significantly bigger population than the data given by self-identification. According to the 1 per cent representative data recording conducted by István Kemény and his research team in 2003 in early 2003 there were between 520,000 and 650,000 people living in Roma households in Hungary.⁸ Calculating with 520 thousand people, 40 per cent of Roma, calculating with 650 thousand, 30 per cent of Roma stated that they are of Roma nationality, thus data from national censuses regarding the determination of the number of Roma people cannot be considered valid completely. As we touch upon later, the not unambiguous determination of the number of Roma is not only be a decisive question for science, but programs aiming at the improvement of the situation of the minority, thus the Decade.⁹

3.2. The perception of the majority society regarding Roma

Based on present legal regulations, a person is Roma if he or she identifies as Roma at census, elections, at school or in front of the local government. However, considering the prejudices and discrimination towards Roma, we have to state **that Roma are treated as Roma if they have visible signs of their ethnicity, or act differently from the expectations of the majority.** The 2003 research by István Kemény also determined the number of Roma based on the non-Roma environment:¹⁰

The surrounding community regards people with dark skins or Roma ancestry as Roma. Further, if somebody's parents are Roma, he or she is considered to be Roma. Generally speaking, people who are half-Roma are also regarded as Roma. The point is that Roma are defined on the basis of their descent. In this sense, a professional who is known by his/her colleagues to be the child of Roma parents is considered to be Roma even if he/she says otherwise or denies having a Roma background.¹¹

According to the opinion poll conducted by the Marketing Centrum on a population sample of 1000 people in March 2009, the Hungarian society bases its opinion about who they regard as Roma on the following characteristics: the research states that 87 per cent of the respondents attributes a more than medium importance to behaviour while deciding on whether someone is Roma. At the same time, the colour of the skin was only regarded to have more than medium importance by 74 per cent. Thus in determining who is Roma, not anthropological features or traditional cultural characteristics – like clothing and manner of speech – but behaviour different from the majority has the biggest role.¹²

⁸ Previous representative surveys of the Roma population were undertaken in 1971 and in 1993 on a 2 per cent sample according to which the number of Roma in Hungary was between 270 and 320 thousand in 1971 and 420 and 520 thousand in 1991. See Kemény István, Janky Béla: "Roma Population of Hungary 1971-2003", in: I. Kemény (ed.) *Roma in Hungary*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2005, p. 73. available at: http://www.mtaki.hu/docs/kemeny_istvan_ed_roma_of_hungary/istvan_kemeny_bela_janky_roma_population_of_hungary_1971_2003.pdf

⁹ See in Chapter 4.3.

¹⁰ Among researchers, the determination of the number of Roma is subject to serious debate. Identification based on both self-proclamation as well as through an outside source - the environment that knows the individual or an independent interviewer – raises problems. For more information on the debate, see e.g.: Gábor Havas, István Kemény and Gábor Kertesi, "A relatív cigány a klasszifikációs küzdőtéren" [The Relative Roma in the Classification Battlefield] *Kritika*, March 1998, p. 189; Gábor Kertesi, "Az empirikus cigánykutatások lehetőségéről" [Potential Methods of Empirical Research on Roma] *Replika*, 1998, p. 29; or János Ladányi and Iván Szelényi, "Ki a cigány?" [Who is Roma?] *Kritika*, December 1997.

¹¹ Kemény I. and B. Janky (2005) 'Roma Population of Hungary 1971-2003', in: I. Kemény (ed.) *Roma in Hungary*, New York: Columbia University Press, p.74.

¹² See in: Marketing Centrum (2009) *Közvélemény-kutatás – Roma társadalom*, available at: <http://www.marketingcentrum.hu/index.php?lang=hu&page=reszletek&id=33>

Who the majority society regards as Roma is not only important from the aspect of determining the number of Roma, as **the image of Roma can accompanied by severely negative and prejudiced behaviour and discrimination.** A 2001 research by György Csepeli, Mária Székelyi and Antal Örkény on a representative sample explored the question whether the members of majority society want to and how they want to decrease the segregation of Roma.¹³ The results showed the powerful presence of prejudices as it turned out from the answers for instance, that four-fifth of the Hungarian society would not give its permission to have a Roma neighbour. Based on attitudes towards Roma, the study named 28 per cent of the population reserved – that is rather being averse to Roma, 39 per cent were rated explicitly racist and 33 were named Roma-friendly. The 2009 research of the Marketing Centrum painted a similar picture to previous researches on prejudice. Analyzing the opinions of the majority society, the study reached the following conclusions: 40 per cent of the sample has strong anti-Roma sentiments while 35 per cent can be regarded as moderately anti-Roma. Only one-fourth of the society can be regarded as free of prejudices. These group rates are strongly diverse based on whether the respondents had and what kind of relationships they had with Roma. Among those that had bad, hostile relations with Roma, 72 per cent belonged to the strongly anti-Roma category, while out of those reporting about good, friendly relations, 43 per cent is the rate of non-prejudiced respondents.¹⁴

It is also important to state that contrary to the perceptions of the majority society regarding the Roma of Hungary a homogenous group, in reality **the Roma minority is fairly heterogeneous.** One main form of this heterogeneity is the linguistic differences. Three groups different in their language and culture are differentiated between the Roma in Hungary: the Romungros (Hungarian Roma) who only speak Hungarian, the Beás who speak Hungarian and a version of the Romanian language, and the Vlach who speak Hungarian and a dialect of the so-called Romani language. Furthermore, it is also necessary to indicate that for more than half of the Roma, Hungarian identity is as important or even more important than belonging to the Roma minority.¹⁵

3.3. Discrimination towards Roma

The Hungarian legal framework supports exercising equal treatment. Article 70/A of the Constitution of the Republic of Hungary ensures that: “The Republic of Hungary guarantees for all persons in its territory human and civil rights without discrimination on account of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other views, national or social origins, ownership of assets, birth or on any other grounds.”¹⁶ The legal framework strictly punishes all kinds of discrimination and also assists the realization of the equality of law by measures aiming at the elimination of inequalities in opportunities.

The Parliament – regarding as its basis the above referred provision of the Constitution, as well as the Council Directive 2000/43/EC implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, and in addition the Council Directive 2000/78/EC establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation – adopted the Act CXXV. of 2003 on equal treatment and the promotion of equal opportunities.¹⁷

¹³ See in: Székelyi Mária, Örkény Antal, Csepeli György (2001) „Romakép a mai magyar társadalomban”, available: <http://www.socio.mta.hu/mszt/20013/szekelyi.htm>

¹⁴ See in: Marketing Centrum (2009) Milyenek a cigányok? - Közvélemény-kutatás a „cigánykérdésről”, p. 11., available: <http://www.marketingcentrum.hu/index.php?lang=hu&page=reszletek&id=28>

¹⁵ See in: Marketing Centrum (2009) Közvélemény-kutatás – Roma társadalom, p.3., available: <http://www.marketingcentrum.hu/index.php?lang=hu&page=reszletek&id=33>

¹⁶ See in: Article 70 (A) of the Constitution of the Republic of Hungary, available at: <http://www.lectlaw.com/files/int05.htm>

¹⁷ See in: Act CXXV. of 2003 on equal treatment and the promotion of equal opportunities: http://www.egyenlobanasmod.hu/data/Act_CXXV_2003%20English.pdf

The act – in accordance with the above referred directives of the European community – name more forms of violations of equal treatment than what the Constitution records. Direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, illegal separation, retaliation and commands for these are regarded legal offense.¹⁸

Despite the legal background, age (67 per cent) and ethnicity (67 per cent) are the most commonly noticed bases for discrimination in Hungary, which are followed by disability (49 per cent), sexual orientation (45 per cent) and gender (43 per cent), while experiencing discrimination on the ground of religion/faith (17 per cent) is the least common phenomenon.¹⁹

The Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) published the results of its study in April 2009, covering the whole European Union concerning the discrimination as well as the experiences of ethnic based hate crimes of migrants and national minorities. **According to the analysis, Roma experienced the highest level of discrimination in all areas examined.** In the case of Roma, every second respondent claimed to have been subject to some form of discrimination in the past 12 months. Around 66-92 per cent of the Roma (depending on the country) affected did not report their experiences on discrimination to the responsible authorities. 65-100 per cent of the respondents also claimed to be mistrustful of the police and other organizations of jurisdiction.²⁰

Besides tendencies for discrimination in recent years, Hungary was also characterized by the increase of segregation despite numerous governmental measures.²¹ Segregation in Hungary is also connected to ethnic based social exclusion that primarily affects Roma. The processes of segregation have serious consequences in the long run, e.g. educational failure, early dropout, low level of education completion and the ethnicization of unemployment.

Another decisive phenomenon of recent years is open aggression towards Roma. In 2008 and 2009, attacks against Roma claimed the lives of several people, among them a small child, while many others suffered life-threatening injuries. At the same time, such organizations appeared and became more and more powerful, which openly claim that there are inferior people in Hungary, who should be separated from the majority of the society.²²

¹⁸ According to Article 8 of the Act: All dispositions as a result of which a person or a group is treated or would be treated less favourably than another person or group in a comparable situation because of his/her sex, racial origin, colour, nationality, origin of national or ethnic minority, mother tongue, disability, state of health, religious or ideological conviction, political or other opinion, family status, motherhood (pregnancy) or fatherhood, sexual orientation, sexual identity, age, social origin, financial status, part-time nature or definite term of the employment relationship or other relationship aimed at work, membership in an organisation representing employees' interests, any other status, characteristic feature or attribute (hereinafter collectively: characteristics) are considered direct discrimination. Those dispositions are considered indirect negative discrimination, which are not considered direct negative discrimination and apparently comply with the principle of equal treatment but put any persons or groups having characteristics defined in Article 8 at a considerably larger disadvantage than other persons or groups in a similar situation were or would be.

¹⁹ See in: Iványi K., Takács J és Udvari M. (2009) „Haszon-talan” diszkrimináció helyett a sokszínűség előnye, Budapest: Másság Alapítvány, p.10, available:

http://massagalapitvany.hu/attachments/073_Haszon-talan.pdf

²⁰ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2009) EU-MIDIS European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey – Main Results Report, available: http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/attachments/eumidis_mainreport_conference-edition_en.pdf

²¹ E.g. for the description of educational and residential segregation, see chapter 3.4.1. and 3.4.3.

²² This wave of aggression touched wide social groups, dozens of protesting declarations were born. Protests in support of the victims of the attacks and Roma people emerged through the country, demanding stopping the series of aggression in Hungary, the elimination of discrimination, punishment of every-day racism and end to segregation in the field of education, housing and health care as well.

3.4. The situation of the Roma in Hungary concerning the four main priority areas of the Decade

Due to data collection regulations mentioned in Chapter 3.1. we can only gain information about the situation of Roma on the four priority areas of the Decade through certain representative researches. Based on the results of the researches, it can be stated that Roma are certainly the losers of the transition of the regime in 1989. Compared to the whole society, they are affected by unemployment, dropout from public education, poverty and exclusion to a striking extent. According to the 2000 report of the World Bank on poverty in Hungary, **Roma descent proves to be the most decisive among the factors rendering permanent exclusion probable**, coming before such indicators as qualifications, age or place of residence.²³ According to the 2003 research by István Kemény, 56 per cent of Roma households belong to the one-tenth of the population with the lowest income.²⁴ However, characterizing the complete Roma population by the problematic of poverty does not provide a realistic picture as only a part of those living in poverty are Roma and only a part of Roma is living in poverty. According to the calculations of János Ladányi and Iván Szelényi, at the millennium two-fifth of Hungarian Roma were multiply excluded, living in some sort of under-class, while more than a quarter belonged to the middle class.²⁵

3.4.1. Education

According to the 2003 research by István Kemény, there are relevant differences in the access to education between Roma and non-Roma children. Data of the study show that at a national level 88 per cent of children between the age of three and five, while only 42 per cent of Roma children attend kindergarten.²⁶ Kindergarten attendance affects later educational success to a great extent.

Based on research data, we can state that almost all Roma children finish primary school. However, **during primary education, strong segregation can be experienced** that may appear in various forms. According to present estimates the number of segregated schools is 180, while the number of segregated classes mostly attended by Roma is 3000.²⁷ Furthermore, in the case of Roma, the rate of dropouts, qualifying as private students and being labelled as slightly mentally disabled and therefore relegated to special schools or classes is much higher than the national average. Moreover, between 1993 and 2003, the number of children labelled as mentally disabled and thus sent to special schools or classes increased.²⁸ According to Kemény, near 20 per cent of Roma children of school age attend these special schools or classes.

According to a research analyzing the 2006-2007 data of the Educatio-Tárki career assessment survey, after the 8th grade Roma students have a 9 per cent probability of not continuing their studies anywhere as opposed to the barely 1 per cent of non-Roma students.²⁹ According to

²³ The study is quoted in Bernáth G. és Hammer F. (2007) Zöld Könyv – A romák médiaábrázolása, Budapest: Szociális és Munkaügyi Minisztérium, p.42.

²⁴ See Kemény I., Janky B. és Lengyel G (2004) A magyarországi cigányság 1971-2003, Gondolat Kiadó: Budapest, p.121.

²⁵ For the more detailed description of the subject, see Ladányi J. és Szelényi I. (2002) Cigányok és szegények Magyarországon, Romániában és Bulgáriában, Szociológiai Szemle 2002/4. pp.72–94, available: <http://www.mtapti.hu/mszt/20024/ladanyi.htm#03>

²⁶ Lásd Kemény I., Janky B. és Lengyel G (2004) A magyarországi cigányság 1971-2003, Gondolat Kiadó: Budapest, p.134.

²⁷ See Molnár E. és Dupcsik Cs. (2008) Country Report on Education: Hungary, pp.17-18, available: http://www.edumigrom.eu/sites/default/files/field_attachment/page/node1817/edumigrombackgroundpaperhungaryeducation.pdf

²⁸ See Kemény I., Janky B. és Lengyel G (2004) A magyarországi cigányság 1971-2003, Gondolat Kiadó: Budapest, p.134.

²⁹ See Kertesi G. és Kézdi G. (2009) A roma fiatalok általános iskolai eredményessége, középiskolai továbbtanulása és középiskolai sikeressége.- Zárótanulmány, Budapest: MTA, p.64. <http://econ.core.hu/file/download/jav/roma608.doc>

Kemény's study, in the 20-24 age group of young Roma 82.5 per cent completed primary school, 1.7 per cent was student of secondary education and 5.1 per cent completed secondary education (76.4 per cent of the whole population).

Widespread segregation is also indicated by the fact that while two-third of non-Roma students attend secondary schools that provide secure further educational and employment perspectives as well as opportunity for secondary school graduation, **70 per cent of Roma children continue their studies in technical schools offering way less secure existence or in special vocational schools.**³⁰

The rate of Roma students in higher education is even lower than of those completing secondary education. According to Kemény, while nationally 40 per cent of those between 18-20, while 1.2 per cent of the Roma between 20-24 study in an institution of higher education.³¹

The poor and Roma children in segregated classes and schools most probably receive even weaker quality of education than what is locally available: they have to learn in buildings that are in worse condition, they have less tools for demonstration and fewer classes given by specialist teachers. Educational inequalities affect the later chances for employment to a decisive extent.

3.4.2. Employment

The employment situation of Roma has dramatically declined since the transition of the regime. This phenomena was caused by the fact that a significant percentage of Roma used to work in the most disadvantaged branches of economy and in disadvantaged regions, as well as by low educational level and ethnic based discrimination.

Presently, few Roma have a steady workplace, inactivity is high among them and their unemployment is permanent most of the time. According to the research by Kemény quoted previously, 28 per cent of Roma men between the age of 15-74 were employed. According to the study, the opportunities for employment of Roma women are even less: around 15 per cent were employed.³² Out of the Roma having a workplace, 70 per cent worked as unskilled or trained workers, 22 per cent worked as skilled workers and the rate of white collar workers or those working as members of a uniformed corporation was only 8 per cent. Thus, even those having a job can only find employment in the lower segments of the labour market.

The career assessment survey of Educatio-Tárki also reports similar findings as the 2003 research, out of the Roma respondents of the sample, 35 per cent of men and 22 per cent of women had a regular job, contrary to the 70-80 per cent results of the whole population sample.³³ Moreover, according to the 2005 analysis of Gábor Kertesi, in the case of Roma having a workplace, insecurity is relevant as 25-30 per cent of those employed have a workplace the following year, and public work constitutes 17-20 per cent of overall employment, which can be regarded as the mechanism providing the significant number of entrance to employment.³⁴

Based on the data available, we can conclude that ethnic based discrimination - which primarily

³⁰ Liskó I. (2005) A roma tanulók középiskolai továbbtanulása, Budapest: Felsőoktatási Kutatóintézet, p.59, available: www.hier.iif.hu/hu/letoltes.php?fid=kutatas_kozben/184

³¹ See in Kemény I., Janky B. és Lengyel G (2004) A magyarországi cigányság 1971-2003, Gondolat Kiadó: Budapest, p.134.

³² For the data see: Kemény I., Janky B. és Lengyel G (2004) A magyarországi cigányság 1971-2003, Gondolat Kiadó: Budapest, p.134-135.

