



COUNCIL CONSEIL
OF EUROPE DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 21 November 2005

MIN-LANG/PR (2005) 6
Addendum 1

EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR REGIONAL OR MINORITY LANGUAGES

**Addendum to the Third Periodical Report
presented to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe
in accordance with Article 15 of the Charter**

HUNGARY

Report on Governmental Actions Concerning Roma Affairs in Hungary in 2003

In office since 2002, the current Hungarian Government undertook, like every one of its predecessors in power, the task of promoting the social integration of the Roma. With a view to this, the Government further developed the institutional system designed to advance the social integration of the Roma. The strategic planning of a government programme based upon a complex approach was started in 2003. Within this frame, methodological and organizational preparations have also been made for the development of a uniform system of special reports serving for the implementation of the Government Programme, as well as for the setting up of a uniform professional and financial monitoring system to evaluate the implementation of the tasks.

MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR

In 2003 the Ministry went on with all its formerly launched programmes. The National Roma Self-Government (OCÖ) and the National Police Headquarters (ORFK) signed an agreement on the regular exchange of opinions in 1999, so liaison officers were appointed by ORFK and co-ordinators by OCÖ. The Police Headquarters of Budapest (BRFK) performs internal reviews on a continuous basis as to the lawfulness of police actions concerning the minorities. Decision was made on the preparation of a comprehensive communication strategy to improve Police/Roma relations. The post of an independent rapporteur on minority affairs was set up at ORFK's Crime Prevention Department on 1 November 2003.

Romology Studies (Roma Ethnography, Communication and Conflict Prevention) have also been included to 'Social Studies' courses within the curriculum of both secondary and university-level specialized policing and police training. Various aspects of the fight against discrimination have also been included in the curricula of the training and advanced training of police officers.

In 1994 ORFK launched a scholarship programme for disadvantaged secondary school students of Roma origin to encourage them to join the police. From school year 2000/2001 on Roma students unable to continue their studies due to financial constraints are given the opportunity to take part in specialized training and become policemen in any of the counties of Hungary.

Draft amendments to Act LXXVII of 1993 on the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities as well as to regulations concerning minority local government elections were prepared in 2003. Furthermore, Parliament passed an act on state subsidies earmarked for the local governments. By virtue of the provisions of this act, local governments could apply for subsidies for the performance of their minority-related tasks upon two grounds.

A total of HUF 10,600,000 was channelled in 2003 to minority legal protection organizations as well as organizations safeguarding and representing Roma interests as subsidies provided through tenders published by the Ministry for social assistants. The same year the Ministry devoted sources to Roma programmes in a total amount of HUF 1,145,000,000.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH, SOCIAL AND FAMILY WELFARE

Among the duties presenting themselves with pressing necessity in the social field, in 2003 the Ministry's highest priorities were the improvement of housing (living) conditions and prevention in the field of public health.

Within the frames of the tender announced for subsidies to youth, not entitled to social provisions any more because of reaching their legal age before 1 November 1997, appr. 40 to 50% of the available funds were awarded to young Roma people as subsidies for home creation in 2003. The budgetary allowance appropriated for this provision amounted to HUF million HUF 585.4.

The Ministry runs a social land programme to make the living of disadvantaged families, including the Roma, easier. The Ministry spent HUF 150 million on this programme in 2003.

To improve the state of health of the Roma population is a job of permanent significance. With this end in view, the increased efficiency of the preventive screening and nursing healthcare services is a goal of utmost importance for the Roma population. The Ministry has accorded priority to professional measures to be taken, in collaboration with the communities living in colonies or colony-like environment and minority self-governments of the settlements concerned, to eliminate factors that may endanger both the environment and human health. Main programmes in progress within the frames of the National Programme 'Béla Johan' of the Decade of Health are:

- Tender for subsidizing research studies into healthcare, social and children protection problems of the Roma population;
- Tender for subsidizing complex health improvement programmes for disadvantaged social groups;
- Tender for the elaboration and introduction of training programmes and practices for a social environment free of prejudices that are compatible with both gradual and post-gradual education;
- Other public health programmes.

The Ministry's major programmes promoting equal opportunities and combating social discrimination were:

- Tender for subsidizing model programmes for the improvement of the Roma population's access to social, children protection and health care benefits;
- Tender for the organization of education and training courses for the improvement of the Roma population's access to social, children protection and health care benefits;
- Training program for Roma health care assistants.
- Subsidizing programmes for the attainment of family planning skills;
- Roma programmes of the National Public Health and Medical Officers' Service.

