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POLICE AND (ETHNIC) MINORITIES (1)

Police and ethnic minorities:

Roma in Hungary

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COREPOL „CONFLICT RESOLUTION, MEDIATION AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AND THE POLICING OF ETHNIC MINORITIES IN GERMANY, AUSTRIA, AND HUNGARY”

The main area of comparative research will aim at an improvement of police-minority interaction through the application of RJ measures. The primary outlet for our findings will be police tertiary education BA and MA curricula and in-service training courses on a national and on a European level. (CEPOL)



“CONFLICT RESOLUTION, MEDIATION AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AND THE POLICING OF ETHNIC MINORITIES IN GERMANY, AUSTRIA, AND HUNGARY” (COREPOL)

- The **German** partner: the largest migrant community: individuals and their families with **Turkish** background, mostly urban, and predominantly working class.
- The **Austrian** research: look at residents with **African** background. This population is mostly residing in the bigger cities.
- The **Hungarian** team: **Roma** communities, who are generally located in the rural parts of the country.

(8% of the Gypsy population lives in Budapest, 14% in the rural cities and 78% in the villages.)

ROMA SETTLEMENTS IN HUNGARY



ROMA/GYPSY PROBLEM

- **Hungary** is suffering of a large number of ethnic-based conflicts of which the majority involves Roma people.
- Estimates of the size of the Roma population diverge widely. Census data is widely debated in Europe, since many Roma do not give a declaration about their ethnic background.
- By most estimates, the share of Roma has grown to between 6 and 9 percent of the population in Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, FYROM and the Slovak Republic.



ROMA/GYPSY IN HUNGARY

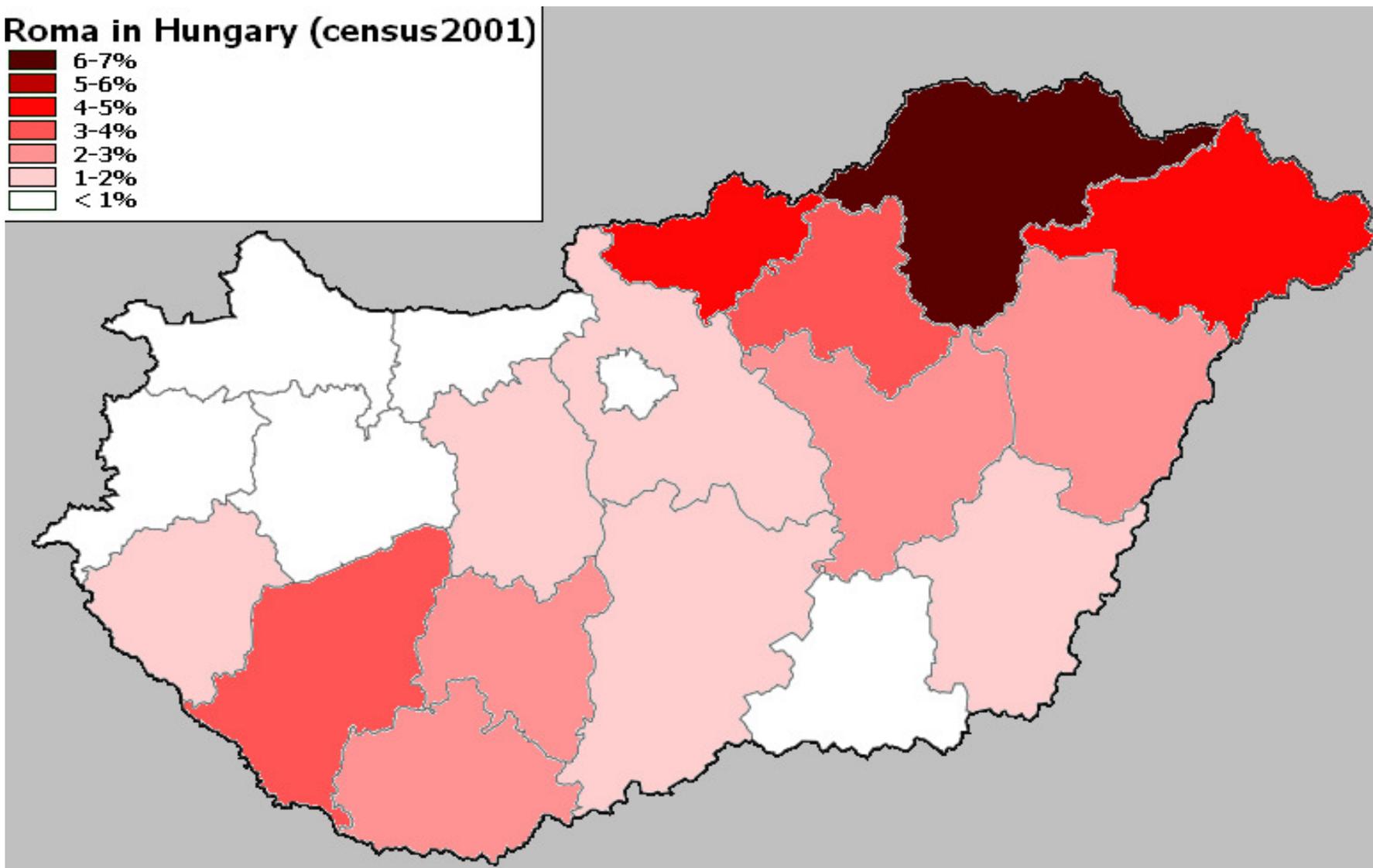
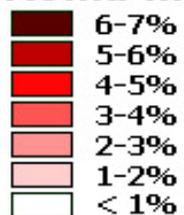
During the latest national census in 2011, citizens were asked about national affiliation on an anonymous basis, 315,583 people (from 10 million) defined themselves as Roma. (In 2001 only 190,046)