³³ See in Kertesi G. és Kézdi G. (2009) Néhány adat a magyarországi roma népességről, available: http://hvg.hu/itthon/200908_Nehany_adat_a_magyarorszagi_roma_nepessegro?s=jobline

³⁴ For the analysis, see Kertesi G. (2005) A társadalom peremén – Romák a munkaerőpiacon és az iskolában, Budapest, pp.174-199.

affects Roma in Hungary – is experienced in employment as well. In 2006, Ferenc Babusik conducted research with empirical sociological tools among 1829 Hungarian companies that employed more than 10 people. The aim of the research was to examine how employers approach certain disadvantaged social groups, especially Roma. According to the study, more than 80 per cent of employers does not or hardly employs Roma, and they would not even employ Roma even in case their qualifications were appropriate. Thus, **in the case of Roma, even proper qualifications are not enough for most companies to employ them, not even for intellectual but physical work.**³⁵ Based on this information, we can state that Roma primarily face open discrimination in the labour market.

The FACT Institute conducted a complex research in the spring of 2006 on the topic of labour market discrimination. According to their findings, the view among employers that the employment of Roma has more costs than benefits became the general attitude. Half of the employers believe that legal regulation would not or would hardly advance the employment of Roma. They also think that attitude changing training for the employees of the companies would contribute to the employment of Roma only to a small extent.³⁶

3.4.3. Housing

A significant part of the Roma in Hungary lives in disadvantaged regions, settlements. The housing situation of Roma was examined by István Kemény's nationally representative research in 2003, which concluded that 6 per cent of Roma, that is 36 thousand people were living in segregated Roma settlements. According to official governmental documents, approximately 100.000 people live in segregated settlements or settlement-like living environments, that is, in one of the 500-550 segregated places.³⁷ Roma living in segregated settlements do not only have to face the lack of basic infrastructure but exclusion present in all fields of life – that primarily originates from low educational levels, permanent unemployment and discrimination.

However, the number of Roma experiencing some form of residential segregation is much higher than the number of those living in segregated settlements. To sum up, of 1165 dwellings included in the survey by Kemény, 483 (42 per cent) lie on the outskirts of a settlement, 23 (2 per cent) at some distance from a settlement, 73 (6 per cent) in segregated Roma settlements, and 254 (22 per cent) in the inner zone of a settlement but in a neighborhood inhabited exclusively or mainly by Roma. Thus, **72 per cent of Roma families live in segregation.**³⁸

The segregation of Roma is intensified by their unequal distribution between the various regions, by segregated flat buildings and town rehabilitations, and by the small villages evolved by the end of the 1980s. In these small villages a social layer developed that could not buy houses anywhere else and is incapable of social mobilization. Besides smaller settlements, quarters with the worst conditions of infrastructure also emerged in bigger cities. Low status social groups gather in these parts of the cities.

Segregation goes hand in hand with the decline of living conditions: the majority of the inhabitants are unemployed, the segregated quarters have run-down and overcrowded buildings while public-utility services are partially or completely lacking. In these settlements, the basic

³⁵ See in Babusik F. (2008) *A romák foglalkoztatási diszkriminációja a munkaerő-piacon - Egy empirikus vállalatkutató eredményei*, available at: http://www.delphoi.hu/download-pdf/roma_fogl_diszkr.pdf

³⁶ Structuur (Netherlands) - Hazilan (Spain) - TE-IS (Hungary) (2008) *Korlátok – Final documents of Access 2 work Project*, available at: <http://www.prkk.hu/dp/download/korlatok.pdf>

³⁷ See in Setét J. (2007) *Kézikönyv: Telepeken, telepszerű lakókörnyezetben élők programja*, available at: http://www.romaweb.hu/doc/kormanyzat/telep/telep_kezikonyv.pdf, p.4.

³⁸ See in Kemény I., Janky B. és Lengyel G (2004) *A magyarországi cigánység 1971-2003*, Gondolat Kiadó: Budapest, p.57.

living standards of people are determined by the fact that the quality and access to services is strongly limited.

3.4.4. Health

The health of the Roma population in Hungary is worse than of the non-Roma population. In their case, **the rate of those over 50 is lower and the rate of those below 30 is higher than the national average.** The reason for this is that the life expectancy of Roma at birth is 10 years lower than the national average, while natality is above it.³⁹

According to the 2004 research by Ferenc Babusik 66,3 per cent of the Roma population above the age of 19 suffer from some kind of illness, 16,1 per cent suffer from more than one illness while 23 per cent suffers from three or more illnesses at the same time.⁴⁰ From the aspect of the social exclusion of Roma it is an especially important fact that the decay of health correlates with their social and financial situation, with their access to socio-economic resources.

According to a research assessing the health conditions of Roma living in segregated settlements, the inhabitants of Roma settlements avail themselves to health services less than others. The difference particularly shows in participation in treatments of medical specialists, dental treatment as well as check-up programs. One of the reasons for this is that **35 per cent of those living in Roma settlements were subject to some sort of discrimination during availing service,** while among the general population such complaints only occurred in the case of 4.4 per cent.⁴¹

Summarizing the data on the situation of Roma, we can conclude that **Roma are in significantly worse situation than the national average in all priority areas of the Decade,** while the negative perceptions of the majority society make their social inclusion difficult. Due to lack of nationally representative research findings, we cannot analyze the changes that occurred during the past years of the Decade. However, we can state that negative attitudes of the majority towards Roma did not decrease in the past years, which makes questioning the success of the Program necessary.

³⁹ A téma kifejtéséért lásd: Babusik F. (2004) A szegénység csapdájában, Budapest: Delphoi Consulting, available: <http://www.delphoi.hu/download-pdf/roma-szoc-eu.pdf>

⁴⁰ See in Babusik F. (2004) A szegénység csapdájában, Budapest: Delphoi Consulting, p.52, available: <http://www.delphoi.hu/download-pdf/roma-szoc-eu.pdf>

⁴¹ See in Vokó Z., Kósa Zs., Széles Gy., Kardos L., Kósa K., Németh R., Országh S., Fésüs G. és Ádány R. (2006) A roma telepeken élők egészségének felmérése. Előadás a NETT XV. Nagyülésén, Siófok.

4. Analysis of the governmental measures in the framework of the Decade of Roma Inclusion

After describing the situation of Roma in Hungary, we examine the governmental measures in the framework of the Decade aiming at strengthening the social inclusion and improving the living situation of Roma. First, we summarize the declared objectives of the Program, then focusing on the four areas we enumerate specific measures assigned to these objectives. Finally, we intend to provide a general evaluation based on the information available.

4.1. On the creation and the priorities of the Program

The Decade of Roma Inclusion is an international cooperation coming into existence through the joining of forces of eight Central and Eastern European countries (Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, the then Serbia and Montenegro, Romania and Slovakia), the aim of which is **to accelerate the social and economic inclusion of Roma, at the time contributing to the transformation of the image of Roma in a positive direction**. Furthermore, its goal is to bring governments, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as the Roma civil society closer for the – transparent and measurably conducted – acceleration of the improvement of the living conditions of Roma.

The idea of the Decade of Roma Inclusion Program surfaced at the conference entitled „Roma in an Expanding Europe: Challenges for the Future” organized in Budapest in 2003. Afterwards, the prime ministers of the participating countries signed the Decade Declaration in Sofia on 2 February 2005, and together with the representatives of the World Bank and the Open Society Institute, they declared the period between 2005 and 2015 the Decade of Roma Inclusion. Since its start, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Spain also joined the program.

The Decade focuses on four priority areas: education, employment, health and housing. At the same time, it also intends to provide answers for the problems of poverty, discrimination and gender mainstreaming.⁴² The participating countries took on an obligation that they **develop comprehensive strategic plans in accordance with their own economic and social politics for the social integration of Roma** on the measures planned for the period between 2005 and 2015, based on which they implement their national Roma strategies. Besides, it was an important pledge to regularly monitor the implementation process of the commonly accepted objectives, and the modification of the strategic plans if necessary.⁴³ Furthermore, both on the level of planning as well as implementation, Roma professionals were to be included, and the development of already existing networks of Roma professionals or their creation was also intended.

4.2. The Strategic Plan and the two-year-long Action Plan

The most important measures for the social inclusion of Roma are summarized in the Decade of Roma Inclusion Program Strategic Plan as the countries participating in the Decade Program – in a mutually formulated framework, based on uniform methodology – developed their own strategic plans relating to the period of the Program. The Parliament of Hungary adopted the 68/2007 (VI.28.) parliamentary resolution on the Decade of Roma Inclusion Program Strategic Plan

⁴² More information on the international website of the Decade: www.romadecade.org/about

⁴³ Szociális és Munkügyi Minisztérium (2005) Roma Integráció Évtizede Program, available: <http://www.romaweb.hu/romaweb/index.jsp?id=riep&p=sajat>. For the problems of monitoring the Decade, see Chapter 4.4.

on 25 June 2007 – two years after the launch of the Decade.⁴⁴

Besides the four priority areas and exercising equal treatment, the Strategic Plan defines concrete goals and tasks and in the field of culture, media and sport – as a result of ideas articulated through public debate.⁴⁵ It also names indicators assigned to them and the measures necessary for achieving the tasks for the period until 2015. It intends to realize gender mainstreaming through the tasks and measures connected to the four priority areas.⁴⁶

The aim of the Strategic Plan is the creation of the conditions for the social and economic integration of the Roma population, the improvement of their living conditions, the improvement of their access to public services, the decrease of the gap between the living conditions of the Roma and non-Roma, and its elimination in the long run. The aim of the tasks drafted in the Strategic Plan are the development of a more effective economic policy, as well as its long-term sustainability (e.g. increasing competitiveness, the improvement of employment, the decrease of social transfers and the number of dependants).⁴⁷

Besides decreasing discrimination towards Roma and strengthening the equality of opportunities, it also sets particular goals in the various priority areas. Thus in the area of education, the goal is expanding integrated education, desegregation in public education, increasing the educational level of Roma; in the area of employment integration in the labour-market as well as increasing the level of employment; in the area of housing the improvement of living conditions together with decreasing residential segregation to a great extent; and in the area of health improving health conditions, increasing life expectancy at birth as well as improving the access to health services.

Point 3 of the resolution called upon the Government to develop for the implementation of the Strategic Plan – by defining the tasks, the people responsible and the necessary resources - the first governmental action plan for the years of 2008-2009. The Government adopted the Decision No. 1105/2007. (XII.27.) Decree of the Government on the Government Action Plan for 2008–2009 related to the Decade of the Roma Inclusion Program Strategic Plan⁴⁸ on 19 December 2007. The action plan determines concrete projects, deadlines and budgetary resources.

4.3. Specific governmental measures

The parliamentary resolution on the Decade of Roma Inclusion Program Strategic Plan and the government decision on its implementation for the period of 2008-2009 include several measures that **aim on the one hand at the reduction of segregation in education, employment and housing; and on the other hand action against discrimination.** On the execution and results of the programs, governmental reports on the subject provide us with comprehensive information.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ See in 68/2007 (VI.28.) OGY. határozat a Roma Integráció Évtizede Program Stratégiai Tervről, available: http://www.romaweb.hu/doc/evtizedprogram/2007/RIEP_stratterv.pdf

⁴⁵ In June 2005, the Ministry of Youth, Family, Social Affairs and Equality of Opportunities organized a series of public debates in seven regions of the country during which the perceptions, recommendations of the decisive actors (municipalities/regional centres, governmental organs, NGOs, researchers, etc) regarding the National Action Plan of the Decade were collected. At the same time, four working groups (from the members of the Roma Cooperation Roundtable) started work in the areas of education, employment, housing and health.

⁴⁶ See in Szociális és Munkaügyi Minisztérium (2005) Roma Integráció Évtizede Program, available: <http://www.romaweb.hu/romaweb/index.jsp?id=riep&p=sajat>

⁴⁷ See in Szociális és Munkaügyi Minisztérium (2007) Az országgyűlés elfogadta a RIÉP stratégiai tervét, available: <http://www.szmm.gov.hu/main.php?folderID=16519&articleID=31955&ctag=articlelist&iid=1>

⁴⁸ See in 1105/2007. (XII.27.) Decree of the Government on the Government Action Plan for 2008–2009 related to the Decade of the Roma Inclusion Program Strategic Plan, available at:

http://www.romaweb.hu/doc/evtizedprogram/2008/Roma%20Decade_HU-action%20plan_2008-2009%20_en.pdf

⁴⁹ The reports are: Jelentés a kormány részére a cigányság életkörülményeinek és társadalmi helyzetének javítására irányuló középtávú intézkedéscsomagról szóló 1047/1999. (V. 5.) Korm. határozat 2002. és 2003. évi végrehajtásáról, available: <http://www.szmm.gov.hu/download.php?ctag=download&docID=21274>, Jelentés a kormány részére a romák

We need to emphasize that the latest official report on the implementation of the programs included in the plans summarizes the results of the year 2008, thus here we also mainly provide information on the programs launched until that point. It is also important to note that as most programs intend to assist the improvement of the situation of the disadvantaged, poorer social groups of society, **we do not know exactly the number of Roma included in the programs.** In the following section, we highlight certain relevant examples from the specific governmental measures assigned to the tasks defined in the Strategic Plan, through which we present the characteristics of the programs connected to the Decade.

4.3.1. Education

In the area of education, the goals of the programs in the framework of the Decade are **assisting the educational success of disadvantaged, Roma children and securing equal access to educational services.** The 2008 Implementation Report on the Government Action Plan for 2008–2009 states that the programs launched in earlier years continued in 2008. Furthermore, activities of the ministry related to legislation were also going on in 2008 with taking into account creating chances and compensating for disadvantages, both regarding legal reforms determining the basic norm, resolutions for execution and regulations setting the order of procedures. During the planning of the utilization of resources, equal opportunity based funding policy is not only a first-rate priority at creating resolutions for setting procedure-application order but during the utilization of EU sources as well.⁵⁰ In the following section, we enumerate programs focusing on the area of education.

4.3.1.1. Sure Start Program (Biztos Kezdet Program)

The Sure Start programs in Hungary followed the examples of the programs in England. The Sure Start was introduced in the United Kingdom in 1999 **targeting disadvantaged children between the age of 0 and 4 as well as their families for the reduction of child poverty and the social exclusion of children.** The implementation of the programs of the Sure Start Children’s Centers is financed by EU funds. Altogether 35 Sure Start Children’s Centers started operating in Hungary in the fall of 2009. The aim of the Children’s Centers is “the provision of services for the children of families living in disadvantaged settlements or parts of settlements under difficult circumstances which contribute to their later success in school.”⁵¹

2.1.2. Kindergarten enrolment assistance

The basic aim of this program is **for the most disadvantaged children who currently do not attend kindergarten to be admitted to these institutions,** thus later to have a successful school career. The first instalment of the kindergarten assistance is a higher amount, 20.000 HUF (1 EUR equals around 265 HUF), and later it becomes 10.000 HUF every six months. This amount is intended on the one hand to reduce the financial burdens accompanying kindergarten attendance, and on the other hand to facilitate regular kindergarten attendance. Therefore, one important

társadalmi integrációját elősegítő kormányzati programról és az azzal összefüggő intézkedésekről szóló 1021/2004. (III. 18.) Korm. határozat végrehajtásáról (2007. október), available:

<http://www.szmm.gov.hu/download.php?ctag=download&docID=21275>, Jelentés a romák integrációjának elősegítésére irányuló 2007. évi kormányzati intézkedésekről és programokról (2008. július), available:

<http://www.szmm.gov.hu/download.php?ctag=download&docID=21276>, Jelentés a Roma Integráció Évtizede Program Stratégiai Tervhez kapcsolódó, a 2008-2009. évekre vonatkozó kormányzati intézkedési tervről szóló 1105/2007. (XII. 27.) Korm. határozatban foglalt feladatok 2008. évi időarányos végrehajtásáról, available:

http://www.romaweb.hu/doc/evtizedprogram/jelentesek/riepintterv_200809_2008idoarany_vegrehajtas.pdf

⁵⁰ See in Jelentés a Roma Integráció Évtizede Program Stratégiai Tervhez kapcsolódó, a 2008-2009. évekre vonatkozó kormányzati intézkedési tervről szóló 1105/2007. (XII. 27.) Korm. határozatban foglalt feladatok 2008. évi időarányos végrehajtásáról, p.2.

⁵¹ See in *Mi a Biztos Kezdet Gyerekház?* (2010), available at:

<http://www.biztoskezdet.hu/site/doc/section/7/id/56> For a more detailed description of the program, see the case studies.

condition of the assistance is regular kindergarten attendance of the child.

