

“Conflict Resolution, Mediation and Restorative Justice and the Policing of Ethnic Minorities in Germany, Austria and Hungary” (285166)



Thursday, December 4th, 2014 – Final Conference

Brussels

Police and Roma in Hungary



**Brussels,
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Roma in Hungary

Hungary: large number of ethnic-based conflicts

- of which the majority concerned: Roma

The size of the Roma population diverges widely.

No declaration about their ethnic background.

6 to 9 percent of the population. (which means from 400, 000 to up to 900,000 Roma people.)

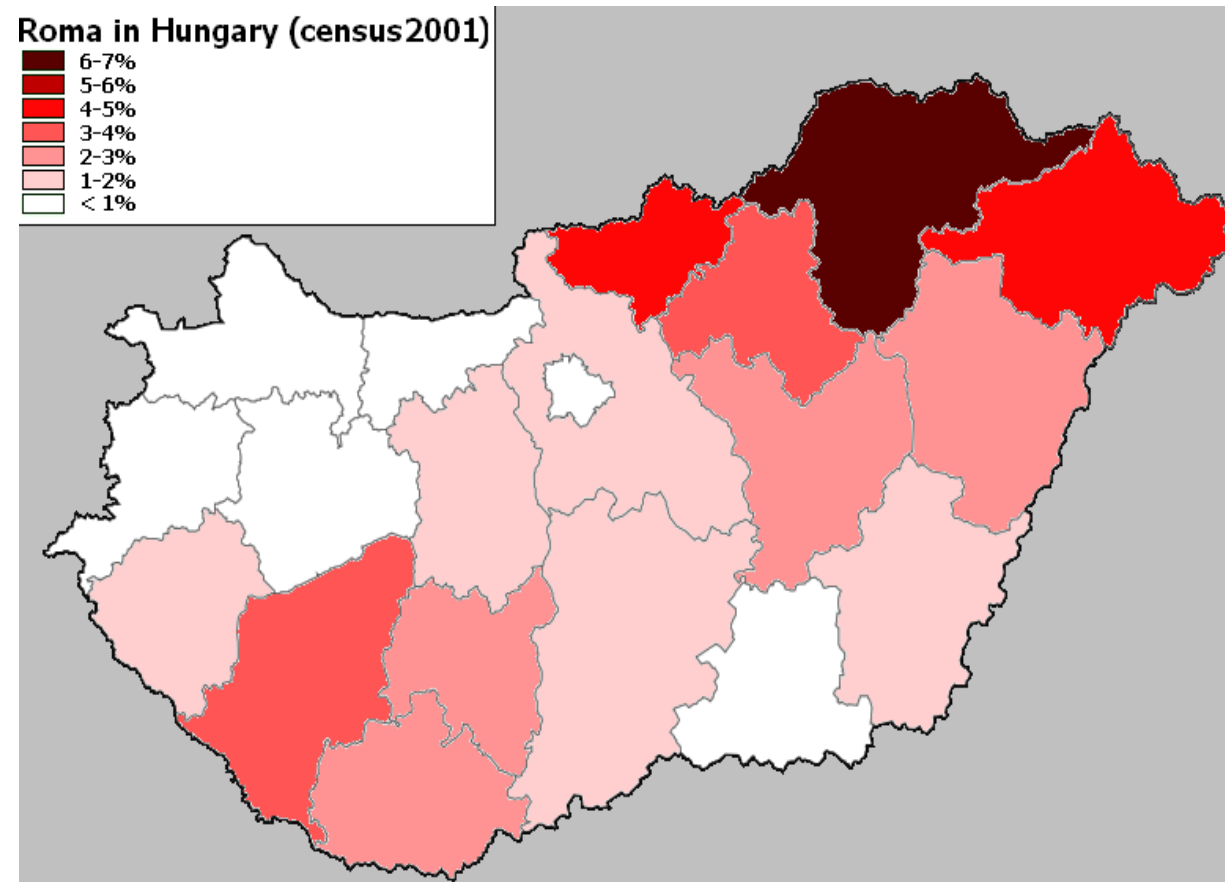
National census in 2011: 315,583 people (from 10 million).

(In 2001 only 190,046)

BUT: the latest sociological research: approximately **8%**

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The Roma communities are generally located in the rural parts of the country: 8% lives in Budapest, 14% in the rural cities, and 78% in the villages.



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COREPOL FIELDWORK



Number of interviews					
Nógrád		Miskolc		Budapest	
Roma	Police	Roma	Police	Roma	Police
13	10	11	10	10	11

Number of interviews	
Roma	34
Police	31
Stakeholder	15

Conflicts and security

Serious conflicts can be observed:

- **within** the Roma communities.

