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# The Roma in Hungary: Socio-economic status, human rights protection, and migratory dynamics

*An annotated bibliography of recent research*

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A tremendous amount of books, anthologies, articles, and conference papers on the Roma population have appeared in the last few decades. This annotated bibliography was compiled as background material for a roundtable discussion organized by the Center for Policy Studies at the request of the Canadian Embassy in Hungary and Citizenship Immigration Canada (CIC). The roundtable discussion *Roma in Hungary: socio-economic status, human rights protection, and migratory dynamics* was held at CEU on September 20, 2006.

The annotated bibliography includes research based reports, findings and recommendations from the last 5-7 years (noted here in chronological order), until 2006 December. Most adopt a broad framework for analyzing Roma issues, which involves discussing the economic, political and legal circumstances of Roma on a national, regional and local level. There are also pieces that employ a comparative approach for assessing the situation of the Roma population living in Hungary. Our primary sources were the European Roma Rights Centre [www.errc.org/Romarights\\_index.php](http://www.errc.org/Romarights_index.php), the Open Society Institute [www.soros.org/initiatives](http://www.soros.org/initiatives), and the RomaCentrum Online Information Centre [www.romacentrum.hu](http://www.romacentrum.hu), all of which are highly recommended for further detailed information on Roma research.

**T. István Kerékgyártó, *Even empathy has gone. The majority and the Roma*, RomNews Network Community, 13 June 2006**

<http://www.romnews.com/community/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=1798&mode=thread&order=0>

The author reports on the surveys on Roma made by the Tarki Social Research Institute, according to which, ninety percent of the Hungarian population say the Roma have criminal tendencies in their blood, and every third adult expresses feelings of antipathy towards them. Surveys invariably show that Hungarians are still afflicted by prejudice against the Roma. But it is not that the majority sees the Roma as 'bad', but that it is thought they are unable to integrate. Most Hungarians agree with the statement that "there are good gypsies, but most are not." As far as the author's opinion is concerned, he also finds it noticeable that Roma receive far less welfare support than they should on the basis of the size of their population. It is also clear that continuous dependence on uncertain employment is a concern for many social groups. It is not just poverty, but exclusion that has pushed Roma to the margins of society, since the majority has no desire to give jobs to them.

**Bernard Rorke and Andre Wilkens (2006) *Roma Inclusion. Lessons Learned from OSI's Roma Programming*. New York: OSI, 29 pages**

[http://www.soros.org/initiatives/roma/articles\\_publications/publications/inclusion\\_20060605](http://www.soros.org/initiatives/roma/articles_publications/publications/inclusion_20060605)

The Open Society Institute (OSI) has worked for 12 years 'to help build a better future for Europe's Roma, mostly by working with Roma to help them mobilize their communities to help themselves'. This report describes some of the lessons OSI, its staff and partners have learnt. The lessons concern funding strategies, financing techniques, how to overcome bias, the idea of mainstreaming and targeted actions, the importance of making a strong focus on the young, and generally what counts as effective and ineffective strategies. Specific recommendations concern women's issues, education, health, civil society, employment, housing and the elimination of discrimination through the awareness raising.

**Berliner Institute für Vergleichende Sozialforschung, *Report on Economic Aspects of the Condition of Roma Women*, 2006**

<http://www.rpa.sk/dokumenty/gesamt.pdf>

This study was sponsored by the European Parliament, DG of Internal Policies, and the Policy Department Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs. It was prepared between August 2005 and February 2006 and its principal purpose was to provide an overview of the economic situation of Roma women in several EU Member States, as well as in Turkey, Romania, and Bulgaria. Experts in Roma affairs, some of whom worked at NGOs with Roma membership, prepared 15 country studies. One conclusion was that the available information is rather thin and uncertain, although the authors conceded that this was not unexpected considering the lack of comprehensive data on this topic. More empirical studies should be conducted that address Roma concerns, such as access of the Roma in the labor market, especially taking into account the situation of Roma women, the changes of economic opportunities in the framework of rapid social and economic transformation, advantageous opportunities Roma women are taking, for example, self-employment or temporary or seasonal migration as well as opportunities in the educational and occupational training sector. Nevertheless, what can be known from Hungarian statistics is that the rate of employment among Roma women is far less than among the total population; and that 73,4 per cent of Roma women have no regularly paid work.

**Gábor Kertesi and Gábor Kézdi (2005) *Roma Children in the Transformational Recession - Widening ethnic schooling gap and Roma poverty in post-communist Hungary*. Budapest: Institute of Economics, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 34 pages**

<http://www.econ.core.hu/doc/bwp/bwp/bwp0508.pdf>

The Roma – Non-Roma educational gap, which was substantial but slowly closing in the communist years, widened after the collapse of the communist system in Hungary. Using data from the mid-1990's and a comparable national sample, the authors estimated multinomial probability models for rates of dropping out after primary school (8<sup>th</sup> grade), continuing in vocational training school, or continuing in a secondary school with a final ('maturity') examination, which is necessary for college entrance. Their results indicated that long-term poverty is strongly associated with a high drop-out rate after 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Roma poverty has increased considerably with the massive layoffs of unskilled workers starting in the mid-1980's. The authors found that the younger a child is when his/her father is laid off the more likely he/she is to discontinue schooling after 8<sup>th</sup> grade. According to a Hungarian survey conducted in 1993/94, 67% of Roma children having an unemployed father drop out of school. The conclusion was that the collapse of Roma employment has played a significant part in the widening ethnic gap in education. Equal opportunities for the next Roma generation are jeopardized unless public policies can help overcome the adverse effects of long-term poverty on schooling outcomes.

