

**Annex I**

**NATIONAL SOCIAL INTEGRATION STRATEGY  
- EXTREME POVERTY, CHILD POVERTY, THE ROMA -  
(2011-2020)**

**SITUATION ANALYSIS**

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The present analysis provides an overview of the situation of the three target groups most affected by poverty risk factor (Roma, children and those residing in disadvantaged regions) and identifies the most significant problems in four problem areas (employment, education, healthcare and housing) also specifically dealt with as part of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies.

## 1. About poverty

While poverty is a complex phenomenon determined by a number of social factors, its causes including social, cultural disadvantages, socialisation deficiencies, shortcomings in education and qualification and deficient skills on the labour market, we may obtain an overall picture of its extent most directly, in a way which also permits international comparison, if we analyse the relevant **income indicators**. We may at this point in time obtain reliable data with respect to income-related poverty from two surveys spanning a longer period; the EU-SILC, and the Household Panel survey of the social research institute TÁRKI. The principles of the common European statistical indicators on poverty established by the heads of state and prime ministers of the Member States at the European Council held in the Brussels suburb of Laeken, in 2001.<sup>1</sup> The European Commission determined the **Europe 2020 strategy poverty reduction target** on the basis of the indicators approved in Laeken as well. The EU target is to **reduce by 20 million** the number of people living in or at risk of poverty and social exclusion. According to the relevant Hungarian undertaking, **Hungary** wishes to reduce the number of those living in poverty **by half a million** by 2020. In determining the undertakings, Eurostat used three indicators: number of people **living in income poverty**, number of people **living in households with very low work intensity** and number of those **living in severe material deprivation**.<sup>2</sup> According to the complex indicator, all individuals falling into any one of these categories or into more than one category at the same time may be regarded as poor or socially excluded. In recent years in Hungary, minor fluctuations apart, the number of those affected by poverty or social exclusion has been more or less constant.

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<sup>1</sup> The system typically adjusted at the time to the internal conditions of the individual countries, that is, a system that relied on relative statistical indicators, was significantly extended in 2006 to include absolute statistical indicators that allow to better reflect the relative situation of the Member States in a cross-sectional context. At present, the indicator system encompasses four areas which measure economic, social and demographic changes and relate to social inclusion, pensions and the health care situation. Absolute indicators relating to financial deprivation have been introduced in recent years to investigate the multi-dimensional nature of poverty and social exclusion.

<sup>2</sup> Income poverty: The persons with an equivalised disposable income below the risk-of-poverty threshold, which is set at 60 % of the national median equivalised disposable income (after social transfers) – on the OECD2 scale.

Eurostat's *work intensity* indicator measures the amount of time (number of months) spent in employment (whether full-time or part-time) by household members of working age (between the ages of 18 and 64) out of the total possible annual time frame. A household is regarded as a household with an extremely low work intensity rate if the members of the household of working age are in employment for maximum 20 per cent or less of the total potential time frame.

Financially deprived: individuals who are compelled to renounce at least three of 9 consumption items for financial reasons: 1. covering unanticipated expenditures, 2. one week's holiday annually, 3. payment of instalments (rental, housing credit payments, utility bills, products purchased on credit), 4. appropriate meals, 5. appropriate heating at home, 6. washing machine, 7. colour TV, 8. telephone, 9. passenger car.

## Income poverty

### Number and ratio of individuals living in poverty or social exclusion

		2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Hungary	%	32.1	31.4	29.4	28.2	29.9
	'000 persons	3185	3121	2878	2794	2956
EU27	%	26	25	24.5	23.6	23.1

Source: EUROSTAT, Statistics database <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>

If we look into the components of the complex indicator, we may identify the fundamental characteristics of poverty in Hungary and may explore trends indicating a change for the worse.

The figures of income poverty have been rather constant for some time.

### Number and ratio of individuals living in income poverty

		2005	2006*	2007	2008	2009
Hungary	%	13.5	15.9	12.3	12.4	12.4
	'000 persons	1342	1578	1221	1226	1229
EU27	%	16.4	16.5	16.7	16.5	16.3

Source: EUROSTAT, Statistics database <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>

\*The extreme data is explained by methodological changes in data surveys in Hungary.

The purpose of the SILC surveys is to create an opportunity for the Member States to compare and analyse their social conditions on the basis of a standard methodology. This survey system geared towards international comparison does not permit the investigation of certain issues which may be relevant to social problems in Hungary. These are, for instance, the situation of the Roma population and the issue of regional disadvantages.

Compared with the SILC data, TÁRKI's Household Monitor survey reflects a less optimistic situation as regards poverty in Hungary. According to their data, we may regard some 13.9% of the entire population as poor in 2009; in other words, this is the proportion of the population that lives off incomes below the internationally approved poverty line<sup>3</sup>. Compared with earlier data, we may see that **relative income poverty increased by 1.3 percentage points compared with 2007 (a significant rise also statistically)** after a period of stagnation in the earlier years of the millennium. The rise between 2007 and 2009 is more significant

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<sup>3</sup> That is, incomes lower than 60% of the annual equivalent household income measured on the OECD2 scale.

than the previous mild fluctuations, and as a result, the risk of poverty is now comparable with that experienced in the mid-1990s.<sup>4</sup>

**The poverty rate increased significantly in 2009** according to TÁRKI's figures. The poverty gap indicating the depth of poverty, that is, the extent of the effort necessary for emerge from poverty, increased in 2009 compared with the 2007 figure, and it is around 22% – higher than ever before. There has been a continuous rise in the depth of poverty since 1992, with a slight decline in 2007. The general rise in the risk of poverty is attributable to the rise in the poverty risk of individuals living in households with children.<sup>5</sup>

### **Households with children, child poverty**

Based on another approach, the indicator used for the determination of Hungary's undertaking with respect to the Europe 2020 strategy, it may be seen, in particular, in the light of the 2009 data carrying the signs of the economic crisis, that **the income position of households with children has deteriorated primarily.**

While the ratio of households with children living below the poverty line was lower than the EU average throughout the period under investigation and remained highly stable (not including the 2006 data which we must take with reservations due to the significant difference), from among the neighbouring countries, both the Czech Republic (10.5%) and Slovakia (13.4%) produced substantially better figures in 2009. Our last, 2009 figure of 17%, presumably as a sign of the economic crisis, indicates a deterioration and approaches the 2009 Polish data (19.8% – which is, however, the result of a significant improvement compared with earlier figures: 2005: 25.2; 2006: 23.3; 2007: 21.1; 2008: 20.2). Romania remained the region's worst-affected country also in 2009 (26.2%).

**Ratio of households with children living below the poverty line, %**

	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
Hungary	16.8	20.5	16.0	16.1	17
EU27	17.6	17.9	17.8	17.8	17.6

*Source: EUROSTAT, Statistics database <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>*

Data in a breakdown by age, too, confirms the extent to which children are affected; **in 2009, 21% of children, some 380,000 children were living in poverty.** Both income poverty ratio and risk of poverty decrease with the progression of age<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> Income poverty and financial deprivation in Hungary by A. Gábos and P. Szivós (2010). In: Social Report, 2010, edited by T. Kolosi and I. Gy. Tóth, Budapest: TÁRKI, 58-81.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Risk of poverty: ratio of poor individuals falling into the given group to the national average. A value higher than 1 represents a higher than average risk of falling below the poverty line of the given category, while a value lower than 1 represents a lower than average risk.

### Income poverty ratios by age groups and genders, 2008, 2009 (%)

Age group, age		2008	2009
<i>Total</i>		12	12
0–17		20	21
18–24		18	18
25–49		12	13
50–64		9	8
65–		4	5
<i>Of which:</i>	<i>Male</i>	3	3
	<i>Female</i>	5	5

Source: Poverty and social exclusion (Laeken indicators, 2009). Central Statistical Office, Statisztikai Tükör, year IV, issue 91, 13 October 2010.

### Risk of poverty (RISK) by age groups and genders, 2008, 2009

Age group, age		2008	2009
<i>Total</i>		1.00	1.00
0–17		1.67	1.75
18–24		1.50	1.50
25–49		1.00	1.08
50–64		0.75	0.67
65–		0.33	0.42
<i>Of which:</i>	<i>Male</i>	0.25	0.25
	<i>female</i>	0.42	0.42

Source: Poverty and social exclusion (Laeken indicators, 2009). Central Statistical Office, Statisztikai Tükör, year IV, issue 91, 13 October 2010.

From amongst the Member States of the European Union, Luxembourg not included where we are experiencing a phenomenon that has evolved for different reasons against the background of a different income structure, in the last two years, Hungary has accounted for the largest difference between the income poverty of households with children and that of households without children. We are amongst the 5 countries of the European Union where **the distance between the poverty of the population and that of children is the greatest, to the detriment of children. One of the main reasons for child poverty is the extensive unemployment rate of the parents.** The ratio of children living in unemployed households is 14% in Hungary (255,000 persons); this is the second highest in the EU. Some **60% of poor children live in inactive families or families with a low work intensity rate.**

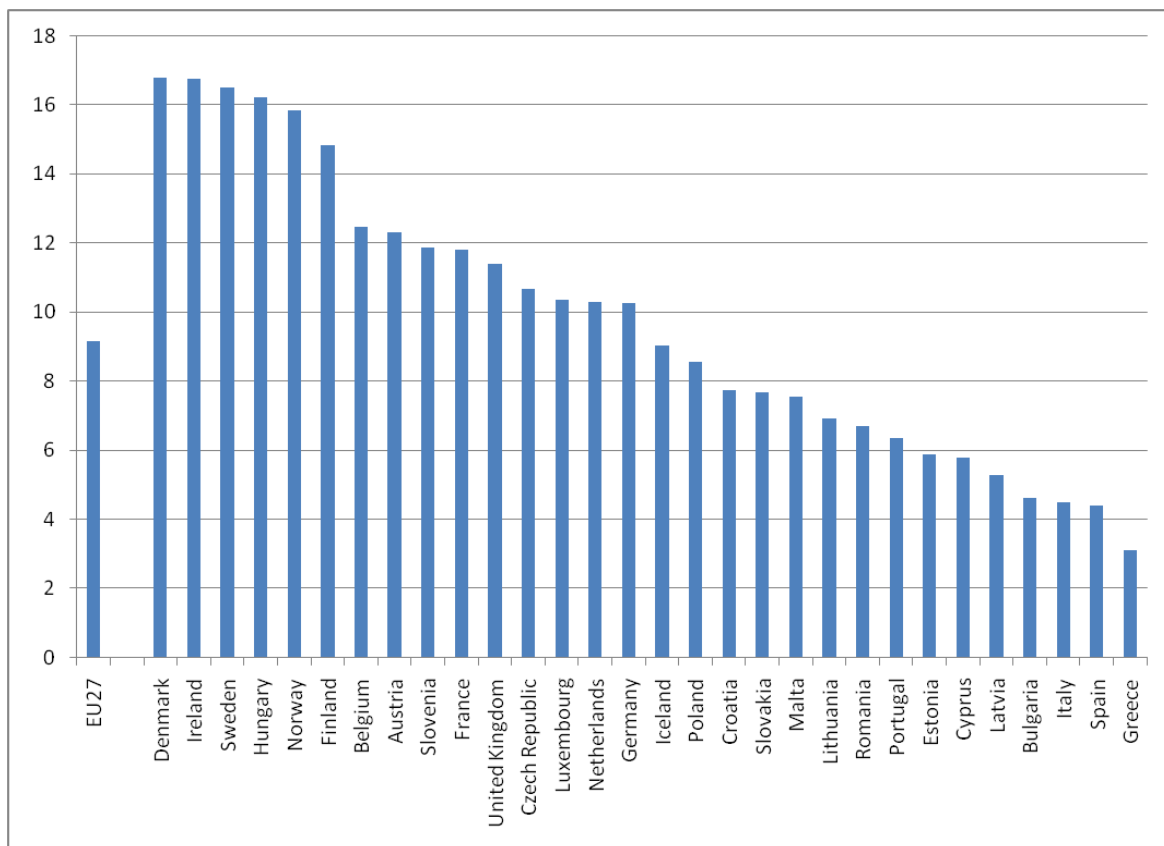
### Income poverty of households with and without children, %

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Households with children	16.8	20.5	16	16.1	17
Households without children	9.7	10	7.6	7.7	6.8
Difference	7.1	10.5	8.4	8.4	10.2

Source: EUROSTAT, Statistics database <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>

It is important to note in the context of poverty indicators that **as regards the effect of social transfers on the reduction of poverty, Hungary is doing well by EU standards.** Compared with the rest of the EU Member States, monetary benefits have a significant income supplementing effect. *Individuals with low incomes derive a significant proportion of their incomes from schemes of monetary benefits.* By examining poverty rates that take account of social benefits and those that disregard them, we may observe that in recent years (since 2005) *our indicators have been well in excess of the EU average and have been equivalent to those of the Scandinavian countries.*

### Five-year average of difference of poverty rates calculated to include and to exclude social transfers, 2005-2009



Source: EUROSTAT, Statistics database <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>

## Households with low work intensity

The number of persons **living in households of very low work intensity** is on the rise, subject to fluctuations. These figures do not yet reflect the effects of the economic crisis, and it may be presumed that the ratio of this segment of the population will increase. The extremely high ratio in Hungary of families with children among households with a low work intensity rate compared to the EU average indicates the gravity of the problem reflected by this figure: 55.6%; Czech Republic: 51.4%; Slovakia: 50.8%; Poland: 46.3%; EU27: 49.2%.: (Source: EUROSTAT report of the Social Protection Committee's Indicator task force, 27 May 2010.)

As a consequence of the low employment level, the ratio of this segment of the population is rather significant in the case of Hungary; according to 2009 data, it affects **870,000 persons** from among those aged below 60. This is some **11.3%** of the entire population. **Approximately 590,000 of them** live in families with children, while amongst children aged between 0 and 17, some 300,000 of them live in such families. We do not have time series data at our disposal with respect to households with children, however, we may presume that **an increasing proportion of children are born and grow up in households where no one works, and without intervention, this results in the deterioration of both the poverty and employment indicators.** At the same time, many of them live in childless households where one of the members of the household is over the age of 60 years.

**Individuals with low educational qualifications, disabled persons, people living in small localities** and disadvantaged regions and **Roma** account for **a large proportion of inactive people.** Main obstacles to access to the labour market: unequal regional distribution of jobs on offer, inflexible labour market, low educational level, problems of motivation arising from long-term unemployment, lack of care services for children and other relatives in need of care and nursing.

### Number and ratio of individuals living in households of extremely low work intensity

		2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Hungary	%	9.5	13	11.3	12	11.3
	'000 persons	745	1034	893	943	870
EU27	%	10	10	9.7	9	9

Source: EUROSTAT, Statistics database <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>

## Severe material deprivation

The development of the number of those living in severe material deprivation keenly reflects the effects of the economic crisis. Until 2008, the index clearly followed a downward trend (parallel with the data of all former socialist countries). At the same time, it still falls considerably behind the average of the EU27. This indicator is particularly subject to changes in economic growth and social welfare. It is important that a large number of children live in households affected by grave financial deprivation in Hungary compared with the EU.



### Number and ratio of those living severe material deprivation

		2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Hungary	%	22.9	20.9	19.9	17.9	20.3
	'000 persons	2271	2077	1922	1771	2061
EU27	%	11	10	9.1	8.5	8.1

Source: EUROSTAT, Statistics database <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>

The vast majority of the population have no possibility to accumulate savings, which is also reflected in the fact that **the majority in Hungary (75%) do not have sufficient savings to finance unexpected expenditures from their own resources**. There is no other member of the European Union where this value is this high (the **EU27** average was **35%** in 2009).<sup>7</sup> In other words, the group of individuals directly exposed to the threat of falling behind is rather extensive in Hungary and even a situation resulting in a short-term loss of income (loss of job, illness, divorce, etc.) may cause long-term crisis. Therefore, *prevention*, the consolidation of the situation of those exposed to the threat of social exclusion, the improvement of the chances of families struggling to overcome the symptoms of the global financial and economic crisis and the prevention of a rise in financial deprivation are all part of an important and effective approach.

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<sup>7</sup> Characteristics of the situation of children and families raising children in Hungary, 2006–2009, manuscript, Central Statistical Office, 2011.

**Ratio of households that would not be able to cover unexpected expenditures from their own resources, %, 2006–2009**

<b>Country/Region</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
EU-27	35.1	34.9	34.0	35.1
EU-15	30.9	30.5	30.4	31.4
New Member States (CZ, EE, CY, LV, LT, HU, MT, PL, SI, SK)	52.6	51.0	48.9	49.3
Belgium	21.1	20.9	23.9	23.8
Czech Republic	40.3	38.5	37.9	37.9
Germany	41.0	36.5	34.9	34.6
Greece	30.6	29.6	26.6	26.6
France	33.3	34.5	34.1	32.5
<b>Hungary</b>	<b>52.4</b>	<b>67.0</b>	<b>67.6</b>	<b>75.2</b>
Austria	26.5	28.7	29.5	24.9
Poland	57.0	54.4	50.7	50.0
Romania	:	45.1	41.7	41.7
Slovakia	49.1	43.3	38.5	36.0
Sweden	13.9	18.0	19.5	18.5

*Source: Characteristics of the situation of children and families raising children in Hungary, 2006–2009. Central Statistical Office, 2011. Manuscript.*

## **2. Situation of the Roma population**

According to the data of the census conducted in 2001, based on ethnic affiliation, 190,000 persons declared themselves Roma, while based on the results of representative Roma surveys, researchers estimated the Roma population to be around 320,000 in 1971, 468,000 in 1993 and 570,000 in 2003. This represents approximately 5.5 per cent of the entire population of the country.<sup>8</sup> At present, we do not have at our disposal research data more recent than 2003. Population forecasts estimate the Roma population to be between 650–700,000 in the present decade.<sup>9</sup> The latest surveys which worked with substantially smaller samples than the

<sup>8</sup> For over a decade, we have not had comprehensive, representative data with respect to the social situation of Roma in Hungary. Therefore, also in the present evaluation we were unable to rely on sources other than those that were available upon the identification of the Decade of Roma Integration Programme, as far as data based on large samples and nation-wide representation is concerned. (The only exceptions to the limited range of data are TÁRKI's Household Monitor survey and the research conducted as part of the TÁMOP 5.4.1 programme, the quick reports of which, containing preliminary results, were published in May 2011.)

<sup>9</sup> Experimental calculations regarding the development of the territorial characteristics of the Roma population and a projection extending to 2021 by László Hablicsek. Demográfia, 2007. Year 50, issue No. 1, 7–54.

