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KEMÉNY

ROMA OF HUNGARY

SSM

ROMA OF HUNGARY

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Preface to the Series and Acknowledgments

The present volume is a component of a series that is intended to present a comprehensive survey of the many aspects of East Central European society.

The books in this series deal with peoples whose homelands lie between the Germans to the west, the Russians, Ukrainians and Belorussians to the east, and the Mediterranean and Adriatic seas to the south. They constitute a particular civilization, one that is at once an integral part of Europe, yet substantially different from the West. The area is characterized by a rich diversity of languages, religions and governments. The study of this complex area demands a multidisciplinary approach, and, accordingly, our contributors to the series represent several academic disciplines. They have been drawn from universities and other scholarly institutions in the United States and Western Europe, as well as East Central Europe.

The editor-in-chief is responsible for ensuring the comprehensiveness, cohesion, internal balance, and scholarly quality of the series he has launched. He cheerfully accepts these responsibilities and intends this work to be neither justification nor condemnation of the policies, attitudes, and activities of any person involved. At the same time, because the contributors represent so many different disciplines, interpretations, and schools of thought, our policy in this, as

in the past and future volumes, is to present their contributions without major modifications.

The authors of this volume are distinguished scholars in the field to which the theme of this book belongs to. The editor is Senior Retired Fellow to the Sociological Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and owner of the Deák Ferenc and the Széchenyi prizes.

The appendices were prepared by Andrea T. Kulcsár.
Budapest, October 23, 2005

Béla K. Király
Editor-in-Chief

In a study published in 1974, József Vekerdi noted that Roma “probably came to Hungary sporadically somewhat before this time.”¹ He cites surnames and place names resembling the word *cigány* as evidence of this. The presence of Roma in Hungary in the 14th century was supported by Barna Mezey in a study published in 1986 and by Péter Tóth in an article published in 1994. Both researchers drew heavily on earlier publications by Tivadar Lehoczky and Béla Szalay.

In 1998, based on research by Katalin Fehértói, Pál Nagy argued that the village name *Zygan* and the personal names *Cigan*, *Cygan*, and *Chygan* bear no relation to the Roma [*cigány*] ethnic group. Still, Nagy could only surmise about the origins of these names. Though it fails to prove the argument, his work nevertheless offers strong evidence that Roma did not inhabit the village of *Zygan* in the 14th century and that people with the name of *Cigan* were not Roma.

Roma arrived in western Europe in the early 15th century. According to a book by Angus Fraser, published in 1995, Roma were seen in Hildesheim in Lower Saxony in 1407, in Basel and Hessen in 1414, and in Meissen and Bohemia in 1416. They were spotted once again in Hildesheim in 1417. In the same year, in Lindau, they received a letter of safe-conduct from Sigismund, Holy Roman Emperor and King of Hungary and Bohemia. Roma were reportedly seen in Lüneberg, Hamburg, Lübeck, Wismar, Rostock, Stralsund, and Greifswald in 1417, in Frankfurt am Main, Strasbourg, Colmar, Zurich, Basel, Solothurn, Bern, and Augsburg in 1418, in Châtillon (Savoy), St. Laurent, and Sisteron (Provence) in 1419, and in Brussels, Deventer, and Bruges in 1420. In all—or almost all—of these imprecise locations, Roma presented the letter of safe conduct received from Emperor Sigismund in Lindau—a document which Miklós Tomka surmised and Pál Nagy proved to be a forgery produced or purchased by Roma. Not even a copy of this document has survived, but Hermann Cornerus’ chronicle,

written in about 1435, does mention it. Nevertheless, a copy of another letter of safe conduct, also attributed to Sigismund and dating from 1422 or 1423, has survived. This second letter was shown by Pál Nagy to be a forgery. The accounts of the chroniclers tell how Roma peddlers bearing letters of safe conduct received provisions and donations, but it is difficult to know whether to give much credence to such accounts.