4.3.1.3. *Tanoda (day-school) program*

In the framework of extracurricular afternoon activities, **the tanoda program intends to assist the continuation of the studies of multiply disadvantaged, mostly Roma students**, hereby improving their chances for success on the labour market and for social integration. The tanoda is form of assisting and managing education that is based on the individual choice of the children and the parents, and is homely and most considerably accommodating to the personal educational needs of the participants.⁵²

4.3.1.4. *Send-off (Útravaló) Scholarship program*

The sub-projects of the program consisting of various components launched in September 2005 **assist the educational advancement of talented, but disadvantaged students living in difficult conditions**. Students and their mentors together can apply for the scholarship – during which the mentor receives financial support while the student receives a scholarship and the professional assistance of the mentor. The extent of the program is indicated by the fact that in 2008 in the “Road to Secondary School” sub-program 5100, in the “Road to Graduation” sub-program 3300, in the “Road to Profession” 1600 student-mentor pair were included.

4.3.1.5. *Employment embedded in training*

The aim of the program is to provide disadvantaged young and adult Roma, who had dropped out of the formal educational system, an alternative way of learning through connecting training with employment.⁵³ According to plans the employment of the participants in the labour market is secured. Furthermore, as **they receive qualifications as assistants in the field of pedagogy or public education**, also positive changes can be generated in the employer institutions (mostly in schools), e.g. decrease in missed classes, aggression or the improvement of school success.

4.3.2. Employment

In the area of employment also the continuation of already launched initiatives was typical. The services of the employment organization, its labour market and adult education programs continued in the year 2008 as well. The organization of public work programs was also continuous. The labour market and adult educational programs aiming at finishing primary school and acquiring qualifications also continued.⁵⁴ Besides, as a novelty, the program entitled “Decentralized programs for the employment of disadvantaged people” was also launched in April 2008 in all regions. **Thus in the area of employment, programs often mean the provision of public work**. In the following, we highlight examples from programs targeting employment.

4.3.2.1. *“Decentralized programs for the employment of disadvantaged people”*

The initiative intends to assist disadvantaged people getting into the labour market by providing complex, individually designed services and support adjusting to local employment opportunities

⁵² Jelentés a Roma Integráció Évtizede Program Stratégiai Tervhez kapcsolódó, a 2008-2009. évekre vonatkozó kormányzati intézkedési tervről szóló 1105/2007. (XII. 27.) Korm. határozatban foglalt feladatok 2008. évi időarányos végrehajtásáról, p.35.

⁵³ Jelentés a Roma Integráció Évtizede Program Stratégiai Tervhez kapcsolódó, a 2008-2009. évekre vonatkozó kormányzati intézkedési tervről szóló 1105/2007. (XII. 27.) Korm. határozatban foglalt feladatok 2008. évi időarányos végrehajtásáról, p.39.

⁵⁴ Jelentés a Roma Integráció Évtizede Program Stratégiai Tervhez kapcsolódó, a 2008-2009. évekre vonatkozó kormányzati intézkedési tervről szóló 1105/2007. (XII. 27.) Korm. határozatban foglalt feladatok 2008. évi időarányos végrehajtásáról, p.2.

and needs. The participants receive training and supported employment, mentoring, and targeted professional networks of assistance that help them getting into the labour market. The implementers of the program are the regional employment centres.

4.3.2.2. “Step one up! II” („Lépj egyet előre! II.”)

The program pays special attention to **organizing catching up trainings and trainings providing professional qualifications**, and also to including the highest percentage of Roma possible. It is a new component compared to the previous program,⁵⁵ that those having at best elementary educational level receive assistance equal to the amount of the minimal wage as training support after 150 hours completed. The overall budget of the previous and the present program is 20 billion HUF.

4.3.2.3. “We do not give up on anyone – Chance for those living in the most disadvantaged areas”

The program provides funding for 47 micro-regions (the distribution of which are: 9 in the South Trans-Danubian region, 15 in the North Hungarian region, 15 in the North Great Plain region and 8 in the South Great Plain region). The program intends to **improve the living conditions of the inhabitants of disadvantaged regions and provide them with a chance for employment by complex region development projects adjusting to the regional peculiarities.**

4.3.2.4. “Road to employment” program

The aim of the program is **providing incentive for work and improving the prospects for employment of those receiving regular social assistance and are permanently unemployed.** The implementation of this dual goal requires complex approach and the launch of a series of interconnected employment and social political initiatives.⁵⁶ The basic concept of the initiative launched in 2009 is that the financial support for those eligible for regular social assistance is bound to their cooperation with the family care centres and the National Employment Service. In the case of those who do not fulfil the set employment requirements or other components indicated as obligatory in the job seekers’ agreement, the support ceases.⁵⁷

4.3.2.5. Enterprise development: funding of investments creating workplaces

The aim of the support is the funding of enterprises producing new workplaces primarily in disadvantaged areas of the country from an economic, social and labour market aspect. In 2008, 140 enterprises applied. The 140 applicants employed 5528 people at the time of applying, which number they intended to expand with 2271 new work places. Out of the 2271 people around 1403 was planned to be officially unemployed.

4.3.2.5. Tender for the strengthening and development of Roma micro-, small and medium enterprises

The program supports the improvement of the market opportunities and competitiveness of Hungarian Roma micro-, small and medium enterprises.

⁵⁵ The aim of the previous version of the program, the so called Step one up! was launching trainings for increasing the qualifical level of the Hungarian adult population through which those affected step one level up in their previous educational level. See more in: Jelentés a romák integrációjának elősegítésére irányuló 2007. évi kormányzati intézkedésekről és programokról (2008. július), p.133.

⁵⁶ See in Szociális és Munkaügyi Minisztérium (2008) „Út a munkához” intézkedéscsomag, available: <http://www.szmm.gov.hu/main.php?folderID=13565&articleID=40489&ctag=articlelist&iid=1>

⁵⁷ See in Szociális és Munkaügyi Minisztérium (2008) „Út a munkához” intézkedéscsomag, available: <http://www.szmm.gov.hu/main.php?folderID=13565&articleID=40489&ctag=articlelist&iid=1>

4.3.3. Housing

The only program highlighted in the area of housing in 2008 was the Housing and Social Integration Program (HSIP) for people living in segregated Roma settlements and settlement-like environment.⁵⁸

4.3.3.1. *Housing and Social Integration Program (HSIP) for people living in segregated Roma settlements and settlement-like environment*

The first actual governmental program since the transition for the elimination of segregated Roma settlements and the integration of people living in these settlements was introduced in 2005.⁵⁹ The most important objective of Housing and Social Integration Program for people living in Roma settlements and similar environment is to eliminate segregated housing environment and improve quality of life of people living in Roma settlements and similar environment. **Besides the providing a solution to the housing conditions with various: social, educational, employment measures and measures to improve the access to services** – based on widespread cooperation.⁶⁰ Thus, the program wishes to eliminate segregation with a complex, expansive perspective, projects of settlements contain not only housing components but also elements of education, community building, health care and employment. The program has finished 5 rounds already with the involvement of more than 40 settlements and is still ongoing. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour called for tenders in support of housing and social integration of people living in Roma settlements and similar environment in 2009 as well.⁶¹

4.3.4. Health

In the area of health in 2008 the previously started screening examinations for the health of the population continued, and conscious participation in screenings concerning cardiovascular system was intended to be achieved through the more powerful communication of the program. Besides, important measures occurred in the documentation of health research, school health development, programs aiming at the improvement of the health condition of disadvantaged social groups and good practices.⁶²

4.3.4.1. *“Sensory-motor Condition Assessment and Training assisting desegregation and health development”*

The kindergarten pedagogues participating in the program concentrating at the 8th district of Budapest can take part in a Sensory-motor condition assessment assisting desegregation and health development and the training building on this, the aim of which is to acquire the knowledge for the improvement of the educational level of the socio-culturally disadvantaged children with the support of the development of sensory-motor skills for integration. The aim of the developments is the facilitation of the school success of the children. Whether the child is able to meet the requirements

⁵⁸ See in Jelentés a Roma Integráció Évtizede Program Stratégiai Tervhez kapcsolódó, a 2008-2009. évekre vonatkozó kormányzati intézkedési tervről szóló 1105/2007. (XII. 27.) Korm. határozatban foglalt feladatok 2008. évi időarányos végrehajtásáról, p.2.

⁵⁹ For a historical overview of governmental measures for the elimination of segregated settlements, see: Lengyel G. (2006) 'Cigánytelepek egykor és ma', in: Kállai E. és Törzsök E.(szerk.) *Cigánynak lenni Magyarországon: jelentés 2002-2006*, Budapest: EÖKIK.

⁶⁰ See in Setét Jenő (2007): Kézikönyv: Telepeken, telepserű lakókörnyezetben élők programja, p.7., available: <http://www.romaweb.hu/romaweb/index.html>

⁶¹ Data source: Szociális és Munkaügyi Minisztérium (2009) *Pályázati felhívás telepeken és telepserű lakókörnyezetben élők integrációjának támogatására (ROM-TP-09-A/B)*, available at: <http://www.romaweb.hu/romaweb/index.jsp?p=palya&sp=view&id=854>

⁶² See in Jelentés a Roma Integráció Évtizede Program Stratégiai Tervhez kapcsolódó, a 2008-2009. évekre vonatkozó kormányzati intézkedési tervről szóló 1105/2007. (XII. 27.) Korm. határozatban foglalt feladatok 2008. évi időarányos végrehajtásáról, p.2.

of the school depends also on the maturity of his or her senso-motor functions. These functions are examined by the condition and motion assessment test.⁶³ If the children reach a result above 75 per cent, they can start school. The children involved in the training can develop at a faster pace than average, can decrease their senso-motor and other disadvantages, and can increase their chances for educational success. The target group of the program is primarily the pedagogues working with 5-9 year old children, and the children less mature concerning their senso-motor skills than the group of youngsters catered for by chosen pedagogues.⁶⁴ In the school year of 2007/08 5 trained pedagogues measured the regular senso-motor development and interim condition assessment of 50 children, as well as the spontaneous maturation process of 150 youngsters.

4.3.5. Enforcement of equality before the law

We enumerate projects for the enforcement of equality before the law initiated and implemented by the concerned ministries.

4.3.5.1. Roma Anti-discrimination Network⁶⁵

In the area of legal protection, professionally directed by the Ministry of Justice – in cooperation with the Prime Minister's Office (MEH, including the Department for National and Ethnic Minorities as well), the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (SZMM), and National Roma Minority Self-Government (OCÖ) – due to the professional work of the lawyers, the Roma Anti-discrimination Network has been operating for years. The number of its lawyers in 2008 was 50. **The majority of the cases managed by the Network were legal disputes concerning discrimination in the field of employment, housing, social benefits, protection of rights pertaining to persons in their capacity as such and private wrong experienced in educational institutions.**

4.3.5.2. Equal opportunity funding policy

To reduce segregation in the field of education and housing, Hungary – in a unique way in the region – **employs the so-called equal opportunity funding policy in the field of public institution development and town development.** The aim of the use of this policy: only tenders and programs assuring that the segregation of Roma in the field of education and housing will be reduced or eliminated can be funded. The enforcement of equal opportunity and anti-segregation funding policy is also assisted by – among others – the anti-segregation plan that is obligatory to develop as part of Town Development Strategies and also the development and implementation of equal opportunity plans connected to measures for the development of public education funded by EU sources.⁶⁶

4.3.5.3. University/College graduate Roma people to public administration – “Program targeting hiring Roma people in public administration”

The program is a professional and a financial assistance system, **consisting of the preparation of**

⁶³ Jelentés az Országgyűlés részére az Egészség Évtizedének Népegészségügyi Programja 2008. évi előrehaladásáról (2009), p.19, available: www.eum.hu/jogalkotas/eloterjesztesek/besznepeu-2008szakmapol

⁶⁴ Lásd Jelentés az Országgyűlés részére az Egészség Évtizedének Népegészségügyi Programja 2008. évi előrehaladásáról (2009), 18. o., available: www.eum.hu/jogalkotas/eloterjesztesek/besznepeu-2008szakmapol

⁶⁵ Aside from the Roma Anti-Discrimination Network, the Judicial Office's professional service also assists the enforcement of equality before the law that also works in a national network, providing help for victims of crimes. They are also in contact with every state, local governmental and civil society organization in the region that could be aware of victims of crimes or might cooperate in helping victims.

⁶⁶ Jelentés a Roma Integráció Évtizede Program Stratégiai Tervhez kapcsolódó, a 2008-2009. évekre vonatkozó kormányzati intézkedési tervről szóló 1105/2007. (XII. 27.) Korm. határozatban foglalt feladatok 2008. évi időarányos végrehajtásáról, p.2.

graduated Roma people for the competitive examination, their competitive examination, competence surveys and patronage. 200-250 people were invited to join the program that began in October 2009. The participants – according to their demands - were allowed to take part in a course about preparation for their competitive exams in public administration, and after that they took part in the compulsory competitive exam. The emerged costs (accommodation, travel, course and exam fee) were covered by an EU source. When passing the competitive exam, the applicants applied for in job interviews of certain lines of duty. In order to be appointed as a public administration officer the applicants have to meet the requirements of the employers, thus these people may only be hired after a successful job interview.⁶⁷

4.3.5.4. „Civil Society Organizations and the implementation of the anti-discrimination law”⁶⁸

The objective of the call for proposals published in the framework of the program in 2008 is to strengthen inclusion and social integration of social groups affected by economic, social or political marginalization through strengthening anti-discrimination activities of civil society organizations. The program supported projects targeting the enforcement of equal treatment and the principle of equal opportunities in the following areas: employment, social security and health, housing, education and training, services and goods and democratic development.⁶⁹ The amount of the resources available for the program (for the years 2007-2009) was all together 1 thousand Million HUF.

4.3.6. International activities

At an international level, among the accomplishments of the Hungarian presidency, we can highlight that **new countries and the UNICEF indicated their intention to participate in the program.** Besides, Hungary also recommended for the other participating countries the employment of the equal opportunity funding policy used in our country in the area of education and housing. Moreover, Hungary also made **diplomatic efforts to develop the European Roma Strategy.** The presidential tasks of the Decade of Roma Inclusion Program were taken on by Hungary between 1 July 2007 and 30 June 2008.

⁶⁷ Kormányzati Személyügyi Szolgáltató és Közigazgatási Képzési Központ (2009) *Tájékoztató a „Romák közigazgatásba történő bekerülését támogató programról” pályázók részére*, available at: <http://www.kszk.gov.hu/data/cms40972/tajekoztato.pdf>

⁶⁸ The Kurt Lewin Foundation developed an ethical code in Békéscsaba in the framework of this program. More information: www.lperspektiva.net

⁶⁹ Szociális és Munkügyi Minisztérium (2007) *Pályázati felhívás a "Civil szervezetek és az anti-diszkriminációs törvény végrehajtása" program keretében*, available at: <http://www.szmm.gov.hu/main.php?folderID=16389&articleID=31979&ctag=articlelist&iid=1>

4.4. The evaluation of the programs

In the following section, we intend to analyze the programs initiated in the framework of the Decade. However, due to some limiting circumstances – that we present in this chapter – we only have the opportunity to do so to a small extent.

4.4.1. The system level problems of the Decade

In its 2008 report⁷⁰ the State Audit Office of Hungary examined the amount and efficiency of programs aiming at the improvement of the situation of Roma since the transition. The study concluded that the efficient utilization of the resources aiming at programs connected to Roma is impeded by several factors. The conclusions of the study may provide important information from the aspect of evaluating the results of past four years of the Decade of Roma Inclusion as well.

As since 1993 referring to data protection rights **it is not possible to conduct official data collection on minorities**, a comprehensive situation assessment presenting the living situation of Roma objectively has not been conducted. According to the study, due to the lack of appropriately detailed information capable to measure even the small changes, the changes occurred in the situation of Roma after the transition cannot be accurately quantified.⁷¹ Thus, the questions of definition and the data protection environment⁷² are not only important from a scientific point of view, but can also be decisive problems in the developments and funding concerning the situation of Roma since for practicing minority rights and for utilizing the institutions of positive discrimination and support, some kind of determination of the circle of those eligible, that is, some form of identification is necessary.⁷³

According to the State Audit Office, the main factor preventing the evaluation of programs connected to Roma is **the lack of exact marking of goals and the unambiguous ordering of resources to them**. The study states that in the case of the most significant components of funding (employment, educational, EU funds) it can be determined only with a wide estimation what rate Roma constituted out of the beneficiaries.⁷⁴ The improper definition of the target group does not only worsen the transparency of the funding system, but hereby real planning and strict calling to account also becomes impossible.

According to the study, the problem is further intensified by the fact that **the ministries, organizations responsible for the programs define their target groups differently**. This way setting measurable conditions for performance is not possible, and a monitoring system built thereon cannot be created. Evaluation based not on estimations but on real, quantifiable data is not possible.

⁷⁰ Állami Számvevőszék Fejlesztési és Módszertani Intézet (2008) *A magyarországi cigányság helyzetének javítására és felemelkedésére a rendszerváltás óta fordított támogatások mértéke és hatékonysága*. available: [http://www.asz.hu/ASZ/tanulmányok.nsf/0/79ED5720B293EBC9C12574F30031B5C7/\\$File/t206.pdf](http://www.asz.hu/ASZ/tanulmányok.nsf/0/79ED5720B293EBC9C12574F30031B5C7/$File/t206.pdf)

⁷¹ See in Állami Számvevőszék Fejlesztési és Módszertani Intézet (2008) *A magyarországi cigányság helyzetének javítására és felemelkedésére a rendszerváltás óta fordított támogatások mértéke és hatékonysága*, p.5.