**Dena Ringold, Mitchell A. Orenstein and Erika Wilkens (2005) *Roma in an Expanding Europe. Breaking the Poverty Cycle*. Washington DC: IBRD, 237 pages**

This study calls for an inclusive approach to overcoming Roma poverty. This would be based on increasing Roma involvement and participation in society whilst maintaining respect for their diversity. The European Union's recent and ongoing enlargement has focused attention on the need to address Roma exclusion at the national level and has highlighted common European challenges. Most importantly, a small but growing core of experienced and dedicated young Roma leaders now work both within their communities and with governments to advocate for change. The book,

following an overview of Roma poverty and welfare, contains case studies on Roma and Roma settlements in the Slovak Republic, Roma diversity in Romania, project experience in Hungary, and Roma in Spain. It claims that Hungary counts as a regional frontrunner in Roma-concerned projects, because the country was among the leading countries for the EU accession, historically has had a greater involvement in minority issues (Hungarian minorities abroad), and the growth of civil society has been more rapid than in the neighboring countries. The policy implications and directions (employment, education, health care, housing, social assistance) recommended at the end of the book are dedicated to the situation in Central and Eastern Europe.

**United Nations Development Programme, *Faces of Poverty, Faces of Hope. Vulnerability Profiles for Decade of Roma Inclusion Countries*, 2005**

The occasion of the millennium prompted the United Nations Secretary General to analyze past human development trends and future directions. To address the global challenge of poverty, UN members accepted a comprehensive agenda for human development, including eight selected goals, targets with deadlines and quantitative indicators. The 'Avoiding the Dependency Trap' (published in 2002, see below) regional report on the status on Roma in five Central European countries, called for monitoring Roma MDGs as a necessary analytical tool for improving the situation of these groups. Two prerequisites were necessary, however: governments' political commitment (that came with the Decade of Roma Inclusion which grew out from a conference in June 2003, see below) and relevant data. The primary purpose of this publication is to provide 'food for thought' by presenting the major socio-economic indicators of the Roma population in the Decade of Roma Inclusion countries and regions (Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo). These indicators are: poverty and unemployment, education, housing and living conditions, and gender equality and empowerment of women.

**Herta Tóth, *Roma Women's Unemployment in Hungary*, Center for Policy Studies, CEU, 2005**  
[http://cps.ceu.hu/romapolicyfellowship\\_resources.php](http://cps.ceu.hu/romapolicyfellowship_resources.php)

This paper was written on behalf of the Roma Women's Initiative of the Network Women's Program, Open Society Institute (RWI later became part of the larger Roma Initiatives Office). It is part of RWI'S efforts to collect existing research evidence and data throughout the CEE and SEE region. The aim is to then make policy recommendations at the national, regional and European level, in order to support Roma women's participation in the labor market. Even though a number of studies were published in recent years in Hungary on the position of Roma in the labor market, most of these studies lack a gender perspective. The aim of this paper is to highlight some of the connections between the position of Roma women in the labour market and their productive and reproductive roles. This entailed challenging the validity of certain traditional labor market concepts for understanding and addressing Roma women's labor market situation.

**Ivan Ivanov, *The best EU anti-discrimination provision, still insufficient in the case of Roma*, European Roma Information Office, November 2005**  
<http://www.erionet.org/Directiva.htm>

The most fundamental change in the European Union relating to combating discrimination has been the adoption of a series of anti-discrimination directives. Particularly significant for the Roma population is Directive 2000/43/EC (the Race Directive). It introduced legal standards for eliminating different treatment in a wide range of areas where discrimination against Roma may take place – education, employment, social protection, housing and access to public accommodation. The

article claims that, according to anti-discrimination experts and Roma NGOs, the Race Directive alone is insufficient to meet the important needs of Roma, since their socio-economic situation would require not only protection from discrimination, but also affirmative action in some fields like education, housing and employment. The article reveals the lack of this kind of political support.

**Rachel Guglielmo and Timothy William Waters, “Migrating Towards Minority Status: Shifting European Policy Towards Roma.”** In *Journal of Common Market Service*, Vol. 43. No. 4. pp.763-86, November 2005. Malden, MA, USA & Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.  
<http://ideas.repec.org/a/bla/jcmkts/v43y2005i4p763-785.html>

During the 1990s, European policy towards Roma evolved from a concern about migration toward a rhetoric about rights. In this article the authors trace that shift across two OSCE reports. Following rhetorical-action models, they show how the EU’s commitment to enlargement and “common values” compelled it to elaborate an internal approach to minority protection. Concerns about migration persist, but Europe now has to consider how to integrate Roma as minorities.