- **But:** Estimates go from 4-6% to up to 7-10% of the total population, which means from 400, 000 to up to 1 million Roma people. **The latest** sociological research shows that approximately **8%** of the population are Roma.



ROMA SETTLEMENTS IN HUNGARIAN COUNTIES

Roma in Hungary (census 2001)



ROMA AND POLICE

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

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 tend to have no trust in police compared to 22% of the Hungarian majority population. (FRA European Agency for Fundamental Rights (2010), Police Stops and Minorities (European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey))

ROMA AND POLICE

- The ombudsman's report verified in 2011: „While the members of different [extremist] groups could continue their dreadful march and “patrol” unmolested in the streets occupied by Roma dwellers for weeks, some of the local (Gyöngyöspata) Gypsy residents were stroke for thousands Forints (20-30 Euros) on-the-spot fine, because they were not walking on the pavement.”



DISCRIMINATION

- Eight similar attacks against Roma people between July 2008 and August 2009 in North-East Hungary.
- Six people died, 55 seriously injured. Among the victims were a couple in their forties, an elderly man, a father and his son, and a single mother with a 13-year-old daughter. In one attack a house was set ablaze and as the Roma father and his four-year-old son fled they were shot dead.
- Fear spread to other villages and other counties. Romas were afraid everywhere, they felt that the police are not able to protect them.
- (On that topic see the movie film of Bence Fliegauf: „Just the Wind” , Berlinale, February 2012, won the Silver Bear)



DISCRIMINATION

- The government in Hungary is apparently taking the Roma problem very seriously while prohibiting vigilante activities by right-wing groupings against Roma communities.
- **Discrimination against the Roma minority in Hungary remains an issue of international media coverage.**



DISCRIMINATION

Amnesty International in a new report '**Violent attacks against Roma in Hungary**' shows how racially motivated crimes impact on individual victims, communities and society as a whole. It also shows how shortcomings in the Hungarian justice system hinder the prevention of and response to such attacks.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gMRq90MTxo0>



NAGYCSÉCS 2008.



TATÁRSZENTGYÖRGY 2009.