⁷² See Chapter 3.

⁷³ See in Eötvös Károly Intézet: *Roma támogatások és jogosultságok egyéni követésének lehetőségei*, 2006. , p.3. available: http://www.ekint.org/ekint_files/File/tanulmányok/romatamogatas.pdf

However, we have to state that the collection of ethnic data raises ethical and methodological problems according to several researchers. Ethnic categorization is not an objective category – thus the questions of who and based on what criteria collects the data and decides on who belongs to what ethnic minority is difficult to answer. Wide-spread discrimination also questions whether storing ethnic data officially would have a good impact on Roma. For a more detailed argument, see: Fleck G. és Messing V. (2009) „A roma foglalkoztatáspolitikai alakváltozásai”, Lovász A. és Teglédy Á. (szerk), *Középkép: Munkapiaci diszkrimináció*, p.95. available: <http://www.mtakti.hu/file/download/mt09/hu/kozelkep.pdf>

⁷⁴ See in Állami Számvevőszék Fejlesztési és Módszertani Intézet (2008) *A magyarországi cigányság helyzetének javítására és felemelkedésére a rendszerváltás óta fordított támogatások mértéke és hatékonysága*, p.59.

This criticism can be valid to the programs in the framework of the Decade as well, as the financing of the Decade of Roma Inclusion Program is in the following way: the implementation of the program is the task of the participating countries, thus their financial background should be raised by the annual central budget. Besides the annual national budget, Hungary as being part of the EU is also eligible for community financing, primarily the opportunities of the Structural Funds. **As the Hungarian initiative leans to a great degree on EU sources, the rules of these sources define the characteristics of the activities financed.** According to the study, the fiscal system and funding policies of the EU did not make it possible to support developments especially for nationalities or ethnic groups from the funds of the EU. The intention of the government to secure EU sources for programs directly targeting Roma was declined.⁷⁵

Taking into account the requirements of the financial framework, **the Strategic Plan of the Decade identified the beneficiaries of the programs on the four priority areas primarily based on residential and social aspects**, thus disadvantaged situation, permanent unemployment, low educational level, or living in disadvantaged settlements or regions became the decisive factor in defining the target groups of the programs. The definition of Roma as an individual target group remained possible in the field of antidiscrimination and culture. Besides, it is important to emphasize that in the case of most of the programs enumerated in the previous chapter, **not specifically the Roma, but disadvantaged groups are the target groups of the calls for application.**⁷⁶

The DecadeWatch report of 2007 analyzing the first two years of the Decade also draws attention to the problems stemming from the system of financing and the definition of target groups. “Despite the fact that Roma have received priority among beneficiaries in a number of mainstream social inclusion measures, what impact these measures have had on Roma is not clear. Hungary’s main challenge in 2007 remained the absence of any mechanisms to assess Roma access to general social inclusion measures and their impact on Roma.”⁷⁷

Though due to the lack of data, we cannot provide an evaluation on the efficiency of the programs, still we can report on some other factors affecting success. According to the study of the State Audit Office, besides data, the **weakness of coordination**, the lack of cooperation between ministries necessary due to the complex programs essential for the improvement of the situation of Roma also obstructs achieving the goals set out. In the past years, **accurate, modern management also was missing as was guaranteeing continuity.** The **evaluation of programs, the dissemination of good practices** did not become a reality.

4.4.2. Problems emerging during the implementation of programs

While analyzing the employment policies of the past years regarding Roma, Gábor Fleck and Vera Messing draw attention not only to the system level deficiencies of public funding for Roma, but also problems emerging at the implementation of concrete programs. According to their study, the way of thinking about such funding changed several times in the past period, and all have justifiable

⁷⁵ See in Állami Számvevőszék Fejlesztési és Módszertani Intézet (2008) *A magyarországi cigányság helyzetének javítására és felemelkedésére a rendszerváltás óta fordított támogatások mértéke és hatékonysága*, p.23.

⁷⁶ In its study, the State Audit Office emphasizes the problem of not targeted programs, which the following: Scientific research also confirm the practical experience that if a target group of funding is defined too broadly, then the members of the target group in a relatively more advantaged situation crowd out the members in a more disadvantaged situation from the access to the funding. See in Állami Számvevőszék Fejlesztési és Módszertani Intézet (2008) *A magyarországi cigányság helyzetének javítására és felemelkedésére a rendszerváltás óta fordított támogatások mértéke és hatékonysága*, p.10.

⁷⁷ Danova S. (2008) DecadeWatch: Roma Activists Assess the Progress of the Decade of Roma Inclusion – 2007

Update, p.30., available:

<http://www.romadecade.org/files/downloads/DecadeWatch/DecadeWatchszázalék202007százalék20Updateszázalék20-százalék20Finalszázalék20százalék2830-07-08százalék29.pdf>

components. However, none of them could affect the employment indexes of the Roma population – not only in absolute, but not even on relative terms. The system is characterized by a series of problems, beginning from assigning the target group, objectives and ranking, through the indicators and the tender system to the organization of impact assessment.⁷⁸

This happened in spite of the fact that the amount of public funding for the improvement of the situation of Roma has increased significantly. **After joining the EU, billions poured on the NGOs fighting for the inclusion of Roma.** However, this support from the EU is in vain if there are no own resources, the NGOs do not find their way in the maze of bureaucracy, the local governmental lobby intends to crowd them out and the organizations inviting applications find conformity to the regulations more important than sustainability.⁷⁹

Through analyzing the employment programs of the past years, the study of Messing and Fleck highlighted as the main functional problems: **the public tender system; administration; the deficiencies in the professional preparedness of the organizations inviting the applications and the formal character or complete lack of monitoring and professional support.** The characteristics of the tender system – that is, the necessity of own resources, guarantee of professional and financial capacity – excluded the applicants in most need of support. The payments often being late for months due to the uneasy administration also functioned as counter-selective mechanisms. Besides, the professionally not always prepared donor organizations often funded unrealistic projects. The monitoring of the concrete projects, though existed, had a mostly formal, technical character, lacking professional support. It can be assumed that these mistakes also were experienced in the case of programs in the framework, in the period of and in other areas of the Decade.

Accordingly, the bureaucratic character, the slowness of administration can decrease the success of programs to a great degree. **Many NGOs complain about the lengthy transfers, the difficult system of financial reporting:** oftentimes, the warning for completion of documents only comes in the last minute, so then the payment is late for another few months.⁸⁰ The bureaucratic character of the system can also operate on the level of the central institutions of the tender system. In case of some educational programs this meant that most programs of the Decade that were supposed to begin in 2005, only began in 2009.⁸¹

The difficulties of writing the applications are enhanced by the fact that the applicants that previously got used to smaller amounts, were provided a funding of 70-150 million HUF, then 300 million HUF. Preparing these tenders requires special knowledge, relatively complex management.⁸² However, the applicants used to smaller projects did not possess this knowledge.

The example of the “tanodas” (day-schools) also illustrates the problems of the tender system. According to Balázs Krémer, **these institutions established during the period of the first national Development Plan (2004-2006) collapsed one by one after the end of the program,** they could not finance their operation – even though their role in assisting the improvement of the

⁷⁸ Fleck G. és Messing V. (2009) „A roma foglalkoztatáspolitikai alakváltozásai”, Lovász A. és Teglédy Á. (szerk.), Közelkép: Munkapiaci diszkrimináció, p.94.

⁷⁹ M. László F. (2009) Sziszüphosz a Csereháton - Roma foglalkoztatási programok II. available: <http://oknyomozo.hu/node/39>

⁸⁰ M. László F. (2009) Sziszüphosz a Csereháton - Roma foglalkoztatási programok II.

⁸¹ Varró Szilvia (2009) Céltalanul - Az MSZP-SZDSZ kormányok romapolitikája 2002 óta, available: <http://oknyomozo.hu/node/22>

⁸² M. László F. (2009) Önerőt merítettek - Roma foglalkoztatási programok I. available: <http://oknyomozo.hu/node/38>

educational success of disadvantaged children is usually regarded positive.⁸³ According to the study, other NGOs winning other calls for applications came off even worse and went completely bankrupt, as though they fulfilled the requirements defined in the contract, many of them did not receive the last instalments of the payments even two or three years after.⁸⁴

4.4.3. Evaluation of specific programs

Though the general impact assessment of the Decade is not possible due to the above mentioned problems, in case of some programs evaluations were written. According to expert opinions, the efficiency of the **“Road to Employment”** program evoking the criticism of several renowned social scientists is not only limited by the above mentioned bureaucratic problems of implementation but also **due to the professional concept behind the program**. The report of the National Strategy Evaluation Committee lead by Zsuzsa Ferge quoted in the article of Figyelőnet expresses its opinion of the Road to Employment program among others, the introduction of which it considers to be an abrupt answer to a permanent and complicated problem. According to the study, **the initiative is economically inefficient, sometimes wasteful, and expanded the extent of public employment only to a small degree while worsening its variegation**. At the same time, it did not help anything politically in the solution of poverty and racism. Besides, it strengthens social walls as it traps the majority of poor people in a visible way in the system of public employment-social assistance that does not provide a way out.⁸⁵

According to the article by Figyelőnet, the study gives a more positive evaluation on the **Sure Start** program. As an impact of the governmental measures concerning the situation of families, among them the Sure Start program, inequalities and child poverty decreased to a certain extent between 2005 and 2008.⁸⁶ However, the restricting measures due to the economic crisis stopped the process, as they affected families with children the most severely.

The DecadeWatch report of 2007 states that even though the effect of educational programs has not yet been evaluated, „there is evidence to suggest that measures to eliminate segregated education have been met with resistance by some local authorities, and funding available for such measures has been underused or misused due to the lack of interest in promoting the integrated education of Roma by educational institutions at a local level.”⁸⁷ **Both about housing as well as health measures the report stated that as their impact no major development started**. Accordingly, the programs showed the signs of little targeted action, were ad hoc and had a limited scope and impact.

The negative experiences seem to be taken into account only to a small extent in future programs due to the lack of monitoring system. According to Krémer, while EU sources are in the centre of the public policy measures of the following years, the previous experiences about projects do not really affect the developments.⁸⁸ However, **the deficiencies discussed above also made the implementers of the Decade rethink the system**. The Implementation Report of 2008 explains: During summarizing the reports of the ministries affected, it became clear that the ministries are not always able to provide accurate information on the indicators asked, and that they do not always

⁸³ Krémer B (2008) A projekt-kórságról, avagy a *tanoda*-szindróma, *Educatio*, 2008/4, p.1., available: www.hier.iif.hu/hu/letoltes.php?fid=tartalomso/1255

⁸⁴ Krémer B (2008) A projekt-kórságról, avagy a *tanoda*-szindróma, *Educatio*, 2008/4, p.1.

⁸⁵ Figyelőnet (2010) Út a munkához – Út a semmibe (2010), available:

http://www.fn.hu/belfold/20100317/ut_munkahoz_ut/

⁸⁶ Figyelőnet (2010) Út a munkához – Út a semmibe (2010), available:

http://www.fn.hu/belfold/20100317/ut_munkahoz_ut/

⁸⁷ Danova S. (2008) DecadeWatch: Roma Activists Assess the Progress of the Decade of Roma Inclusion – 2007 Update, p.31.

⁸⁸ Krémer B (2008) A projekt-kórságról, avagy a *tanoda*-szindróma, *Educatio*, 2008/4, p.1.

report on the completion of the task defined in the given point of the resolution. Therefore, it is essential for the ministries to write their reports in the future according to a reporting system based on uniformly defined indicators. The indicators that need to be taken into account both in planning and in monitoring should be defined after the further checking of the recommendation prepared for the development of the monitoring system, until the end of 2009.⁸⁹

Summing up the desk research, it can be stated that several governmental measures were created for assisting the inclusion of Roma and the improvement of their situation. However, **a comprehensive evaluation cannot be given on the efficiency of the Decade at the moment as the necessary data and analyses are lacking.** In the case of several programs, the studies examining them report on relevant problems. Based on these findings, we need to highlight the following problematic areas:

1. On the level of the **central program**:

- Lack of measurable data on the target group and resources, and the delay of evaluation, monitoring;
- The weakness of the central coordination of the programs;
- The lack of cooperation between ministries and lack of modern management;
- Not securing the dissemination of good practices and the continuity of the programs.

2. On the level of the **specific projects**:

- Inequality stemming from the characteristics of the public tender system;
- Delay of payments due to the bureaucratic management of funding;
- Professionally often not well-prepared funder organizations;
- Lack of professional support and monitoring.

⁸⁹ Jelentés a Roma Integráció Évtizede Program Stratégiai Tervhez kapcsolódó, a 2008-2009. évekre vonatkozó kormányzati intézkedési tervről szóló 1105/2007. (XII. 27.) Korm. határozatban foglalt feladatok 2008. évi időarányos végrehajtásáról, p.3.

5. The questionnaire phase of the research

In this chapter we review the results of the research involving the questionnaire, by presenting the methodology of the examination first. During the description of the results – taking into account the low number of respondents – we primarily intend to present the general opinions concerning the Decade.

5.1. Methodology

In order to collect the opinions about the Decade of Roma Inclusion Program, the method of questionnaires was employed as part of the overall research. Our colleagues worked with altogether 35 questionnaires consisting mainly of closed questions, being used in all Decade countries.⁹⁰ While choosing the respondents, we aimed at contacting representatives of the five segments below:

1. leaders of local governments (7 questionnaires)
2. Scientists, researchers (6 questionnaires)
3. Roma experts of parties (6 questionnaires)
4. Roma leaders of civil society (8 questionnaires)
5. Governmental organizations (8 questionnaires)

The questionnaire consisted mostly of closed questions, its completion consumed around 60 minutes according to our experiences. Besides the general opinions about the Decade, we also asked about concrete results in the areas of the various – educational, housing, employment and health – policies.

We would like to emphasize that due to the low number of respondents, we cannot draw far-reaching conclusions. Concerning the efficiency and successfulness of the Decade, we can primarily rely on the results of the qualitative research. The results of the quantitative research rather provide descriptive information on the opinion of experts that know and are familiar with the Decade.

5.2. General opinions about the situation of Roma

After summarizing the results, we can claim that the experts interviewed **do not regard the integration of Roma** as being **fulfilled**, and that they regard **discrimination** against them as a **presently existing problem**.

General opinions concerning the situation of Roma		
Assisted, scale question with one answer		
Base: the number of respondents rateable for the given question		
	N	Mean
Please grade the level of overall Roma integration in your country! 1= Very low, 5= Very high	35	2,14
Over the past five years , this level of integration has... 1= Decreased very much, 5= Increased very much	34	2,82
Please grade the level of discrimination against the Roma in your country! 1= Very high, 5= Very low	35	1,97
Over the past five years , this level of discrimination against the Roma has 1= Increased very much, 5= Decreased very much	35	1,91

⁹⁰ The standard questionnaire was already developed, our colleagues only translated to originally existing text.

Based on the results above we can state that the respondents regard **the level of general integration as rather low (2.1), while the level of discrimination concerning Roma as rather high (2.0)**. To make matters worse, the respondents saw the level of integration while evaluating the changes of the last five years as nearly constant, but more decreasing (2.8), while the level of discrimination was seen as clearly increasing (1.9).

In this situation the efficiency of governmental measures is a key point. In the next chapter we present the opinions concerning this issue.

5.3. On governmental intervention and the efficiency of the Decade

Based on the results we can state that the opinions about the prioritization of governmental measures can be well articulated. It is promising that the respondents regard the measures of the Decade successful primarily in the areas (education and employment) that also were stressed as areas of high priority by the government. At the same time, experts regard the **efficiency of the Decade successful only to a limited extent**.

Please indicate how government has prioritized the following areas of Roma integration

Assisted, scale question with more answers

Base: the number of respondents evaluating the given answers. The lower the mean value after the certain answers, the more the respondents think that the Government regarded the given area as a priority.

	N	Mean
Education	33	1,85
Employment	27	3,67
Housing	29	3,83
Anti-discrimination	29	4,62
Hate crime	27	5,00
Political participation	26	5,15
Anti-poverty	25	5,56
Health	24	5,71
Gender	23	7,43

Based on the results above we can state that **according to the respondents, the Government is primarily active in the area of education (1.9), employment (3.7) and housing (3.8)**. We also asked about the success of the Decade regarding the areas above. We present the results in the table below.

Rank the success of Decade actions over the priority areas!

Assisted, scale question with more answers

Base: the number of respondents evaluating the given answers. The lower the mean value is after the certain answers, the more the respondents think that the Decade was successful in the given area.

	N	Mean
Education	25	3,08
Employment	24	3,58
Health	21	3,81
Equal treatment	26	3,92
Housing	23	4,35
Hate crime	23	5,04
Gender	22	5,14
Anti-poverty	22	5,77

The Decade program was primarily successful in the areas – education and employment - where the government was active as well. However, we can see significant difference regarding health. While the measures of the Decade can be regarded as successful here, according to the respondents, this area rather fades into the background among the governmental priorities.