Persecution of Roma evidently began very early on. They were accused by the Holy Roman Empire of being spies. Miklós Tomka states that they were expelled from Germany by the imperial diet [*Reichstag*] as early as 1479. However, according to H.M.G. Grellmann, the first expulsion order was issued by the imperial diets held in Lindau in 1496 and in 1497. The order was reiterated at Freiburg in 1498, at Augsburg in 1500, 1544, 1548 and 1551, as well as on later occasions. But both Grellmann and Tomka state that in general the anti-Roma laws could never be implemented.

The example of Spain is even more illuminating. As Grellmann notes:

In 1492, the King of Spain ordered the expulsion of the Roma. But instead of making their way towards the country's borders, Roma took refuge in remote places, and before long they could be seen all over the place once again. Emperor Charles V hounded them, as did Philip II too. But they managed to re-trench themselves in Spain and have lived there peacefully *until the most recent times*.²

In his book, Grellmann surveyed each of the European countries for legislation requiring the expulsion of Roma. He established that in all European countries—with the exception of Hungary, Transylvania and Russia—such legislation was adopted, but that nowhere was it effective.

"While it is true that only a few Roma were punished by all this, nevertheless it added to their feelings of exclusion,"³ wrote Miklós Tomka.

Barna Mezey was of a similar view: "The states of western Europe, while never able to expel or (and this is no exaggeration) annihilate the nomadic Roma communities, did succeed in drastically limiting their numbers through their measures."⁴

The words of Angus Fraser are even more poignant: "Had all the anti-Gypsy laws which sprang up been enforced uncompromisingly, even for a few months, the Gypsies would have been eradicated from most of Christian Europe well before the middle of the 16th century. This did not happen. The saving feature, as has emerged repeatedly, was that even the most rigorous penal laws were often not carried into effect, perhaps owing to silent opposition on the part of some of the population, or venality among minor officials, and certainly on account of the defective organization of such police forces as existed."⁵

Historical developments in the 15th and 16th centuries perhaps explain why the national assemblies (or diets) of Hungary and Transylvania, in stark contrast to those of the other European countries, never passed laws against Roma. The greatest problem facing the region at the time was the expansion of the Ottoman Empire. The need to defend against the attacks and destruction wrought by the Turks determined everything—even the policies of rulers, diets and cities towards Roma.

In 1474, during the reign of Matthias, the Turkish pasha of Szendrő attacked and burned down the town of Várad. In the same year, Turkish troops advanced as far as the River Fekete Körös and overran Moldavia. In 1476, Ottoman incursions led the town of Nagyszeben to employ Roma with the task of strengthening the municipal fortifications. Eleven years later, in 1487, King Matthias promised in writing to protect the freedoms of the Roma of Szeben. According to this document, which was addressed to István

Báthori, voivode of Transylvania,

the Roma, that is, Egyptians, living in the seat of Szeben—who are required to undertake certain tasks for the defense of the town—have enjoyed, for some years now, the privilege that none of the voivodes, or deputy voivodes, of these parts, nor their *familiaris*, should be permitted to bother the Roma or extract tax or other payments from them: thus, seeking to preserve the Roma in their old rights and privileges (...) we hereby order and command that you at all times refrain from pestering, inciting or burdening the aforementioned Roma, that is, the Egyptians, and from extracting taxes or other dues from them (...).⁶

Roma were employed not just on the fortifications but also in the manufacture and repair of arms. Evidence of this is provided by a *salvus conductusa* issued by King Ulászló II in 1496 to the voivode Tamás Bolgár and his entourage. The document distinguishes Tamás Bolgár and his party of 25 wandering Roma from other groups of Roma travelling with other voivodes. Boglár's group are ordered to make rifle bullets and other war tools in the service of Sigismund, bishop of Pécs.

From the early 16th century, the Roma population grew steadily in Hungary and particularly in Transylvania. After the Battle of Mohács, the country was divided into three parts. Most of the 16th-century sources indicating a Roma presence relate to the towns of Nagyszeben, Brassó and Kolozsvár in Transylvania, the eastern part of the divided country. In 1502, King Ulászló II addressed a document to Péter Szentgyörgyi, *országbíró* and voivode of Transylvania, offering four wandering Roma in the service of Kolozsvár protection as well as freedoms similar to those received by the Roma of Szeben. The document was subsequently reaffirmed by both Ferenc Kende and István Dobó, voivode of Transylvania. Meanwhile the document issued by King Matthias in

1487 was reaffirmed in 1583 by Zsigmond Báthory, prince of Transylvania.