Kemény surveys but were representative nation-wide, too, appear to confirm these numbers. Based on the 2003 data, with regard to an annual growth rate of 12 to 15 thousand per year, researchers estimate the Roma population to be around 750,000 (approximately 7.5% of the population), subject to the reservation that „the Roma population most certainly does not exceed one million but is with all certainty greater than 700,000”.<sup>10</sup>

### Number of Roma and their distribution by age in Hungary

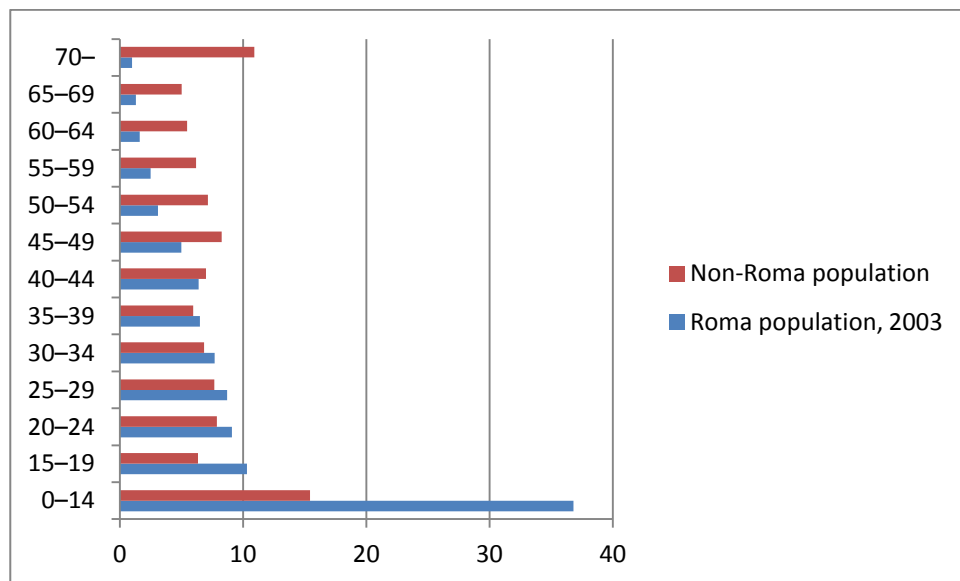
Age			
From year	to year	%	value
0	14	36.8	209 760
15	19	10.3	58 710
20	24	9.1	51 870
25	29	8.7	49 590
30	34	7.7	43 890
35	39	6.5	37 050
40	44	6.4	36 480
45	49	5	28 500
50	54	3.1	17 670
55	59	2.5	14 250
60	64	1.6	9 120
65	69	1.3	7 410
70	-	1	5 700
Total:		100%	570 000

*Source: Kemény, Janky and Lengyel (2004), page 18*

According to surveys, the age composition of the Roma population is substantially younger than that of the non-Roma population. The ratio of children aged between 0 and 14 amongst Roma is 36.8%, while this proportion within the non-Roma population is 15.4%.

<sup>10</sup> Roma society – 2010 Quick Report on Part „A” of the Research. (research report drafted in conjunction with the research pillar of the Operative Programme for Social Renewal [TÁMOP] 5.4.1.)

### Age distribution of the Roma and non-Roma populations, 2001, 2003, %



Source of data: Kemény, Janky and Lengyel (2004), page 18 and demographic data lines of the 2001 census.

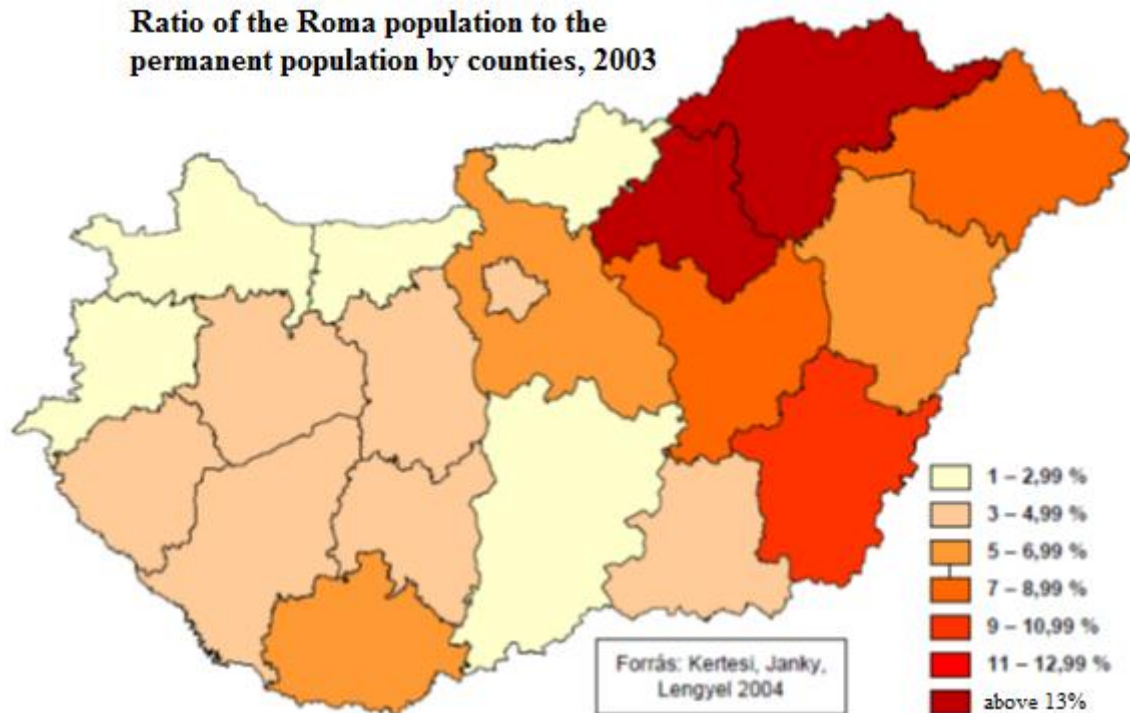
Based on a summary evaluation of the research conducted by the Institute of Economic Sciences of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences as part of the National Programme Against Child Poverty and the proposed recommendations, „The enhancement of conscious family planning could be one of the elements of the strategy to be identified for the reduction of child poverty.”<sup>11</sup> The survey establishes that „with a rise in the number of children, there is a rise in the chance of families falling into a state of impoverishment. The primary reason why low-status parents tended to have a larger number of children was that they had more children than they had planned, and parallel with this, there was a higher proportion of parents in this segment in whose case children were born in spite of their intentions or who would like to have had children at a later stage in their lives. Amongst families with more children than planned, the risk of impoverishment is twice as high as in families which have the planned number of children.”<sup>12</sup>

**The Roma population has an uneven geographical distribution in the territory of the country.** Territorial differences are significant both in relation to the entire population and based on the proportions within the Roma population. In several counties of the country, their ratio to the entire population remains below 3 per cent, while in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén and Heves Counties, it is near 15 per cent. Territorial differences emerge most markedly at the level of localities; in some localities or locality groups, the Roma are in a majority.

<sup>11</sup> Dynamics of inequalities in opportunities by László Bass. (Research headed by Zsuzsa Ferge.) Gyerekesély Füzetek 2. MTA GYEP Budapest, 2007. p. 39.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

**Ratio of the Roma population to the permanent population by counties, 2003**



*Ratio of the Roma population to the permanent population by counties, 2003*  
*Source: Kemény, Jankó and Lengyel (2004), page 14, prepared SzMI 2010*

More than 60% of Roma live in the countryside, in a rural environment, mostly in segregated residential zones, in rather poor housing conditions. According to research, there are approximately a hundred localities in Hungary which have definitively turned into poor-Roma ghettos, while in another two hundred localities, this situation will emerge in the near future as a result of seemingly irreversible processes. Most of the ghettoed localities and localities on their way to ghettoing are situated in the country's economically depressed north-eastern and south-western regions which are typically characterised by a structure of small localities. As a consequence, we may also observe a process of micro-regional ghettoification and the phenomena of definitive segregation.<sup>13</sup> Population projections, which are at our disposal in a breakdown by regions, forecast the continued survival of these regional differences in the distribution of the population.

<sup>13</sup> Effect study regarding integration-centred education policy by Gábor Havas and János Zolnay. Research report. European Comparative Minority Research Foundation, 2010. p. 4.

### Numbers of Roma population, 1991–2021

Regional unit	1991	2001	2011	Base*	Low	High
				2021		
Budapest	40 400	59 600	80 500	103 200	95 900	110 600
Central Hungary	65 800	97 000	132 700	173 000	159 600	186 700
Central Transdanubia	22 800	31 000	39 800	49 500	45 900	53 200
Western Transdanubia	22 200	26 400	30 200	33 700	31 900	35 400
Southern Transdanubia	63 500	72 400	79 300	84 900	82 700	86 800
North Hungary	123 800	151 500	181 900	215 500	204 300	226 500
North Alföld	114 500	129 600	145 000	161 300	155 200	166 700
South Alföld	35 500	41 800	48 700	56 300	53 500	59 000
Hungary total	448 100	549 700	657 600	774 200	733 100	814 300

*\*The forecast was prepared in three versions on the basis of different presumed demographic scenarios.*

*Source: Experimental calculations regarding the development of the territorial characteristics of the Roma population and a projection extending to 2021 by László Hablicsek. In Demográfia, 2007. Year 50, Issue No. 1. 7–54.*

According to some research<sup>14</sup>, the employment rate of the Roma population barely reaches 20%. The 10 per cent employment rate amongst **Roma women** is particularly alarming<sup>15</sup>. These figures are coupled with an extremely poor state of health (Roma die 10 years younger than non-Roma on average<sup>16</sup>), a low educational level (barely 20% of them reach secondary final examinations) and ghetto-like housing conditions without modern conveniences. Crime and ethnic conflicts are particularly rife in these areas. According to TÁRKI's 2010 Household Monitor data survey, **the poverty rate amongst the Roma population in 2009 was near the 2000 figure and reached 70%**.<sup>17</sup>

We are experiencing a number of economic and social processes which negatively affect the most disadvantaged regions and social groups. By international comparison, **the employment rate is low, education is not competitive and the population are accumulating a dangerous level of debt. These processes have a multiplied effect on the Roma population** which may also lead to manifestations of segregation and discrimination.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Roma in Hungary, 1971-2003, by István Kemény–Béla Jankó–Gabriella Lengyel. Gondolat Kiadó–Ethnic-National Minorities Research Institute, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, 2004

<sup>15</sup> Situation of Roma women at the turn of the millennium in an Eastern European context, by Bernát-Páthy–Dencső, 2009.

<sup>16</sup> Entrapped by poverty. Roma in Hungary – social and economic situation, state of health, access to social and health care services, Delphoi Consulting 2004. p. 48.

<sup>17</sup> While due to the size of the sample, this data cannot be regarded as representative, this is the only estimate made with academic precision with respect to the poverty rate amongst the Roma population.

<sup>18</sup> Labour Market Mirror, edited by K. Fazekas A. Lovász and Á. Telegdy (2009), 2009. Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Economic Sciences, and National Employment Foundation. A close-up: Discrimination on the labour market.

## Situation of Roma women

A number of studies and research in Hungary and in other countries of Europe introduce the living conditions and situations of the Roma. These studies, however, only partially cover the increased disadvantages of Roma women.

Based on the available research<sup>19</sup>, we may clearly establish that, compared with Roma men, Roma women have inferior educational qualifications, suffer a greater disadvantage on the labour market and their incomes, too, are lower. They are in a poorer state of health, have less access to the healthcare and social services, and therefore their life expectancy is also shorter. In most cases, the risks and dangers they are exposed to are not stressed emphatically enough. It is likewise little discussed that they have an exposed position within the family, in some cases, they are married off whilst still children and may become the victims of human trafficking or prostitution.

Gender-based discrimination in the case of Roma women is aggravated by ethnic discrimination.<sup>20</sup> In some problem areas, almost exclusively Roma women are present, and in these cases concentrated interventions are required.

As most of the disadvantages of Roma women are largely attributable to their **low educational qualifications**, one of the main priorities of the strategy (priority 4) is the reduction of the educational and labour market disadvantages of Roma women.

### *Disadvantages of Roma girls/women in education*

Roma women fall behind both Roma and non-Roma men and non-Roma women in almost every department; education, **participation in the labour market** and income. In spite of the fact that, according to a 1993 Roma survey, similar to non-Roma, Roma girls, too, do better at school, only 5.8% of Roma women had vocational qualifications, while 17.5% of Roma men completed their secondary vocational studies<sup>21</sup>. We may observe striking differences also upon comparing Roma and non-Roma women; the proportion of Roma women with maximum elementary schooling is two to five times higher than the proportion of non-Roma women in the same category. There is a significant difference between the educational indicators of Roma and non-Roma women in the same status as well. We may therefore conclude that the educational gap stems not only from ethnic circumstances but is also attributable to social gender roles. Factors responsible for **early school leaving rates**

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<sup>19</sup> Topical issues of social and political inclusion of Roma women in Europe by Lídia Balogh and Angéla Kóczé. Background study and collection of recommendations prepared for the conference entitled Roma women in focus.

Lívía Járóka's report: situation of Roma women in the EU. Women's rights/Equal opportunities - 01-06-2006

Written Comments of the European Roma Rights Centre Concerning Hungary for Consideration by the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women at its 39th Session. (July 23 – August 10, 2007).

<sup>20</sup> Labour Market Mirror, edited by K. Fazekas A. Lovász and Á. Telegdy (2009), 2009. Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Economic Sciences, and National Employment Foundation. A close-up: Discrimination on the labour market.

<sup>21</sup> Methods serving to improve the success of Roma pupils at school and the situation of the Roma minority and the National Development Plan by Péter Farkas. Új Pedagógiai Szemle, 2002. No. 11, pp. 3 - 17.

amongst Roma women: loss of motivation, socialisation differences arising from disadvantaged status which are often managed inadequately in practice in schools, lack of access to quality integrated education, etc.

#### *Roma women and access to employment*

During the years of socialism, far fewer Roma women had jobs than Roma men. After the change of regime, however, Roma women, too, lost their jobs in much the same proportions as Roma men, and consequently, also at present, the **employment rate of Roma women is substantially lower** than that of men. It transpires from the data of Roma surveys that labour market integration is unattainable for the vast majority of young Roma women for the following main reasons: segregation caused by regional disadvantages (Roma segregates in disadvantaged regions with inadequate infrastructure, lack of appropriate and/or affordable transport), lack of job opportunities, low education, motherhood at a young age. Those who give up the continuation of their studies because of motherhood may forfeit their chance of obtaining a stable job for the rest of their lives. The Roma face the conflict of motherhood/fatherhood and labour market chances at a younger age (with less experience). On the other hand, based on the experiences of family members and neighbours, considerations may strongly emerge, on the basis of which many young Roma **significantly under-estimate the labour market fruits of a good education**. They may therefore place greater emphasis on a status elevation via motherhood, which in turn further reduces the chances of any kind of future inclusion process.

#### *Correlation between poor education, low employment rate and motherhood amongst Roma women*

It is a widely accepted approach that it is a significant motivational force that, in the *hopeless labour market situation*, early motherhood is „the only chance to become an adult, to invite respect and to obtain self-esteem.”<sup>22</sup>

According to research<sup>23</sup>, in the past decade and also at present, Roma women have their first children at the age of 20 on average, in contrast to non-Roma women. One third of Roma women become mothers as teenagers, before the age of 18 (at the age of 15-16) and approximately two thirds of them have their first children by the age of 20, at the latest. By looking at the individual regions, it may be clearly seen that in areas offering poor labour market opportunities, there is a high fertility rate also on average (for instance, in the extremely poor eastern part of the country), while in regions offering somewhat better opportunities also to the Roma (for instance, in the Central and Western Transdanubia regions), the fall in fertility is similar to the trends experienced in the case of non-Roma women. *Fertility is therefore strongly influenced by labour market opportunities.*

#### *State of health of Roma women*

As a consequence of the poor living conditions of the Roma, the lack of targeted

<sup>22</sup> See „My children are my life” by Judit Durst. Changes in the trends of having children in a small Roma village community. Századvég, 2001, No. 3. pp. 71 - 92.

<sup>23</sup> National surveys, 1971, 1993, 2003. The situation of the Roma population by István Kemény-Béla Janky. p. 26.



information, the limited access to quality health care and exposure to higher health risks, similar to the whole of Roma society, Roma women, too, are in a poorer state of health than the population on average.

Amongst the factors determining the individual's state of health, the pregnancy history of women is a key factor. In addition to other factors with an impact on the individual's state of health before and during pregnancy, the circumstances of birth greatly influence the child's prospects in life, state of health and physical and intellectual development. These are: an appropriate gestation period, a problem-free birth, the avoidance of birth-related injuries and the performance of adequate early screening tests. According to the survey data, Roma mothers have lower educational qualifications, give birth at a younger age and have a lower body weight. They live in poorer infrastructural circumstances (mains water, sewage system).<sup>24</sup>

In Hungary, similar to the Czech Republic and Slovakia, *the infant mortality rate and the proportion of children born with a below-average weight* are, amongst Roma mothers, almost *double* that of the entire population's average.<sup>25</sup>

Smoking is the most significant, preventable cause of death in the advanced countries, including Hungary. The spreading of smoking amongst women is a particular concern as it negatively affects the chances of future generations both directly (foetal damage and through passive smoking that infants are exposed to after birth) and indirectly (as a negative example). Mária Neményi's research<sup>26</sup> conducted amongst Roma mothers demonstrated that 62% of the Roma women included in the survey continued to smoke also during pregnancy, in contrast to 25% of non-Roma women. In their own opinion, young Roma women's state of health is not much worse than that of non-Roma. At the same time, behaviour patterns with a negative impact on health, such as smoking, are 10% more frequent among them.<sup>27</sup> Both active and passive smoking have a negative impact on the foetus's health prospects. In the case of mothers who smoke or are exposed to passive smoking, premature babies born with a lower weight, by 200 g on average, are more frequent. The children of mothers who smoke fall ill more frequently *during infancy*; their prospects for their adult lives, too, are worse.

Cot death (SIDS) is significantly more frequent if the mother smoked during pregnancy. Children exposed to environmental cigarette smoke fall behind in their physical development (height, respiratory performance, intellectual capacity; reading, behaviour and integration disorders may emerge).<sup>28</sup>

By virtue of the inequalities amongst localities, segregation, low incomes, low educational qualifications, discriminatory access to services, prejudice, etc., disadvantaged groups,

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<sup>24</sup> A comparison of Roma and non-Roma women embarking on early motherhood based on Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County data by Péter Balázs, Kristie L. Foley, Ildikó Rákóczi, Andrea Greczner. *Nőgyógyászati és Szülészeti Továbbképző Szemle*, 2010, Year 12, Issue No. 4.

<sup>25</sup> UNDP, *The Roma in Central and Eastern Europe, Avoiding the Dependency Trap*, 2003. Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia, Hungary and the Czech Republic. Equality and Human Rights Commission, *Inequalities Experienced by Gypsy and Traveller Communities: A review*, 2009.

<sup>26</sup> *Poverty – ethnicity – health* by Mária Neményi, Budapest, Újmandátum Kiadó 2005. pp. 136 – 147.

<sup>27</sup> *Roma women as they see themselves and their access to health care. Better health for women (a research report)* by A. Úrmös and Gy. Gyukits, 1999.

<sup>28</sup> National Institute of Health Development. *Background study to reduce smoking*, 2007.

including Roma women, find it substantially more difficult to gain access to gynaecological care and other health care services, and it is therefore essential to revise the relevant institutional and legal regulation. Birth control medication is far less affordable for them, while they find other birth control methods alien to their customs less acceptable. There is therefore a much higher proportion of women amongst them who choose the most dangerous form of birth control, a procedure with an extremely harmful effect both on health and the psyche, *abortion*. One fifth of Roma women have an abortion during their lifetime, and there is a rather high proportion of women who have had multiple (3-9) abortions.<sup>29</sup>

#### *Violation of law and violence against Roma women*

We have very few data available with respect to human trafficking and sexual exploitation involving Roma women from Central and Eastern Europe, in spite of the fact that several reports on human trafficking highlighted the fact that minority groups, the Roma communities in particular (in Europe), and girls raised in orphanages (where Roma children are over-represented in Eastern and Central Europe) are particularly exposed to the violation of human rights.