Besides activity, the question of successfulness is an important question as well. In the table below we present the opinions regarding this issue.

How do you assess the impact of the Decade of Roma Inclusion in your country?

Assisted, scale question with one answer

Base: all respondents, 1=very negative, 5=very positive

	N	Mean
	35	3,21

The respondents rated the effect of the Decade of Roma Inclusion Program as somewhat above medium (3.2).

5.4. Affecting policies and participation in political life

In the questionnaire, there were questions about the cooperation between Roma organizations and the government – more strictly speaking about successfulness and the extent of interest enforcement. After analyzing the data, we can state that **the respondents were critical about the cooperation between the Roma organizations and the government, and the enforcement of the interest of the Roma organizations.** They regard cooperation as not too efficient, and in their view, Roma organizations only have a small voice in the development and implementation of the various policies.

What is the effectiveness of consultation between Roma actors and government?

Assisted question with one answer

Base: all respondents, N=35

	N	%
Very high	0	0,0
High	5	14,3
Low	11	31,4
Very low	11	31,4
No consultation	7	20,0
Don't know	1	2,9

The experts interviewed regarded the cooperation between Roma organizations and the government as not too successful. This can be concluded from the fact that nearly two-thirds of the respondents (63 per cent) indicated the categories „very low” and „low”.

To what degree do Roma organizations have a say in creating Roma-related policy?

Assisted, scale question with one answer, 1=very low, 5=very high

Base: the number of respondents ratable for the given question

	N	Mean
	34	2,15

According to the answers, the Roma actors only have a voice in the development of policies to a small extent (2.2).

To what degree do Roma organizations have a role in implementing Roma-related policies?

Assisted, scale question with one answer, 1=very low, 5=very high

Base: the number of respondents ratable for the given question

<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>
32	2,06

Similarly to the previous question, low mean values (2.1) can be seen in the table above as well. According to the answers, Roma organizations have a limited voice in the implementation of the policies concerning Roma as well.

5.5. Concrete policies

Due to the low number of respondents, among the questions about politics – regarding all areas – we only emphasized three general questions, as **knowledge about the concrete programs was so low that only a few respondents could give answers possible to evaluate regarding them.** In the present summary we only provide the evaluation with words of the results. We present the tables summarizing the data in the Annex.

The respondents interviewed regarded the initiatives implemented in the various areas of policies successful – even if only to a limited extent. This can be concluded from the fact that the majority of the respondents evaluating the areas of education, housing, employment and health thought: the various initiatives contributed to bring about the desired changes to a certain extent.

At the same time, it is less promising that according to the answers, **the level of integration decreased in all areas, while the level of discrimination increased.**

6. The experiences of the expert focus group research

The aim of the focus group research was to examine the activities of the past five years of the Decade primarily by the involvement of national and international experts, based on their opinions voiced on professional meetings. Two group meetings were organized to become acquainted with the experts' knowledge from various areas connected to the Decade. The meetings were held on 15 and 21 January 2010 in Budapest and Pécs.⁹¹ All of the participants of the six and three person groups were professional scholars and politicians involved in Roma integration. The focus group research aimed at examining the efficiency of the past period of the Decade similarly to the questionnaire research, but in a more detailed, comprehensive manner. Besides, possible points of correction and recommendations for increasing the success of the Program are also included. In the following section, the results of the focus group research are presented.

6.1. The perceptions of the Decade

The reasons for developing the program on the one hand are professional in kind and on the other hand are important from the aspect of social cohesion. One of the motivations was the fact that after many attempts in history, the situation of the Roma minority has still not been consolidated. According to the recent research reports and opinion of experts, the Roma population has to face disadvantage and discrimination in the field of education, employment, housing and health.

The other important motivation was, that the increasing part of the majority society more and more intensively declared (for example through political manifestations) that there is no will to live together in a common society in shared social space, and to share common institutions, for example schools with Roma. It was not the first time in history, but in the last 5-10 years this attitude can be seen as even more intensive. The participant countries, among them Hungary, intended to offer solutions for the situation with the tools of the program.

We intend to emphasize that **the order of operation of the now 5 years running program was criticized heavily by the experts. At the same time, it is also sure that the goals of the Program are important, its diplomatic and fund raising potential is unquestionable.** The study does not intend to question the professional work done so far but tries to show what picture the experts contacted had about the Program.

6.1.1. General opinions about the program

At the beginning of the research we were interested in how the experts invited evaluate the Decade. Therefore, we explored what general knowledge, experience can the experts connect to this program. Based on the experiences of the focus group research we can state that **everybody knew the name of the program and its general objectives. At the same time, nobody has come across financial and professional reports, annual partial analyses or statistics concerning the period of implementation of the program.**

Regarding judgments on the program, we mostly found negative perceptions. According to the opinions of the experts interviewed it can be concluded that the essence of the program is obvious: promoting the integration of Roma in different areas. However, according to them, only **mock, illusory action** followed the defined objectives.

⁹¹ We would like to especially thank the Focus and Inhall Ltd in Budapest and the House of Civil Organization in Pécs for providing the room for the meeting.

„The program became like a haunting story, many people talk about it, but nobody saw it. It does not reach the ground. (Group Pécs)

We assume, that it is not the result of the limited knowledge of the researchers, but rather the communication of the results, the **inadequate PR campaigns** (coverage, communication), and the **lack of aligned professional coordination** (control, coordination). Although in the beginning, there was an intensive presence of the program during the professional and social consultation phase, however, since then there is less and less information provided about the program. Presently, there is **no correspondence that would make the transits and possible overlaps between program components clear**, thus creating certain transparency among the various professional fields, ministries and areas of implementation.

“If someone has to account for these goals, he will be in trouble with data collection as well. What will he say? How will he assign numbers to the general objectives?” (Group Pécs)

Exact traceability can be expected from an international project, which has an essential and basic tool: organizing multi level coverage (professional and public). According to the opinions, the lack thereof leads to raising questions concerning the financial situation of program, and make the program be a target of political actors. The experts interviewed feel that **the Program is only a representative, symbolic procedure, and does not provide information about the real actions.**

We also intended to examine the problem by making a small internet research. We googled the words “RIÉP” (the acronym for the Decade of Roma Inclusion in Hungarian) and ‘Roma Évtized’ (Roma Decade) to check the results. The results were a few, professionally poor reports detailed according to years, specialized fields and expenses. The exception is the www.romaweb.hu website, where data are not updated, access is unstructured and accounts are missing. Another website worth mentioning is <http://www.romadecade.org/>, which does not have a Hungarian version. Furthermore, it also does not contain international reports and statistics. These deficiencies can also obstruct the access to information and limit the interest towards.

According to experts, the civil initiative character of the program can be regarded a mistake, since **the voluntary nature makes the reporting difficult**, while also assimilating forced programs can be included in the Decade that do not serve the original objectives (for example the Slovakian housing program). According to the opinion of the experts, the problem could have been eliminated by having the following two conditions simultaneously:

1. By drafting an unambiguous **professional, explanatory fundamental document** (Preamble on Roma Integration), that should have been provided for the governments in the beginning as a point of reference.⁹²
2. By establishing **an independent steering organization**, the responsibility of which would be to find the people in charge, define a clear scope of duties and competences, make those in charge keep the deadlines, make them report, synthesize these reports and publish them in several languages.

Independently from the criticism, **positive aspects of the program can be identified**. According to feedback, it is an important merit of the Decade that it draws public attention to Roma inclusion, to the untenable living situation of Roma people. Besides, it is a positive result that referencing the Decade became an aspect impossible to evade in governmental program drafting concerning integration, Roma politics, and that it achieved international attention.

⁹² Although it would not be legally binding, in the continental legal practice, a preamble can be referenced while making decisions as a source that signals the intentions and the objectives of the initiatives proposed.

“It is referred to a lot. My first experience is that if someone asks what to do in the field of Roma inclusion, the program comes to my mind at once.” (Group Budapest)

6.1.2. Recommendations on the efficiency of the program

Efficiency means whether the program operates well, whether it executes its tasks the best, professional way in accordance with its possibilities. The results of a program can be demonstrated and understood primarily by numbers, statistics. However, the experts interviewed did not really encounter such documents.

We asked the experts invited to **give recommendations on overcoming the most urgent problems setting back the inclusion program**. These are not program points developed in great detail (which cannot be expected at focus group discussions), still the opinions can be used for appointing new directions, new areas to develop in further thinking about the program. Without order of importance but indicating the areas, we enumerate the topics the interviewees raised:

- **Missing minimum standards in the area of integration:** according to the interviewees the program lacks content as it is the sovereign right of the given countries with what they fill it up. Notions, concepts are not defined, principles are not set, and the program also suffers from methodological deficiencies. This can be a source of danger as if there is no program content there is nothing to be called to account for. Besides, the principles developed can also protect the professional leaders as in case of their existence, there is no option to act different from these bases – with good intentions, but with little professionalism - in the name of the Decade.
- **Definition of the basic standard in education:** educational institutions should have a basic standard regarding the buildings, infrastructure, supply in teachers and competence. Segregation could be moderated this way as well, as this approach strives to create equal conditions in the educational market, and supposedly less parents would take their children to other schools.
- **Admitting Roma into public work programs and social service:** the development of equal opportunity plans the field of employment similar to the ones for overcoming segregation in education is necessary, that would be developed for the county, regional, micro-regional and local governments. The point of this is that Roma work force should not be excluded from public work programs, following a developed system of conditions, their employment would be obligatory.⁹³ Besides, such social programs are needed that really accept Roma too.
- **Mobility, with the development of the housing market and the system of tenement flats:** the spatial location and mobility of Roma in segregated settlements – and together with this the big part of the unemployed – should be assisted. The improvement of the tenement flat system and the compensation for inequalities in the housing market could be an efficient tool for decreasing the disproportionately high differences between the prices of flats between the western and eastern parts of the country as well as the better or more equal degree of supply of human resources of the employment centres having unequal capacity for absorption.

⁹³ One aim of the latest modification of the Act on Public Education was increasing the equality of opportunities in the area of education. Therefore the Ministry for Education and Culture would establish a national network with training of professionals the aim of which is that with the help of trained professionals, at the local governments Equal opportunities plans would be developed taking into account local peculiarities regarding education/training.

- **Rural development and Roma inclusion:** as the majority of Roma in Hungary live rural areas – many of them in the most disadvantaged areas –, in the future the inclusion Roma integration in the work of rural development offices is necessary.
- **The reform of the local governmental system:** the reform of public administration should be connected to Roma inclusion in the future. According to the participants the local governments abuse the great degree of the present freedom for decision.
- **Restoring the damaged safeguarding of interests:** its goal is safeguarding the interests of Roma, raising questions regarding Roma inclusion and informing the public.

6.1.3. Recommendations on improving the success of the Decade

The international situation of the Roma differs in such a wide range that it makes it impossible to find solutions to their problems and define common policies on what can be applied for each participating country to improve their situation. Because of the heterogeneity and internal differentiation of the domestic Roma population, a differentiated integration strategy is needed in Hungary for promoting the social inclusion of Roma. Furthermore, in Hungary – according to expert opinions - **the Roma specific problems are not only Roma problems**. Obviously, the Roma minority is overrepresented among the affected people, but if we define these problems as purely a Roma problem, we will not be able to assign the adequate tools.

Still, there are tools that can affect the question of integration successfully. We asked the participating experts to think of methods, program components or directions that increase efficiency, with the utilization of which mostly the Roma population can be reached and that facilitate successful program implementation. The participants raised the following issues:

- **Minimum standards again:** first of all, a degree of integration needs to be determined.
- **Formal and professional monitoring:** according to the opinions, a good monitoring system examines legal, procedural, financial and professional meeting the requirements simultaneously. This condition can mean that without its adaptation, the implementers of tenders/programs can feel that accounting is irresponsible, thus it is not worth wasting much energy on the program itself either, which makes the output side rather questionable.
- **Roma inclusion should be followed by general socio-political reforms:** a program like the Decade can only function if targeted and colour-blind programs operate simultaneously and the effort for integration affects the core of the social structure, the whole of social policy. Micro-programs can have short term results at a local level, but they cannot change e.g. the deficiencies of the labour market or the questions of residential or educational segregation decisively.
- **One of the most important organizational forces in society is labour:** the internal differences of the Roma population of Hungary require a differentiated employment strategy. On the one hand, with the development of incubation programs e.g. public employment can become the engine of employment. On the other hand, the development of social economy and systems for enterprise development; and professional facilitation building on these measures but having a characteristic of primary labour market can bring results.⁹⁴

⁹⁴ The incubative and building on social economy character of employment can be justified by that gradual transition from living on social assistance to being employed through trainings, provision of supported work places, and individually determined development strategy can be useful.

- **Centralized professional and financial governance and monitoring, decentralized implementation:** the development of decentralized system of distribution with county level or regional centres building on demands constructed, collected from the ground level is recommended. At the same time, an organization for central professional and financial control is important as well that exercises supervision above the given programs.
- **Reacting to local peculiarities:** It is not always effective to copy a methodology and adapt it immediately, because it worked at some place else. It always has to be set to be in accordance with the given environment, the local (micro-regional or regional) peculiarities.
- **Provision of expert and Roma representation free from politics:** politically independent experts and Roma participants should be included in all levels of program development and implementation.
- **Legal framework possible to conform to:** the conditions provided by the legal background can also be the key questions of an inclusion program, because even the best ideas can disappear if there is an environment, a legal framework that leaves loopholes from the requirements of implementation.
- **The role of the media and starting social discourses:** the participants also regarded the role of the media important. It is the responsibility of the professional organization exercising obligation for information to communicate about Roma in an objective way and regarding integration through positive examples and success by using the media.

6.2. Presentation of the tendencies of the four pillars – indicating the priority areas

We also asked the opinion of the experts about the problems and the possible points for correction of the four priority areas of the Decade - education, employment, housing and health. In the following section, we shortly present the main opinions.

6.2.1. Education

Ethnic segregation is becoming more and more widespread in public education. Segregation is a symptom of the fact Hungarian public education became severely unequal. Though structural reforms began, still, in the area of educational integration of Roma, there are no visible results.

According to the experts asked, the segregational problems of public education cannot be described solely with the terminology of equal opportunities and desegregation. From the opinions it can be outlined that inequalities in schools, even segregation are not created by local governments, but they are the by-products of the educational system. Local governments can worsen the situation, but cannot fully improve it, as municipalities can only desegregate to a point until which the parental and educational groups powerful in the educational market allow them.

Based on the answers, we can conclude that reform steps should be continued at primary education. Besides, parents also should be made interested: together with children, the inclusion of adults should also be made possible. This can happen with the modernization of the traditional National Qualifications Register - with the correction of the structural imperfections of the training system; through labour market service programs, or in primary education by motivating through the children.

6.2.2. Employment

According to the experts interviewed, the present employment system is suffering from many problems. The question is also made more difficult by the weak national economy and the structural problems of vocational education. On the one hand, the educational system of the National Qualifications Register should be strengthened, that is, it should not occur that maid, sewer or park maintenance trainings are launched in areas where there already are many, presently unemployed people that participated in similar trainings before. The other chance is increasing the inner mobility, e.g. with the reform of the tenement flat system and assistance of migration adjusting to the capacity of the employment centres to absorb the workforce. The third possible solution is the assistance of international migration, that is, the state should help those with low educational levels to find employment abroad after receiving training (in this case the member of the family living abroad supports the family staying at home by his or her income).

According to other opinions, the state should make a decision to take more drastic steps, if it really would like to have efficient employment programs from the aspect of Roma inclusion: only positive discrimination can be the adequate tool. According to the representatives of this opinion, in areas where the work places, public institutions are at the state's disposal (e.g. public health, educational institutions, other organs of public administration), and there is shortage at work force, first of all Roma should be trained and employed. To achieve this, it would be essential that the state supports the target group by paying for the training and travel costs, and at the end of the program, it should provide employment for several years for those having successful examinations, and also assist easing the housing problems.

A problem also affecting Roma is the question of employment and social assistance. Regarding this issue, a standpoint was articulated that as in Europe active inclusion, - that is, binding aid to conditioning – is a common practice. However, this requirement is embedded in such a policy environment that is able to mobilize groups that are the farthest from the labour market. This way those permanently unemployed or those difficult to employ do not simply register in the employment centres but in a given case the employer side also gains advantages: e.g. in their case the burden on employers can be reduced by allowances.⁹⁵ Active inclusion could be functioning in Hungary as well.

At the same time, the issues of market actors, motivating employers, whitening black labour, systems for the motivation and development of enterprises, methodological/managing centres for assisting employment did not come up.

6.2.3. Housing

There are two possible ways for the solution of the problem of residential segregation: coordinated eliminations of segregated settlements and in parallel the reform of the tenement flat system. The first already operates in Hungary with a certain level of success. In the case of the latter, e.g. operating hostels could provide a solution, institutions that are similar to worker's hostels, but are more humane, comfortable even for families.

6.2.4. Health

The most important issue is the damage in the opportunity for equal access to services that presents itself in basic- and specialized service as well. This problem concerns the reform of the general medical service system: it is a question the organization of basic health service.