**Gábor Halmai** *My Various Identities*, European Roma Rights Center, March 2005

The author describes his own experience advising the Hungarian president on “hard cases.” These include balancing increased rights of free speech (based on American and German models) with hate-speech protections for Hungarian Roma, Jews and homosexuals. As an example of current anti-minority biases in Hungary, the author cites a number of findings from recent public-opinion pools, including:

- 90% of respondents believe that all of the problems of the Roma could be solved “if the Roma went to work”;
- 67% agreed with the statement, “the tendency to criminality is in the blood of Roma people”;
- 50% agreed with the statement, “it is a good thing that there are restaurants where Roma are not allowed to enter.”

**Valeriu Nicolae, *Reasons and Solutions for the Inclusion of Roma within European Institutions*, European Roma Information Office, 2005**  
<http://www.erionet.org/BPDiplomacy.htm>

This is a background paper for an international conference organized by the ERIO and DiploFoundation, entitled “Roma Diplomacy: A Challenge for European Institutions?”, held in Brussels, December 8 – 9, 2005. This conference formed part of the Roma Diplomacy project which aims to train young Roma rights activists as public diplomats with the skills needed to represent their communities. Besides traditional lobbying activities and human rights advocacy, Roma diplomats will be called upon to function on the international diplomatic scene. The paper presents a case study of the existing situation regarding employment, representation, ownership and visibility of Roma within the European Institutions, focusing on the European Commission, European Parliament and Council of Europe. It shows relevant official documents, reasons for, and concrete ways to employ Roma within these and other international organizations, like UNDP, OSI, or the World Bank.

Open Society Institute, European Roma Information Office (ERIO), *Current Attitudes Toward the Roma in Central Europe: A Report of Research with non-Roma and Roma Respondents*, September 2005

[http://www.soros.org/initiatives/roma/articles\\_publications/publications/attitudes\\_20050901](http://www.soros.org/initiatives/roma/articles_publications/publications/attitudes_20050901)

The Decade of the Roma Inclusion is an enormous undertaking, with all the participating countries (Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Montenegro, and Slovakia) committing themselves to reduce disparities in key economic and human development outcomes for Roma. The initiative, mainly funded by the World Bank and the Open Society Institute, will only be effective if policy makers understand the drivers of discrimination that the Roma face. According to the authors, they must design strategies that can change these views, build support for change, and create an environment that allows Roma to flourish, as other populations do in these countries. The ultimate goal is to change prejudicial attitudes and develop support for government programs that improve the lives of Roma. In order to develop a more systematic and deeper understanding of the Roma population, 8 focus groups were conducted in 8 countries (12 in Serbia-Montenegro) in June, 2005<sup>1</sup>. In each country five focus groups were done with a randomly selected, representative sample of non-Roma and three focus groups were conducted with the Roma. Following this exercise a survey will be fielded so that perceptions and attitudes can be quantified and tracked over time in each country. Country specific reports are available on the qualitative phase of this research effort.

László Hablicsek in cooperation with Márta Gyenei and István Kemény, *Kísérleti számítások a roma lakosság területi jellemzőinek alakulására és 2021-ig történő előrebecslésére [Trend Estimates of Roma Population by Regions, and Their Projections until 2021]*, Active Society Foundation, September 2005, 34 pages

This paper is a summary of a research that estimates the demographic, educational and activity trends of the Roma population. The aim is to serve the programs helping Roma employment and education, which require data for achieving their goals. The outcomes of the estimates are databases on Roma by gender, age groups, educational levels, and activity categories between 1991 and up to 2021, and, in addition, an analysis about the regional location of Roma population, the demographic, educational and activity differences, and their estimated future. The paper does not address the problem of defining Roma. It adopts the approach used in surveys during sociological research and census.

UNHCR, *Hungary: Situation of Roma, including housing, and the impact of Hungarian membership in the European Union; state protection (2002-February 2005)*, March 2005 (source is provided by ERIO)

The research was made by the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, and since specific information on the impact of Hungary's 1 May 2004 accession to the European Union (EU) on the Roma community could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate, the Refugee Board collected all the country reports concerning Roma economic, educational, health, and housing condition in Hungary. Police relations, societal attitudes, legislation, the strength of state protection, and NGOs were explored with the help of 'Roma Rights', a quarterly journal of ERRC.