These programmes went on in 2004, too. The Ministry assigned to these goals a total spending of appr. HUF 632 million in 2003.

MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR

Since secular unemployment runs to high proportions among the Roma population, various government organs have launched programmes to promote the labour market integration of the Roma at both central and local levels.

Commissioned by the Ministry, the non-profit company 'National Programme Management Office for Social Services' of the European Social Fund (ESF) launched and implemented PHARE programmes also concerning the situation of the Roma population ('The permanent employment of disadvantaged social groups' and 'Combating discrimination in the field of employment'). Among others, the program was a successful contribution to the permanent employment of the Roma in 2003.

With its 'Human Resources Development Operative Programme (HEFOP)', the Ministry focussed its efforts on increasing the general rate of employment, providing a better access to qualifications that are acknowledged by the market and improving the competitiveness of live labour. Within this programme, several measures were taken with special regard to the improvement of the Romas' situation. Also funded by the EU, the 'EQUAL Programme' was launched to subsidize experimental initiatives (such as anti-segregation practices or life-long learning).

The State Employment Service and the complex labour market programme announced by the county Employment Centres also rendered help to the Roma at both national and local levels (e.g. by the provision of various services or stop-gap training closely followed by subsidized employment) in 2003. The following deserve particular attention: promotion of education, retraining and vocational training, encouraging the Roma to become entrepreneurs or self-employers, provision of wage subsidies and funds for the assumption of contributions as well as aiding career starters to gain first-hand labour experience. The participation of the Roma in these programmes widely varies (5 to 30%); the principle of positive discrimination comes across whenever active means are applied.

The Employment Centres are active in organizing public work projects and community service work of public utility. About 6700 Romas were involved in public work projects and over 18,000 in community service works in 2003.

The National Employment Public Foundation as well as the Regional Labour Development Centres, mainly in charge of educational and further training projects, also run some additional programmes.

Compared with previous years, the co-operation between the county Employment Centres and Roma minority self-governments improved in 2003 (agreement on the exchange of information, the Centres issued information flyers, methodological brochures).

In 2003 the Ministry and the State Employment Service jointly devoted a total of about HUF 8 billion 560 million to measures designed to improve the labour market position of the Roma, with an estimated number of those involved of appr. 35,000.

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The programme launched by the Ministry to provide disadvantaged and unemployed population with funds, through tenders issued at municipal level, to subsidize plant cultivation and livestock breeding (e.g. the procurement of seeds and propagation materials) came to an end in 2003. At the same time, the Social Estate Fund grew wider and about 600 Romas were aided from budgetary sources earmarked for subsidizing the agricultural production of disadvantaged communities.

Funding of the complex development programme that devoted HUF 90 million to the improvement of the situation of the Roma within the experimental programme 'LEADER' was completed in August 2004.

In 2003 the Ministry spent a total of HUF 280,000,000 on Roma programmes.

MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS AND TRANSPORT

Within the Programme for Enterprise Promotion 'Széchenyi', the Ministry announced tenders in October 2003 with the intention of promoting the market opportunities and increasing the competitiveness of domestic micro, small and medium-scale enterprises of Roma entrepreneurs. The tender provided funds in the form of non-refundable aids of max. 3 million forints for equipment and machinery procurements, with 50% aid intensity (the bids came primarily from the building and construction industry and the sector of services). As a result of the programme, continued also in 2004, more than 150 new jobs were created in 2003.

MINISTRY OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND SPORTS

In 2003 the Ministry provided funds for subsidizing Roma research studies, sports programmes, training and non-governmental organizations. Rádió C (Roma Radio) and a documentary ('Sorsfordítók') were among the aid beneficiaries.

Within the frames of the 'Programme for strengthening democratic institutions and the dialogue among young people', research work on Roma youth organizations in Hungary had been carried out between 2002 and 2004. Annual conferences are held with the participation of NGOs and Roma minority self-governments (2003: 'Roma children and youth at the turn of the Millennium').

In 2003 the Ministry spent a total of HUF 366 million on subsidizing winter and summer youth camps for the age group of 6 to 18. In judging applications received in reply to the calls for leisure sports tenders, bidders who undertook to prefer disadvantaged participants were given plus scores.

The co-ordination on drugs counts among the key responsibilities of the Ministry. About 130 drug co-ordinators (teachers and educators of Roma children as well as so-called Roma assistants) received training in 2003. The Ministry provided funds for this purpose in an amount of HUF 10 million.

The Ministry announced tenders in a total amount of HUF 19.7 million for non-governmental and other organizations. Among others, Roma assistants have been trained and a number of drug prevention programmes implemented with the help of this form of state subsidy.