Hungary is a departure, transit and destination country in human trafficking aimed at the exploitation of women and female children as well as in human trafficking for the purposes of forced labour involving men primarily. In addition to international human trafficking, there is also human trafficking within the country. The victims are typically uneducated, financially exposed individuals, usually from the East-Hungary and North-East Hungary regions.<sup>30</sup>

One research that was conducted by the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) and its partners in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Romania and Slovakia, in addition to Hungary, also supports this fact, the main causes of which are poverty and the various forms of exclusion. Researchers found in the course of interviews conducted with specialists from the social care system and the representatives of civil organisations that those interviewed believed that 40 to 80% of the victims of human trafficking were Roma in the case of Hungary. It is also important, according to the survey, that very few Roma in the target countries under investigation were able to participate in prevention programmes and had access to victim protection services.

In the case of human trafficking and sexual exploitation, there are no measures serving prevention and there is therefore no adequate protection for Roma women and Roma and non-Roma young people who are most exposed to the threats of human trafficking and sexual exploitation. According to the staff members of Hungarian women's rights organisations, *25 to 30% of prostitutes in Amsterdam, while 98 to 99% of prostitutes in Zurich are Hungarian citizens, 80 to 85% of whom are Roma*. Based on the reports of civil organisations based in Zurich and Amsterdam, it may be presumed that a large proportion

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<sup>29</sup> Poverty – ethnicity – health by Mária Neményi, Budapest, Újmandátum Kiadó 2005. pp. 136 – 147.

<sup>30</sup> The foundations for action against human trafficking were laid down in Government Resolution No. 1018/2008. (III.26.) on the National Strategy Against Human Trafficking Between 2008 and 2012. The Government Resolution identified the most important objectives and the means and methods necessary for their attainment, appointed a national coordinator and created a coordination mechanism which at present involves the cooperation of 12 state, civil and international organisations.

of these women are victims of human trafficking and/or exploitation. This phenomenon is one of the less discussed topics even amongst Roma women activists.<sup>31</sup>

Evaluating the governmental Roma policy of recent years is a difficult task because we do not have at our disposal the data, on the basis of which we would be able to determine how many of the programmes and how much of the funding intended for the Roma actually reached the target group. The findings of the State Audit Office reached in 2005 with respect to the funds for minorities are true and correct also at present; the success rates of funds and benefits cannot be tracked down in the financial information system of state finances. At the disbursing agencies, there was no standard monitoring system attached to the funding system.<sup>32</sup>

With regard to the fact that the Roma are in a highly unfavourable position even within the socially disadvantaged groups of the population, targeting aids and benefits is a particularly important task, while one of the greatest failures of the system is *the so-called creaming*. „**It is typical of Roma living in poverty that they are in the worst position even within groups with multiple disadvantages.** Consequently, in the case of welfare programmes launched for the benefit of target groups identified on the basis of regional and social criteria, there is a serious risk that, compared with the other members of the target group, the Roma in the most disadvantaged position reap less of the actual benefits of these programmes.”<sup>33</sup>

A 2008 study of the State Audit Office establishes, „funds used for the improvement of the situation of the Roma in Hungary have multiplied since the change of regime, and the funding system and support programmes have become increasingly more complex. At the same time, the system of planning, implementation and monitoring has not caught up with these changes. The conventional methods of governmental coordination did not prove to be suitable for the effective management of comprehensive government programmes.”<sup>34</sup>

In the absence of ethnic data, we do not know who is Roma and who is not. We can therefore only estimate the ratio of Roma participation in the various measures. Not including programmes and regions (e.g. the scholarship competitions of the Foundation of Roma in Hungary, minority elections) where the programmes designated the target group on the basis of ethnic affiliation and therefore participants were required to make a declaration with respect to their Roma ethnicity as a condition of participation in the programmes. Consequently, in the case of ethnically targeted (that is, Roma) programmes, ethnic data was duly gathered and managed. We should explore how this practice could be extended to a wider range of programmes.

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<sup>31</sup> Topical issues of social and political inclusion of Roma women in Europe - Background study and collection of recommendations prepared for the conference held in Budapest on 7 April 2011 entitled *Roma women in focus*.  
<http://www.eselyegyenloseg.eu/noierdek/sites/default/files/Roma%20nok%20tarsadalmi%20befogadasa%20Europaban.pdf>

<sup>32</sup> Summary report on the fulfilment of the duties of ministerial commissioner supervising Roma aid by Flórián Farkas. Budapest, 2011.

<sup>33</sup> Possibilities and necessity of taking account of ethnicity by Dr Gyula Pulay. Budapest, March 2009, p. 10.  
[http://www.gyerekmonitor.hu/index.php?option=com\\_phocadownload&view=category&download=17:etnika-i-szambavetel-2009-03&id=3:kapcsolodo-anyagok&Itemid=4](http://www.gyerekmonitor.hu/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&download=17:etnika-i-szambavetel-2009-03&id=3:kapcsolodo-anyagok&Itemid=4)

<sup>34</sup> See: Summary evaluation study on the rate and efficiency of aids used since the change of regime for the improvement of the situation and advancement of the Roma in Hungary. State Audit Office, Institute for Development and Methodology, 2008.

We do not have information on the results of developments and interventions, there are no coordinated statistical systems for the evaluation of the actual social effects and there is no comprehensive sociological research. Partly in recognition of these deficits, the Social Renewal Operational Programme, and its action plans for 2007–2013, have incorporated the requirement that it is necessary to keep track of the situation of disadvantaged social groups, including the Roma population as a priority, and to conduct reliable, extensive research with a large sample base for the evaluation of the effects of developments.

The „Discrimination in the European Union 2009” Eurobarometer survey identified a number of interesting findings worth looking into with respect to the knowledge, views and attitudes of the members of Hungarian society in connection with discrimination and the six social groups listed in the Amsterdam Treaty. The results of the research show that discrimination on racial/ethnic grounds, on grounds of age, disability and gender occurs more frequently in Hungary than in the other EU Member States, and there is an 11 to 21% difference compared with the average discrimination rate. At the same time, discrimination on grounds of religious conviction/belief is less wide-spread. As regards discrimination at the work place, most disadvantages are suffered on grounds of skin colour/ethnic origin, age and gender. It is a relevant data item for raising awareness that more than one half of Hungarians (which more or less corresponds to the EU average) claim that, in the case of discrimination or harassment, they would not be aware of their rights. This applies most to those with lower educational qualifications and women, while young people aged between 25 and 29 appear to be more aware of their rights.

In the last three years, in response to increasingly radical, extreme ideologies that spread in the wake of the crisis and crimes committed by Roma perpetrators, there has been a rise in racially motivated, serious violent crimes and certain forms of violence committed by the members of illegal, paramilitary organisations against Roma, so-called „uniformed crime”. These apparently ethnically motivated crimes further intensified the already existing conflicts. In the interest of more effective action against the latter, in May 2011 Parliament amended the rules under criminal law relating to violence against the members of communities, which thereby created grounds for the punishability of provocatively anti-communal practices that are capable of creating fear in the members of a community affiliated with a national, ethnic, racial or religious group.

### **3. Situation of children**

Hungary’s future economic, social and political development depends on how happy, healthy and well-educated the children of today will be, how safe and secure they will feel and how strong their self-confidence and self-esteem will be when they grow up. Demographic trends, the declining birth rates and the increasing aging of society clearly show that we must maximise our future human resources; in other words, we must maximise the opportunities of all children in the future and must effectively address the problems of poverty and exclusion.

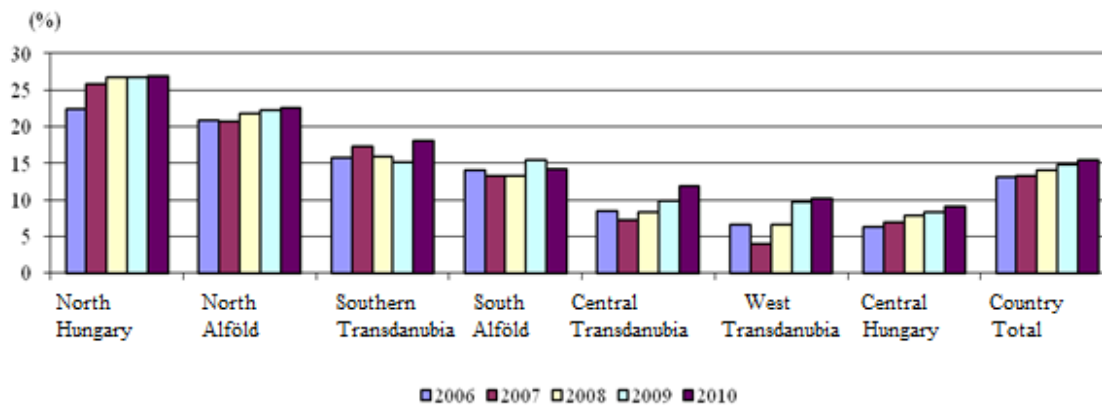
Improving the situation of disadvantaged children and children with multiple disadvantages, including Roma children, and preventing the inheritance of poverty are key to social inclusion.

According to the data of the Central Statistical Office, the number of individuals under the age of 18 years was **1,797,955 on 1 January 2011**, and they accounted for 18.0% of the total

population. The number of births has declined continuously since the mid-nineteen-eighties; **90,335 children were born in 2010.**

The increased exposure to the risk of poverty of families with children is a determining feature of poverty in Hungary. As regards the intergenerational transmission of poverty, the clear rise in the number of children living in unemployed households and the territorial distribution demonstrating a concentration of problems point towards a significant deterioration.

### Ratio of inactive children under the age of 19 living in households without employed member, %

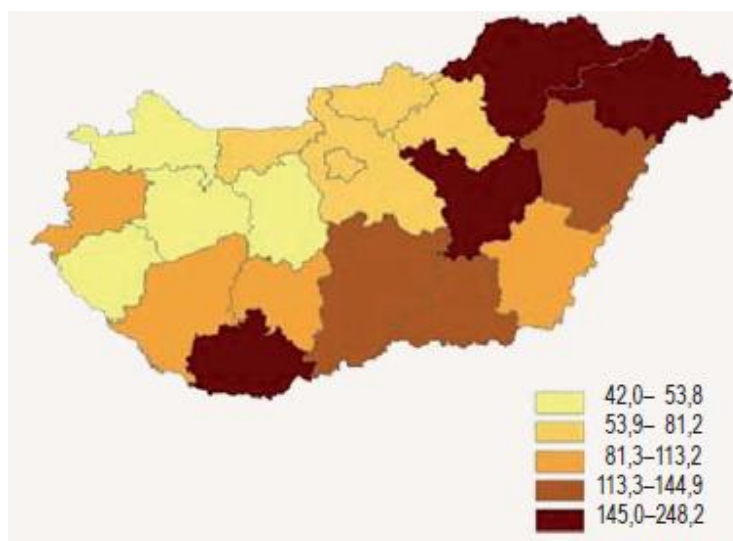


Source: *Characteristics of the situation of children and families raising children in Hungary, 2006–2009.* Central Statistical Office, 2011. Manuscript.

Some **11%** (198,000 persons) of children **are registered by the guardian authorities as endangered**, most of them for financial reasons, however, there has been a rise in recent years in the number of children endangered for behaviour-related reasons. These are in many cases induced by a series of failures in school, serious crises and conflict-ridden family circumstances. In the disadvantaged regions, the ratio of endangered children is 2 to 3 times higher than the proportion of endangered children in other regions.

The lack of standardisation in the terms and concepts used is another problem. Child protection services and health care use the term endangered child, a concept which contains a number of subjective elements, while education uses the term disadvantaged or multiple disadvantages, which is based on objective indicators. As a result, a situation involving multiple disadvantages can only be identified when the child is introduced to the system of public education.

## Minors registered as endangered falling on one thousand persons of the same age, 2010.

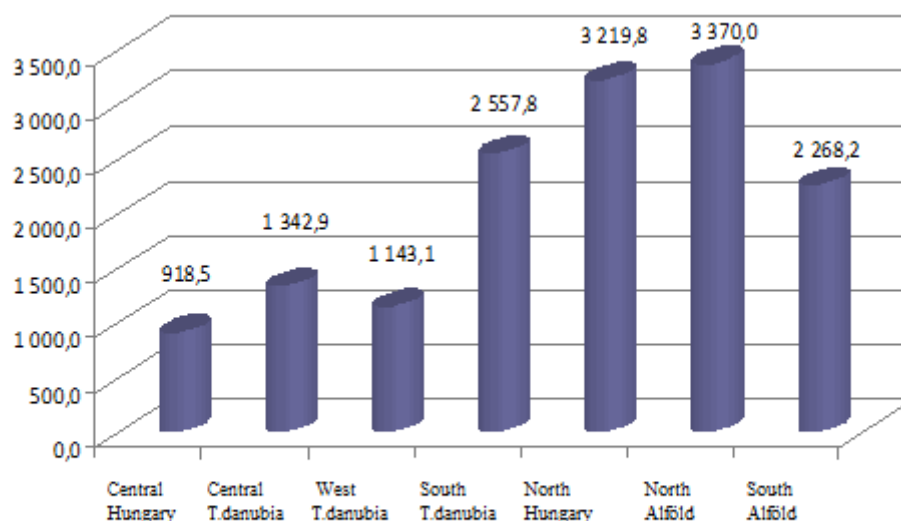


Source: Child protection indicator system, 2010. Statisztikai Tükör, Year V, Issue No. 42, Central Statistical Office, 22 June 2011.

There is also an upward trend in the number of **children transferred into protective custody**. In 2010, 13.4 children out of 1,000 minors (24,000 persons in total) were taken into protective custody. The number of children **transferred to child protection care** and placed in custody with foster parents or in children's homes has not decreased for years. In 2010, these measures involved 17,792 children. There is an increasingly large proportion of children aged between 12 and 14 or older transferred into protective custody. The main reasons are school problems, vagrancy, truancy, serious behavioural and integration problems, the effective management and treatment of which is greatly hindered by the serious deficiencies of psychiatric care offered to children and adolescents. There is likewise no decrease in the amount of time spent in specialist care which requires major expenditures on the part of the central budget; few children are successfully channelled back to their families. The main reasons being that families are often a serious threat to their own children, the parents are unemployed and have no income, while there is a shortage of capacity in the child welfare and child protection care system.

There is a slow rise in the number of those **eligible for regular child protection benefits**. In 2010, 560,000 children (data of Ministry of National Resources) lived in households where the income falling on one person in the family was 130% or 140% of the minimum pension (in the case of single parents or disabled and sick children). There is a strong territorial determination in the distribution of regions where high proportions of individuals receive regular child protection benefits.

**Regular child protection benefit, number of subsidised individuals falling on ten thousand citizens aged between 0 and 24, 2009**



Source: *Characteristics of the situation of children and families raising children in Hungary, 2006–2009.* Central Statistical Office, 2011. Manuscript.

Based on the provisions of the Public Education Act, children from among those eligible for regular child protection benefits whose parents have maximum elementary education are regarded as children with multiple disadvantages. According to the Ministry of National Resources, State Secretariat for Education, 11% of children of kindergarten age (37,000), 13.7% of children in elementary school (106,000) and 4% of children in secondary education (23,000) **are children with multiple disadvantages.**

A basic condition of the healthy development of children is healthy nutrition. Many children living in abject poverty do not have access to a sufficient quantity of healthy food. Free public meals, which some 400,000 crèche, kindergarten and elementary school children eligible for regular child protection benefit receive, are key. Secondary school students in need are entitled to a 50% reduction in the fees payable for meals.

Supplying the some 400,000 children in need with meals during the school holidays is another problem. The Government spent some HUF 2.4 billion in 2011 on the **summer meals of children** as part of which 1,410,000 meals were provided in 1,400 localities.

The integration of disadvantaged children living in poverty can only be successful in cooperation with their parents. Child welfare services play a prominent role in the care of disadvantaged families, the prevention and elimination of situations endangering children and the organisation of cooperation between the various sectors (education, health care, child welfare). Another serious problem is presented by the fact that there are major differences in the standard and capacity of services and that care services are the scarcest in the very regions and areas where they would be needed most. The development or establishment of quality care in these areas, which would also contribute to the significant improvement of the living standards of the individuals living in the regions concerned, is a priority task.

The services and institutions of the child welfare and child protection care system, too, are characterised by maintenance problems and a shortage of specialists, in particular, in smaller localities.

**Ratio of social experts to the total personnel of social and child welfare services, %**

	2007	2008	2009
Child welfare services			
<b>Region</b>			
Central Hungary	89.8	90.8	91.4
Central Transdanubia	82.0	79.6	88.7
Western Transdanubia	79.3	86.4	94.1
Southern Transdanubia	78.2	85.2	86.9
North Hungary	76.3	82.3	84.4
North Alföld	82.7	88.6	88.9
South Alföld	73.1	75.6	78.6
Total	81.3	85.0	87.0
<b>Size of locality</b>			
0 – 499	63.8	74.5	72.7
500 – 999	53.8	64.8	75.2
1 000 – 1 999	62.5	75.5	77.8
2 000 – 4 999	77.7	81.6	84.3
5 000 – 9 999	81.3	85.6	89.3
10 000 – 19 999	79.5	84.6	84.4
20 000 – 49 999	90.2	90.4	92.0
50 000 – 99 999	83.5	90.8	95.6
100 000 – X	88.5	93.7	92.4
Budapest	94.6	92.9	94.3

*Source: Characteristics of the situation of children and families raising children in Hungary, 2006–2009. Central Statistical Office. 2011. Manuscript.*

Due to the deficiencies of the system of institutions and service providers, not all children have equal access to quality care best suited to their individual needs. In problematic localities, parents have no access to appropriate assistance with their care, child-raising and lifestyle problems which greatly deteriorates the social chances of children living in poor families. Some elements of the care system providing for the temporary care of children (deputy parents, temporary children's homes) are not available in every part of the country, while some of the temporary family homes are struggling with a shortage of capacity.



**Early childhood** is an extremely important stage of life; the investments made in this phase are recovered in the highest proportion and are particularly beneficial in the case of disadvantaged children, including Roma children, as they compensate, or at least partially compensate, for the disadvantages suffered at home. In spite of this, a significantly smaller proportion of Roma children receive early childhood education and care.

Healthy development in early childhood necessitates the coordinated high-quality services available to all children of several sectors (health care, social services, education). This also requires firm governmental coordination.

**Daytime child care services** falling within the category of basic child welfare services play an essential role in the successful employment of parents, while they play an equally important role in the early socialisation of disadvantaged children.