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<sup>1</sup>

Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia



Valeriu Nicolae, *Who Now Remembers the Roma?*, Internet Centre Antiracism Europe (ICARE) – Special Edition News Page: Commemorating Auschwitz, February 2005  
<http://www.icare.to/newsspecial-auschwitz.html#WHO%20NOW%20REMEMBERS%20THE%20ROMA?>

The author cites several recent examples of bias against the Roma in Eastern Europe which were expressed by political personalities. These include: the failure to mention the Roma in an EU Parliament resolution on the Holocaust (even though an estimated 250,000 to 1,000,000 Roma were exterminated during the Holocaust); the 1993 statement by former Slovak Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar that Roma are “antisocial, mentally backward, unassimilable and socially unacceptable”: and another statement by the Slovak Minister of Labor, Social Affairs and Family that, “Roma dislike work.” However, Nicolae does not claim that these views reflect an institutional practice, he cites recent polling data conducted among Hungarian history students: two-thirds of those interviewed feel that “the majority of gypsies are not decent people”, almost half of them believe that Roma do not do anything to integrate into society and almost the same number consider that the growth of the Gypsy population constitutes a threat to society. More than one-third believe that Gypsies should be forced to live like other people, the same number think that Roma are genetically determined to crime and 20 per cent openly advocate for a segregation of Roma from society. The widespread anti-Gypsyism was reflected by a national opinion poll from 1995 which discovered that 67 percent of Hungarians believed that Roma are prone to crime by nature. Close to 10 percent of Hungarians are of Roma origins and a large number are from mixed families.

Marcel Coenders, Marcel Lubbers and Peers Scheepers, *Majorities’ Attitudes towards Minorities in (Former) Candidate Countries of the European Union: Results from the Eurobarometer in Candidate Countries (Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Malta, Cyprus and Turkey) 2003*, Report 3 for the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC), 2004

While the report from the study provides no direct references to attitudes toward the Roma in Eastern Europe, it does deal with a number of key issues that have relevance to future research on the topic. Specifically, the study identified a stronger tendency toward “exclusionist” positions toward minorities among majority populations in the Baltic States, with consistently lower “exclusionist” responses from respondents from Poland, Romania, Bulgaria and other Eastern European countries. Older respondents, respondents living in rural communities and respondents who were not affiliated with any religious organization were significantly more likely to adopt “exclusionist” attitudes toward minorities. Surprisingly, education and (in most cases) income were identified as only “spuriously connected” with “exclusionist” attitudes toward minorities, with no significant differences among respondents with different levels of income or educational attainment when controlled for other individual characteristics. Differences between men and women were never found to be significant. In terms of the context for respondents’ attitudes, the level of immigration was identified as a predictor of “exclusionist” attitudes, with people who live in countries with comparatively higher levels of migrants exhibiting significantly higher levels of ethnic “exclusionism” than people with smaller migrant populations. The effects of unemployment on respondents’ attitudes were inconsistent, however.

**“Ethnic Statistics.”** In *Roma Rights – Quarterly Journal of the ERRC*, Number 2, 2004. Budapest: ERRC, 90 pages

In recent years, the need for statistics on Roma became ever more acute, as governments have begun to develop special programs related to Roma. This problem also comes up while intending to monitor the Roma Millennium Development Goals (see “Faces of Poverty, Faces of Hope”, 2005). A common defect of all these programs is that they are not based on reliable demographic, labor, health, education and housing statistics broken down by ethnicity. This issue of Roma Rights revisits and recapitulates Roma statistics from several angles, and by building a more detailed case of numbers and percentages, for instance, by taking into account the different ways how Roma are identified, tries to help the work of the departments where Roma-related programs and projects are being drafted.

**Karin Waringo, *Europe’s Most Unwanted*, European Roma Information Office, 2004**  
<http://www.erionet.org/OpinionP.htm>

Using a summary of recent polling data (1990-2003) regarding attitudes toward the Roma across Europe, the author argues that the Roma are “Europe’s most unwanted” group. The paper claims, through a synthesis of data from country-specific polls, that “roughly two-thirds” of Europeans would not like to have a Roma as a neighbor. The situation is particularly grim in Eastern Europe, with 87% of Slovaks (1999), 87% of Romanians (2000) and 85% of Czechs (1996) indicating that they would not want to live near a Roma. Similarly, 89% of Bulgarians reported that they would not want their child to go to school with a Roma (1992), 88% of Romanians indicated that they would not want to be friends with a Roma (2003), and 93% of Romanians (2003) and 80% of Slovaks (1999) indicated that they would not allow their children to marry a Roma. The article further describes the tendency of Europeans to describe the Roma in terms of deviant social behavior (e.g., laziness, poor hygiene, criminality, dishonesty, etc.). For instance, 77.1 % of respondents to a 2000 Polish survey characterized Roma as dishonest, while 67% of respondents to a 1995 Hungarian poll reported that Roma are “prone to crime by nature.” The author notes, however, that opinion polls rarely address the reasons behind their attitudes toward and opinions of the Roma.