According to Brassó's municipal tax records dating from the 16th century, Roma performed several tasks in the city, such as repairing the city's gates and bridges, manufacturing arms and cannons, keeping the streets clean, sweeping the market, and clearing the sewers. Roma also functioned as gravediggers, dogcatchers, and executioners in Brassó.

Major fields of employment were the manufacture of iron tools, horseshoes and nails as well as locksmithery and blacksmithery. And some Roma were goldwashers.

Roma were mentioned in the municipal tax records of Brassó, Szeben, Kolozsvár and other towns because they paid taxes. The tax records even tell us how much tax they paid.

The Transylvanian diets also ordered the taxation of Roma. For instance, a diet convening between September 29 and October 4, 1558, decreed as follows: "The tax on Roma is 1 forint per head. They should not be subject to irregular burdens by means of their voivodes."⁷ According to a resolution passed by the Enyed diet of March 10–15, 1560, the "taxation of Roma has been regulated: all Roma with tents should pay the sum of 50 *dinars* biannually on the days of St. George and St. Michael."⁸

There was clearly a demand for Roma labor—for both military and peaceful purposes. Demand for their labor meant that Roma themselves were in demand. Still, the towns and voivodes required not just the labor of Roma but also their taxes. Indeed, there were squabbles about who should receive the taxes payable by Roma and who should benefit from their labor. This was so not just in Szeben and Kolozsvár, but also in other places, such as Dés.

In 1552, Ferdinand I issued a document concerning the Roma of Dés, addressed to András Báthori, voivode of Transylvania:

... As the followers of our Royal Highness, the wise and prudent judge and jury of our town of Dés, as well as its citizens

and residents, have described, our citizens dispose of ten tents of Roma, who have been serving our chamber in Dés since ancient times and, as a result of the approval and consent of the king of Hungary, have been able to freely traverse all counties of Hungary, and everywhere they have enjoyed exemption from regular and irregular public dues, whom, however, the formerly decent Fráter György, bishop of Várad, tormented with the collection of stiff taxes and services that were not due to him, resettling the Roma from the town of Dés to Újváros...⁹

The document then ordered the return of the Roma to the town of Dés and the restoration of their "ancient" freedoms as well as their exemption from taxation. Queen Isabella issued a document of similar content in 1557.

In the late 15th century and early 16th century, strengthening fortifications and manufacturing weapons were not the only forms of employment practiced by Roma, for some of them were musicians: "Apart from their metal-working skills, the Gypsies were acquiring a reputation as musicians in Hungary," writes Angus Fraser.¹⁰

His assertion was based on five pieces of data. The first dates from 1489. According to the accounts book of Hyppolit, archbishop of Esztergom, funds were granted to Roma who played the lute on Queen Beatrix's island (Csepel Island). "We do not know the exact number of Roma," wrote Bálint Sárosi, "nor exactly what was meant by the word 'lute' (it could have been a tambura or even a cimbalom). We don't even know what kind of Roma they were (Turkish Roma musicians, who perhaps did not speak Hungarian ...)."¹¹

The second piece of data stems from the accounts book of Lajos II. On May 3, 1525 the sum of two silvers was paid to the *pharaunes*, who played the cythara in front of the queen at the royal horse races. According to Bálint Sárosi, the word "cythara" may

have meant a violin or another plectrum string instrument, such as a tambura or cimbalom, but it could not have been a zither at this stage.

The third piece of data concerns the appearance of Roma at the Hatvan diet in 1525. According to Archduke Joseph and Henrik Wlislöcki the "Roma ordered to appear" were musicians: "With their music, they soon conquered the sympathy of the nation, so that at the Hatvan diet of 1525 Roma musicians were officially invited."¹² Since the original text mentions merely Roma rather than Roma musicians, Bálint Sárosi disputed that the Roma invited to the diet were necessarily musicians.

The fourth piece of data is a request for Roma violinists (*cytharedos chyganos*) made in 1532 by Pál Bakyth, chief captain of the Hussars, to Tamás Nádasdy. As Bálint Sárosi concluded, the *cytherados* may have been violinists, luteplayers or minstrels.