The available **crèche capacity** serving to provide daytime care for children under the age of three is extremely scarce; only 12.7% of children in this age bracket attend crèche, while the EU expectation is some 30%. Crèches operate in 9% of all settlements, typically in larger cities and towns, and most of the some 948 **family day-care centres**<sup>35</sup> mostly catering for the crèche age group, too, provide services in larger localities. In smaller localities where the number of children does not permit the opening of a separate crèche group, it is possible to create a crèche group within the boundaries of the local kindergarten or to operate a combined kindergarten/crèche facility, of which there are some 80 in the country. Due to the scarce crèche capacity, the children of working parents gain admission, and therefore the children with multiple disadvantages of unemployed parents living in poverty have no access to this service. Families living in poverty are unable to afford the high fees charged in family day-care centres, and their children therefore have no access to this day-care form either.

The **Sure Start programme** also operating in Hungary serves the early fostering of the skills of young children with multiple disadvantages, including Roma children, and offers a chance at the earliest possible age to children below the age of 5 living in poverty who have no access to crèche facilities and other high-quality services due to the scarcity of family resources, residence in a disadvantaged region or for other socio-cultural reasons. There are now some 44 Sure Start Children Centres subsidised from SROP (Social Renewal Operational Programme ) funding, mostly in disadvantaged micro-regions. Their complex development, professional reinforcement and organisation into a network are currently under way.

#### **4. Territorial disadvantages**

Domestic territorial processes are characterised by a high and increasing degree of territorial concentration, against the background of a continuous demographic decline. **The abandonment of the most under-developed regions continues**, which is accompanied by a rearrangement in the ethnic ratios present. The largest loss of population has in recent years been sustained in North Hungary and Southern Transdanubia, the highest-priority target areas of the inclusion policy, while the population of the most advanced Central Hungary region has increased. Natural growth in the northern and western neighbourhoods of the capital was also

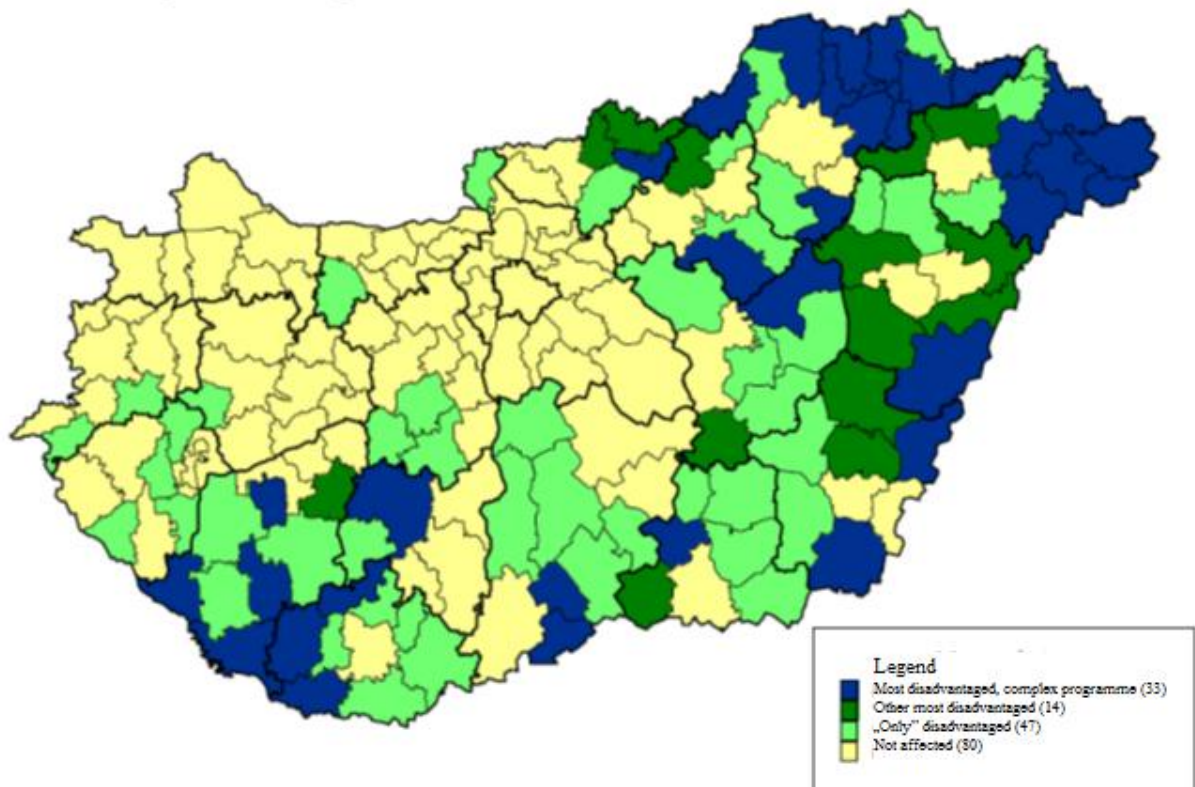
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<sup>35</sup> Ministry of National Resources, State Secretariat of Social, Family and Youth Affairs.

accompanied by a migration benefit that reinforced the former.<sup>36</sup> In most parts of the country, however, the natural decline was even aggravated by a migration loss.

The legal rules, designed to manage the concentrated spatial disadvantages, that identified localities in a disadvantaged position and the related aid systems were being developed parallel with the municipality system. Government Decree No. 311/2007. (XI.17) regarding the classification of the favoured regions is the legislation currently in force which designates the 47 most disadvantaged micro-regions, including **33 particularly disadvantaged micro-regions to be supported via complex programmes**, and another 47 disadvantaged micro-regions.

### Disadvantaged micro-regions



*Source: Information on micro-regions eligible for priority aid, Central Statistical Office, Budapest, 2008.*

In 2008, 95% of homes had mains water on a national average, however, in some of North Hungary's most disadvantaged micro-regions as well as in some micro-regions in the South Alföld area characterised by smaller individual homesteads, this proportion did not even reach 80%. In the Mórahalom micro-region, the proportion of homes connected to the mains drinking water network was only 55.9%. The ratio of homes connected to the public sewage network is in excess of 70% nation-wide. While in Budapest and in some Transdanubian micro-regions this proportion exceeds 90 per cent, in some micro-regions (for instance, the

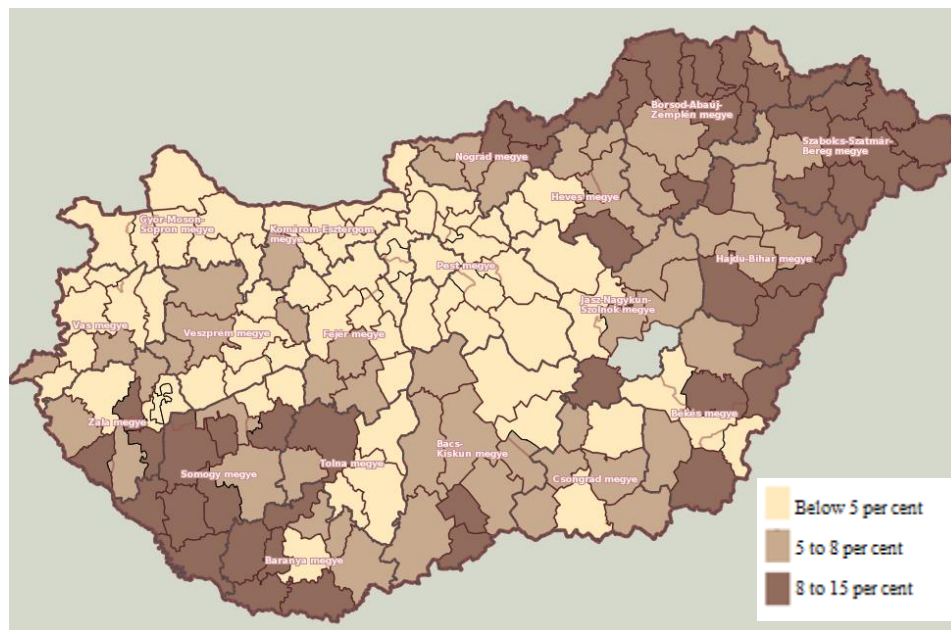
<sup>36</sup> If we look at the micro-regional data of the year 2010, natural growth is the highest in the Dunakeszi, Ráckeve and Budaörs micro-regions. In order of benefit derived from domestic migration: Budaörs, Gödöllő and Dunakeszi micro-regions. At the same time, population figures increased the most in the Budaörs, Dunakeszi and Veresegyháza micro-regions.

Enying, Nagykáta, Kistelek, Jánoshalma and Bácsalmás micro-regions in 2008) this ratio remains below 10%; furthermore, the Kadarkút micro-region, the only one in the country, had no public sewage network as recently as 2008. The ratio of homes connected to the mains gas network is the highest in the Central Hungary region (85%) and is the lowest in Southern Transdanubia (60.4%). The gas network is virtually non-existent in the Szigetvár and Sellye micro-regions where the proportion of homes connected to the network is below 20%.<sup>37</sup>

The gap between regions is clearly indicated by the fact that while in Central Hungary, Central and Western Transdanubia, every fiftieth person, in the north-eastern and south-western parts of the country every tenth and, **in some localities, every fifth individual receives social benefits on a regular basis**. Due to low utilisation rates, **elementary education has ceased in more than 230 localities** since 2003 which affected most the regions of North Hungary, Southern and Western Transdanubia characterised by small villages. The **number of libraries constituting the most extensive network of cultural facilities, too, has decreased to some two thirds** which again adversely affected small localities.

**The process of regional concentration also represents the concentration of social and economic problems.** A serious unemployment rate and severe social and health care problems are simultaneously present in the most disadvantaged regions.

#### Ratio of registered unemployed for more than 180 days in percentage of the active population of working age (15-64), 2009, %



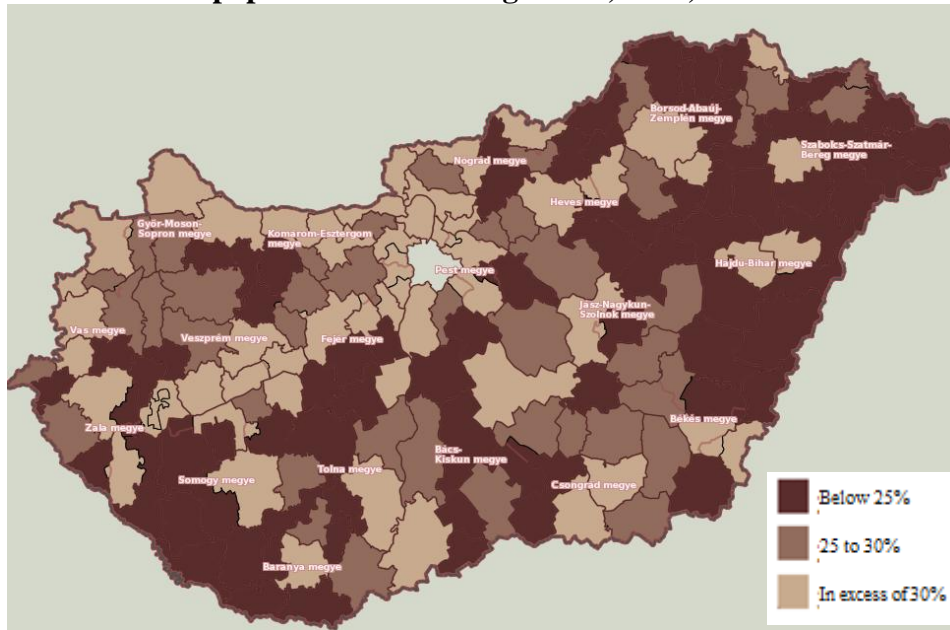
Sources: KSH T-STAR data – VÁTI-TEIR

The poor labour market situation and the lack of businesses and job opportunities are both the cause and consequence of the development of social problems. At the same time, the poor qualification indicators of those living in disadvantaged regions, too, testify to the

<sup>37</sup> National Regional Survey 2010. Ministry of National Economy, Ministry of National Development. <http://www.vati.hu/index.php?page=main&menu=19792&langcode=hu> p. 27.

intergenerational transmission of disadvantage, poor chances of social mobility and the lack of the basic criteria of employability.

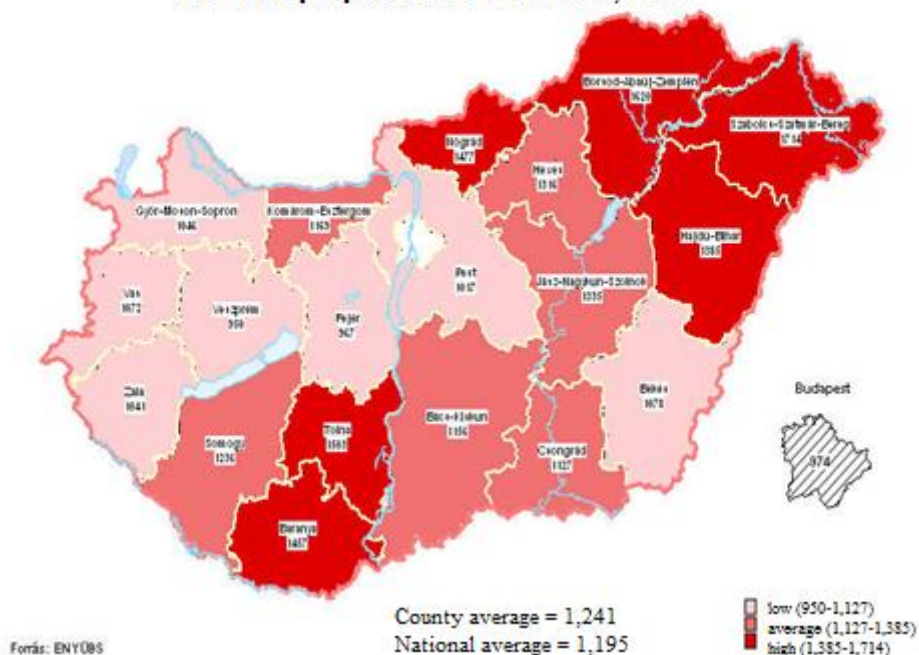
**Ratio of individuals with minimum secondary qualifications in percentage of the population over the age of 18, 2001, %\***



*\*Not including Budapest.  
Source: Central Statistical Office, census data – VÁTI-TEIR*

The number of crimes in relation to the population figure is increasing most dynamically in the two most disadvantaged regions, North Hungary and North Alföld.

**Number of registered perpetrators falling  
on one hundred thousand inhabitants  
based on perpetrator's residence, 2010**



The territorial distribution of the number of usury-related crimes in Hungary demonstrates a similar pattern. This type of crime against property is clearly generated and induced by the need emerging as a consequence of long-term unemployment and low labour and social transfer incomes, and is maintained by organised groups of criminals. In the absence of legal alternatives, people exposed to multiple problems are prepared to accept the extremely high interest rates of usurers. As of the last quarter of 2011, the police launched a successful, „comprehensive campaign” against the spread of the crime of usury. In conjunction with this campaign, Parliament passed Act CXXXIV of 2011 which renders the conditions of the punishability of usury more stringent. Additionally, however, and in coordination with these activities, it is necessary to find a legal alternative for the improvement of the crucial living security of the population living in the most under-developed regions. The maximisation of interest rates and the annual percentage rate that may be charged on loans was an important statutory change introduced in November 2011, as a result of which interest rates may be maximum 24 percentage points higher than the central bank prime rate as of next year.

The extreme difference between the indicators of the most disadvantaged regions and the national average is aptly represented by the following statistical summary regarding public education. In the territory of the 47 most disadvantaged micro-regions with multiple disadvantages („LHH47”), 27.9% of pupils/students have multiple disadvantages, while this ratio is only 6.5% in the other parts of the country on average.

Number and ratio of children with multiple disadvantages in school year of 2009/2010.

Territorial unit	Type of institution						Total
	Kindergarten	Elementary school	Vocational school	Special vocational school	Vocational secondary school	Grammar school	
<b>Number of pupils and students</b>							
MD47 micro-regions	50 923	136 569	16 211	912	17 678	26 397	<b>248 690</b>
Other 127 micro-regions	277 622	639 172	119 057	9 105	255 666	213 595	<b>1 514 217</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>328 545</b>	<b>775 741</b>	<b>135 268</b>	<b>10 017</b>	<b>273 344</b>	<b>239 992</b>	<b>1 762 907</b>
<b>Of which pupils/students with multiple disadvantages</b>							
MD47 micro-regions	16 990	45 264	4 137	243	1 837	1 026	<b>69 497</b>
Other 127 micro-regions	20 091	61 271	9 333	1 141	4 852	1 611	<b>98 299</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>37 081</b>	<b>106 535</b>	<b>13 470</b>	<b>1 384</b>	<b>6 689</b>	<b>2 637</b>	<b>167 796</b>
<b>Ratio of children with multiple disadvantages</b>							
MD47 micro-regions	33,4%	33,1%	25,5%	26,6%	10,4%	3,9%	<b>27,9%</b>
Other 127 micro-regions	7,2%	9,6%	7,8%	12,5%	1,9%	0,8%	<b>6,5%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,3%</b>	<b>13,7%</b>	<b>10,0%</b>	<b>13,8%</b>	<b>2,4%</b>	<b>1,1%</b>	<b>9,5%</b>

Source: Public education –statistical data base, 2009/2010.

**Ten per cent of the country's total population live in most disadvantaged micro-regions<sup>38</sup>**; in 22 of the 33 micro-regions, there are no localities with a population in excess of 10,000. In these micro-regions, education is typically not competitive (number of students continuing their studies is extremely low), there is a high rate of child poverty and there is a poor health situation (life expectancy is 1 to 2 years less than average in the case of women and 3 to 4 years lower in the case of men).<sup>39</sup> The short-term unmanageable debt rate of the population (any-purpose loans, usury, etc.), too, is on the rise.

There are significant differences in the state of development as well as structural differences between the 33 micro-regions and within the individual micro-regions themselves. The duality of most disadvantaged micro-regions and most disadvantaged settlements is a criterion to be considered for the purposes of developments<sup>40</sup>. Some **40% of settlements with grave social disadvantages are situated on the borders of the 33 micro-regions**, and constitute in many places single units with these micro-regions themselves.

According to its purpose, the New Hungary Integration Programme, which was created to manage micro-regional disadvantages with development funding provided by the EU<sup>41</sup>, serves the development of the 33 most disadvantaged micro-regions. The dedicated funding of HUF 97 billion attempts to alleviate the deficiencies of the economic, social, educational and environmental infrastructure and situation of regions with multiple disadvantages through the implementation of more than 1,000 projects. The **comprehensive programme** had its initial

<sup>38</sup> Based on Sections 6 and 7 of Parliamentary Resolution No. 67/2007. (VI. 28.), 10 per cent of the population live in MD33 micro-regions, while 15 per cent in MD47 micro-regions.

<sup>39</sup> Micro-regional inequalities in life expectancy on birth at the turn of the millennium in Hungary by András Csíste – Nándor Németh. Kormányzás, Közpénzügyek, Szabályozás. Year II (2007), issue No. 2, pp. 257–289.

<sup>40</sup> Government Decree No. 240/2006. (XI. 30.) on the list of localities disadvantaged from a social, economic and cultural point of view and/or affected by unemployment rates significantly in excess of the national average.