**European Commission, Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities: Anti-Discrimination and Relations with Civil Society conference on ‘Data Collection to Promote Equality’, Helsinki, 9/10 December 2004.**  
[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/fundamental\\_rights/events/helsinki04\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/fundamental_rights/events/helsinki04_en.htm)

This EU-Finnish conference was called to explore the development of official statistics or other data as a tool for observing and measuring the implementation and effectiveness of non-discrimination legislation and policies. A common defect of all national programs related to Roma inclusion is the general absence of reliable demographic, employment, health, education, housing and other relevant statistics according to ethnicity. The report of the conference identifies the primary reasons for the current lack of reliable statistical data as:

- misconception that personal data protection laws prohibit the gathering of ethnic data;
- failure to understand the strategic importance of ethnic monitoring for the fight against discrimination;
- fear that ethnic statistics can be misused to harm the respondents;
- unwillingness of governments to draft programs for Roma integration;
- fear of governments that they may be embarrassed by findings;
- methodological difficulties (including the question of who should be identified as “Roma,” those who state their Romani ethnicity or a much larger group defined through external attribution,

along with the inherent difficulty of dealing with the refusal of many Roma to “admit” their ethnicity).

As example of the difficulty in conducting and distributing the findings from research about the Roma, the report provides the example of a recent case in which the Hungarian Ministry of Health refused to release data from a survey it had commissioned measuring the attitudes of Hungarian health professionals toward the Roma and its impact on the quality of service they receive. After professional associations representing doctors and nurses questioned the validity of the survey findings (which were apparently critical of their attitudes and performance), the Ministry of Health decided not to publish the report, and the results of the survey were shelved.

**European Commission, Employment and Social Affairs, *The Situation of the Roma in an Enlarged European Union: Fundamental Rights and Anti-Discrimination*, 2004**

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/fundamental\\_rights/pdf/pubst/roma04\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/fundamental_rights/pdf/pubst/roma04_en.pdf)

This lengthy report provides a brief history of the Roma in Europe, a substantive outline of the EC’s policy framework for addressing Roma issues and concerns, and a description of the Roma in key sectoral fields (education, employment, housing, healthcare, access to justice, etc.). Research cited throughout the report addresses a number of issues that recur throughout recent literature: the relegation of disproportionate numbers of Roma children in Slovakia to schools for the mentally disabled; the wide differences in unemployment rates between Roma and other members of European society; the widespread use of “discretionary means tests” with Roma for eligibility for social benefits in Romania. The study argues that there is a need to include specific references to Roma in social inclusion policies throughout the region – and not simply to assume that the Roma will be included in the implementation of such policies.

**Karin Waringo, “Who is Afraid of Migrating Roma?” In *(Un)Freedom of Movement: Migration Issues in Europe - online Journal of EU Monitoring and Advocacy Program*, Open Society Institute, July 2004**

<http://www.eumap.org/journal/features/2004/migration/pt2/whoafraid>

The article discusses the anti-Roma campaign in the Western European, especially British media, kicked off by an article published in *The Economist*, 15 January 2004, on the potential impact of a hypothetical mass immigration of citizens from the new member states following the EU enlargement. While the magazine tried to downplay the fears it had itself raised, highlighting that the new immigrants would bring in more to the British economy than they would cost, it nevertheless qualified these soothing words. The *Economist* article said “Central Europe’s Roma minorities ... are a particular case for concern.”

Waringo claims that this kind of political discourse turns up not only in Great Britain, but also in other EU member states. Throughout the accession process, the European Union, in particular via the EU Commission, persistently urged the candidate countries of Central and Eastern Europe to improve the situation of their ethnic minorities, and especially Roma, as a prerequisite for entry into the EU. According to Waringo, even at that time, it was felt that Western Europe’s concern for the Central and East European Roma was not totally objective.

Valeriu Nicolae, *Anti-Gypsyism – a definition*, European Roma Information Office, March 2004  
<http://www.erionet.org/mainAG.htm>

This article argues that anti-Gypsyism only partially fits the definition of racism. The author argues that it is, in fact, an ideology rather than a form of racism. It puts forward the definition of anti-Gypsyism as a complex code of social behavior used to justify and perpetrate the exclusion and supposed inferiority of Roma. It is based on historical persecution and negative stereotypes and, after the author, in its current forms, it continues to strongly hinder Roma from reaching the status of equal citizens.

RomNews Network, *Representative Research on the Situation of the Roma Population*, November 2003-January 2004  
<http://www.romnews.com/community/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=1278&mode=thread>

This is a brief summary of recent research on the situation of the Roma in Hungary, based on a 2003 study conducted by Hungarian sociologists Béla Jánky and István Kemény. The study represented the third national survey conducted in Hungary regarding the situation of the Roma population, following previous national surveys in 1971 and 1993. Findings from the study include:

- Serious problems caused by unemployment and under-education;
- Visible improvement in the education of Roma children, along with significant increases in the number of Roma children enrolled in Hungarian schools;
- Recent improvements in housing for Roma in Hungary, particularly in the areas of infrastructure and comfort;
- Increase in the number of villages in which Roma constitute a majority;
- Urban migration of the Roma, with almost 50% of Hungarian Roma now living in cities;
- Short-term increase but long-term decline in Romani-speaking Roma, which has shifted from 21% in 1973 to 5% in 1993 to 8% in 2003;
- Upward mobility, with 13% of Roma families already belonging to middle-class families with higher than average education levels.