The fifth piece of data concerns a letter sent to Vienna in 1543 by someone at the court of Queen Isabella. The letter states the following: "The most excellent violinists from Egypt, the progeny of the pharaohs, are playing here." On their instrument (the cimbalom), "they do not pluck the strings with their fingers, but hit them with a wooden stick, and they sing along in full throat."¹³

The above data are cited by Fraser and are also to be found in Bálint Sárosi's book entitled *Cigányzene* ["Gypsy" Music]. Fraser does not refer to any additional data, whereas Sárosi mentions several other items and his conclusion is very different from Fraser's:

"The data listed do not in any way verify the hypothesis that a relatively large number of Roma musicians settled in Hungary as early as the 16th century."¹⁴

Although few written documents dating from the 16th century—or even from the 17th century—refer to Roma musicians, one should also note that few contemporary documents make any mention of Roma at all. The scarcity of documents and, more importantly, the dearth of documentary references to families and individuals, indicate that the number of Roma in Hungary in the

16th century was small. They were not particularly numerous in Transylvania and were even more uncommon in the middle part of the country controlled by the Ottomans.

We have already noted how King Ulászló II sent the voivode Tamás Bolgár and 25 wandering Roma to Pécs. It would seem certain that the Ottoman advance resulted in the appearance of small numbers of Roma throughout the southern counties in the late 15th century and early 16th century. From the 1540s onwards, Turkish sources refer to Roma

who served the Muslim armed forces and public administration as musicians, blacksmiths, firemasters, bullet casters, nailsmiths, swordsmiths, gunpowder producers, weapon polishers, hangmen, surgeons, soldiers, and guides, or who worked for Muslim military-civil municipalities in the occupied zone—municipalities that increasingly resembled “the Balkans.” At Haram Castle, for example, 15 Roma musicians and 6 Roma blacksmiths were living in 1540. Since they were in the Treasury’s service, they were exempted from paying taxes.¹⁵

The elaboration of Ottoman sources has shown that, in the Turkish-occupied zone of Hungary, Roma were relatively numerous in five Sultanate municipalities—Tolna, Pécs, Ráckeve, Esztergom and Buda. But Roma also lived in Szeged, Kecskemét and elsewhere. “In Buda and in other parts, whole urban quarters were taken over by Roma in the 16th century,”¹⁶ wrote Sándor Takáts. Following in Takáts’s footsteps, László Mészáros wrote the following: “According to the defters, most tax-paying Roma lived in Buda, where they inhabited a separate ‘Roma town’.”¹⁷

Other authors too mention a Roma ‘town’ in Buda. Still, given the number of Roma inhabitants, it does not seem justified to speak of a town. Fifty-six Roma families were listed in 1546, rising to 62 families in 1559 and 90 families in 1580.

According to Mészáros, the Buda census of 1546 indicates that 71 per cent of Roma heads of household still used Greek Orthodox names, while 29 per cent were already Muslim. However, the figure of 71 per cent derives from 32 Greek Orthodox families and the figure of 29 per cent from 13 Muslim families. Based on such small numbers, it would be foolish to draw far-reaching conclusions.

It was only considerably later that Roma reached Royal Hungary, i.e. the northern and western parts of the country. And they seem to have been in even smaller numbers than in Turkish-occupied Hungary. Several letters are the only documentary evidence of their presence to have survived from the 16th century.

Roma, Landlords, and Counties

By the late 16th century or the early 17th century, Roma had nevertheless reached all parts of Hungary. Evidence of this is a letter of recommendation issued to Voivode Gáspár and his people by Péter Révai Túróc, county lord lieutenant, in 1608:

The birds of the heavens have their nests, the foxes have their dens, the wolves have their hiding places, indeed all the animal species know where their home is, apart from this poor Egyptian nation that people call gypsydom—nobody can be sure why, but people go on about this everywhere. Perhaps because of the brutal tyranny of the pharaoh or perhaps because the gods so destined, they live their usually sorrowful lives according to ancient tradition in tents made of rags, which they erect in the fields and meadows outside cities; and the old, young, children and infants of the clan have thus learnt how to put up with the rain, the freezing cold and the sweltering heat outside the walls of a house, to do without any birthright in this world, not to enter towns, castles, and market-towns, not to fall under royal patronage, but instead, moving back and forth between their uncertain settlements, knowing

nothing of economy, having no kind of ambition, and just living from one day to the next and from one hour to the next, they earn their food and clothing by the work of their two hands under God's free sky. Therefore, believing that this clan is worthy of pity, I request you, each one of you, and I enjoin my kindred, that if ever a group of this Egyptian clan—especially the holder of this letter, Voivode Gáspár, together with the Roma who are subordinate to him and strive under his leadership, including their children, families and chattels—should come to your lands, your holdings and your estates, that you please or, in the case of my kindred, you shall, give them permission to settle in your lower towns, on your meadows and lands, to put up their tents, to bravely practice their smithery, and that you protect them from all people that may wish to harm them.¹⁸

A letter of safe conduct issued by Palatine György Thurzó to Voivode Ferenc and his party of Roma in 1616 is almost identical in wording. Indeed, there is just one small difference between the two letters. When describing the employment of Roma, the letter written by György Thurzó does not mention blacksmithery, but states: "They strive with their own hands, anvil, bellows, hammer, and pliers for morsels to eat and clothes to wear."¹⁹ Fraser notes the following: "The document was written in fine Latin, and in the opening sentences—clearly, not by accident—it cites a verse from the scriptures (Matthew 8:20)."²⁰

It is the subtle beauty and humanity of these letters of recommendation and safe conduct that distinguish them from other contemporary documents mentioning Roma. A further distinctive feature is that they concern the destitute wandering Roma living outside the towns. Other notables also issued documents protecting Roma in the 17th century: for instance, Palatine Miklós Esterházy in 1630, Prince of Transylvania Rákóczi György I in 1643, and

György Hononnay Drugeth, lord lieutenant of Ung County, in 1661.

Citing research by Kálmán Thaly, Pál Nagy gave an account of the relationship between the Esterházy family and Roma. Nagy's account includes the following passage: "János and Ferenc Esterházy provided Roma with legal protection as well as the right to freely pursue their crafts. They also granted them letters of safe conduct, so that the Roma could move freely from one Esterházy estate to the other without let or hindrance from the civilian or military authorities at tax and customs offices, bridges or ferries. In the documents, János and Ferenc identified the main Roma trades as smithery and barter-trading, adding, in 1723, other trades that were wholesome. Essentially, the Esterházy family were acknowledging that free movement would enable Roma to provide artisan services in villages on the family's estates, which would provide them with a living."²¹

The documents issued by palatines, princes, lord lieutenants and feudal lords demonstrate that by the early 17th century Hungary's Roma population had grown significantly as a result of immigration and that this increase was to continue throughout the century. The documents also demonstrate a demand for Roma handicrafts, in particularly smithery, on the estates and in the villages. The feudal lords and dignitaries paid Roma for their smithery and other work, and they also provided them with protection. It is furthermore apparent that like their French and Spanish counterparts Hungarian aristocrats were generally sympathetic to Roma. The documents also contain much evidence concerning the poverty of the Roma. Although Roma were paid for their work, it seems the amounts they received were inadequate.

In 1683 the *Ungarischer Simplicissimus* reported on the growth of the Roma population. "Roma are by nature inclined towards music; almost every Hungarian noble has a Roma violinist or locksmith."²² To claim that almost every noble had a violinist

was clearly an exaggeration: Hungary's population at the end of the 17th century was probably between 3.5 and 4 million, and one in twenty men was a noble. But there could not have been more than several hundred Roma musicians living in the country at the time. Indeed, the total Roma population could not have been much greater than 20,000.

Written sources from the 17th century do not just mention Roma blacksmiths, Roma musicians and the nobles who offered them protection. In 1624, Szepes County determined upon the expulsion of Roma from the towns and villages of the county. The justification for such action was that Roma,

an Egyptian clan, which, due to its otherwise pitiful life of destitution and vagrancy, and having adopted the habits of vagabonds and armed itself like a group of bandits... forces the poor people to make payments, and what is particularly worthy of contempt, it steals the horses of the poor people, taking them across to neighboring Poland.²³

In 1660, Nyitra County resolved to expel Roma from the county.