Poverty and especially poverty affecting Roma is a more and more rural phenomenon apparent in

⁹⁵ Such programs have already been launched in Hungary by the National Employment Foundation.

small villages. In the most disadvantaged areas medical service is not properly organized. It is a general phenomenon that there is one G.P. in every four-five villages, and according to the experts interviewed, specialist's offices or screening spots are even more difficult to reach. (In many cases, families cannot cover the costs for getting in). Moreover, the district nurses' often cater for 250-300 people. This fritters the work of the district nurses to such an extent that they do not reach everyone. For appropriate medical service these phenomena have to be changed.

Besides, it is important to improve the general health condition which is connected to housing circumstances. But discrimination experienced in service is also waiting to be solved, which affects the quality of catering to a great degree, making second-class patients from Roma people.

Moreover, maybe the most important problem is how the unemployed - Roma are also present among them to a great extent – can be provided with health insurance

Besides the four pillars, the interviewees also found valid a general, comprehensive anti-discrimination principle to come across that would appear as an obligatory principle in all areas. Thus it the protection of human beings would become the most important principle: that is, the strengthening of the rights and institutions connected to discrimination-free life is a fundamental task.

6.3. The role of the Decade in the integration of Roma

It is important to mention that many decrees refer to the Decade of Roma Inclusion without "*knowing what its content really is*". The objective of this was to validate the program at the international level, and through referencing make synchronization possible. We collected the most important aspects regarding the role of the Decade as seen by the members of the focus groups:

- Without minimum standards and methodology the development plans may not reach their goals. The Program has an important role in their development;
- An important role of the program would be to promote the bringing together of cultures;
- The Program could be an important tool for reducing prejudice;
- It can raise diplomatic and social awareness.

We were interested in how the experts invited see: will the Decade be able to think big? The answers were positive in all cases, but for this the OSI and other supporters of the program need to exercise self-criticism: "*What does not work needs to be precisely cut out, and we should not deceive non-Roma and Roma.*"

According to the opinions, until the government does not start to enforce the principle of antidiscrimination, desegregation and inclusion, results cannot be expected from sporadic programs. Political will and an effective work of a professional team necessary for this is also lacking.

6.4. The possible role of Open Society Institute in the integration of Roma

The Open Society Institute is still seen as a proper actor to manage the program, because it is apolitical, but possesses diplomatic influence, and by developing and applying the preliminary designed protocols and standards it should continue the coordination of the programs. Besides, the experts suggest strengthening its role in the following areas:

- International procuration (coordination and EU promotion of interest);
- Steering of the national operative teams;

- Developing the monitoring and reporting system (e.g. drafting protocols, strengthening the role of monitoring organizations);
- Providing coverage.

The OSI obviously has played an important diplomatic role in these fields.

„This is an important step, that the OSI and others could reach that this is accepted at the European level. It is not yet accountable, since there is no monitoring built in. But it is an essential step, the topic cannot be neglected anymore. (Group Budapest)

At the same time the doubt appeared that while the diplomatic conciliation and international coordination tasks were dealt with, the development of implementation was neglected in the last period. **In spite of the small diplomatic successes in order to be more effective, the OSI should play a more characteristic role in the program management in the future.** There are two opportunities:

1. According to some opinions, **the OSI would be able to work own its own**, since it possesses international influence and network to be able to manage even such an extensive program. In this case, externalities towards governments can occur during the legal, implementation, and legitimizing aspirations.

2. At the same time, according to the opinion of the majority, a more realistic opportunity would be **to harmonize the international civil initiative and the governments**, in which the OSI would manage the program as the coordinator of an umbrella organization but with more dominant interest enforcement. After defining the minimum standards concerning the four pillars, the OSI would make the national governments guarantee the observation of these standards.

In the latter case, the OSI should strengthen its procuration role, since some of the member states' competencies would be transferred the EU institutions in order to be more effective in the implementation of the common issues.⁹⁶ On the one hand, the UN based on the cooperation of national governments; on the other hand, the European Commission could be a forum through which the topic could be introduced and strengthened in the community politics.

According to the interviewees, by the assistance of OSI the relevant institutions of the European Union should pressure the member states. It should enforce the defined minimum standards; and by its financial role it should strengthen the monitoring system.

6.5. Expectations from the continuation of the Decade

At the end, we were interested in what kind of professional standards and requirements would be set by the experts if they had the opportunity to finish and restart the program. We asked the interviewees to make proposals in relation to their own special professional fields. As a result an integrated approach was designed, which correlates the different Roma related social phenomena from the aspect of different disciplines in their cultural and historical context. By stressing constructive cooperation and further actions, the requirements toward the program were defined as follows.

⁹⁶ In principle the European Commission can initiate new legal provisions. These new legal norms should be implemented and enforced by the Commission and the member states. Two other institution possess important tools: The Court, which supervises and controls the European legal norms, and the Court of Auditors, which controls the activities from financial aspect.

- **Designing preliminary standards:** According to feedback, this is a basic shortcoming of the program
- **Defining social, socio-economic indexes and indicators:** The Decade would be more than a good PR program if it would set professionally reasonable, real indicators at least concerning Hungary.
- **Annual professional and formal monitoring:** the involvement of civil professional Roma in the monitoring committees is an essential element which would ensure legitimacy
- **Publishing good and bad practices annually:** Hungary has better results in comparison to the neighbouring countries. The situation of the Roma minority –except Sweden - is better than in the other 12 participating countries, thus it would be reasonable if we showed good practices in the international sphere.
- **Launch discussions on Roma integration and a democratic civil movement:** Developing bottom up initiatives regarding Roma integration, social cohesion at the local level; articulating the initiatives, interests more effectively, which would generate the development and implementation of more responsible, professionally valid, financially sustainable action programs.
- **Enforcing the legal principles regarding anti-discrimination by setting sanctions:** An integrated legal principle which sets sanctions ensures the legal dissuasive power to limit ethnicity, gender, skill or health based discrimination in Hungary.
- **Establishing a multilevel multidisciplinary cooperating professional team:** It would be essential to establish from each country an informal, practice oriented professional team that ensures the legitimacy of the program by the involvement of three dimensions: governmental, academic, and Roma interest representation. These working groups would be responsible for political coordination and professional steering.
- **Involvement of the relevant institutions of the European Union to have a more effective lobby and to ensure the legitimacy the program**
- **Serious governmental and political commitment:** National politics should present a clear and committed governmental program to promote Roma integration.

7. The experience of the in depth interview research

According to preliminary agreements, we conducted five interviews with people between the age of 18-55, participating in the integration process or programs: thus being the beneficiaries of one of the integration programs. We would like to present the climate of opinions, even though far-reaching conclusions cannot be drawn from five interviews. We reached the interviewees with the assistance of organizations implementing and/or organizing integration programs.

In the following section we present the detailed findings of the in-depth interviews.

7.1. Socio-demographic pressure

It can be stated, that even in deep poverty or in the case of inhabitants of segregated housing environments, there are opportunities to break out, even though these are full of challenges and need enormous efforts from every member of the family. What also makes the breaking out difficult is the fact that regarding geographical and professional mobility, there is a great probability that improvement will be observed only after generations. It is assumed that the way the parents manage their own or their children's lives is connected with their commitment and generosity.

„Everybody lives in Budapest. Although there was a background to begin with that my grandparents came to Pest from the country to get out of the ghetto. I think that is almost impossible nowadays. That is why I am lucky.”

It was reported by every interviewee that leaving the segregated Roma settlement brought radical changes to the life of the family that was characterized by slow, challenging progress and a different lifestyle compared to their previous conditions. They also reported that the status quo of the segregated settlements blocks many people from moving forward on their own. These failures evoke depression and limit their opportunities and vision concerning the future to the maintenance of the minimal living conditions.

We also observed that **the education of the parents does not by all means influence the chances of their children** since in most cases the parents only finished the 6th -8th grade of primary school. In the families this depends rather on solidarity, generous attitude for the future of the children, wilder network of relations and motivation.

„For us there were cases when there was no food, but the girl had to go to high school. You cannot let yourself not care, you need persistence.”

An external financial or other kind of support or supportive organization besides the support of the parents and relatives is very determining from the aspect of the carrier of the child. This supportive attitude is (also) necessary concerning the breakthrough.

„Scholarship programs are needed, because the parents cannot finance the education of the children. If the child is not spirited and does not represents his or her interests effectively, it can be very difficult get through the barriers, like paying the tuition fees.”

7.2. Evaluation of the programs

Although the programs evaluated by the interviewees were very different, we tried to focus on the common opinions, feedback and values.

7.2.1. Colour-blind employment programs with weak involvement of the labour market

The main value of the program on the one hand is that the participants became registered again, and they start participating in trainings, that is, they can have the access to the labour market at the lowest level of reintegration. **Even the programs with minimal involvement of the labour market** (providing consultations and services, but providing no job opportunity) have positive influence. Common feature observed is that the participant's employment aspiration does no longer tend towards the black market.

The employment and consultation opportunities give motivations and a more optimistic vision concerning the future for the participants. Although no employment opportunities are ensured, the program develops a better self-estimation of the individual.

„ If people are looking for a job, it matters how they are experiencing their every-day lives, for example not going anywhere, not feeling like doing anything, or trying. ”

7.2.2. Targeted employment and training program with strong involvement of the labour market

Stable and regular employment (permanent employment) and the extension of the social network and its quality is **a hopeful phase** compared to the previous unemployment phase. The participants of such programs compared to those who do not participate have a more optimistic vision for the future and count on moving away from living on social assistance.

„It was great for me; I shouldn't have stayed at home. It was very bad even for my soul. It was like rebirth: I was studying, occupied my brain; we have a house, I work. I liked to learn. ”

Those who participated in the program became more open for studying, development, and formed strong requirements of studying towards their children.

7.2.3. Colour-blind nursing (child care service) program

The program provided more individual and flexible child care, based on skill and capacity development instead of infant's nursery. Professional work according to the individual child-centred approach, in micro groups with the active involvement of the parents was seen very positive. It prepares the children for social life, developing the basic habits, and at the same time, the value system of the parents can also change together with the children, and the experts can help to solve their problems.

„It is good mentally. I calmed down, I can talk to people. I can share my problems with professionals, they help, and I am open with them. Before, I couldn't be that relaxed, it makes my life and my social relations easier. So they help not just the children but the parents as well. It works well, they involve the parents together with the children. It would be too much to educate the parents separately, I would not do that. For me it is better to be together and to try to solve our problems together. ”

7.2.4. Targeted education program with talent management

By a complex program which provides educational and financial support, **young Roma get the chance on the one hand to be involved in talent management and on the other hand as in the model of Anglo-Saxon universities to establish an intensive social life and network.** The program and the related activities help strengthen a positive vision for the future and help produce highly educated, foreign language speaking Roma intellectuals. According to the interviewees this contributes to demolishing the negative stereotypes affecting Roma, and strengthens their socially

responsible role.

When we asked about the expectations with which the interviewees started the program or what kind of problem they were searching a solution for by participating, we encountered similar climates of opinions. Two main features were social network and professional development.

„ I was looking for a community to belong to, not a solution to a problem. I do not expect anything. Of course there is a certain desire in me that if they support us for 4-5 year, then I should give back something. But they don't expect us to fight for the Roma, it is not a requirement. On the other hand they expect us to finish school and be good professionals. They helped us in that with many tools. You can do something for the Roma community in any profession, you don't have to sit in a ministry to help.”

7.3. Vision for the future

In all cases, the vision of the parents regarding their children was not only defined by lifestyle, but by basic social values.

„I would like to make sure, that nothing like my past happens to him. I would like to provide everything in education and life as well. He is still young, but I have plans: lawyer, policeman, or something like this, but becoming a nurse or a doctor is also good. It is important to have goals in his work. To be successful in the future.”

In the younger age groups the **need to have opportunity for individual development has been articulated as an internal expectation as well.** We also discovered regarding the employment programs that for the parents not just the future of their children but also their own carrier became important.

“I couldn't find a job own my own. Here, the Office doesn't help. The program also offered financial help, so I called off the maternity benefit for which I was entitled because of the work. We received decent salary, it was more important for me. It is better, because I would have received around 28.000. HUF, now I receive minimal wage.

The ideas about the importance of employment and carrier dominated in the case of all participants of the employment programs, but the interviewees also emphasized the importance of school and learning. **It can be stated that the expectations of the participants who got out of the segregated living situation are getting more positive and promising.**

„It is very important that they go to school, because what was not given to me, is given to them. I am strict with them because they have to study.”

8. Case Studies

Three case studies were conducted for the illustration of the programs implemented in the framework of the governmental measures. During research, interviews were taken with the people responsible for the implementation of the given program about the experiences gained during the execution of the projects. In the field of education, the example of the Sure Start program in Józsefváros; in the field of employment, the realization of the training and employment of unemployed Roma in institutions of public education program in Szendrőlád; while in the field of housing, the project of the housing and social integration program for people living in segregated Roma settlements and settlement-like environment in Szomolya are analyzed. However, it is important to state that the programs examined in most cases intend to provide a solution to the problems of the Roma minority in Hungary by a multi-dimensional, complex approach.

8.1. Sure Start Program (Biztos Kezdet Program)⁹⁷ in Józsefváros

The case study concerning the area of education intends to describe an example of the Sure Start Children's Centers, the program of the Józsefváros Joint Day Nurseries. For the introduction of the initiative, interviews were conducted with Ms. Ferencné Scheer, the principal of the the Józsefváros Joint Day Nurseries, the head of the local program and Ms. Léna Szilvási, the professional manager of the central Sure Start program.

8.1.1. The beginning of the Sure Start programs

The Sure Start programs in Hungary followed the examples of the programs in England. The Sure Start was introduced in the United Kingdom in 1999 targeting disadvantaged children between the age of 0 and 4 as well as their families for the reduction of child poverty and the social exclusion of children.⁹⁸ They try to facilitate the physical, intellectual and social development of infants and children by direct engagement with the children and their parents. The Sure Start directs special attention to providing the well-being and the health of children equally before and after their birth.⁹⁹

The first projects in Hungary were introduced in 2004, when pilot programs were launched in 5 different types of settlements and micro-regions (Ózd, Vásárosnamény and six partner settlements, Budapest Józsefváros, Csurgó and Órtilos). In 2005, the township of Katymár and Győr also joined the initiative. Given the experience of the results of the pilot programs, 52 new programs started in 2007, mostly in settlements with a population over 2000.

In the same year, the National Program to Combat Child Poverty was created that developed the "Should Be Better for the Children" national strategy. Certain components of the strategy adopted in 2007 were realized in the program entitled the "Give Kids a Chance" project of the New Hungary Development Plan (Új Magyarország Fejlesztési Terv -ÚMFT). The project - the implementer of which was the Institute for Social Policy and Labor and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences National Program Office against Child Poverty, which also drafted the strategy¹⁰⁰ - includes the

⁹⁷ The Sure Start programs do not target Roma specifically but intend to help those living in the deepest poverty, thus in the areas targeted the rate of the Roma population is numerous. However, it is also important that the Children's Centres are open to all families of the settlements raising small children, this ways aiming at achieving integration. „The Sure Start program is not a Roma program but a program against child poverty.” Interview with Léna Szilvási.

⁹⁸ The need for the establishment of the centers is given by the social and economical changes occurred since the transition as besides the unemployment of the parents with low educational levels, child poverty is also intensified by the lack of access to services the isolation of disadvantaged settlements or parts of settlements. This lack of services is especially significant in the case of institutions working with small children.

⁹⁹ *Biztos Kezdet Program – 2007*. Konferencia, available at:

<http://www.szmm.gov.hu/main.php?folderID=16364>

¹⁰⁰ The consortium partnership of the two institutions also means that 11 Children's Centers are located in micro-regions where the program office has started or will start complex programs.

development of complex, micro-regional programs dealing with the entire childhood as well as the professional support of the Children's Centers. The implementation of the programs of the Sure Start Children's Centers is financed by an EU fund, TÁMOP 5.2.2.

Altogether 35 Sure Start Children's Centers started operating in Hungary in the fall of 2009. The local programs are assisted, coordinated and controlled from a professional and methodological point of view by the "Give Kids a Chance" project. The aim of the Children's Centers is **the provision of services for the children of families living in disadvantaged settlements or parts of settlements under difficult circumstances which contribute to their later success in school.**¹⁰¹ This way the long term objective is the elimination of child poverty existing in Hungary.

8.1.2. The Sure Start program in Józsefváros

The population of the district named Józsefváros fell from 85.194 people in 1998 to 71.075 people in 2007. The backwardness of the buildings compared to the average in Budapest is significantly more robust. The rate of flats without all mod cons was 24 per cent in the 2001 in the district, while in Budapest this rate was 9.8 per cent. The average age of the inhabitants of the district is lower than in other parts of the capital, and the educational level of the population – both regarding the number of those having higher education level and those who having at least completed primary school– also falls behind the average in Budapest.¹⁰²

The institution of the Józsefváros Joint Day Nurseries was invited as one of the five beneficiaries of the Sure Start pilot program to develop the project for the big city, housing estate program. The 5 day nurseries are managed by a joint professional and economic management. The base institutions of the Sure Start pilot program were the two day nurseries in the housing estates of Baross Street, where altogether 136 children between the age of 0 and 3 partook in the services of the program. Later, from the spring of 2007, the Sure Start Club established in the new seat of the institution also became engaged in the work. The club provides programs every day between 8:30 and 12:00 for the 12 mothers and their children who do not attend day nurseries and who live in the area of the Magdolna quarter. The average age of the children is 18 months.”