High-level regional conference on Roma hosted by the Government of Hungary: ‘Roma in an Expanding Europe: Challenges for the Future’, Budapest, June 2003  
[http://www.soros.org/initiatives/esp/events/roma\\_06302004](http://www.soros.org/initiatives/esp/events/roma_06302004)

The educational level of Roma, on average, has historically been low across Europe. While forced assimilation efforts during the socialist period did lead to significant gains in enrolling Roma children in school, the gap in the educational attainment of Roma and the rest of the population was not bridged in any of the countries for which data are available. In the context of socialist assimilation campaigns, education was viewed as an instrument of political and economic socialization which would facilitate the inclusion of Roma into society and the economy. However, despite the achievements in reducing literacy and increasing school participation, the efforts undertaken during the socialist era laid the foundation for inequities in education quality, as many Roma were channelled into separate or segregated schools outside the mainstream system. The same separate schools or schools in general have eroded since the transition from socialism, and Roma children of basic school age are increasingly not starting or finishing school.

This is the main reason why the participating countries of this conference (Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, and Slovakia) resolved to (a) establish a Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015, during which countries would focus on

reducing disparities in key economic and human development outcomes for Roma; and (b) establish an international Roma Education Fund (REF). At the conference, the World Bank committed to undertake the technical work necessary to establish the REF, in consultation with international organizations and donors, Roma and other stakeholders.

**András Kováts (ed.) (2002) *Roma Migration*. Budapest: Institute of Ethnic and National Minority Research – Centre for Migration and Refugee Studies, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 197 pages**

There are several merits to this book, which was funded by the International Organization for Migration. First and foremost, it demolishes simplistic understandings that migratory patterns are only a response to economic immiseration, opportunities elsewhere, or a product of de facto if not de jure persecution. Secondly, it offers a rich picture of the extreme heterogeneity among Roma communities, families and individuals. As the researchers show (Kállai, especially), many of those who might be expected to take advantage of migratory possibilities do not in fact do so. Whilst political and social marginalization do have their effects on migration, actual migration behavior has little to do with any so-called 'nomadic spirit'. The book deals with Roma migration to Canada and France from Hungary, and also to Hungary from Romania. It treats Roma migration not as an ethnic issue, but rather as a socio-economic and political phenomena.

**Ferenc Babusik (2002) *A romák esélyei Magyarországon [The Opportunities of Roma in Hungary]*. Budapest: Kávé Kiadó – Delphoi Consulting, 325 pages**

The main focus of this book is the education and the employment of the Roma population. The general claim regarding these two topics is that all children in a supporting environment, without experiencing segregation or negative bias towards them can perform very well; regardless of their financial or family background. The inequality of opportunities, negative perceptions, objective deprivation and discrimination are key words when people talk about the situation of Roma people. The book presents several research studies on Roma: concerning the basic education of the Roma population in Hungary (by Titanilla Fiath), the employment of Roma (by Melinda Kovai & Máté Zombory), the primary schools teaching Roma children (by Ferenc Babusik), the key factors of Roma's efficient education (by Ferenc Babusik), enterprises employing Roma people (by Judit Adler & Ferenc Babusik), and a case study on the Roma population in the region of Ózd (by Ferenc Babusik). The authors present certain recommendations arising out their research and offer suggestions as to how these results could be put into practice, and how to solve specific problems of Roma groups.

**Andrea Krizsán (ed.) (2002) *Ethnic Monitoring and Data Protection. The European Context*. Budapest: CEU Press, 289 pages**

According to the authors in this collection of essays, of all rights abuses, discrimination is among the most difficult to prove. Anti-discrimination litigation – especially when challenging systematic inequalities – requires statistics as evidence. Similarly, designing social policies without more or less accurate quantitative predictions is hazardous. But finding reliable race or ethnic-coded data, even by experts, is bordered on statistical agnosticism, because of the complex performance of identification. This collection of studies tries to show how data protection laws can act against stigmatization and, at the same time, can cover up discrimination. Namely, the claiming of ethnic identity excludes others and at least partially opposes them. It results in a curious contradiction: those who want to end the racist distinction first have to define and measure the racial group, at the risk of essentialization.

Claude Cahn (ed.) (2002) *Roma rights: Race, Justice, and Strategies for Equality*. New York, Amsterdam, Brussels: International Debate Education Association, 274 pages

This book focuses on the human rights of Roma, what is particularly relevant as “human rights” being inseparably linked with access to jobs and education. It includes 3 sections. The introductory one outlines a historical background of the Roma in Europe. The second deals with five debates on issues central to Roma rights: the problem of hate speech (whether or not to punish violent, hateful, racist speech as a criminal act); education for a multicultural society (how to cope with the problem of Roma children’s segregation, and racism in the school system); the role of the media (whether or not journalists have an obligation to fight racism – to be “activists”, or does this corrupt their role as “objective” reporters); the problem of racism in the criminal justice system (how can we address problems of race in an institution that strenuously resists acknowledging the possibility of its own corruption by race factors); political participation (how to balance democracy with the necessity to compensate for the weakness of some groups). The last part provides for those who would like to go deeper into contemporary dilemmas and approaches to racism.