A patent issued by Governor Ferenc Nádasdy in 1670 reveals that expulsion orders were announced in the counties of Somogy, Vas and Zala. In the end, however, no attempt was made to implement these statutes. In the 17th century, only a very few Roma appear to have settled in these counties. Even today, few Roma live in the counties of Nyitra, Szepes and Vas.

One should note that until the Ottomans were forced out of Hungary, the country was wracked by conflict—between Turks and Hungarians, Transylvanians and supporters of Royal Hungary, Catholics and Protestants, itinerants and the sedentary population. And the conflicts resumed at the time of the Rákóczi war of liberation.

Reconstruction and Immigration

From 1711 the destitute country began the process of regeneration and reconstruction. As part of the reconstruction effort, the Habsburg rulers—Charles III and Maria Theresa—settled Germans, Serbs and Romanians in depopulated areas of the country. In addition to such officially sponsored immigration, there was also a spontaneous flow of people to vacant or semi-vacant areas around the country. Some of the new immigrants were Roma. Indeed, Roma immigration continued throughout the 16th and 17th centuries and became even more significant in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Between 1784 and 1787 a census was held in Hungary and Transylvania by order of Joseph II.

According to the census, the population of Hungary, less Transylvania, was 6.5 million. Transylvania had a population of 1.5 million, while Croatia's population numbered 340,000. Together with the military districts comprising the Banat region as well as military personnel on active service, the country's population was 9,300,000.

In Hungary (excluding Transylvania) the census recorded 43,772 Roma in 1782. Roma thus accounted for 0.67 per cent of the country's total population. In Transylvania, 3762 sedentary Roma families and 3849 nomad Roma families, that is, in total 7718 Roma families, were recorded in the census of 1772. If we suppose that five individuals were living in each family, this would mean a Roma population of 38,590. Given that there were in total 302,896 families in Transylvanian, the Roma population in the principality comprised 2.55 per cent of the total population. In the Banat region, 8072 Roma persons were counted in 1780. The total population of the region was 450,000. Thus 1.6 per cent of the region's population was Roma. Combining the three parts of the country, Hungary's Roma population must have been approximately 90,000 in 1780. This was 1 per cent of Hungary's total population.

Similarly to the situation in the 15th and 16th centuries, the main immigration route ran from Wallachia and Moldavia to Transylvania, and from Transylvania to the central, northern and western counties of the nation. The second route of immigration ran from Serbia to the southern parts of Hungary. In the late 18th century, just over half of the country's Roma population resided in Transylvania and the Banat region. These were the areas to which the new immigrants were coming. Meanwhile, few Roma resided in the western counties bordering Austria or in the northern counties bordering Poland.

The Roma immigrants were Romani native speakers; they learnt Hungarian after their arrival in the country. Within several generations, their linguistic assimilation was complete and they no longer spoke Romani. Some smaller groups, however, preserved their knowledge of the language. In the counties of Nógrád and Baranya and in the Pilis hills, some Roma continue to speak Romani (the Carpathian dialect) as well as Hungarian. And in Szabolcs County and in the Szatmár region, some Roma still speak the Gurvari dialect of Romani. Transdanubia is home to Sinti and to Vend Roma—who are also known as “knife-grinding” Roma.

“Enlightened” Absolutism

During the reign of Maria Theresa and of her son, Joseph II, censuses were carried out and records of the Roma population made. The underlying idea sought to count, record and monitor everything and everyone, to classify the population and subordinate it to the purposes of the state, to settle all unsettled issues, and to regulate anything that was still unregulated.