Participating in the Sure Start program primarily meant committing to its philosophy. Thus the aim of those working in the program was assisting upbringing in the family, compensating for the possible deficiencies, supporting the parents and strengthening their roles, facilitating the establishment and development of parental self-help groups, providing the necessary information about programs, concentrated cooperation with partner organizations, the continuous training of professionals participating in the program and the dissemination of the Sure Start approach among the staff of the nurseries and partner organizations.

One of the main innovations of the program was its focus on and involvement of the parents. “*We let the moms in, and this remained this way until today.*”¹⁰³ They focused on the improvement of the skills of the parents and on transmitting information. Instead of donations they established a “tool lender” as a free service. “*We do not collect for charity, there is no food donation, we give intellectual ammunition.*”¹⁰⁴ From the self-help shelf everyone could take what they needed and could bring in what they did not use anymore.

During the pilot program, the employees engaged in the question of the development of the children as an additional task, in a more concentrated form during their everyday work. **They participated**

¹⁰¹ *Mi a Biztos Kezdet Gyerekház?* (2010), available at:

<http://www.biztoskezdet.hu/site/doc/section/7/id/56>

¹⁰² Scheer F. (2009) *Biztos Kezdet Budapestben, a Józsefvárosban*, manuscript.

¹⁰³ Interview with Ferencné Scheer

¹⁰⁴ Interview with Ferencné Scheer

in continuous trainings on a monthly basis for 2-3 years. The training consisted of passing on information about the education of children with a learning disability, on nationality, sociology, and in the last year of the discussion of the cases perceived by them. The trainings were executed by attendants, nurses and assisting professionals from the staff of the day nurseries asked for this additional task. Furthermore, the previously also employed early complex check-up and development assisting program continued, that measured the motional, mental, communicational and linguistic development of the young children before and during the program.

The pilot program received a yearly 2-3 million HUF in the first years, and after 2006 it received a 1.5 million HUF funding. *“Naturally, everyone worked out of sheer love, this amount was only enough for research and the material requirements.”*¹⁰⁵ After the three year long pilot program, due to the decrease in governmental resources, they practically continued their operation from their own resources. According to Léna Szilvási, the experiences of the pilot programs show that **the minimal and unpredictable central financing was not sufficient for these programs to operate really well.** *“We saw exactly that with haphazard financing it cannot be expected to implement a serious program of high quality in the settlements. However, we also saw that there are local resources to mobilize and that with appropriate professional assistance these initiatives can be governed to the right pass. There is need and there is demand.”*¹⁰⁶

8.1.3. The Children’s Center in Józsefváros

The essence of the Sure Start Children’s Centers is the provision of personal and material conditions for the children that make it possible for them to develop their skills. Besides, the program aims at the inclusion of the parents by assisting them professionally in bringing up their children. The Centers also intend to be involved in the life of the settlements they are in, as they regard the *development of the children as the responsibility of the entire community.*¹⁰⁷ The cooperation of the various professionals of different fields of child care is also important for the more efficient work. The fact, that **the Centers are for free, open for everyone and are in an independent building** also offers opportunities for the communities for a common spaces that differ from the ordinary ways of how people – e.g. professional nurses and parents – interact.

The present project started in October 2009. After three months of preparation, the programs were launched in January 2010, and the training also fell behind time: it lasted until the middle of February 2010. Józsefváros won 40 million HUF funding for 30 months. This amount covers the salary of three employees, working for 8, one for 6 and one for 4 hours – one important feature of the program is that one employee has to be the member of the community the Center targets. The employees received a 180 hours long professional training provided by the central program and a mentor assigned also helps their work with consultations.

The day nurseries are open from 6 in the morning till 6 in the evening, while the compulsory opening hours of the Children’s Centers are 4-5 hours every morning. It is not obligatory however, to be present constantly or to come in every day. At the Children’s Center in Józsefváros the mothers arrive every day until 9 o’clock and stay until noon.

Twelve mothers visit the Children’s Center regularly with their children, the average age of whom is 20 months. Generally, 5-6 parents come in every day, the others attend 2-3 times a week. The advantage of the city is that the kids leave from here to day nurseries or kindergartens, therefore it is manageable, that even though the age group of the program are children before school-age, children over 3 do not participate in the programs, thus there are no big age differences. Drop-out is rare, it

¹⁰⁵ Interview with Ferencné Scheer

¹⁰⁶ Interview with Léna Szilvási

¹⁰⁷ Interview with Léna Szilvási

occurs in 1 or 2 cases a year. Major conflicts have not emerged and the minor ones are discussed by the participants on the spot.

8.1.4. The evaluation of the Sure Start Program in Józsefváros

Work started in the Józsefváros Children's Center in January 2010, thus only the experiences of previous programs can be summarized. Mrs. Ferencné Scheer regards the Sure Start program efficient as according to her, the engagement in the programs itself gives a certain plus to the families. She believes that everything helps that is information or a model, and the fact that the mothers break free for a short time from the mentally and physically bad conditions assists both the child and the family. According to the results of the continuous surveys conducted by the staff of the program¹⁰⁸ examining the social, mental and motional development level of the children, it is astonishing that the percentage of children falling behind significantly in development compared to the average is between 10-26 per cent. By the increasing of the age, the number of children showing signs of developmental backwardness increases as well.¹⁰⁹ Before getting in the Sure Start program, children between the age of 0 and 2 mostly fall behind in motional development, while children between the age of 2 and 4 in speech development and in the area of independence. However, **experience shows that early recognition and proper personal and material conditions and agenda, a significant degree of development can begin.** Out of the children examined, 3.13 per cent was not ready for school in September 2007, and 1.5 per cent in September 2008, compared to the data of the district Educational Council, according to which the rate of children not ready for school in the district was 9-11 per cent. We cannot draw far reaching conclusions from the research due to the small size of the sample, but present data show that the sooner children start the program, the smaller their later developmental disadvantages will be.

The interviewees regarded the continuation of the programs and long term planning important. In the life of the Children's Centers, the three years long funding period is only enough for the ripening of the program, this is the amount of time needed for winning over the community and for the co-workers to reach confidence. However, for successful professional work a lot more time is needed. The question is what will happen with the Centers after the funding period comes to an end. Though long-term commitment is guaranteed by the professional managers of the program, *“for continuous sustainability, political struggles have to be fought.”*¹¹⁰ The presently prevailing two year action plan falls due in 10 months,¹¹¹ and only intentions and promises were articulated about the following period. However, such insecurity has a negative effect on the present programs as well.¹¹² The staff of the central program regard the acquisition of the political will their task as well.

Besides its continuation, the interviewees also regarded the mainstreaming of the program necessary. The staff of the central program is presently involved in brainstorming about the spreading of the initiative. According to Mrs. Scheer, such programs should not only target categorically disadvantaged children, but also the children of families of higher social status. The children of these families will have the same developmental problems, only because of different

¹⁰⁸ In the first two years the conditions of the children participating in the program were studied by questionnaires, then the data of 134 families of 146 children attending kindergarten in 2004 and 2005 and coming of the age of school enrolment in 2007 and 2008. About the educational qualifications of the parents we can state that 57 percent of the mothers and 58 per cent of the fathers had completed primary school – the 8 grades. 50 per cent of the mothers and 54 per cent of the fathers was actively employed.

¹⁰⁹ Scheer F. (2009) Biztos Kezdet Budapest, a Józsefvárosban, manuscript.

¹¹⁰ Interview with Léna Szilvási

¹¹¹ Written in February 2010.

¹¹² An additional problem mentioned was the strict requirements for application – paying the overhead expenses of the houses from own sources and agreeing to maintain the house for one year after the funding period – stopped the most disadvantaged settlements from applying. There were also problems stemming from inappropriate budget plans that proved to be difficult to change as it needed the agreement of the donor organizations.

reasons. For the engrossed play of the children an environment is needed that provides some sort of constancy. *“When I started my career, an old paediatrician told me that the road to hell is paved with good intention and the damage we cause to children out of ignorance, even with good intentions, cannot be seen immediately. If it would be seen at once, we would not do it.”*¹¹³

8.2. The training and employment of unemployed Roma in institutions of public education program in Szendrőlád

The program was implemented in the local primary school, it included the employment and training of two Roma staff members for six years. For this case study, Ms. Andrásné Rőczei, the vice-principal of the school participating in the program as well as one of the implementers, and Ms. Andrea Maródiné Ádám, one of the beneficiaries of the program were interviewed.

8.2.1. The environment in Szendrőlád

Szendrőlád is located in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County, in the North Hungarian region, in a multiply disadvantaged area. The population of the settlement is 1879 people, and according to the estimations of the employees of the local government, 70-80 per cent of them are Roma. There is water and electricity in all streets of the township, gas is available in almost all streets.

The rate of unemployment is 80 per cent, opportunities for employment can only be found in the kindergarten, the school, the local government and the twilight home. **The local Roma can only find employment as public workers. Besides, few of them work in the local forestry or go to other settlements.** Due to mortgage credit several people found themselves in debt, and the institution of usury is also functioning. Besides the school, the local Roma minority self-government and the Bhim Rao Association is active in the field of the improvement of the situation of Roma. The association operates a tanoda (day-school) and plans to open a summer day-boarder in May 2010.

The institution implementing the program analyzed is the Day-boarder Kindergarten and Elementary School of Szendrőlád. Presently, 355 children study in the school. **There are solely Roma students, the non-Roma children attend the school in Edelény.** Out of the students 44 are children with special needs. These children study in integrated classes in junior school. Besides, they also participate in the separate development classes as required by law. The students from senior classes still study in separate classes. Besides the presently analyzed program, the school is also active in the field of applying for and implementing other tenders.

8.2.2. Launching the program

The program supporting the training and employment of Roma in institutions of public education was developed by the Roma Office of the Prime Minister’s Office in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, the Education Research Institute and the National Employment Foundation (OFA). The initiative aimed at utilizing an integrated approach that intended **to help entering the labour market by taking into account the problems stemming from disadvantaged socio-economical situation.** The program supported unemployed Roma having completed primary school that took upon working in an employment relation during the period of the program, and acquire the necessary basic educational qualifications for the professional qualification – the 10th grade or secondary school graduation – and receive qualifications from the National Training Registry.¹¹⁴ Qualifications from the Registry could be taken as youth helper, pedagogical assistant, and child or

¹¹³ Interview with Ferencné Scheer

¹¹⁴ Országos Foglalkoztatási Közalapítvány (2003) *Pályázati dokumentáció – A roma származású munkanélküliek közoktatási intézményekben történő foglalkoztatása és képzése, (RKF/2003)*, available at: http://www.ofa.hu/index.php?WG_NODE=WebPalyazatok&WG_OID=PALfe3690f65cc3128a9

youth supervisor.

The projects started in the summer of 2003 and depending on the period of the professional training, lasted for 2, 3 or 4 years, and the institutions funded by the program also had to provide the employment of the Roma employee for two more years. Proposals could be handed in by such institutions of public education from Northern-Hungary, the South Trans-Danubian, the South Great Plain, and the North Great Plain regions where the percentage of Roma children reached 20 per cent. For the first and second round of the call for applications altogether 46 institutions of public education applied successfully for implementing the training and employment of 61 people.

The program began in Szendrőlád in the school year of 2003 and 2004. **In the framework of the project, two assistants – one man and one woman – were employed.** Andrásné Rőczei, the vice-principal of the school regards the program a half-success, as though one participant did finish her studies and graduated from high school, the other participant of the program after an unsuccessful final exam in Hungarian language did not try again the exam, found employment abroad, thus his contract was undone. *“It was a pity, because we were very satisfied with his work.”*¹¹⁵ The other participant of the program who had successfully completed the training conditions was employed in the school for another two years as also required for the contract of the tender. She then had a baby and therefore the labor relation was ended. Presently they again consider her employment, for the financial background of which they await the answer of the Edelény Branch Office of the Employment Center in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County.

8.2.3. Employment program component

At the start of the program the people drafting the proposal for application clarified to both participants what scope of activities they are hired for. Their tasks included being on duty, in the mornings they saw in the children to school, they looked after them and helped during meals. When they had some time, they helped the children in the afternoon with writing home work, reading, learning poetry. On the occasions of school ceremonies and gatherings, e.g. at carnival or farewell ceremony their work could be counted on. *“We were everywhere, where we needed to.”*¹¹⁶ The two participants also had separate scope of duties, while Andrea Maródiné Ádám worked as an office assistant using her previous computer skills, the male colleague assisted the work of the child care workers, he visited the families on a weekly basis. *“There were several occasions, when he took the child to school.”*¹¹⁷ The new employees - in accordance with the tender – received minimal wage. After graduation and the qualifications exam the remaining participant’s salary was raised according to Hungarian regulations.

8.2.4. Educational/training program component

The two participants of the program were employed full time. In addition, due to their studies attended weekly consultations and got educational leave for several weeks in the exam period. In these occasions the remaining school-porters took on their tasks. The preparation for the graduation exam was in the Herman Ottó Secondary School in Miskolc. Besides the two participants, the mentors assisting them also participated in trainings for mentors twice a year.

8.2.5. The implementation of the program

The National Employment Foundation covered the costs of the program completely, the local government did not have to support it from its own budget. There were no serious problems regarding the transfer of the benefits the participants were eligible for, the salaries were always

¹¹⁵ Interview with Andrásné Rőczei

¹¹⁶ Interview with Andrea Maródiné Ádám

¹¹⁷ Interview with Andrásné Rőczei

given out on time. The last fee for mentoring was delayed for one year.

Andrásné Róczy considered the program successful for several reasons. First, **it provided secure employment for the participants**. Second, the work of the participants proved to be **a great help for the children as well as the teachers**. They became successful mediators between the teachers and the parents. Finally, **linking employment to education also provided an opportunity and motivation for the participants to increase their level of education**, which does not only give them more knowledge but also easier access to employment on the labor market. In the beginning, Maródiné found her job difficult, working with children proved to be more demanding than she previously expected. *“The first week, I went home with a headache every day.”*¹¹⁸ However, after some time had passed, she developed friendly relationships with the bigger kids, who willingly went to her with their – even private life - problems and the smaller ones started to get attached to her as well.

Out of the two participants in the program in Szendrőlád, one graduated secondary school and was able to qualify for a profession. Currently, she is a student of an institution of higher education studying to become a pedagogue. Thus the initiative can be regarded successful. However, the program in Szendrőlád could not make a significant change in the severely disadvantaged economic and social situation of the settlement. Therefore besides the introduction of initiatives similar to the above analyzed program, projects aiming at the reduction of unemployment and the increase of economic activity should be implemented, without which long-term development is not guaranteed.

8.3. The housing and social integration program in Szomolya

In the case study on housing, one example of the Housing and Social Integration Program (HSIP) for people living in segregated Roma settlements and settlement-like environment connected to the Decade of Roma Inclusion Program is described.¹¹⁹ The program aims at the elimination of segregation by a complex, multi-dimensional approach, the projects of the settlements do not only have housing but also educational, community development, health and employment components. The implementers of the programs are local governments or NGOs establishing a consortium that adjust the distribution of the resources to the local needs. The work of the local implementers is assisted by mentor sent by the ministry, who gives professional advice to the organizations. The program in Szomolya aimed at the elimination of the residential and social segregation of Roma families living in cellar homes. For the case study, Mrs. Irénke Lázár Györgyné, the head of Szomolyai Romákért Egyesület (Association for the Roma in Szomolya), also coordinator of the program implemented in the settlement was interviewed.

8.3.1. The situation in Szomolya

Szomolya is located in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County. Its geographic and public administration location is unfavourable, for though Mezőkövesd is the centre of the micro-region, the settlement is rather tide to Eger. The village is only allowed to move in these two directions because of its road-system, it is not enough to join in the country's circulatory system.¹²⁰ The number of people living in the village is decreasing, presently the population consists of about 1650–1700 people. The proportion of Roma people is around 20 per cent.

The Cherryblossom Project in Szomolya¹²¹ received funding from the program in 2007, and in 2008, as well. First the settlement received subvention of 47.840.000 HUF, one year later this

¹¹⁸ Interview with Maródiné Ádám Andrea

¹¹⁹ For the general description of the governmental measure, see Chapter 4.3.3.1.

¹²⁰ Szociális és Munkaügyi Minisztérium (2008) *Kormányzati intézkedések a lakhatási szegregáció visszaszorítására*, Szerif Kiadó: Budapest, p. 18.

¹²¹ The program was named after the famous black cherry of Szomolya.

amount was 45.080.000 HUF, that was completed by the subvention coming from the National Employment Public Foundation as well. The first round of the program lasted from March until December 2007, the second round went from January 2008 until June 2009. Members of the consortium that implemented the program were: the leading applicant Szomolyai Romákért Egyesület (Association for Roma in Szomolya), Szegényeket Támogató Alap (SZETA) Egri Alapítványa (Foundation in Eger of the Fund in Support of the Poor), the local government of Szomolya and the local Roma minority self-government. The local government of Szomolya did not participate in the second round of the program. The program consisted of housing, employment, education, community building, social and health care elements at the same time.