<sup>41</sup> Formerly known as „We don't give up on anyone” micro-regional integration programme.

difficulties. The tenders invited were not sufficiently able to adjust to the specific local features. At the same time, in the absence of expertise and practical experience in the invitation of tenders, the actual local needs did not clearly emerge in the tender materials. The complicated administration and assessment of tenders often made it impossible for micro-regions to submit applications of appropriate quality with a view to the cooperation of multiple sectors and human resource services. The programme should be continued on the basis of the evaluation of its experiences.

## 5. Access to education and training

*The system of public education is struggling with a number of problems affecting disadvantaged groups including the Roma in particular which can only be resolved through further long-term development. In addition to honouring the basic principle of equity<sup>42</sup>, effective action is urgently necessary also on account of the fact that the Roma represent a significant and increasingly large proportion of the school-age population and, as a consequence, of the employees of the future.*

**It is a regrettable characteristic of the educational system that it is unable to reduce the disadvantages existing on account of family circumstances; in other words, according to the definition of the PISA survey, the system is not equitable. The background analyses of surveys show that the Hungarian educational system is one of the systems amongst the OECD countries least providing equal opportunities and the educational success of children largely depends on the education and occupation of their parents.**

It is a fundamental problem

- that some pupils and students suffering from multiple disadvantages do not even receive the locally available educational services.
- that there is insufficient cooperation with other sectors, in particular, the child welfare and child protection services, and there is insufficient emphasis on the need for partnership with parents.
- that there is educational **exclusion** in public education which stems, on the one hand, from the school migration of pupils of higher social status and is, on the other hand, a consequence of segregation and the selectivity of the school system<sup>43</sup>. **In schools and classes where, as a result of these processes, pupils living in extreme poverty and**

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<sup>42</sup> *The documents and literature of the European Union and the OECD related to education treat the principle of equity as a basic principle. According to a 1997 OECD report, „Educational equity refers to an educational and learning environment in which individuals can consider options and make choices throughout their lives based on their abilities and talents, not on the basis of stereotypes, biased expectations or discrimination. The achievement of educational equity enables females and males of all races and ethnic backgrounds to develop skills needed to be productive, empowered citizens. It opens economic and social opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity, race or social status.”*

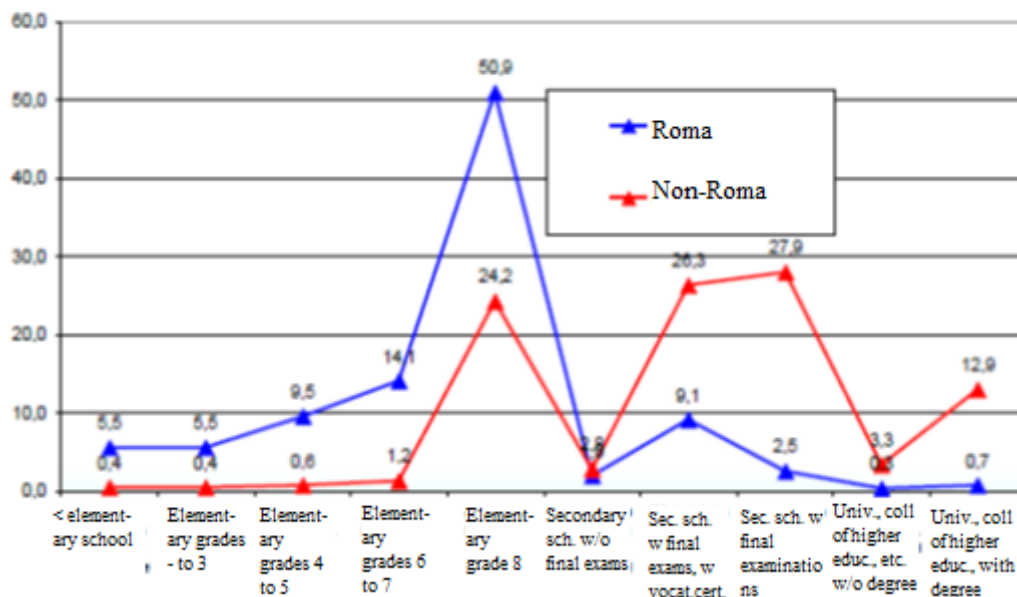
<sup>43</sup> Results of PISA surveys; Segregation in elementary school – causes and consequences by Gábor Kertesi – Gábor Kézdi (2004); Results of international surveys – conclusions for the development of public education in Hungary by Benő Csapó, 2011.; Selectivity of the Hungarian educational system in the light of the results of international comparative studies by Benő Csapó, Gyöngyvér Molnár and László Kinyó (2009).

**Roma constitute a separate group, the standard of education is lower: the number of classes taught by specialist teachers is lower and the institutions concerned have inferior equipment compared with other local schools and classes.** As a consequence, the existing social differences are multiplied. According to a 2010 study<sup>44</sup>, the number of Roma-majority schools has increased by some 34% since 2004. In 70% of these schools, finding teachers covering the entire spectrum of subjects under the curriculum presents a problem.

- that teachers are not prepared during the course of their basic and ongoing training for the education of disadvantaged children and/or children coming from a different socio-cultural background and for cooperation with the parents.
- that education does not sufficiently furnish children with the basic skills necessary for participation in the labour market and does not provide the foundations for health awareness and life-long learning.

**Roma children** are extremely over-represented amongst children with multiple disadvantages. According to estimates, approximately one half of children with multiple disadvantages are Roma and almost two thirds of Roma pupils struggle with multiple disadvantages<sup>45</sup>. The Roma population's educational level is well below the average which is clearly represented by the graph below.

**Ratio of highest educational qualifications of the population aged between 18 and 59 to the entire population group concerned, 2001 (100% in total)**



Source: Central Statistical Office, Census, 2001.

<sup>44</sup> Effect analysis of integration-centred education policy by Gábor HAVAS and János ZOLNAY 2010, Public Foundation for European Comparative Minority Research - Európai Összehasonlító Kisebbségkutatásokért Közalapítvány (EÖKIK)

<sup>45</sup> Children of poorly educated parents and Roma young people in secondary schools by G. Kertesi and G.. Kézdi (2010). Report on the fluctuations in the Educatio Career surveys between 2006 and 2009.



**The educational integration of the Roma population** came to a halt in the years preceding the change of regime. While in the decades before the nineties, the Roma significantly caught up with the national average in terms of the completion of their elementary studies and there was an increase in the ratio of Roma individuals with vocational qualifications, their ratio in secondary schools providing final examinations remained negligible and consequently so did their participation in higher education. Their relative situation regarding studies at a higher educational level has since further deteriorated. One of the great achievements of Hungarian society after the change of regime was the mass introduction of secondary schools offering final examinations and the consequent wide-ranging democratisation of the path leading to university. However, masses of young Roma were unable to enjoy the benefits of these changes. **While their integration in elementary schools continued, their ratio in secondary schools providing final examinations remained below 15 per cent, in contrast to the national average in excess of 80 per cent.** Additionally, the relatively few Roma continuing their studies tend to seek admission to vocational schools with a continuously diminishing market value and have a much higher drop-out rate than their non-Roma counterparts.<sup>46</sup> A study based on a national competence survey demonstrates shocking results seriously endangering the chances of upward mobility<sup>47</sup>. According to this, young Roma tend to continue their studies in vocational schools in higher proportions at the level of almost every test result than non-Roma students (who less typically opt for studies in a vocational school if they achieve better results at school). Additionally, Roma youths with better-than-average competence results tend to go to secondary schools, rather than to grammar schools offering a better chance of proceeding to higher education. It is therefore **important to ensure**, in conjunction with enabling a successful transition from elementary school to secondary school, **that pupils with good results aim for institutions suited to their abilities.**

2009 surveys<sup>48</sup> estimated the proportion of Roma pupils in the 8 grades of elementary school to be around 9 to 11 per cent on the basis of their own admission and external evaluation. According to research relying on competence tests<sup>49</sup>, 92-93% of Roma pupils having completed the eight grades of elementary school continue their studies, while this ratio is higher than 99% in the case of non-Roma pupils. Dropping out of education further deteriorates these ratios. Only 62 per cent of the Roma population having completed the eight grades of elementary school attend the fourth year of secondary school as full-time students, and only 40 per cent of them avoid having to repeat a year of their studies. (These proportions are 95% and almost 80%, respectively, in the case of non-Roma students.) As regards the continuation of studies after secondary school, regardless of the differences arising from the educational levels of parents, there is an enormous difference between Roma and non-Roma

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<sup>46</sup> Success rate of young Roma in elementary education, continuation of studies in secondary education and success rate in secondary education. A closing study by G. Kertesi and G. Kézdi G. (2009). Product No. ROMA 608 of the programme of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Social Sciences, entitled „Measuring and evaluation of the performance of public education”.

<sup>47</sup> Children of poorly educated parents and Roma young people in secondary schools by G. Kertesi and G. Kézdi (2010). Report on the fluctuations in the Educatio Career surveys between 2006 and 2009.

<sup>48</sup> Success rate of young Roma in elementary education, continuation of studies in secondary education and success rate in secondary education. A closing study by G. Kertesi and G. Kézdi G. (2009). Product No. ROMA 608 of the programme of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Social Sciences, entitled „Measuring and evaluation of the performance of public education”.

<sup>49</sup> Children of poorly educated parents and Roma young people in secondary schools by G. Kertesi and G. Kézdi (2010). Report on the fluctuations in the Educatio Career surveys between 2006 and 2009.

students. According to 2008 estimates, 2 per cent of young Roma begin their studies in higher education and 0.5 per cent obtain a degree<sup>50</sup>.

### **Kindergarten education**

**High-quality education in early childhood** has a more profound and long-term effect on children from all social strata than any later intervention. An intervention implemented at this stage is able to reverse the consequences of a disadvantaged situation particularly effectively. This also means that investment in early childhood education may result in savings for the future<sup>51</sup>. In spite of the fact that kindergarten education plays a major role in laying the foundations for a successful subsequent school career, surveys looking into the kindergarten education of disadvantaged children show that where there is insufficient available capacity, primarily children having completed the age of five years are admitted, along with those whose parents have jobs. The children of parents with a poor education, unemployed parents or parents drawing a disability pension are the most likely not to gain admission to kindergarten; that is, the very children who would most need long-term kindergarten education.<sup>52</sup> As a consequence of this and other factors, a substantially higher proportion of Roma children only start going to kindergarten at the age of 5, in contrast to non-Roma children, the majority of whom begin kindergarten at the age of 3. On national average, 88% of children aged between three and five attend kindergarten, while only 42% of Roma children in the same age group.<sup>53</sup> This is particularly typical **in disadvantaged settlements** and regions where, in some places, the **serious shortage of kindergarten capacity**<sup>54</sup>, too, prevents the fulfilment of the obligation determined in the public education legislation, on the basis of which, as of 1 September 2008, local municipalities are required to ensure that children with multiple disadvantages have access to kindergarten education as of the age of three years.

According to the 2009 statistical data of the Central Statistical Office, **there are no kindergartens** in 926 localities, most of which are small villages. However, there are some **50 localities where the number of children of kindergarten age would actually warrant** the operation of a kindergarten. The ratio of kindergarten groups with more than 25 children in the North Great Plain region (36.9%) and in North Hungary (35.4%) is substantially higher than in Western Transdanubia (24.3%), and is substantially higher in small localities compared with the situation nation-wide.

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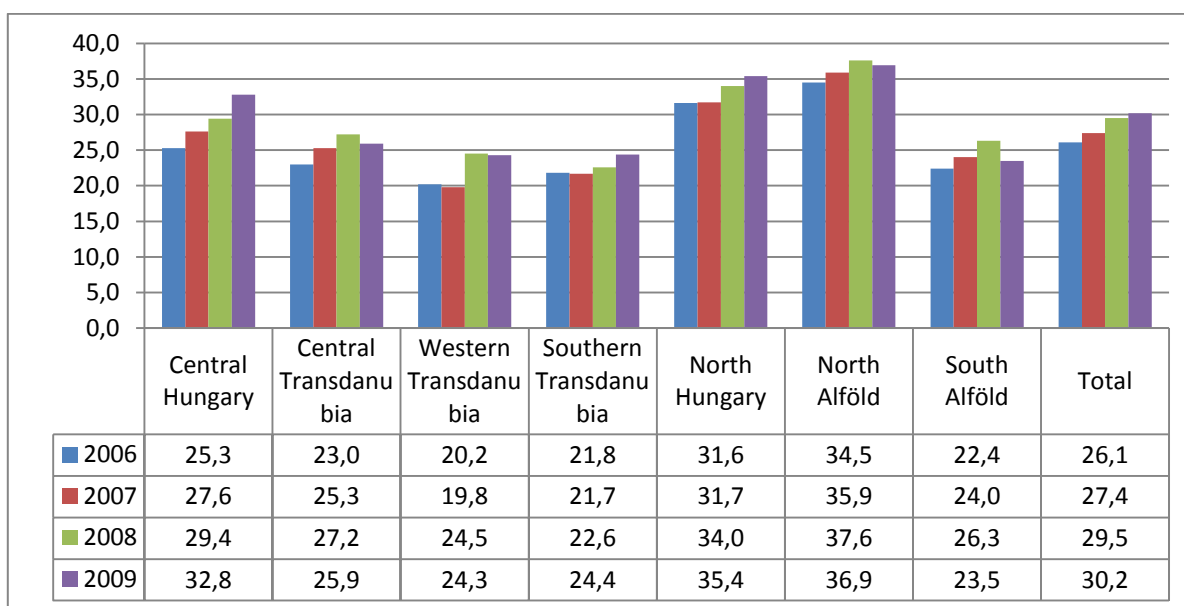
<sup>50</sup> Open Society Institute: Comparative Data Set on Education 2008.

<sup>51</sup> COM (2011) 66 Early Childhood Education and Care: Providing all our children with the best start for the world of tomorrow. Communication from the Commission.

<sup>52</sup> Data taken with respect to the status of kindergarten education in 27 towns by G. Havas (2005). National Education Integration Network.

<sup>53</sup> Parliamentary Resolution No. 68/2007. (VI. 28.) regarding the Decade of Roma Integration Programme Strategic Plan.

### Ratio of kindergarten groups with more than 25 children, %

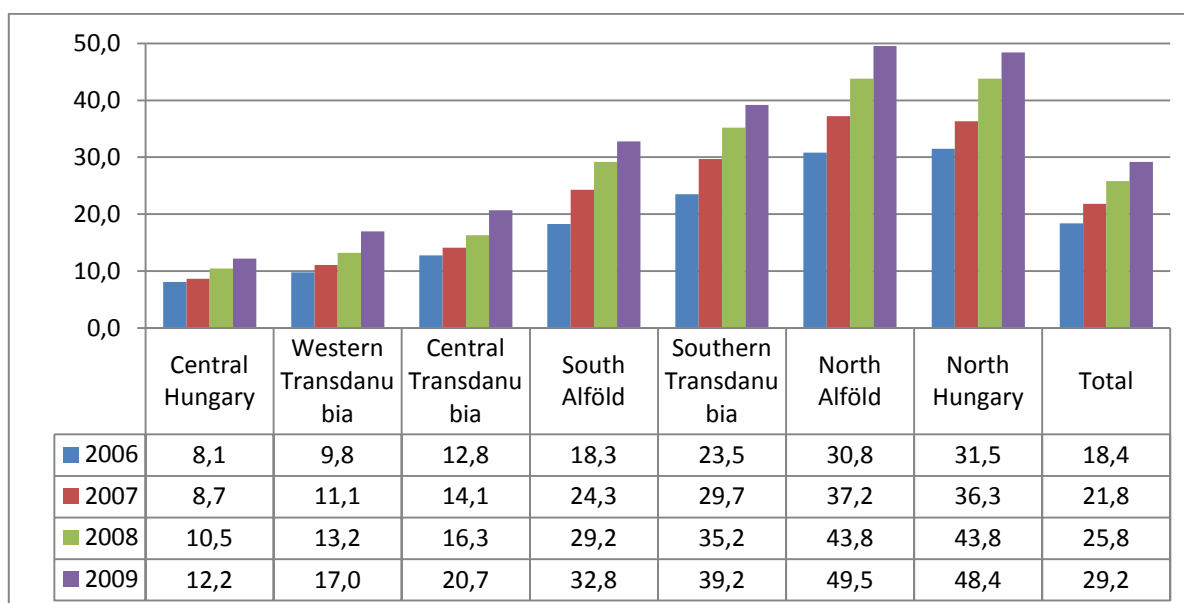


Source: Indicators characteristic of the situation of children and families with children in Hungary, 2006-2009. Indicators compiled by the Evaluation Committee of the „Let Children Have a Better Life” National Strategy – working material. Source of data: Central Statistical Office.

There is also a marked territorial difference in the proportions of disadvantaged children attending kindergarten.

In the **47 most disadvantaged micro-regions** where there are large numbers of children with multiple disadvantages, there are at least 7 localities where the number of children would warrant the operation of a kindergarten but there is no kindergarten, and there are almost 60 localities where kindergartens are over-crowded or the **number of kindergarten spaces is substantially lower than the number of children of kindergarten age**. In the majority of these localities, population tends to be younger and younger, the proportion of individuals declaring themselves to be Roma is well in excess of the national average and there are segregated settlements.

### Ratio of disadvantaged children attending kindergarten, %



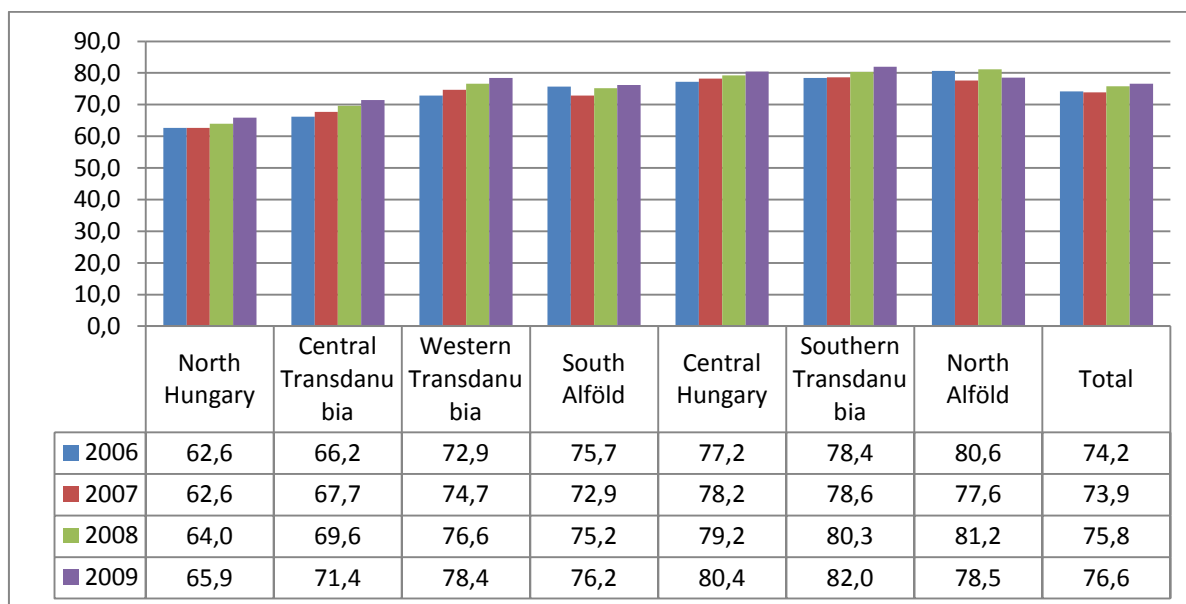
Source: Indicators characteristic of the situation of children and families with children in Hungary, 2006-2009. Indicators compiled by the Evaluation Committee of the „Let Children Have a Better Life” National Strategy – working material. Source of data: Central Statistical Office.