A Regional Human Development Report, *The Roma in Central and Eastern Europe. Avoiding the Dependency Trap*, United Nations Development Programme, 2002

<http://www.romanothan.ro/engleza/reports>

The survey highlights the Roma minority’s desire to integrate, rather than assimilate in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia. Integration needs to replace the current financial dependency on state support. To be sustainable, integration policies need to address three major deficiencies: availability of employment opportunities; equal access to education; and participation in government, especially at the local level. The report outlines several major policy deficits regarding Roma communities and vulnerable groups in general: lack of adequate disaggregated socio-economic data for proper policymaking; shortage of integrated solutions that treat the problems of marginalized communities in their entirety (for example, by linking education, employment, health and capacity building activities in community-based projects); insufficient awareness that the provision of development opportunities for vulnerable groups is a long-term investment, which ultimately benefits the majority and minority populations equally. This report seeks to help policy makers address these deficits, and represents the beginning of a long debate on sustainable development opportunities for marginalized groups.

Country of Origin Research, *Hungary: View of Several Sources on the Situation of Roma: Attitude of the Population*, Research Directorate Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa, Canada, September 2001

<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home/opendoc.pdf?tbl=RSDCOI&id=3df9ba3a4>

This is a brief synopsis of information from a variety of sources (both research-based and anecdotal) regarding public attitudes toward the Roma in Hungary. Highlights include:

- Reports of an increase in anti-Roma sentiments (Erika Törzsök, co-editor of the 2000 report, “A Roma’s Life in Hungary”), along with the virtual elimination of stigma attached to individuals expressing anti-Roma attitudes (Ferenc Erős and Sándor Geskó);
- Reports of the high level of anti-Roma prejudice across all levels of Hungarian society (Tárki Social Research Centre large-scale opinion poll (May 2001);
- Belief among non-Roma Hungarians that criminality and lack of intelligence are hereditary characteristics of Roma (Ferenc Erős);

- The impact of the July 2000 immigration of a group of Roma from Zámoly in central Hungary to France on negative attitudes toward Roma, who were viewed as “betraying” Hungary;
- The impact of negative press coverage on non-Roma attitudes among the general population, with 10% of all articles expressing openly anti-Roma views (July and September 2000 study of the Hungarian media by András Kováts)
- The anti-Roma statements made on the radio and on TV by high-level politicians (24 May 2001), including the Prime Minister (15 May 2001) (Ernő Kallai).
- The absence of “legal” discrimination against Roma in Hungary (24 May 2001), several sources point to everyday discrimination in every sector of society

Soros Foundation Network, Education Sub-Board of Open Society Institute, *Research on Selected Roma Education Programs in Central and Eastern Europe (Yugoslavia/Serbia, Slovakia, Romania, Hungary, Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Macedonia)*, September-October 2000

[http://www.soros.org/initiatives/esp/articles\\_publications/publications/rep\\_20010428/a\\_intro1\\_20010428.pdf](http://www.soros.org/initiatives/esp/articles_publications/publications/rep_20010428/a_intro1_20010428.pdf)

Over the last five years, several projects have been initiated by non-governmental organizations, in an effort to improve the educational opportunities available to Roma students in the region. To advance this agenda, this research project attempted to ask questions, the answers to which would be instrumental in defining future strategies for the Soros Foundations Network.

The Roma education projects examined by this research can be divided into two distinct groups. The first group provided direct educational and related services to Roma children and their parents. The second group focused on creating institutional change in the schools to benefit Roma children and their parents. As a whole, the Roma education projects offered several services and targeted – either directly or indirectly – all age groups of Roma children within the educational “pipeline” from preschool to secondary school. With one exception, each individual project limited itself to one or two age groups.

As for the conclusions:

- The Roma education projects examined by this research have succeeded in improving the educational attainment of participating Roma children. With appropriate support, participating Roma children have achieved high marks, maintained regular school attendance, and remained in school.
- Several of the Roma education projects examined by this research have begun to promote institutional change, but only in particular schools. However, these institutional change projects require a longer time span to develop than direct service projects.
- By itself, none of the individual program models can respond to the entire spectrum of educational needs of all Roma children in any single country, much less across the entire region. However, in combination, they do offer comprehensive solutions to meet the educational needs of Roma children across the continuum of ages.
- Roma education projects need to place a greater emphasis on assessment, documentation, and collaboration to ensure that their services are sustained over the long-term.

András Kováts, Kata Bognár and Dorka Sík, *Roma Migration in the Hungarian Press from February till September, 2000*, International Organization for Migration (IOM), October 2000

<http://www.romacentrum.hu/aktualis/tudkut/media.htm>

The study is a continuation of the research conducted from 1997 until March 2000, and a follow-up of analyzing the press coverage on Roma migration, since the level of Roma immigrants became quite

high during the period between 1998 and 2000: on the average, 100 persons immigrated to Canada per month. The difficulties of Roma in Zámoly, who migrated to Strasbourg in July 2000, also started in 1997. The research reveals that the Hungarian press during the September 1997- July 2000 period did not or just rarely dealt with the question of Roma migration. Most of the arguments were political ones, and the representatives of migrants were not involved, but rather civil organizations and minority local governments. Politicians denied that Roma immigration would be a problem, and most of the articles did not contain data on migration. More than half of the articles claim that discrimination and political persecution are the reasons of migrating. One-third of them give the economic background as an explanation, and only few refer to the dependency trap of the Roma population. The rhetoric of the articles exclusively tried to be neutral - neither racist, nor partial towards Roma; and none of them were interested in the trends of Roma migration.