Funds effectively applied by the Ministry for the above-mentioned purposes amounted to a total of HUF 480,000,000 in 2003.

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

The Ministry performs its tasks related with Roma affairs primarily through the orientation of young Roma to the military profession and subsidizing and propagating the Roma culture.

It is the Ministry's aim to make the military profession attractive for as many young Roma as possible, and to increase the number of people of Roma origin who decide to join the Army (as volunteers, reservists, contract strength or regulars). With this end in view, the Ministry organized information programmes in a series of Hungarian settlements and its enlistment boards visited secondary schools with high proportions of Roma pupils as well as Roma events. The Ministry organized a survival camp for Roma students showing interest for the Army.

Last year, the Ministry established the Scholarship for Promoting Equal Opportunities 'Balázs Lippai', offering 20 Roma students pursuing studies at military academies/colleges or attending warrant officer training courses scholarships in a monthly amount of HUF 8 to 10 thousand. Unemployed of Roma origin were involved in the specialized initial training programme. 4 to 12 lectures on Romology Studies with printed notes and chrestomathies were included in the curricula of officers' and warrant officers' training courses in 2003.

The Ministry subscribed to all Roma magazines of importance (i.e. 'Amaro Drom', 'Lungo Drom' and 'Világunk'), sending 70 copies of each of them out to each large corps' library.

Further subsidies went to 'Roma Magazin' on Hungarian Television (MTV1), Rádió C, Tilos Rádió (radio stations) and 'Gipsy half-hour' on the Hungarian Radio as well as a Roma magazine 'Amaro Drom'.

In 2003 the Hungarian Army funded a research study into the living circumstances of soldiers of Roma origin on a panel of 1,000.

In 2003 the Ministry spent a total of HUF 14,710,000 on Roma programmes.

MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

Functioning since 2001 as the most successful programme of the Ministry, the Roma Anti-discrimination Client Service Network was established in co-operation with the Government Office for National and Ethnic Minorities and National Roma Self-Government in joint funding. The Network was designed to reveal cases of discrimination against the Roma. The lawyers involved in the Network provide the victims with legal help (counselling, preparation of legal instruments, legal representation) free of charge. The Network had 27 offices nationwide in 2003, it has seen to 1250 cases altogether since its establishment with 135 evidenced cases of discrimination. The Ministry organized a professional conference for the lawyers in the Network and issued a publication describing the activities performed within the Network.

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES AND COMMUNICATION

Within the frames of the programme 'Nationality and Ethnic Minorities' launched by the Ministry, non-governmental and non-profit organizations registered in Hungary were entitled in 2003 to tender for subsidies for the digital processing, archiving and propagation of cultures of the national minorities living in Hungary in a total amount of HUF 70 million. The programme was terminated in 2004.

The Ministry provided funds for subsidizing the development of the IT infrastructure used by the minority self-governments, including Roma Minority Self-Governments, in a total amount of HUF 380,000,000. A 'Roma Online Secondary School Pilot Programme' was launched in North-Eastern Hungary in 2003. According to the original idea, those registering in the programme may finish their secondary level studies using online educational methods and, with a view to their actual needs, receive training that provides skills necessary for drafting legal or administrative applications, as well as may also take special exams on using and programming computers. In the first phase of the programme, representatives of the Roma minority self-governments and members of Roma non-governmental organizations were entitled to register. Following an introductory course, the participants had access to computers and take part in regular consultations. The programme is continued in 2004.

Funds effectively applied by the Ministry in 2003 amounted to HUF 550,000,000.

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND WATER MANAGEMENT

The programme 'Drawing the Roma of Hungary into activities related with environmental protection and nature conservation of Hungary's forests and other natural territories under protection' had been launched in 2002 on the initiative of the National Roma Self-Government, and continued in 2003, too. The source of aid payments was a fund of HUF 50 million, separated from the chapter-managed allocation 'KAC' (Environmental Fund's Target Task). The programme has been completed by now. The number of Roma involved in the programme was estimated at 450.

As far as the improvement of those living in straitened circumstances in colonies (or colony-like environment) is concerned, the Ministry has the joint liability for the implementation of a complete package of medium-term measures. In the first step, a comprehensive survey of colonies and colony-like dwellings was completed in 2003; the second phase of the programme, aimed at the reduction of environmental harms in the colonies, is still under way through a tender procedure. Within the frames of this latter one, the colonies and colony-like dwellings undergo a thorough cleaning, which also includes general rodent extermination. Rubbish and debris left behind in the colonies and their surroundings are carried away for dumping, the colonies are developed by surface drainage structures (outlet ditches, culverts, etc.), paved roads and sidewalks to utilize areas so relieved for community purposes, e.g. as leisure parks. The Ministry provided funding in a total amount of HUF 87,071,225 for 94 tenders.