In addition to the shortage of capacity, the early kindergarten education of children with multiple disadvantages, including Roma children, is also often hindered by the fact that the **parents are not motivated** to enrol their children in kindergarten as they are not aware of the significance of kindergarten education and in many instances, the **shortage of money** (appropriate clothing, travel, etc.), too, poses a major problem. For the purpose of encouraging the early kindergarten education of children with multiple disadvantages, the Government provides **kindergarten aid** which those families are eligible for who enrol their children in kindergarten at the age of 3 or 4 and ensure their regular attendance. According to the 2009 data of the Central Statistical Office, some 23,000 children were awarded kindergarten aid.

### Education in the school system

The chances of children with multiple disadvantages of being successful in school are curtailed by the fact that **elementary schools** frequently do not acknowledge that **a significant proportion of pupils are unable to adequately prepare for classes on the following day** because they live in social and housing conditions where not even the bare minimum necessary for learning exists. After an earlier fall in the number of elementary school pupils attending afternoon day-care, there has been a rise since 2007; in 2009, 76.6% of children in the lower four grades attended **afternoon day-care** or home-care classes on average nation-wide. In Central Hungary and Southern Transdanubia, four fifths of elementary school pupils attended afternoon classes, whereas in North Hungary only two thirds of them.

### Ratios of pupils attending afternoon day care by regions and in total, 2006–2009, %



Source: Indicators characteristic of the situation of children and families with children in Hungary, 2006-2009. Indicators compiled by the Evaluation Committee of the „Let Children Have a Better Life” National Strategy – working material. Source of data: Central Statistical Office.

In localities with a population of less than 3,000, only a little more than one half of children attended afternoon day care, while in towns with a population of more than 50,000, more than 90% of children attended afternoon day care.

The **application of inappropriate teaching and educational methods**, too, often presents a problem; namely, disregard for the fact that, due to their specific socialisation, disadvantaged children are even less able to achieve results if the school and the teacher favour a frontal methodology based on the sharing of information by primarily relying on verballity or does not pay specific attention to the inclusion of the pupils concerned, the enhancement of their self-esteem and the raising of their status within the community.

„It likewise often presents problems that while opting for the private pupil status is a pupil right, by exploiting the scarce information parents have access to or the fear of parents, the heads of institutions unilaterally decide on the establishment of the **private pupil status**, for instance, due to the behaviour problems of pupils”<sup>55</sup>, thereby depriving pupils in need of help of the services provided in public education.

We must continue to pay special attention to ensuring that **pupils should not be declared** mentally or intellectually challenged, **with special educational needs**. As a result of measures implemented in recent years – the extraordinary reviews conducted as part of the **„From the desk at the back” programme**, the amendment of the relevant legal rules, including the measures related to the establishment of the diagnosis of mildly mentally challenged -, there has been a decrease in the number of pupils classified as pupils with special educational needs due to a mild mental disability. Decree No. 4/2010. (I. 19.) OKM identifies the relevant procedure and the professional requirements of the tests and examinations serving as the basis of the subsequent expert opinion.

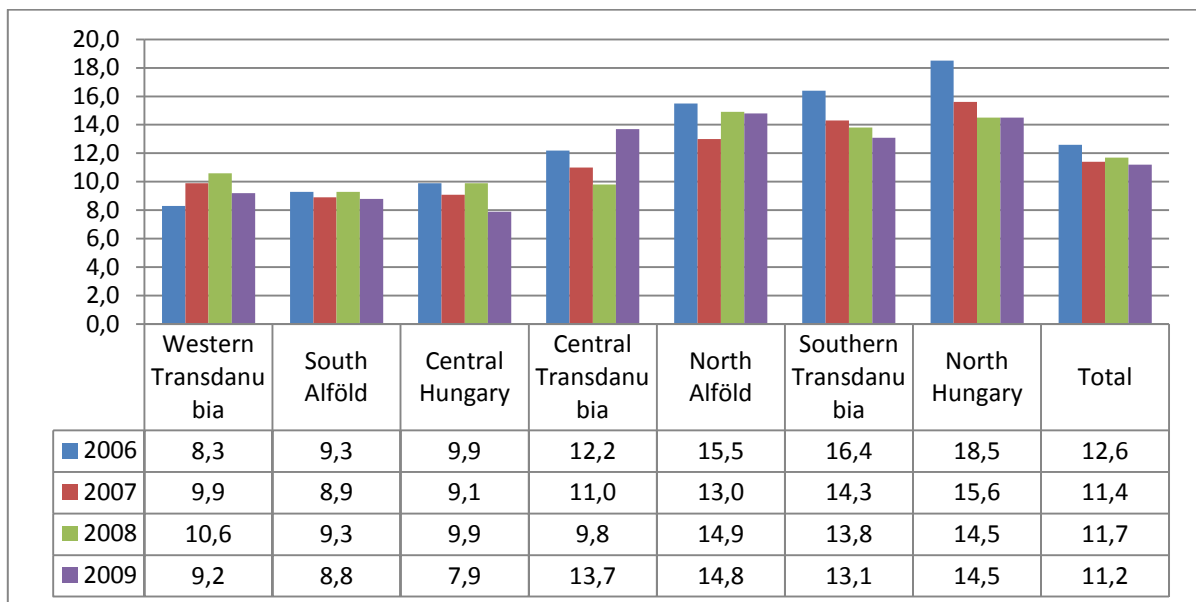
<sup>55</sup> Report of Commissioner for Rights in Education on activities in 2007.

School year	Number of mildly mentally challenged pupils in grades 1 to 8 in full-time education	Total pupils in grades 1 to 8 participating in full-time education	Ratio of mildly mentally challenged pupils in grades 1 to 8 - %
2005/2006	26 768	887 068	<b>3</b>
2006/2007	24 929	856 173	<b>2.9</b>
2007/2008	23 087	836 368	<b>2.8</b>
2008/2009	21 689	815 272	<b>2.7</b>
2009/2010	19 358	799 655	<b>2.4</b>
2010/2011	17 982	782 080	<b>2.3</b>

Source: Public education, statistical data

**Drop-out rates in secondary education**, which indicate the institutional and content problems of the school type and the educational system, are **particularly significant in the case of vocational institutions**. In this school type, every 4th student on average is required to repeat at least one year during the course of his/her studies (the ratio of students required to repeat a year in grammar schools is 5% in relation to the total number of students), many of them never complete their studies and **depart from the educational system without qualifications**. This phenomenon, which has been on the rise in recent years, greatly contributes to youth unemployment and a rise in poverty and plays a major role in the regeneration of a population with low educational qualifications. In the case of premature dropouts, the so-called second chance schools designed to assist the re-integration of dropouts into the school system are of particular significance.

**Ratio of early school-leavers<sup>56</sup> by regions and in total, 2006–2009, %**



<sup>56</sup> The ratio of early school-leavers among young people aged between 18 and 24 shows the ratio of those who have maximum elementary qualifications and did not attend any type of full-time education or adult education in the 4 weeks preceding the survey. This ratio is designed to measure the drop-out rate in education and training.

*Source: Indicators characteristic of the situation of children and families with children in Hungary, 2006-2009. Indicators compiled by the Evaluation Committee of the „Let Children Have a Better Life” National Strategy – working material. Source of data: Central Statistical Office.*

At the same time, mention should be made of the fact that **significant governmental efforts have been made in recent years for the increased enforcement of equal opportunities in education. In addition to local programmes, programmes co-funded by the European Union** (Phare, HEFOP – Human Resources Operational Programme, SRPOP – Social Renewal Operational Programme, TIOP – Social Infrastructure Operational Programme, ROP – Regional Operational Programmes), too, have been available in the magnitude of tens of billions of forints. While **integrated education is largely wide-spread on an institutional level, drop-out rates and the study results of students with multiple disadvantages have yet to improve significantly.**

It is important to note that the target groups of educational equal opportunities programmes are, in every instance, regardless of ethnicity, groups of pupils/students qualifying as pupils/students with multiple disadvantages or as disadvantaged as defined in Section 121, Point 14 of Act LXXIX of 1993 on Public Education<sup>57</sup>.

Developments implemented earlier attempted to create an alternative educational facility for the education of disadvantaged children by introducing informal learning scenes. The **extracurricular learning centres programmes** also continued during the 2007-2013 EU programming period on the basis of a standardised model. The main purpose of the SRPOP sub-measure 3.3.5 „Aid for extra-curricular learning facilities” project is to reduce the school drop-out rate and to reinforce the path towards the continuation of studies (in secondary schools providing final examinations and in higher education if possible) for pupils/students with multiple disadvantages, Roma youths, pupils/students under child protection care and migrant pupils/students. The extracurricular learning centres are a form of education opted for by children and their parents out of their own free will that is designed to assist and manage learning adjusted to the personal educational needs of participants and that serves to improve the chances of integration into the formal school system.

As part of the programme, more than one hundred extracurricular learning centres projects designed to boost the educational success of pupils with multiple disadvantages were financed. However, the sustainability of extracurricular learning centres and the need for the streamlining of parallel institution development and funding forms raise significant concerns.

### **Integrative Pedagogical System**

The Integrative Pedagogical System (IPS) introduced in 2003 is a pedagogical system which is designed to create equal opportunities for children with multiple disadvantages in the local pedagogical practice. The institutions using IPS were supported professionally by the National

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<sup>57</sup> Section 121 (1), Point 14 of Act LXXIX of 1993 on Public Education: „disadvantaged child, pupil, student: a person whose eligibility for regular child protection services was established by a notary public due to his/her family circumstances or social situation; within this category, a disadvantaged child has multiple disadvantages if his/her parent providing statutory supervision only successfully completed his/her studies in the eighth grade of elementary school, in the case of a child attending kindergarten, at the time when the child completes the age of three or, in the case of a pupil, at the time when the child becomes eligible for entering school, on the basis of a voluntary statement issued in the procedure regulated in the Act on the Protection of Children and the Guardian Authority; a child also qualifies as a pupil with multiple disadvantages if he/she was taken into long-term foster custody.”

Education Integration Network. The number of children and institutions participating in the programme increases year by year. It is now employed by one quarter of elementary schools, and kindergartens and secondary schools, too, have joined the methodology-based programme. In total, approximately 1,600 institutions of public education, 300,000 children (80,000 pupils with multiple disadvantages and 20,000 children with multiple disadvantages) and some 13,000 teachers are as a result involved in educational integration.

A study concerning IPS<sup>58</sup> shows that the programme has led to a general improvement in the development of the pupils/students of the participating schools.

## Minority education

The extension of the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages to the Romani and Beas languages spoken by the Roma in Hungary was promulgated by Act XLIII of 2008. It may be established in this context that the undertakings made in the field of education are in harmony with the statutory regulations related to the education of national and ethnic minorities. The forms, content and framework of the kindergarten and school education of the Roma minority are regulated in the decrees on the directive concerning the kindergarten education of national and ethnic minorities and the directive concerning the school education of national and ethnic minorities. The purpose of kindergarten education is to prepare children for a successful entry into the school system by consciously building on the differences and similarities between the Roma culture and the majority culture. Education in the school system enables Roma pupils to acquaint themselves with the cultural values of the Roma and provides information on the status, rights, organisations and institutions of the Roma. It assists Roma integration with pedagogical means, without assimilatory expectations. This form of education and teaching, also as a form of creating equal opportunities, successfully operates in a number of localities. Agencies providing for the maintenance of the given institutions have been able to draw normative funding from the central budget for the purpose since 1993. At the same time, it is necessary to uphold guarantees which prevent Roma minority education from becoming a means of segregation<sup>59</sup>.

The **on-the-job training of teachers** participating in the education of the Roma minority is subsidised annually via tenders. Curriculum development and the **development of programme packages** may be implemented as part of the SROP sub-measure 3.4.1.

## Vocational and adult training

Regional Integrated Vocational Centres (RIVCs) were set up to address the structural problems in the system of **vocational training** that mainly stemmed from the system of the maintenance of institutions. As part of the Operative Programme for Human Resources, the agencies responsible for the maintenance of institutions of public education, businesses involved in practical training and institutions of higher education were eligible to create RIVCs for the fulfilment of duties related to vocational training as defined in the Act on Public Education<sup>60</sup>. As a result, 16 RIVCs came into being. These were followed by a new

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<sup>58</sup> The experiences of a successful school integration programme. Study on the integration programme of disadvantaged pupils. By Gábor Kézdi and Éva Surányi. 2005-2007. Research Summary. Educatio Társadalmi Szolgáltató Közhasznú Társaság. Budapest, 2008. [www.biztoskezdet.hu](http://www.biztoskezdet.hu)

<sup>59</sup> A review of the legal regulation relating to the education of Roma in Hungary by András Kádár, Institute for Educational Research and Development; Official inspection of schools with a low number of students teaching minority languages, Education Office, 2010.

<sup>60</sup> Act LXXIX of 1993 and Section 2 (5) of Act LXXVI of 1993.



generation of RIVCs funded from the Social Renewal Operational Programme / Social Infrastructure Operational Programme for in accordance with Act LXXVI of 1993. The new RIVCs were able to come into being within more regulated boundaries, however, statutory regulation permitted integration of varied degrees (according to the rules in force, as many as 7 types of RIVCs may legally operate). It was possible to establish institutions offering a diversified choice of training on the basis of the genuine integration of schools merged into a RIVC under standard supervision, however, institutions that only offered seemingly lawful operations and seeming integration, too, were eligible for subsidies, the sustainability of which is doubtful after the conclusion of the tender programme. At present, there are 85 RIVCs operating in five different forms. The original purpose of RIVCs was to develop a system of vocational institutions with a diversified training structure adjusted to the needs of the economy that is able to manage the funding received from the central budget more effectively, is able to flexibly respond to the needs of the labour market and offers an actual choice to students. It was a further objective that the training system should provide up-to-date skills actually required in the economy through the implementation of content-based and methodological developments and the identification and improvement of skills necessary for employability. RIVCs were further expected to reduce the high drop-out rates and to promote and to keep track of (re-)integration into the labour market and career orientation.<sup>61</sup>

The main problem of the vocational system is that it is at present characterised by the same degree of heterogeneity that was prevalent before the reforms, which reduces transparency and coherence and makes the effective regulation and operation of the system substantially more difficult. At the same time, most RIVCs are not organised on a regional basis as their coming into being was determined more by factors of contacts than any kind of regional or territorial principle.

In the interest of creating an effective and manageable system of institutions, it is necessary to amend the rules regulating RIVCs. In addition to the improvement of cost efficiency, the objective of the reform is to create a vocational system that is more relevant to the labour market, to achieve a reduction in the number of young people dropping out of education without a qualification and to attain a more transparent vocational system that responds to changes and the needs of the economy with greater flexibility.

An important criterion of a knowledge-centred economy is the passing on of new knowledge and information and the drilling of skills. Information in the form of knowledge is passed on in schools, however, it is necessary to learn not only during the years of youth as, with the progress of technology, the acquired knowledge becomes dated and, on the other hand, it may be necessary to change occupations 5 to 6 times during adulthood. According to surveys conducted on the basis of an internationally standardised methodology, **a mere 9% of Hungary's adult population takes part in education/training.** With this percentage, Hungary is the last amongst the Member States of the European Union where the average proportion of adults attending training is 36%. Learning in adulthood is characterised by major disproportions. Those who would need to learn most do not take part in training; the participation of individuals with low educational qualifications, older individuals and those living in small localities in adult education falls far short of the desired level. Those who do not learn during their adult years lose the ability to learn or never learn the skills not previously acquired in school. An uneducated person is amongst the first to drop out of the labour market or is not even able to enter the market, which contributes to the accumulation of social problems.

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<sup>61</sup> Measures concerning vocational training of the Operative Programme for the Development of Human Resources of the National Development Plan. Szakképzési Szemle, Autumn 2004.

It is a major problem that 51% of the population over the age of 16 are still digitally illiterate. In addition to the elderly, there are particularly great deficiencies amongst **the unemployed, the disadvantaged, individuals living in small communities and individuals with inferior educational qualifications** who could **only be targeted under the auspices of adult education**. Failure to enjoy the benefits of the information society further deepens social inequalities, and therefore information and communication technology devices and the attainment of e-Inclusion<sup>62</sup> with the aid of these may help promote the individual in his/her economic and social life and may contribute to the reduction of geographical and social differences, the development of skills and competencies, finding a job and becoming an active member of society. Consequently, the **development of digital literacy** must be amongst the main priorities of adult education.<sup>63</sup>

### **Scholarship programmes**

Several state and private scholarship programmes set out to promote the success of disadvantaged and Roma students in elementary, secondary and higher education.

The scholarship programme supporting the largest number of students (which was first managed by the **Hungarian Public Foundation for the Roma ('MACIKA')**, followed by the Public Foundation for National and Ethnic Minorities in Hungary) expressly targeted Roma students. In recent years, on average some 10,000 senior elementary school students, secondary school students and students in higher education have been able to participate in the programme annually which was first launched in 2000<sup>64</sup>.

**The 'In the Road' Scholarship Programme** was launched in 2005. Its comprehensive objective is to promote the establishment of equal opportunities for disadvantaged students, to improve the chances of young people in the continuation of their studies and in obtaining vocational qualifications, a certificate of final examinations or a degree and to foster talented students with an interest in sciences. 'On the Road' provides financial aid and, via its mentor system, professional support for students in the 7th and 8th grades of elementary school and secondary school students constituting the primary target group. Three equal opportunities and one talent fostering sub-programmes operate under the auspices of 'On the Road' (the *Road to secondary school*, *Road to final examinations* and *Road to a qualification* scholarships and the *Road to science* sub-programme) in which some 20,000 students and almost 11,000 mentor-teachers participate on an ongoing basis. The strength of the programme is that students are assisted not only financially but they also receive support from a mentor.

The purpose of the **'Arany János' Talent Fostering Programme for Disadvantaged Students** is to enable the children of the poorest parents with the lowest educational qualifications to successfully attend full-time secondary education providing a final examinations certificate in a larger proportion. The selected students make up for any educational deficiencies as part of a preparatory year of education which enables them to continue their studies in secondary schools (and boarding facilities). These institutions are amongst the most successful in preparing students for admission to higher education. The

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<sup>62</sup> e-Inclusion is the European Union's policy aimed at enhancing digital literacy and wider inclusion in the digital society.

<sup>63</sup> Digital Literacy Action Plan, Monitoring Report, 2009.

<sup>64</sup> Rate and effectiveness of aid provided for the improvement of the situation and advancement of the Roma in Hungary since the change of regime. State Audit Office, Institute for Development and Methodology. 2008.

programme was launched in 2000, and the number of participating students increased to 3,000 by the 2011/2012 school year, while the number of participating institutions (secondary schools and boarding facilities) rose to 23.<sup>65</sup> According to the 2008 State Audit Office Report, 82% of the students (aged between 14 and 19) participating in the programme gained admission to higher education, 95% obtained a driving licence, 89% were awarded ECDL certificates and 93% passed language examinations.