GYÖNGYÖSPATA, SPRING 2011

- The 2,800 residents of Gyöngyöspata, a village about 80 kilometres northeast of the capital, found themselves for weeks on the front line of the battle by the far right against the country's Roma minority. The ultra-nationalist party Jobbik held a rally there and its leader spoke of the threat from the village's 450 or so Roma, or gypsies, whom he blamed for the suicide of an elderly resident.
- A far-right paramilitary group calling itself the “Civil Guard for a Better Future” moved into the village to “protect law and order”.



GYÖNGYÖSPATA SPRING 2011

- There were police units patrolling fields between the Roma neighbourhood and the land where the “Defence Force” had announced it would hold its amateur military exercises.



GYÖNGYÖSPATA, SPRING 2011.

- The police moved in and broke up the Defence Force camp before it got underway.
- The leader of Defence Force, and some of his associates were arrested and charged with disorder-related offences. All were subsequently released after a court found no grounds to detain them.





29 May 2012 at the country-side (Nagykanizsa, south-west Hungary) „You will die gypsies” „You with X sign will burn”



DEVECSER

05 August 2012

Demonstration of the right extremists front of a Roma house („Gypsy Crime”).

Szélsőjobbos felvonulás és őrjöngés Devecseren –
YouTube www.youtube.com/watch?v=bYBtnrqVbnU



NEW POLICIES

- The government elected in 2010 returned to “firm hand” policies in the criminal law.
- Following the American agenda of the zero tolerance policies (Wacquant, 2009) the law of “three strikes” emerged in Hungary codifying the obligatory life sentence in case of violent recidivists. Nevertheless the same law does not permit the life sentence for individuals under the age of 20.
- The new regulations increased the fee limits of misdemeanors, while many of them were “upgraded”/aggravated to the possibility of potential imprisonment.



HUNGARIAN GANG JAILED FOR RACIST ROMA KILLINGS

- 6 August 2013. A court in Hungary (after two-and-a-half year trial) has found four men guilty of killing six Roma (Gypsy) people in racist attacks. The men used guns, grenades and petrol bombs in nine assaults on Roma over a 14-month period.
- Life sentences were handed down to three persons, a fourth defendant got a 13-year prison sentence.



ROMA PEOPLE IN CANADA 2013

<http://www.cbc.ca/thenational/indepthanalysis/roma/>

- Behind the Scenes
- Through the use of photographs and narration, Ed Ou reflects on the Roma community and the complexity of their relationship with far right-wing nationalist groups. He also describes how he felt as a Canadian welcoming a family of Roma refugees to this country.
- Can Hungary be designated a safe country when so many of its Roma citizens are desperate to leave? In this feature documentary, Nahlah Ayed went to Hungary to find out.



„TO BRIDGE THE GAP”

- Law enforcement officials need to take steps towards increasing the **confidence** of hate crime victims, so that they in turn feel safe enough to report such crimes to the police. That can only be done if Roma groups are assured that thorough investigations are made in instances of police ill treatment of Roma. To bridge this **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.



NEW PUBLIC WORK PROGRAMME

Gyöngyöspata recently became one of a handful chosen to pilot a government scheme to put the long-term unemployed to work on sub-minimum-wage community service projects.



PREVENTION

- The National Strategy for Community Crime Prevention emphasizes the importance of **restorative justice** on several occasions.
- To achieve the goals set up five priorities year by year:
 - prevention and reduction of juvenile crime;
 - improving urban security;
 - prevention of violence within the family;
 - prevention of victimization, assisting and compensating victims;
 - prevention of recidivism.



Thank you for your
kind attention!



VIOLENT ATTACKS AGAINST ROMA IN HUNGARY

2008. 21 July Galgagyörk, 8 August Piricse, 5
September Nyíradony, 29 September,
Tarnabod, 3 November Nagycsécs, 15
December Alsózsolca, 2009. 23 February
Tatárszentgyörgy, 22 April Tiszalök, 3 August
Kisléta