According to a government decision, preparations for the 'Vásárhelyi' Plan could also start in 2003. Preparatory 'spade-work' was partly organized within the frames of communal works projects. The proportion of Roma employees involved is estimated by the responsible heads of work to reach appr. 30 to 35%, which means 330 to 385 persons. Funds effectively utilized by the Ministry for the above-mentioned purposes amounted to HUF 228,571,225 in 2003.

THE OFFICE OF THE POLITICAL SECRETARY OF STATE RESPONSIBLE FOR ROMA AFFAIRS

The Council on Roma Affairs was set up by government decision with 21 members in 2003 to assist the Prime Minister's work as an advisory board. Belonging to the Prime Minister's Office, the Council has a membership consisting of Roma and other public figures, representatives of various organizations as well as persons of fame from the world of science with consulting, reporting and advisory competence in any matters of strategic importance for the social integration of the Roma.

Co-ordinated by the Office of the Political Secretary of State Responsible for Roma Affairs and in co-operation with the Ministries and administrative bodies with nationwide authority concerned, elaboration of the government programme promoting the social integration of the Roma has been started in agreement with the National Roma Self-Government and competent NGOs.

The Roma Cultural Fund, raised within the budget of the Office to provide financial assistance for the Roma culture, granted persons and organizations with funds and aids in a total amount of HUF 122,988,000 through tenders.

Within the Coordination and Intervention Fund for the Roma, the Office allocated an aid of HUF 20,000,000 to Rádió C, and favourably judged another 77 individual applications.

The sum allocated to the Conflict Management and Legal Aid Fund served for the purpose of providing financial assistance for legal aid bureaus acting in Roma affairs and promoting the favourable solution of ad hoc legal cases. This was the fund, which also included the amount of the domestic contribution to the programme 'The Financial Support of the World Bank for the Improvement of Roma Institutions' in 2003. The programme was launched by virtue of the agreement between the Republic of Hungary and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, according to which IBRD granted Hungary a non-refundable aid in an amount of USD 347,000. The aid was devoted to efficient elaboration and successful implementation of medium and long-term strategies.

In addition to the budget allocation of HUF 1,135,000,000, voted by the Parliament for the Public Foundation for the Roma of Hungary (working since 1995) for the year 2003, an additional aid of HUF 250 million was also granted from the General Reserve of the Central Budget of 2003 to help foundation goals realize, with especial emphasis on the subsidizing of the studies of young Romas.

The Roma Social Integration PHARE Programme was implemented within the Office for Roma Affairs after having been removed from the scope of competence of the Government Office for National and Ethnic Minorities. The programme was launched with the express aim of strengthening social cohesion and improving relations, communication and co-operation between the Roma and the rest of the Hungarian population through micro-region development projects, community-development activities, anti-discrimination training programmes and other activities promoting the dissemination of information.

For the improvement of the Roma institutions, a project has been launched within the frames of twinning institutional co-operation designed to take over useful experience from the Spanish Roma policy (expert's activities, training).

Demonstrating systems and practices already existing in Spain within the frames of the Spanish-Hungarian twinning co-operation, the Roma Twinning Programme, launched by the Roma Social Integration PHARE Program Office, has been of a great professional help in the establishment of a domestic monitoring system.

Established as of the 1st of May 2003, the Governmental Roma Portal /ROMAWEB/ provides government organs, local governments, NGOs as well as any individual citizens with up-to-date information, maintaining a permanent flow of information. The network of regional centres also has an important share in contributing to this activity.

Funds effectively utilized by the Office for Roma Affairs for the above-mentioned purposes amounted to HUF 911,837,000 in 2003.

OFFICE FOR NATIONAL AND ETHNIC MINORITIES

Within the activities displayed by the Office in 2003, the improvement of the opportunities provided for the Roma to promote their interests as well as the financial assistance rendered to legal aid organizations in the prevention and elimination of discrimination and to organizations and institutions active in the field of conflict prevention and management were of model value. The total funds of HUF 20 million devoted to these purposes went to 24 legal aid bureaus.

Talks with a number of institutions started in 2003 to harmonize the work of foundations, public foundations and institutions promoting the Roma minority media, to maintain their permanent co-operation and to ensure that financial resources are utilized in an efficient manner.