8.3.2. The basic concept of the project: strengthening the Association

As the local government did not apply on its own for the first round of the program, **the main component of the project became increasing of resources of the Association leading the implementation to be able to function on its own** with little help from the municipality. The housing, employment and other components were embedded in this main component.¹²² As a first step, the implementers bought a house in the centre of the settlement to provide continuous operation and long term planning. The seat of the association later became the place of implementation providing the necessary infrastructure as well as the space for educational and community programs and for social aid.

8.3.3. Housing program component

One-third of the Roma (119 people) lived in 26 cellar homes under deeply disadvantaged circumstances before the program started. The cellar homes are hard to approach, wet and musty, they lack basic tools of civilization.¹²³ **These cellar homes were completely eliminated through these two years, the families were moved to integrated parts of the village.** However, the majority of the local Roma community is still living in two segregated streets, on the outskirts of the settlement.

In the first round of the program they managed to establish a home in an integrated environment for 11 in 26 families living in cave houses. 10 families bought flats, 1 family started to build a house.¹²⁴ Besides 7 families were provided help with building water supply in their house. In this round the beneficiary families had a certain amount of matching contribution – in form of social subsidy for housing (szocpol) or bank credit, for this reason the houses could become their own properties. The buildings bought had to be renovated in several cases, local entrepreneurs were charged with the works, its expenses were covered by the program budget as well.

Szomolya was an applicant in the following round of the program as well, for the project eliminated the housing segregation only in the case of half of the families, thus people were afraid that the original state would return. All Roma who were still living in cellar homes were moved to new buildings in the second round of the program. For beneficiary families did not have the needed amount of matching contribution, the buildings became the properties of the Association. The beneficiary families rent the buildings from the Association and pay 4000 HUF per month for them at present, this amount of money will cover the expenses for the reparations; renovations that might be needed in the future. According to the existing plans, in ten years the families will be given these buildings in return of a symbolic amount of money. Renovations and reparations of the buildings bought in the second round were done by people participated in bricklayer course arranged in the

¹²² Szociális és Munkaügyi Minisztérium (2008) *Kormányzati intézkedések a lakhatási szegregáció visszaszorítására.* p.18.

¹²³ Cseresznyevirág projekt: Szomolya 2006-2009, brochure.

¹²⁴ Szociális és Munkaügyi Minisztérium (2008) *Kormányzati intézkedések a lakhatási szegregáció visszaszorítására,* Szerif Kiadó: Budapest, p. 18.

framework of the employment program element.

The last date when families moved to the remaining houses was in February 2009. In spite of the economical crisis, **though sometimes there are seasonal problems with paying the bills, neither the water supply, nor electricity has been cut off in any houses.**

8.3.4. Employment program component

The proportion of employed people in Szomolya is lower than the national average. According to Irénke Lázár Györgyné the unemployment rate in the village is 20 percent, however, this way or that, the majority of Roma people work through undeclared employment. The employment component of the program aimed at the reduction of severe unemployment.

Though there were employment components in the application submitted in the first round, that time, the project of Szomolya was not supported by the National Employment Foundation. In spite of this, the organization managed to achieve that local Roma people employed as public workers were also involved helping the implementation of the project due to the 70 per cent support of the salaries given by the local Employment Office in Mezőkövesd.

In the second round of the program, trainings could finally start. 20 persons finished primary school; which was also funded by the Employment Office. Besides, this training that aimed at the completion of the seventh and eighth grade in elementary school, „10 persons worked in position of youth inspector in child care institutions in Eger and in the social project element of the program, they also received qualification. 10 persons were employed as bricklayers.”¹²⁵ After the trainings, due to the economic crisis, only 1 participant was offered a job on the labor market.

Besides the employment and housing components, the implementers also provided and still provide social service originally for the families moving out in order to make their integration to the new circumstances easier, but later the entire Roma community and occasionally some non-Roma as well asked them help with certain issues. „*We need to achieve this, to become a place that is open for everyone.*”¹²⁶ Concerning education and community building, afternoon and weekend programs – sometimes involving professional activities aiming at the development of the children – were organized, as well as occasional excursions, competitions, summer camps and festivities targeting the entire community.

8.3.5. Conflicts emerged in the implementation phase

Conflicts among the Roma families that did not take part in the program, with non-Roma communities and with the local government emerged in the implementation phase. In connection with the Roma community, selection of the participating beneficiary families was the primary source of conflicts, which was relevant in the first round of the program. Problems making the implementation more difficult also emerged among the non-Roma residents of the settlement. Neighbors of the newcomer families laid a complaint at the local self-government because of noisy and overbearing behavior or for other reasons; however problems were solved through the mediation of people working in the program. **According to Irénke Lázár Györgyné only 4 in 24 families had problems fitting in their new environment successfully which is a very good result.**

Conflicts also emerged through co-operation with the local self-government; which resulted in the fact that the local self-government of Szomolya, member of the consortium in the first round did not participate in the partnership in the second round. According to Irénke Lázár Györgyné the source

¹²⁵ Szomolyai Romákért Egyesület (2009) "Cseresznyevirág" Projekt: Szomolya 2006-2009, brochure.

¹²⁶ Interview with Irénke Lázár Györgyné

of the problem was that the local government wanted to have a heavier say in the program, doubted certain program components, e.g.: beneficiary families should have been moved near the segregated Roma streets¹²⁷ located in the verge of the village instead of the center, however, the Association found this unacceptable.

8.3.6. The evaluation of the program

Irénke Lázár Györgyné reckons that the success of the program is partly based on the basic concept the mentor, which was to **prepare for the long run through strengthening of the civil society organization**. The association is still functioning, implementing more, among them even more robust tenders, providing employment for its members, while the families that moved in the houses still manage to pay the bills, thus the program can be regarded sustainable.

After-care assurance is also an essential condition of a program's success. The Association became capable of doing the required duties, however families living in other villages should be provided with social workers for one or two years even through the local self-governments own budget if it is needed.

Also important for strengthening the Roma community were **the programs organized for them**. However, the interviewee found that even though this activity was part of the project to be implemented, the tender did not provide appropriate source of funding for it. Thus these programs were financed by the members of the association and the Roma minority self-government, development, which is not sustainable in the long run.

As a source of problem, the Irénke Lázár Györgyné mentioned the lack of communication and flow of information towards the majority society, the local government and sometimes the Roma community – that could have been useful to create peace for people of the village. However communication with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor was found suitable.

In spite of the emerged difficulties and problems, the program in Szomolya can be regarded a good practice as the association reached the objectives set out in the implementation of the project, eliminated the special segregation of the families previously living in the cellar homes, while through the strengthening of the association and the community, started long term developments. However, the program was not enough to solve problems existing in the field of education and employment. Further calls for tenders and implementation of projects, respecting complex treatment of social and economical problems are needed to maintain the results and for a sustainable continuous development.

¹²⁷The program in Szomolya eliminated 2 segregated parts of the settlement out of 4. However, more than 50 per cent of Roma people are still living in streets located on the verge of the village.

9. Summary

As we described in the desk research section of the study, **the situation of Roma in Hungary in the area of employment, education, housing and health care falls behind the national average** by a great extent, and thus requires strong intervention. Among the problems we have to mention low levels of education, permanent unemployment, residential segregation and discrimination in access to basic services. A lot needs to be done in the field of exercising equal treatment, for the promotion of which the conscious enforcement of rights by the state and law enforcement organizations is needed. **The increase in the number and intensity of conflicts, as well as the popularity of far right organizations are also alarming tendencies.** These complex issues need to be treated in a whole society level as a lot is at stake – not at least the competitiveness and future of Hungary – while deciding on whether we want to and how we intend to handle the situation. State intervention has a large role in the process of improving these circumstances.

The Hungarian Government initiated several measures in the framework of the Decade of Roma Inclusion for enforcing equal access to funds for Roma, the educational success of Roma students, integration in the labour market and the elimination of segregation in housing. However, the target groups of governmental measures initiated are in most cases not specifically the Roma but disadvantaged social groups; **proper evaluation and follow-up on the efficiency of the measures from the aspect of Roma inclusion and the improvement of their situation – due to the lack of data – is not possible.** Based on feedback, neither the Roma, nor the majority society did experience tangible results, visible changes.

The present study evaluated the Program based primarily on expert opinions. According to the findings of the questionnaire research, **though some measures can be regarded successful to a limited extent, discrimination increased and integration decreased in all areas of the Program** – education, employment, housing and health.

Based on the focus group research it can be stated that the certainly positive effect of the Decade is that it draws public attention to the issue of Roma inclusion and the indefensible living situation of Roma people. However, apart from this, the interviewees considered the program to be **a good intentioned, representative, symbolic process, not real action in most cases.**

The experts experienced serious deficiencies in the past years, **not coming across a proper impact assessment** proved to be a fundamental problem. There is no correspondence at the level of monitoring the results that would make the transits and possible overlaps between program components clear; **there is no univocal transparency** among the various professional fields, ministries and areas of implementation. Besides, communication of the results of the Program is not proper, professional management is incomplete. Besides evaluating the present results, the experts of the focus groups discussions also made recommendations for the improvement of the efficiency of the Program that is discussed in Chapter 6.

On the level of the implementation of specific programs, we can see a more positive picture. In the case studies we described projects evaluated successful to a certain extent. The interviewees of the in-depth interview research who were beneficiaries of certain programs also **reported about positive changes in connection with the programs.** Thus it can be stated that certain, properly implemented programs can have affirmative impact on the participants. Despite the problems generally experienced, some initiatives are capable of

facilitating changes.

To sum up, though certain programs can have a positive impact and though an extensive structure of institutions and huge financial resources are available for the implementation of tasks defined by the Program; due to the lack of proper social, political background, strategy, concept and transparent funding system necessary to tackle the problems; **the efficiency and success of the Decade of Roma Inclusion is not secured.**

10. Recommendations¹²⁸

For strengthening coordination, sustainability and accountability; the establishment of an international **management organization** is necessary, the tasks of which would be:

- to unambiguously define the tasks and scopes of authorities set in the Strategic Plan of the Decade, as well as the people and institutions responsible for implementation of these tasks;
- to determine feasible deadlines;
- to call people in charge to account;
- to synthesize and publish reports created by the various actors in several languages – including the national languages of the participating countries.

According to feedback, **inter-ministerial organizations could also fulfil this role**, but **the OSI** – taking on a somewhat more relevant program management role – could **also be regarded capable for completing this task**. The involvement of professionally significant governmental, scientific, non-governmental and Roma interest representation organizations is also recommended.

The OSI could strengthen its role in the following areas:

- International procuration (coordination and promotion of interests at an EU level);
- Steering of the national operative teams;
- Developing the monitoring and reporting system (e.g. developing protocols, strengthening the functions of monitoring organizations);
- Providing coverage.

Besides setting up the management organization, an **international founding document containing minimum standards** should be developed as well, that determines definitions of concepts, principles and indicators for providing the measurability and continuity of the Program.

Synchronization among the four priority areas of the Decade – education, employment, housing and health –, **provision of free pass among the program components and clearing possible overlaps is also necessary** from the aspect of accountability and improving efficiency. The initiatives implemented in the four priority areas of the Decade might serve as a good point of reference for the elaboration of new governmental action plans and calls for tenders. **The connection of the expected reforms in public administration and the measures aiming at general socio-political developments to the Decade** is also recommended.

Comprehensive antidiscrimination principles that appear in all areas concerned should be pushed for as until the state begins to enforce the principles of antidiscrimination, desegregation and inclusion, no results can be expected from the sporadic programs.

The launch of discourses on Roma inclusion and the strengthening of democratic self-organization is necessary, that is, **support for bottom-up initiatives concerning Roma inclusion and cooperation between Roma and non-Roma is important**, as an answer for

¹²⁸ The recommendations are given after consultations with experts and other actors of the Program in the framework of the present research detailed above.

which responsible, professionally valid action programs that are also sustainable from a financial view could be created.

To improve accountability, a **method for data collection needs to be developed** that meets the requirements of European legal provisions protecting personal data and the right for self-identity, in order to make the integration efforts towards Roma measurable in the four priority areas of the Decade. By real, quantifiable data, the rate of false information stemming from the lack of transparency could be decreased.

Organization of regular and comprehensive annual data collection and program evaluation, and the elaboration of international level reporting are necessary. Providing **free access on the internet to statistics, reports concerning the whole Program in English** as well as collecting and publishing studies about member states in **national languages** is also needed for measurability and transparency. By this, multi-level arrangement of information release (for every-day people and professionals) and the deficiencies apparent in the field of communication could be made up for. **Stronger communication**, more accessible data would also improve the popularity of the Program as well as the sensitivity of the public and decision makers concerning the relevant issues.

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Annex

Annex 1: More tables on the findings of the questionnaire research

1.1. Education

To what degree do education programs bring about desired change?

Assisted question with one answer

Base: all respondents who regarded themselves competent concerning the educational programs

	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Very much	3	8,6
Somewhat	19	54,3
Not at all	2	5,7
No programs	2	5,7
Don't know	9	25,7
Total	35	100,0

In your opinion, over the last five years integration in education has...

Assisted question with one answer

Base: all respondents who regarded themselves competent concerning the educational programs

	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Increased very much	0	0,0
Increased	9	25,7
Decreased	7	20,0
Decreased very much	4	11,4
No Change	6	17,2
Don't know	9	25,7
Total	35	100,0

Over the past five years, discrimination against the Roma in education has...

Assisted question with one answer

Base: all respondents who regarded themselves competent concerning the educational programs

	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Decreased very much	0	0,0
Decreased	4	11,4
No Change	9	25,7
Increased	10	28,6
Increased very much	2	5,7
Don't know	10	28,6
Total	35	100,0

1.2. Employment

To what degree do employment programs bring about desired change?

Assisted question with one answer

Base: all respondents who regarded themselves competent concerning the employment programs

	N	%
Very much	1	2,9
Somewhat	17	48,6
Not at all	8	22,8
No programs	2	5,7
Don't know	7	20,0
Total	35	100,0

In your opinion, over the last five years integration in employment has...

Assisted question with one answer

Base: all respondents who regarded themselves competent concerning the employment programs

	N	%
Increased very much	0	0,0
Increased	0	0,0
Decreased	13	37,1
Decreased very much	4	11,4
No Change	11	31,5
Don't know	7	20,0
Total	35	100,0

Over the past five years, discrimination against the Roma in employment has...

Assisted question with one answer

Base: all respondents who regarded themselves competent concerning the employment programs

	N	%
Decreased very much	0	0,0
Decreased	1	2,9
No Change	4	11,4
Increased	15	42,8
Increased very much	8	22,9
Don't know	7	20,0
Total	35	100,0

1.3. Housing

To what degree do housing programs bring about desired change?

Assisted question with one answer

Base: all respondents who regarded themselves competent concerning the housing programs

	N	%
Very much	2	5,7
Somewhat	13	37,1
Not at all	6	17,1
No programs	3	8,6
Don't know	11	31,5
Total	35	100,0

In your opinion, over the last five years integration in housing has...

Assisted question with one answer

Base: all respondents who regarded themselves competent concerning the housing programs

	N	%
Increased very much	0	0,0
Increased	3	8,6
Decreased	7	20,0
Decreased very much	4	11,4
No Change	11	31,4
Don't know	10	28,6
Total	35	100,0

Over the past five years, discrimination against the Roma in housing has...

Assisted question with one answer

Base: all respondents who regarded themselves competent concerning the housing programs

	N	%
Decreased very much	0	0,0
Decreased	0	0,0
No Change	8	22,9
Increased	13	37,1
Increased very much	3	8,6
Don't know	11	31,4
Total	35	100,0

1.4. Health

To what degree do health programs bring about desired change?

Assisted question with one answer

Base: all respondents who regarded themselves competent concerning the health programs

	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Very much	1	2,9
Somewhat	11	31,4
Not at all	4	11,4
No programs	2	5,7
Don't know	17	48,6
Total	35	100,0

In your opinion, over the last five years integration in health has...

Assisted question with one answer

Base: all respondents who regarded themselves competent concerning the health programs

	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Increased very much	0	0,0
Increased	1	2,9
Decreased	3	8,6
Decreased very much	6	17,1
No Change	10	28,5
Don't know	15	42,9
Total	35	100,0

Over the past five years, discrimination against the Roma in health has...

Assisted question with one answer

Base: all respondents who regarded themselves competent concerning the health programs

	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Decreased very much	0	0,0
Decreased	2	5,7
No Change	7	20,0
Increased	7	20,0
Increased very much	4	11,4
Don't know	15	42,9
Total	35	100,0

Annex 2.: the main characteristics of the interviewees

interviewee	Program represented
middle aged male	Roma Employment Network program – employment consultancy
middle aged female	Housing and Social Integration Program –training and employment
young female	Sure Start program
young female	Romaversitas
young male	Romaversitas