In contrast to this, from July 2000 more and more articles were released on Roma migration, especially regarding the family from Zámoly, whose representative, as a migrant, also appeared in the media. More public servants declared their opinion, and the situation of Roma was discussed more generally, mainly connected to social policies; however, the political aspect remained prevalent. More articles explained this Roma family's migration as a result of economic difficulties, but a new element is taking them as victims of political manipulation.

**“Post-Communist Roma Migration to Canada.”** In *Amaro Drom*, Hungarian Roma Monthly, Number 9, 2000  
<http://www.amarodrom.hu/>

This study compares the cases of Roma migrating to Canada from the Czech Republic, and that from Hungary in the late 1990s. It details the reactions of the public and the government in Canada, and pays special attention to the influence of the rhetoric of the media, the bias towards Roma, the roots of racism, and the prominent individuals and organizations of the Roma's homeland. The article tries to reveal how these factors have influenced the migration policies in Canada. It says that Roma migration to Canada from Eastern Europe, especially from the Czech Republic and from Hungary, has a long history, the only new element is that at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Roma asylum seekers openly identify themselves as Roma, and hence the stereotypes against Roma, the fear of the majority society, and the anxiety of tabloids, all serve to develop a new kind of attitude towards these issues.

**Ágnes Kelemen (2000) *National Sentiments and Attitudes Toward Minorities*, Budapest: Political Science Institute, Hungarian Academy of Sciences**  
<http://www.mtapti.hu/mszt/a2000/kelemena.htm>

This is a report of a study examining the relationship between national sentiments and attitudes toward minority populations (Jewish and Roma) among Hungarian secondary students. The questionnaire for the study consisted of five sets of questions related to five specific topics: attitudes toward Roma in Hungary, attitudes toward Jews in Hungary, attitudes toward national identity, concept of the nation, and socio-economic variables.

**“Forced Migration.”** In *Roma Rights – Quarterly Journal of the ERRC*, Number 1, 1999. Budapest: ERRC, 92 pages  
<http://www.errc.org/cikk.php?cikk=546>

This issue draws attention to the reasons why Roma migrate. In many cases they are forced to leave their home countries, because of war (like in Kosovo), socio-economic conditions, or because of discriminatory acts. Not being a nationally organized social group, Roma have no mainstream media,



no safe haven across any border, and no military alliances to interfere if it is needed. Articles include case studies on Eastern European Roma families seeking for asylum in the West, and report on the difficulties these families have to face. In spite of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and its promise of the right to seek and enjoy asylum from persecution, many host countries deny such rights to Roma. The issue also includes an argumentation how the Hungarian media misrepresent the Romani asylum issues.

### **EQUAL Common Database**

The EQUAL Common Database contains information on all of the projects (Development partnerships - DPs) financed within the European Union. Clicking on the numbers on Hungary, one can find many projects with their title in Hungarian but with their description in English.

<https://equal.cec.eu.int/equal/jsp/index.jsp?lang=en> – The wesbite of the database

<https://equal.cec.eu.int/equal/jsp/dpComplete.jsp?cip=HU&national=1> – EUROMA-NET

<https://equal.cec.eu.int/equal/jsp/dpComplete.jsp?cip=HU&national=2> – Improvement of Disadvantaged Roma Families Social Positions through Training

<https://equal.cec.eu.int/equal/jsp/dpComplete.jsp?cip=HU&national=3> – Development of the Labour market Situation for the Roma

<https://equal.cec.eu.int/equal/jsp/dpComplete.jsp?cip=HU&national=4> – DMJV Local Governments - Knowing how to work

<https://equal.cec.eu.int/equal/jsp/dpComplete.jsp?cip=HU&national=29> – Equal Opportunities in the Media

<https://equal.cec.eu.int/equal/jsp/dpComplete.jsp?cip=HU&national=30> – The Training and Employment of Equal Opportunity Experts

<https://equal.cec.eu.int/equal/jsp/dpComplete.jsp?cip=HU&national=33> – “Second Chance” in the Area of Vásárosnamény

<https://equal.cec.eu.int/equal/jsp/dpComplete.jsp?cip=HU&national=34> – BRIDGE (The Innovative Social and Economic Development Program of Roma in Borsod)

<https://equal.cec.eu.int/equal/jsp/dpComplete.jsp?cip=HU&national=40> – Opportunity for Full Life III

<https://equal.cec.eu.int/equal/jsp/dpComplete.jsp?cip=HU&national=41> – Through Joining and with Equal Opportunities for the Social Integration of Roma

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