A sub-programme was devised in 2004 under the title '**Arany János' Talent Fostering Boarding Facility Programme for Disadvantaged Students** which attempts to achieve the above objectives with the aid of the means and methods of boarding facilities. At present, the sub-programme operates in 11 boarding facilities and in the secondary schools offering a final examination certificate that closely cooperate with them (agreeing to provide a preparatory year as a ninth grade). Following the preparatory year, students only stay together in their boarding facility groups and pursue their studies in various secondary schools in an integrated manner. In September 2012, almost 900 students will start the school year in 5 grades within the boundaries of this sub-programme. The '**Arany János' Talent Fostering Boarding Facility – Vocational School Programme for Students with Multiple Disadvantages**, in which 605 students will participate in 2012, was launched in 2007. The institutions included in the programme (7 boarding facilities and 13 vocational schools) agree to furnish minimum 85 per cent of their newly admitted students with competitive vocational qualifications. All three 'Arany János' programmes assist students with both extra pedagogical support and aid of a social type in accordance with the requirements laid down in the relevant legal rules.

The Higher Education Mentor Programme has operated under the auspices of the equal opportunities strategy of the Ministry of Education as an equal opportunities programme promoting the studies of disadvantaged young people in higher education since 2005. The purpose of the programme is to improve the chances of the young individuals concerned of gaining admission to institutions of higher education, to help them successfully complete the requirements and to broaden their future opportunities on the labour market.

It is important to make mention of the activities of the **Romaversitas Foundation** operating from non-state and EU funding which has, since its establishment in 1996, helped approximately 200 Roma students to complete their studies. In the last few years, the programme has achieved a more than 80% degree attainment ratio<sup>66</sup>.

## **6. Access to employment**

Far fewer people work in Hungary today (approximately 3.8 million) than the number of inhabitants of working age with the actual ability to work, the Széll Kálmán Plan points out<sup>67</sup>. This strategic document cites the loss of state revenue and the state expenditures arising from the low employment rate as one of the reasons for the accumulated state debt. The New

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<sup>65</sup> [www.ajtp.hu](http://www.ajtp.hu)

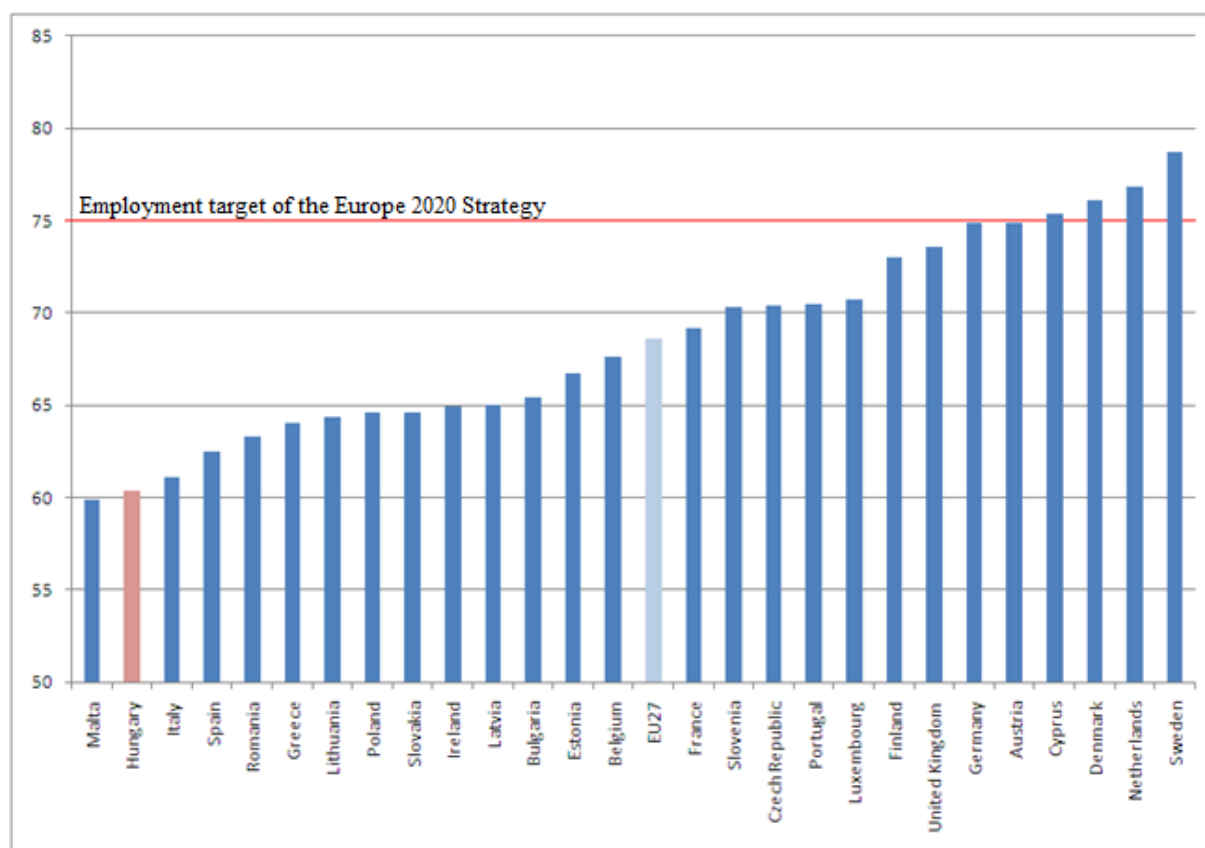
<sup>66</sup> Romaversitas Foundation, monitoring survey-Summary Study, Kurt Lewin Foundation, January 2011.

<sup>67</sup> Széll Kálmán Plan. United against debt. p. 16.

Széchenyi Plan highlights that the primary way to increase employment is by increasing the demand for employees, that is, creating jobs by supporting businesses, small and medium-sized businesses in particular. The economic consequences of low employment are closely related to its social consequences and the related „costs”.

The most important feature of the Hungarian labour market is the long-term low level of participation in the labour market which results from the **extremely low employment level** and the **somewhat higher than average unemployment rate**.<sup>68</sup> Hungary is one of the EU Member States with the lowest employment level; only Malta has a poorer employment rate than Hungary in the European Union. In the past year, employment has decreased to a degree somewhat in excess of the EU27 average, while there has been a worse-than-average deterioration in unemployment. In spite of this, the Hungarian labour market is positioned somewhere in the EU middle range in respect of the effects of the crisis on the labour market and the deterioration of the main indicators.

### Employment rate of population aged between 20 and 64 in the countries of the European Union, 2010



Source: EUROSTAT, Statistics database, <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>

**In response to the economic crisis, following an earlier period of stagnation, the situation on the labour market in Hungary has deteriorated.** In the last two years, employment has decreased similar to the EU27 average, while there has been a more marked deterioration in

<sup>68</sup> According to EUROSTAT data, the employment rate of the population aged between 20 and 64 was 60.4% in 2010 in Hungary, while the unemployment rate was 11.2 %.

unemployment. In spite of this, the Hungarian labour market is positioned somewhere in the EU middle range in respect of the effects of the crisis on the labour market and the deterioration of the main indicators.

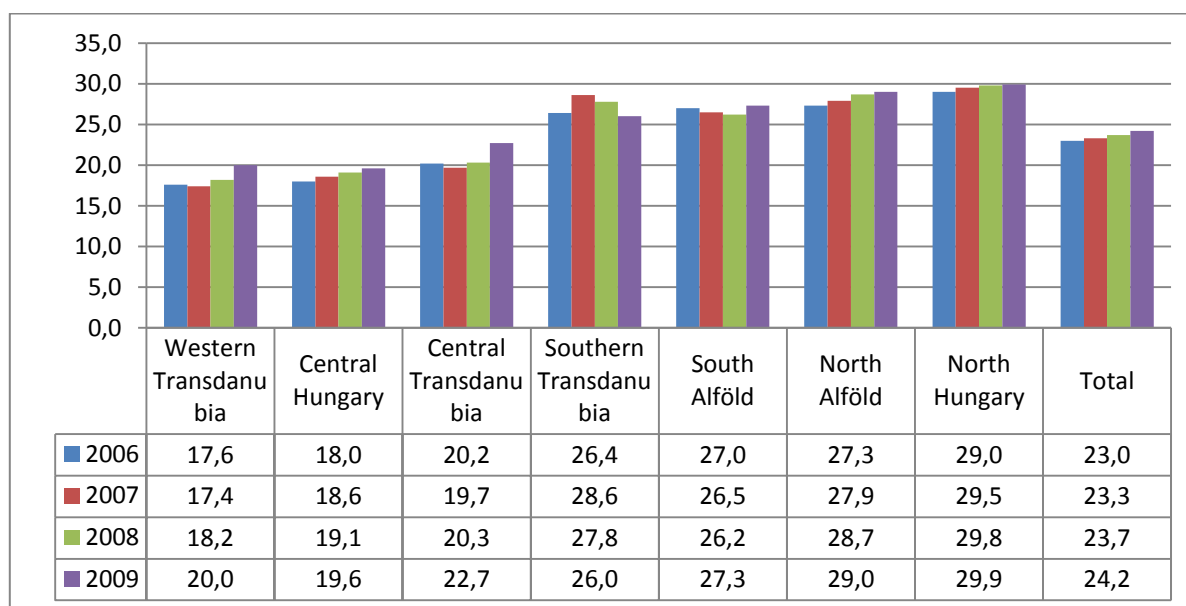
The fall in the unemployment rate and in the number of registered job-seekers and a repeated rise in the rate of employment in the first half of 2011 allow us to conclude that the Hungarian labour market has already overcome the worst. At the same time, in this context, Community and local analyses that continue to project an economic growth without an increase in employment (and without the creation of jobs) compel us to remain cautious.

The development and continued **survival and persistence of poverty is attributable to the lack of employment opportunities, in addition to other educational and sociological factors**. At the same time, the reverse of this finding is also true; **the chances of the disadvantaged of entering the labour market are highly limited**. We have failed to achieve a long-term increase in our employment rate in Hungary and Hungary's employment rate, 55%, is extremely low by European standards. The low employment rate characteristic of the Hungarian labour market is primarily attributable to the high inactivity of the **population with low educational qualifications** which may be observed in the case of both gender as well as in the case of the middle-aged otherwise qualifying as the most active group on the labour market. The labour market position of employees with low qualifications forced out of the sector of large corporations in the nineties has not improved in recent years; a significant proportion of these people do not work or their jobs are unstable and uncertain. In Hungary, only 25.9% of individuals aged between 15 and 64 with elementary education qualify as employed, while the EU-27 average is 45.1%. There is a much lesser difference between the employment rates of individuals with secondary qualifications (Hungary: 61.1%; EU-27: 68.4%) and there is only a minor difference between the comparable data of persons with tertiary qualifications (Hungary: 77.8%; EU-27: 82.3%). It clearly follows from the above data that primarily individuals with low educational qualifications constitute the target groups of employment-related, social and educational/training interventions designed to promote social integration.

The **older** generations about to retire, **women attempting to return to the labour market after giving birth** and individuals with disability are likewise disadvantaged from the viewpoint of employment. The labour market participation rate of the generation between the ages of 15 and 24 is also low. **Young people** are absent from the labour market mainly on account of the extended term of their education and training, however, it now takes substantially longer to find a job after the completion of studies and the simultaneous pursuance of studies and employment is far from typical.

There are significant **territorial inequalities in employment**. The employment rate is the highest in the Central Hungary region, while the second and third places are occupied by the Western Transdanubia and the Central Transdanubia regions. The North Great Plain and North Hungary regions are in the worst employment situation.

**Ratio of individuals living in households without employed members by regions and in total, 2006–2009, %**



Source: *Characteristics of the situation of children and families raising children in Hungary, 2006–2009. Central Statistical Office, 2011. Manuscript.*

The problems listed above emerged more intensively, cumulatively, in the case of the **Roma population** in the most disadvantaged position on the labour market. The economic changes following the change of regime particularly affected the sectors which employed Roma in large numbers, and they therefore lost their jobs on a truly large scale (according to some estimates, some 55% of the jobs previously filled by Roma were terminated at the beginning of the nineties, in contrast to 33 per cent of the total jobs).<sup>69</sup> Most of them were unable to return to the labour market subsequently, they became long-term unemployed and passed their difficulties down to the younger generations. Sectoral policies were unable to offer a way out of the trap that had developed. The employment level of the Roma population is less than one half of the non-Roma average, while their unemployment rate is three to five times higher than that of the non-Roma population. According to the 2006 study of *Central European Management Intelligence (CEMI)*, while the Roma account for approximately 7% of the population, only some 2 to 2.5% of those in employment are Roma (75-90,000 persons) and Roma account for 25 to 30% of the registered unemployed (100,000-130,000).<sup>70</sup> Based on the research of the European Union's Fundamental Rights Agency concerned with minority discrimination<sup>71</sup>, the Roma in Hungary are the worst affected by labour market discrimination in the European Union. In the last 5 years 68% of them, while in the last 12 months, 47% of them felt that they were negatively discriminated in the course of their efforts to find a job. The problems affecting the Roma population have been left unresolved for many years, and their deficiencies in education and employment have remained preserved.

The Roma population and the population of disadvantaged regions who mostly live in a village environment were, after the change of regime, unable to take part in agricultural

<sup>69</sup> Bureau for European Comparative Minority Research: *A Roma's Life in Hungary: Report*, 2002.

<sup>70</sup> *Central European Management Intelligence (CEMI): Macro-Balance and Growth*, 2006.

<sup>71</sup> European Fundamental Rights Agency, *European Union Minorities and Discrimination. Data in Focus Report. Main Results*, 2009.

employment with high live-labour intensity as the emphasis had been previously shifted onto mechanised, large-scale production in agriculture. In spite of the country's excellent agricultural features, there was no connection made between self-sufficiency in the production of foodstuffs, local production and local consumption (e.g. in public catering) for the population of villages. As a result, the population lost the opportunities of high live-labour-intensive employment, in spite of the fact that this would have created jobs even in their disadvantaged village environment.

No effective and long-term solutions have been identified in response to low employment. **Employment programmes on their own are unable to improve the level of employment on a long-term basis; new, sustainable jobs are required on the competitive market, and „the only way to achieve this is via entrepreneurs”.**<sup>72</sup> The Government's primary economic policy priority is to create one million new, taxpayer jobs in Hungary over a period of ten years. This target is only attainable through the coordinated, effective and targeted operation and coordination of the country's economic and employment policies and, in the long run, of the country's education, training, social and health care policies.

## **7. Access to healthcare**

The general state of health of the country's population is rather negative. A widely known indicator of the situation is that the **average life-expectancy at birth indicator falls significantly behind even the values that could be expected on the basis of the modest economic performance.** Against the background of this overall, generally unfavourable situation, typical **regional differences** experienced in the state of health of individuals, which precisely follow the pattern of socio-economic differences, present a particularly grave problem.<sup>73</sup>

As regards health care from the viewpoint of social disadvantages, **the deficiencies in the basic services represent the most elementary access problems.** In recent periods, the indicator of the availability of basic services has declined in spite of the fall in the population. It testifies to a segmented care system that the number of physicians in relation to the population figure is the lowest in Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County (in spite of the fact that, in addition to Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County, this is where the most significant improvement has been achieved).

The main focus of the **National Public Health Care Programme** implemented on the basis of Parliamentary Resolution No. 46/2003. (IV.16.) is the operation of **targeted screening tests serving national health purposes.** The measures taken as part of the programme include measures specifically concerning disadvantaged social groups, e.g. school information and educational programmes, however, the current volume and state of organisation of these measures are not sufficient to induce the changes that are necessary in this field.

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<sup>72</sup> New Széchenyi Plan. A development policy programme for standing on our own two feet, renewal and advancement, January 2011. p. 19.

<sup>73</sup> The Hungarian population's state of health, with special regard to the period after the turn of the millennium by Róza Ádány. Népegészségügy / Year 86, Issue No. 2.

**There are major inequalities in the state of health of children as well as in their access to health care services.** Largely social factors are responsible for these inequalities. Some 30 to 50% of deaths and health problems involving children are related to the disadvantaged social and economic situation of parents. Health development is the most effective in the first years of life, however, there are contributing factors to good health already before conception.

**Abortion is highly prevalent in the lives of disadvantaged families and women.** According to the data of the Bureau of the Chief Medical Officer attached to the State Service of National Health and the Chief Medical Officer, **45% of those applying for an abortion** who appeared before the Family Protection Service in 2010 **did not use any kind of contraceptive** against the unwanted pregnancy (e.g. via natural methods, use of condom, contraceptive pill). Many of them **refer to the high prices** of contraceptive devices and pills as the reason for not employing contraception, however, they did not resort to any other method or device. In 2010, 12% of women applying for an abortion repeatedly requested another abortion within 1 year. Based on the above data, the concern may arise that some of the applicants use abortion as a contraceptive method.

**Unplanned and unwanted pregnancy is a significant risk factor in perinatal and infant mortality.** The same is also true of **teenage pregnancy**. The new-born babies of young mothers are more likely to be born prematurely, with a lower body weight. A low weight at birth increases the risks of health damage during infancy as well as in later life.

**The ratio of prematurely born children in Hungary is 8.4% (Central Statistical Office, 2009) which is in excess of the EU average** and almost double the corresponding figure of Northern European countries. Giving birth prematurely is only partially attributable to health reasons; the **mother's level of schooling, bad living conditions and an unhealthy lifestyle play a greater role.**



**Ratio of prematurely born babies (babies born live with low body weight) by regions,  
based on size of locality, mother's educational qualifications and birth weight  
(%)(Central Statistical Office)**

	2006	2007	2008	2009
<i>Total</i>	8.3	8.2	8.3	<b>8.4</b>
<b>Region</b>				
Central Hungary	7.7	7.2	7.2	7.2
Central Transdanubia	7.4	7.7	7.6	7.3
Western Transdanubia	7.2	6.8	7.6	7.8
Southern Transdanubia	8.4	9.0	8.7	<b>9.4</b>
North Hungary	10.0	10.3	10.1	<b>10.3</b>
North Alföld	9.6	9.7	9.6	<b>9.9</b>
South Alföld	7.7	7.6	8.2	7.8
<b>Size of locality</b>				
0–999	9.6	10.0	10.7	9.9
1000–1999	9.4	9.6	9.6	9.7
2000–4999	8.8	9.5	9.3	9.1
5000–9999	8.6	8.2	8.5	8.9
10 000–19 999	7.9	8.0	7.5	7.8
20 000–49 999	7.7	7.7	7.9	8.2
50 000–x	7.9	7.2	7.3	7.5
<b>Mother's educational qualifications</b>				
Elementary or lower	13.5	14.1	14.0	<b>13.9</b>
Secondary without final examinations	8.1	8.0	8.3	8.1
Secondary with final examinations	6.8	6.7	6.8	7.1
Tertiary	5.9	5.6	5.7	6.1
<b>Birth weight</b>				
< 1500 grams	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.4
1500–2500 grams	7.0	6.8	6.9	7.0

*Source: Characteristics of the situation of children and families raising children in Hungary, 2006–2009. Central Statistical Office, 2011. Manuscript.*

As regards the ratios of **infant mortality**, there is a close correlation between spatial disadvantages and the mother's low educational qualifications. Infant mortality is an indicator of the state of advance of a country's health care system and is also one of the most significant indicators of socio-economic development.