It was this approach that gave rise to Maria Theresa's Roma decrees. Under the decree issued in 1753, the estates were obliged to designate areas under their ownership for the permanent settlement of Roma. In such areas, they were obliged to assist Roma in

building accommodation; the estates were also to provide agricultural land, to support Roma in practicing their artisan trades, and to secure them access to guild membership. The decree prohibited Roma from moving from one place to another and from traveling; and it prohibited the authorities from issuing passports to Roma. Roma were also prohibited from begging. The decree placed the Roma voivodes and the general Roma population under the jurisdiction of the village magistrates. It prohibited Roma from keeping horses. It ordered Roma to wear normal clothing wherever they were living. The decree of 1761 prescribed that Roma were in future to be called "new Hungarians" or "new peasants" and that use of the word *cigány* should be discontinued. Indeed, people who used the word *cigány* were to be fined. The decree issued in 1762 prescribed military service for young Roma males aged over 16. The decree of 1772 prohibited Roma from speaking Romani. It also prohibited Roma from marrying among themselves. It ordered that Roma children should be removed from their families at the age of four and placed with peasants. The counties were to pay maintenance payments to the foster parents of Roma children.

After the death of Maria Theresa, Joseph II issued a decree in 1783 that served to reiterate and summarize the previous provisions. Thereafter, however, Joseph II ignored the Roma issue.

Maria Theresa's decrees were clearly impossible to implement. Landowners were reluctant to grant land to Roma, and guilds had no wish to accept Roma artisans as their members. The county diets appeared to support the imperial and royal decrees, passing them on to the district administrators. In reality, however, the diets had no interest in verifying implementation of the decrees or in providing the funding necessary for their implementation. Time and again, the royal court issued new commands to the governing councils, demanding they give account of the results. The governing councils then demanded the same of the counties, while the counties adopted resolutions but never verified their implementation.

The only real efforts were made in counties bordering Austria, close to the royal court in Vienna.

In 1783, a new census recorded 30,241 Roma persons—13,531 persons less than in 1782. The difference stemmed from the reclassification of some Roma as new Hungarians; they no longer counted as Roma.

On April 10, 1787, the governing council informed the counties that Roma were no longer on the agenda and that the Department for Roma Affairs had been abolished. It told them to stop providing for Roma children out of their own funds. Thereafter the governing council ignored the Roma issue, as did also the diets of the 19th century.

The Triumph of “Gypsy” Music

The decrees of Maria Theresa and Joseph II prohibited the Roma from making music, thereby acknowledging the significance of the change in the Roma lifestyle that began to take place as the decrees were being drafted. The census of 1782 recorded 1582 Roma musicians and 5886 Roma blacksmiths, but in subsequent years the number of Roma musicians rose rapidly.

Roma musicians had been living in Hungary since the late 15th century. At first, there were only a few of them, but their numbers grew steadily. Still, “gypsy” bands and “gypsy” orchestras did not begin to form until the 18th century. The first gypsy band was founded by Panna Czinka. It had four members: first violin [*primás*], second violin [*kontrás*], bass, and cimbalom. János Lányi, a landowner in Gömör, had taught Panna Czinka music; the orchestra was in Lányi’s service. By the end of the century, a whole series of “gypsy” orchestras had been established. In the initial periods, they were founded by landowners for their own entertainment. Nonetheless, landowners were usually quite willing to support public performances, and they took their orchestras along with them to the national diets.

Bálint Sárosi offers a thorough analysis of developments in the era—which saw the ascendancy of “gypsy” music. Such music should not be regarded as Roma music, but as music performed by so-called gypsy musicians, who usually play the works of Hungarian and Roma composers and whose style is acknowledge and respected the world over as “gypsy” music. Sárosi wrote:

In the early 19th century, the best Roma musicians, led by János Bihari (1764–1827), won general acclaim; the public saw them as the representatives of [Hungarian] national music, welded to the Hungarian national movement.²⁴

Sárosi then noted that Bihari was the most popular of contemporary musicians because he knew more than anyone else about Hungarian musical traditions and was the most effective player of the tunes that conjured up the spirit of the wars of liberation.

Roma “gypsy” musicians also accompanied their masters into the war of independence of 1848. After the Hungarian defeat, it was time for plaintive merriment [*sírvá vigadás*]; and Roma musicians were in greater demand than ever before.