Low life-circumstances, unemployment, and poverty. (mainly neighborhood conflicts and domestic violence)

- **with** the majority of the society.

discrimination: labour market, services, public transport, education, identity checks,

prejudice: public speech, hate speech, etc.

Image of and connection with the police

Minorities were characterized by a kind of ‘**otherness**’ (*different habits, culture, behaviour patterns*)

There is a **negative impression** and image of the police:

- Policemen are usually **prejudice** towards the Roma
- **Disrespectful behaviour, ethnic profiling, physical violence** – mainly at the countryside
- Police can **not handle** the conflicts



Roma and Police



FRA EU-MIDIS: Largest EU-wide survey to date on minorities
(Police Stops and Minorities)

Within Europe, Hungarian Roma can be considered one of the most apparent subjects of discriminatory ethnic profiling by the police. (FRA, 2011.)

41% of the Roma sample was stopped by police in the last 12 months contrary 15% of Hungarian majority citizens.

While 72% of Hungarians describe the approach of police during stops as “respectful”, this is only true for 36% of Roma stopped by police. 30% of them describe officer behaviour as “disrespectful”.

While 62% of Hungarians have confidence in the police, this applies to less than 30% of Roma. More than half of them have **no trust** in police compared to 22% of the Hungarian majority population.



The latest FRA Report

Racism, discrimination, intolerance, and extremism:
learning from experiences in Greece and Hungary
(FRA Report 2013) (Golden Dawn, Jobbik)

Anti-Gypsyism

a term indicating the specific expression of biases, prejudices, and stereotypes that motivate the everyday behaviour of many members of majority groups towards the members of Roma and Traveler communities, is deeply rooted in Europe.

(Human rights of Roma and Travelers in Europe, COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, Council of Europe, February 2012, 39.p)

Discrimination



Eight similar attacks against Roma people between July 2008 and August 2009 in North-East Hungary.

Six people died, 55 seriously injured. (a couple in their forties, an elderly man, a father and his son, and a single mother with a 13-year-old daughter).

Romas: the police are not able to protect them.

(see the movie of Bence Fliegauf: „Just the Wind” Unknown racist murderers have already attacked four families. Some of them died. Who will be the next on this ordinary day? Inspired by a true story. 2012)

Discrimination against the Roma minority in Hungary remains an issue of international media coverage.

Judgment in Hungary



On that topic: a documentary of award-winning filmmaker Eszter Hajdú: „Judgment in Hungary”

<http://goo.gl/rzB0wY>

The trial of four serial killers charged with murder on racial grounds.

(Budapest from March 2011 until August 2013. over 30 months, 167 days).

Life sentences to three persons, a fourth defendant got a 13-year prison sentence.

First Screening at the Faculty of Law Enforcement for MA students with the presence of the judge and filmmaker!

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Hungarian human rights organizations

(non-profit human rights watchdog NGOs)

- Hungarian Civil Liberties Union (HCLU)
- Hungarian Helsinki Committee (HHC)
- Working-group against Hate Crimes
- Legal Defence Bureau for National and Ethnic Minorities

- The **purpose** of the organisations are to provide general recommendations and draft proposals on fights against racism and other prejudiced views.
- The most recent report emphasizes the importance of combating against racially-motivated crimes, the need for training programs on human rights, the necessity to avoid misbehaviour, and the inevitable nature of the fight against police brutality and excesses.
(The victim with the help of NGO lawyers turned to the European Court of Human Rights)

Police's mission: „To bridge the gap”

Law enforcement officials need to take steps towards increasing the **confidence** of hate crime victims.

To bridge the **trust gap**, it is crucial for police to receive adequate **training on community policing** that can help them to handle conflict resolution at local levels.

The idea of **community policing** is addressing questions and matters of **collaboration** between law enforcement organisations and society.

COREPOL recommendations: common programs



- consultation hours,
- joint events,
- common leisure activities,
- projects or workshops,
- regular networking meetings and
- information exchanges were mentioned as fields of regular contacts and of cooperation between police and minorities.
- *In all of the three countries interviewees agreed that the hiring of more people with minority background as police officers would be beneficial.*



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Thank you for your kind attention!

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The next speaker: Sandor Mergancz, Brigadier General, the former Head of the Somogy County Police Headquarters.

Since 2013 he has been working for the Ministry of Interior as Chef Consultant.

He was participating in the program STEPSS (Strategies for Effective Police Stop and Search) EU project.

Three project partners: the Hungarian Helsinki Committee, the National Police Headquarters and the Hungarian Police College. The project was financially supported by the European Commission’s AGIS Program and the Open Society Institute Budapest Foundation (OSI)