**Infant mortality rate by regions, based on size of locality and mother's educational qualifications (per mille) (Central Statistical Office)**

	2006	2007	2008	2009
<i>Total</i>	5.7	5.9	5.6	5.1
<b>Region</b>				
Central Hungary	5.1	4.9	4.9	3.5
Central Transdanubia	5.4	6.4	5.3	4.4
Western Transdanubia	4.9	5.4	4.4	5.4
Southern Transdanubia	5.4	6.5	4.6	5.0
North Hungary	9.0	9.5	8.8	<b>8.1</b>
North Alföld	5.3	5.2	4.6	<b>5.6</b>
South Alföld	5.2	5.2	6.9	<b>6.1</b>
<b>Size of locality</b>				
0–999	8.5	9.2	8.4	5.8
1000–1999	5.3	6.7	6.2	7.0
2000–4999	6.1	6.6	6.3	6.3
5000–9999	6.5	5.6	5.7	5.6
10 000–19 999	6.4	6.0	4.2	4.4
20 000–49 999	4.2	4.8	6.0	5.5
50 000–x	5.1	5.2	4.8	4.0
<b>Mother's educational qualifications</b>				
Elementary or lower	10.7	12.2	9.4	<b>10.1</b>
Secondary without final examinations	5.9	5.0	5.5	4.4
Secondary with final examinations	4.4	4.3	4.5	4.3
Tertiary	2.9	3.4	3.8	3.0

*Source: Characteristics of the situation of children and families raising children in Hungary, 2006–2009. Central Statistical Office, 2011. Manuscript.*

The fact that **pregnancy at a young age** is greatly determined by social disadvantages is underlined by the ratio of young-age pregnancies that is almost three times higher in North Hungary than in Western Transdanubia.

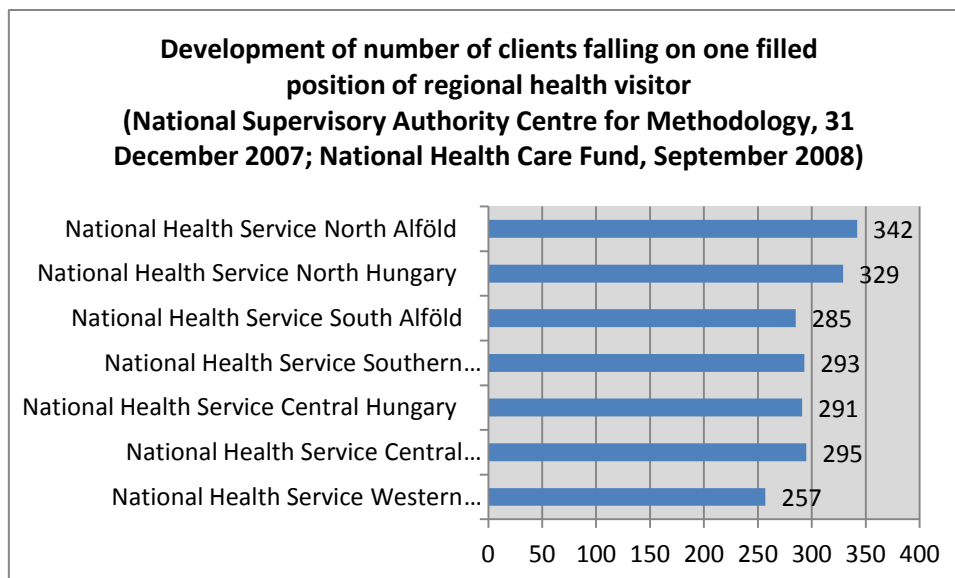
**Ratio of young-age pregnancy by regions, based on size of locality and mother's age (per mille) (Central Statistical Office)**

	2006	2007	2008	2009
<i>Total</i>	21.8	21.6	22.9	22.5
<b>Region</b>				
Central Hungary	15.9	15.9	17.4	16.9
Central Transdanubia	15.7	16.2	17.2	16.2
Western Transdanubia	12.6	13.2	14.8	14.5
Southern Transdanubia	26.1	25.6	25.8	26.2
North Hungary	35.9	35.1	38.2	38.4
North Alföld	29.5	28.8	30.0	29.2
South Alföld	17.0	17.3	17.4	16.6
<b>Size of locality</b>				
0–999	34.0	34.5	35.4	34.1
1000–1999	28.9	29.4	33.8	32.8
2000–4999	27.3	27.7	28.5	27.9
5000–9999	24.6	24.2	24.3	23.5
10 000–19 999	22.8	21.7	21.5	21.3
20 000–49 999	19.1	18.4	20.3	20.1
50 000–x	14.2	13.9	15.2	15.0
<b>Woman's age</b>				
–14	4.9	5.3	5.7	5.3
15–17	27.4	26.8	28.3	27.9

*Source: Characteristics of the situation of children and families raising children in Hungary, 2006–2009. Central Statistical Office, 2011. Manuscript.*

As regards the standard of **local paediatric care**, the network is incomplete or is not at all present in areas inhabited in the largest proportions by people with multiple disadvantages, including Roma children. These are, in fact, the areas where the number of paediatric practices falling on 10 thousand children is lower; for instance, this number is twice as high in Central Hungary as it is in North Hungary.

Providing preventive care extending to all age groups is the most important duty of the **network of health visitors**. However, the pursuance of successful health visitor activities in the disadvantaged regions is greatly hindered by the fact that there are many vacant positions. In the North Great Plain region, 10% of the jobs were vacant in 2007, while in a number of regions, the service of health visitors can only be maintained through long-term deputisation. As a result, the number of clients falling on one health visitor is significantly higher than the maximum permitted by law (250 persons).



Upon the management of the complex problem concerning health care, it is important to take account of the fact that, according to a study of the Fundamental Rights Agency<sup>74</sup>, in the past one year, 18% of Hungarian Roma have experienced discrimination in health care.

Amongst the Roma population, there is deprivation, as referred to in other studies, also in the area of state of health and health indicators are highly negative. We may find values well below the country average in most departments: 66.3% of the Roma population over the age of 19 suffer from some disease, 16.1 % suffer from more than one disease and 23 % simultaneously suffer from 3 or more conditions. **In most of the 20 most frequently occurring internal medicine conditions, the Roma have an at least double illness rate compared with the entire population** (e.g. tumorous diseases), in the case of six conditions, a more than five-fold rate (e.g. asthma, stomach illnesses), and in three illness groups (impaired eyesight, iron-deficiency anaemia, infectious lung diseases) a more than ten-fold illness rate.<sup>75</sup> Conditions occurring in higher proportions, too, highly contribute to the fact that there is an extremely high proportion of individuals with disability, disability pensioners (15.4%), amongst the Roma.<sup>76</sup>

From among the risk factors with an impact on health, **smoking**: 77.4% of the Roma population smoke, in contrast to 31.4% in the entire population, **high blood pressure**: 87% of the Roma population suffer from high blood pressure, in contrast to 32 % in the entire population, and **nutritional problems** and the **lack of prevention** clearly prove to be factors with an impact on health.<sup>77</sup> The following findings were made in a study conducted in Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County: active smoking and exposure to environmental tobacco smoke are significantly more frequent among the Roma than among the non-Roma. More than two thirds of Roma had their first cigarette before the age of 18, while this proportion amongst the non-Roma is only 50%. A very early start (below the age of 12) occurred among the Roma in 14.9% in contrast to 2.5% amongst non-Roma. All of them without exception

<sup>74</sup> European Fundamental Rights Agency, European Union Minorities and Discrimination. Data in Focus Report. Main Results, 2009.

<sup>75</sup> Limits of equal opportunities in Hungary by Ferenc Babusik. L'Harmattan Kiadó, 2005. pp. 60-90.

<sup>76</sup> Entrapped by poverty by Ferenc Babusik. Delphoi –Consulting, 2004. pp. 3-4.

<sup>77</sup> Health survey, 2009. Central Statistical Office and Roma population state of health survey, 2009. Eduinvest. p. 29.

smoked in the years before; while two thirds of the Roma smoked, only 50% of the non-Roma population smoked. Only one out of ten Roma women decided not to smoke during pregnancy, while this ratio is 66% amongst non-Roma women. Primarily due to the husband/partner smoking at home<sup>78</sup>, the Roma were exposed to harmful environmental tobacco smoke (passive smoking) 2.5 times more frequently.

According to experiences, the Roma do not even avail themselves of free health care (64.2 % of them never or rarely)<sup>79</sup> which is a consequence of their poor financial and social circumstances: they are unable to travel to screening tests, they cannot afford medicines, they have no one to leave the children with, etc. The primary consideration of disadvantaged families is sustenance, living from one day to the next, rather than health preservation and the prevention of illness.

## **8. Access to housing and basic services**

Typical problems of housing conditions in Hungary are the unpaid public utility bills and housing debts, the low ratio or lack of social housing, the concentration of extremely grave housing problems and segregation which also determines the living environment.<sup>80</sup>

Our National Reform Programme created in conjunction with the Europe 2020 Strategy, too, treats problems related to housing and the covering of housing costs as a top priority. When we look at the poverty indicators of households and child poverty, the increasing burdens of housing loans and household bills are of particular significance. The shaken security of housing amidst the circumstances of the economic crisis may be the beginning of a path leading to the gravest forms of poverty for wide strata of society forming part of the lower income groups.

The number of individuals with debts towards the electricity, gas and remote heating service providers has effectively doubled since the beginning of the millennium. According to research data<sup>81</sup>, in 2003, some 596,000 people owed various amounts, while this figure in 2009 increased to 1,129,000. There are 66 per cent more individuals with electricity bills in arrears than earlier, while the number of people owing gas bill debts increased almost seven-fold. This significant increase may be explained by the rise in the price of gas; it increased three-fold between 2003 and 2009. While the debt falling on one person is barely more than 30,000 forints, there is a significant increase in the number of those whose debts have been overdue by three to six months.

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78 Comparison of Roma and non-Roma women delivering premature babies based on Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County Data by Péter Balázs, Kristie L. Foley, Ildikó Rákóczi, Andrea Greczer.

79 The Roma population's state of health, a study, 2009. Eduinvest. p. 29.

80 The draft strategy concerning these problems is the Housing Strategy of the Ministry of National Economy. A professional debate paper, May 2011.

81 Development of the population's bill debts in the light of a survey by Balázs Herpai. *Esély – Társadalom- és szociálpolitikai folyóirat*, 2010/6.

Housing support is designed to prevent the accumulation of debts. However, housing support is provided in kind in few places, and the cash received disappears in the family budget and „functions as a general income supplement”.

The Act on Social Services provides for the debt management service which may be of assistance if there is a larger amount of accumulated debt. The legislation only renders this service mandatory for towns with a population of more than 40,000; in the rest of the localities, the decision is left to the local board of representatives. As a consequence, this service is only available in 4 to 5 per cent of localities.

The installation of prepaid devices (meters with a card) would be helpful for those living in disadvantaged conditions. Service providers are, however, not interested in the installation of such devices and there are therefore only a few hundred of them in operation.

One of the most fundamental housing policy problems of recent decades has been the lack or shortage of social housing. The proportion of municipality-owned homes has decreased from 22% at the beginning of the nineties to 4%, while the ratio of privately-owned flats available for renting is approximately 4%.<sup>82</sup> The main reason for the problem of housing loans denominated in foreign currencies is, that in the absence of a sufficiently large, legal rented accommodation market, many individuals are compelled to buy flats of their own, often beyond their means. The affordability of access to housing to satisfactory standards is a major problem also for average families who cannot rely on their parents or relatives for help. In spite of this, the ratio of privately owned homes in Hungary is one of the highest in Europe, in excess of 90 per cent. Some 10 to 12% of all housing is substandard accommodation with no modern conveniences or with limited modern conveniences or temporary accommodation. Minimum 284,269 and maximum 315,085 people live in segregated housing conditions, some three per cent of the country's population.<sup>83</sup> There is likewise no effective response to the problems of those affected or endangered by the challenge of homelessness and other forms of housing exclusion (e.g. arbitrary property occupation, residents without legal status) that would be able to alleviate the failures of the market. The Housing Programme chapter of the New Széchenyi Plan<sup>84</sup> lays particular emphasis on increasing the proportion of rented accommodation, including the construction of (communal) social housing. The Government is in the process of identifying a short- and medium-term action plan for the prevention and management of housing exclusion.<sup>85</sup>

In recent years, a significant programme designed to address the housing, locality and regional disadvantages was the **programme of segregated localities**. The purpose of this programme was to improve the living conditions of those living in segregated residential environments and to enhance their social inclusion. Developments were aimed at segregated localities in regions and settlements. Several methodological approaches are used for the definition and identification of these.

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<sup>82</sup> Ministry of National Resources, State Secretariat of Social, Family and Youth Affairs: Short- and Medium-Term Action Plan related to the issue of street homelessness.

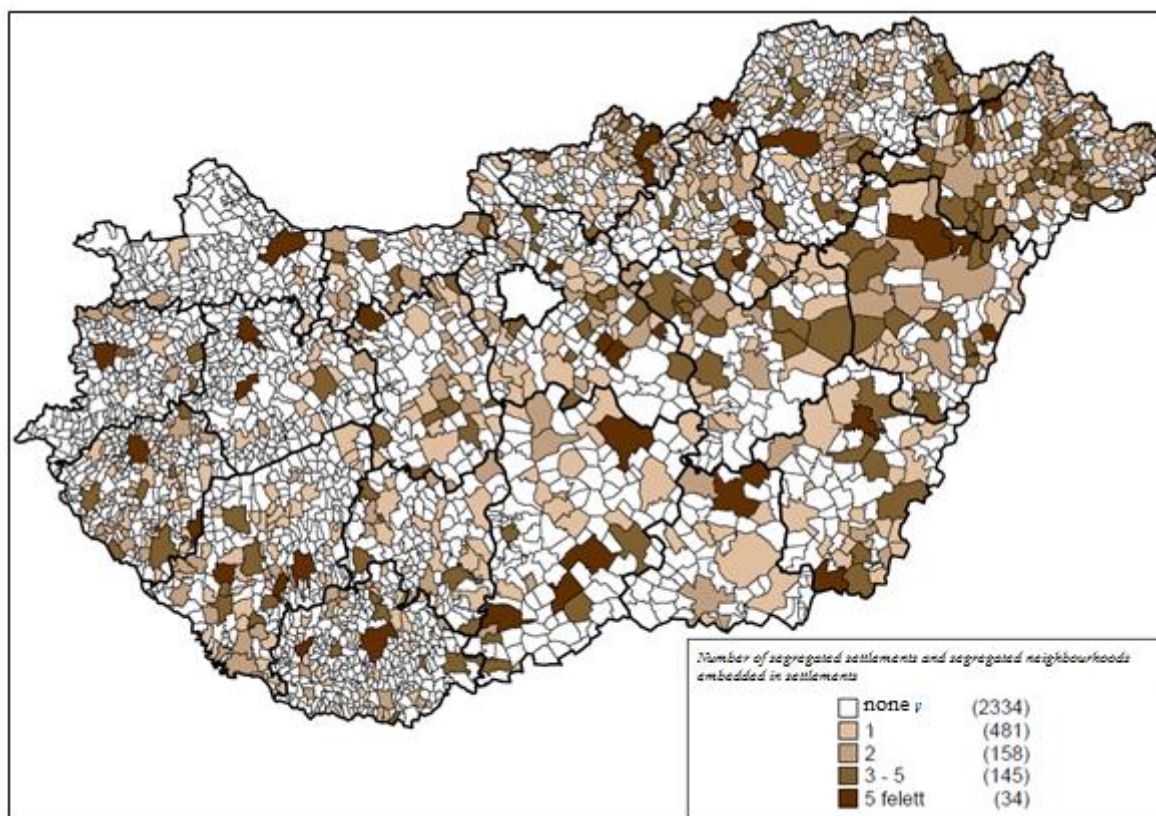
<sup>83</sup> An analysis of the geographical situation and infrastructural state of slums, Roma ghettos and segregated urban neighborhoods by Veronika Domokos (2010).

<sup>84</sup> New Széchenyi Plan. A development policy programme for standing on our own two feet, renewal and advancement, January 2011. p. 182.

<sup>85</sup> Ministry of National Resources, State Secretariat of Social, Family and Youth Affairs: Short- and Medium-Term Action Plan related to the issue of street homelessness.

The surveys of recent years concerning **segregated** localities deliver varied results; they give an account of 500 and more than 1660<sup>86</sup> segregated localities<sup>87</sup>. Based on the claims made in the study rendering an account of 1663 segregates, there is segregation within the settlements in one quarter of all localities. **Some two thirds of the segregated localities are situated on the edges of settlements. 14% of the segregates are located beyond the locality limits** (on average, at a distance of 3.8 km). Approximately 26,000 people live in places like this. In 17 of the segregates featured in the sample, there was neither any public drainage system, nor any public lighting; 64.7% of these are located in non-residential areas. These circumstances are a major threat to health, and even if we disregard the harmful effects of isolation, they frustrate the chances of a complete integration.

### Number and geographical situation of segregated settlements and neighbourhoods



Source: *An analysis of the geographical situation and infrastructural state of slums, Roma ghettos and segregated urban neighbourhoods* by Veronika Domokos (2010). Manuscript.

<sup>86</sup> An analysis of the geographical situation and infrastructural state of slums, Roma ghettos and segregated urban settlements by Veronika Domokos (2010).

<sup>87</sup> Segregated settlements are urban areas in which, according to the 2001 data of the Central Statistical Office, at least 50% of the residents of active age [between 15 and 59 years] do not have a regular work income and/or have educational qualifications not higher than the 8 grades of elementary school. In the case of settlements with a population of less than 2,000: all dilapidated locality parts inhabited by the locality's poorest residents in a single block which are regarded as slums or Roma settlements based on local popular opinion.

Between **2005 and 2009, programmes of segregated localities were implemented in 48 settlements** (from a budget of HUF 3.5 billion), Based on the evaluation of these<sup>88</sup>, while the programmes aimed at complexity, the **lack of a standard programme structure** and the diversity of and the **inflexibility** experienced in the utilisation of the **funding** allocated for the individual part-programmes constituted major hindering factors.

As regards EU funding, also according to one of the findings of an investigation conducted by the State Audit Office in 2008, „only few of the operational programmes of the New Hungary Development Plan take account of the multi-dimensional nature of the disadvantaged situation of the Roma. Therefore, **single-dimensional tenders** serving to achieve a single goal (e.g. training, job creation) **are not suitable** for providing genuine help for the Roma living in the most difficult conditions.” The report further establishes that „the most disadvantaged groups of the Roma population are unable to avail themselves of certain services (e.g. training) without supplementary services (e.g. travel, organisation of the supervision of children). **Consequently, only complex programmes taking account of the complexity of their disadvantages can offer them a true solution in general**”.

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<sup>88</sup> See evaluation of settlement programmes between 2005 and 2009: Evaluation of the integration programmes of individuals living in segregated settlements and in settlement-like living conditions by Petrovác–Somogyi–Teller. Városkutatás Kft., June 2010.