In co-operation with the Prime Minister's Office and units responsible for communication at the various Ministries, the Office for National and Ethnic Minorities performed communication tasks in relation to the implementation of the package of medium-term measures designed to improve the living conditions and social situation of the Roma population.

Funds effectively applied by the Office for the above-mentioned purposes amounted to HUF 40,240,766 in 2003.

MINISTRY OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

The Ministry performs its prescribed tasks through a cultural programme launched, by a call for tenders, to promote the improvement of the system of Roma educational institutions, and through the provision of financial aid for the work of social organizations of national authority performing cultural activities.

In 2003 the Ministry aided the organized camping of Roma children, the learning of various traditional Roma handicrafts, Roma cultural programmes, covered a part of the operational costs of national cultural associations, and provided funding for the publication of literary works by Roma authors.

The Ministry also made financial contribution to the training of future professionals supposed to work with Roma communities in settlements far and wide in Hungary. In general, the programmes were launched with the aim of implementing micro-regional and regional training (e.g. Cultural Institute of Hungary). The proportion of the participants of Roma origin within total trainees (150 to 200 persons) was about 80%. The Ministry financed the annual operational costs of, and many cultural events organized by, OCIMK (National Roma Integration and Cultural Centre).

Within the frames of the programme designed to promote the development of a realistic picture of the Roma, a total of HUF 7.25 million was allocated to TV and radio programmes, films and printed media.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

In 2003 the Ministry continued its efforts to provide equal opportunities for disadvantaged and Roma children. Key measures taken were as follows:

- Setting up and the operation of the National Network for the Integration of the Roma to Mainstream Education (OOIH);
- Introduction of normative financing for integration (to eliminate segregation);
- Revision of decisions that qualify Roma children as handicapped, and steps taken to eliminate the so-called 'pseudo disability' (within the programme 'From the Last Bench');
- Amendment of the Act on Public Education (the prohibition of segregation and discrimination at schools and the prohibition of failure /classes 1,2,3/);
- Sponsoring research studies and training programmes in Romology;
- Sponsoring model programmes and special educational institutions.

All in all, a tender fund of approximately HUF 300 million was available for the programmes of the chosen 45 base schools that were making the benefits of the integrated education better known in schools within their reach. If applied for, the normative funding of integrated education is granted to educational institutions to provide them with financial means for the obligatory elimination of the segregated classes up to the school year 2008/'09. This normative amount of HUF 51,000 per head per year is first open to applications from the school year 2003/'04 for desegregation.

The revision of the abilities of children originally qualified as slightly handicapped was started among the children attending the first and second classes in 2003. Pupils qualified by the professionals as 'pseudo-handicapped' were removed to normal classes. Out of 2099, the number of such removals was as high as 230 in 2003 as compared with the 60 to 70 in former years. As for the disadvantaged children, the new regulation provides for the obligatory admission to nursery schools and the provision of meals free of charge. A new element of the Act on Public Education is the use of the 'tanoda' methodology, making extra-curricular activities possible.

Training in Romology, providing accredited qualifications, has been introduced as part of the post-gradual education of pedagogues teaching and training Roma pupils as well as Roma ethnography in lower elementary school sections. The Ministry provides funding also for research programmes that promote minority education.

In addition, funds were allotted from the budget to ethnographic camps organized for Roma children, and local governments maintaining nationality nursery and other schools (e.g. Public Foundation Grammar School and College 'Gandhi', Pécs) also received budgetary grants. The ministry also provided subsidies for young Romas learning at institutes of higher education or taking part in preparatory university courses as paying students, and spent on both extra-curricular development of the Roma children and their development in specialized schools, as well as on their instruction in foreign languages and Roma talent fostering.

The Ministry announced tenders to provide subsidy for research work programmes promoting minority education, in particular the elaboration of linguistic and methodological materials to be used in the teaching of two Roma dialects, namely 'Beás' and 'Romani'.

MINISTRY OF FINANCE

In order to meet the expectations raised, the central budget of 2003 provided resources classified into budgetary chapters, which were assigned to the Ministries concerned as allocations or budget estimates in the form of tenders. Subsidies were granted to:

- Coordination and Intervention Fund for the Roma,
- Roma Cultural Fund,
- Programmes for the improvement of institutions promoting the Roma integration,
- Scholarships to pupils and students of Roma origin,
- Public Foundation for the Roma of Hungary,
- National Roma Self-Government,
- Non-profit company 'National Roma Integration and Cultural Centre'.

* * *