Roma Population Growth in the 19th Century

According to the census of 1850, the permanent population of Hungary was 12,946,000 while the resident population was 13,192,000. By 1857, the permanent population had risen to 13,668,000 and the resident population to 13,769,000. Meanwhile, the Roma population in 1850 was 140,000—1 per cent of Hungary’s total population. In 1857 the number of Roma with permanent residence in the country was about 143,000, or 1 per cent of the total population. Between 1784 and 1857, Hungary’s total population grew by 47 per cent, while between 1782 and 1857 the Roma population grew by 58 per cent. Immigration accounts for some of the population growth among both the general population

and the Roma population. Nevertheless, immigration was clearly a more important factor among the Roma population.

According to the 1893 Roma census—one of the most important documents in the history of the Roma of Hungary, 280,000 Roma were living in the country on January 31, 1893. The number of Roma recorded in the census was 274,940. (This is the usually cited figure.) Still, Budapest, where perhaps more than 500 Roma were living, was not covered by the census. Moreover, “the census did not find sedentary Roma” in several towns. The document also notes the following: “The census left out those who did not profess to be Roma... Adding in those who were missed, the number of Roma in Hungary may surely be put at approximately 280,000.”²⁵

In the census report, Roma population figures were broken down by county. The Treaty of Trianon cut through the borders of Hungarian counties and districts and various subsequent changes have been made to Hungary’s administrative boundaries. These two factors mean that one may only make an approximate estimate of the size of the Roma population in the late 19th century in areas that today belong to Hungary. Our estimate is that about 65,000 Roma were living on territory that still forms part of Hungary. In 1893, 160,000 Roma were living on territory ceded to Romania after the First World War, about 40–42,000 on territory ceded to Czechoslovakia, and about 8–10,000 on territory ceded to Yugoslavia.

Of the 65,000 Roma living in areas that today belong to Hungary, 23,000 were living in Transdanubia, 18,000 in the region between the rivers Danube and Tisza (excluding Bács-Bodrog County, but including the municipality and district of Baja as well as Heves County), 10,000 in what is today the northern part of Hungary, including Borsod County as well as retained parts of the counties of Esztergom, Nógrád, Abaúj and Zemplén, and about 14,000 in what is today the eastern part of Hungary, including the counties of Békés, Hajdú and Szabolcs as well as the retained part of Szatmár County.

Minister of Interior Károly Hieronymi, who took up his post on November 19, 1892, in fact initiated the census. Several weeks later, Hieronymi assigned the holding of the census to the Statistical Office. According to the preface of the census report, Hieronymi's aim was "to settle, at national level, the issue of vagrancy and also to sedentarize vagrant Roma." Nevertheless, the survey was not limited to nomadic Roma but also covered Roma who "had already fully assimilated into modern civil society and who no longer differed from the rest of the population in terms of lifestyle, livelihood, culture and traditions, disregarding some minor anthropological differences." The survey also noted housing conditions, family status, religious adherence, literacy, employment, livelihood, as well as native language and knowledge of other languages.

The head of the Statistical Office charged Antal Hermann—"an ethnologist known for his studies of Roma"—with elaborating the data collected during the census and with compiling a general report.

In several areas the findings were somewhat surprising. Indeed, the large number of Roma staggered Antal Hermann. He referred to the 1873 "Roma census" that had been carried out under a decree of the Minister of Interior. That census had recorded "on very indefinite grounds" 214,000 Roma. Hermann might also have cited earlier data.

In just 53 years the Roma population had doubled. Its share of the total population had risen from 1.16 per cent to 1.8 per cent. Yet, during this period, the natural increase rate could not have been much higher among Roma than it was among the general population. Proof of this is that, in 1890, children aged under 14 comprised 37 per cent of the Roma population and 36.6 per cent of the general population.

During the same period, the national population grew by 30 per cent but the Roma population by 100 per cent. This difference

must be attributed to immigration, principally from Romania, a country with the highest percentage of Roma in Europe. The effects of immigration were apparent in regional differences in the size of the Roma population. Whereas in Transdanubia and in the region between the rivers Danube and Tisza, the Roma share of the population was just 0.8 per cent, it was as much as 5 per cent in Transylvania. In what are currently the easternmost counties of Hungary, it was 1 per cent in Békés, 1.5 per cent in Hajdú, 1.8 per cent in Bihar, and 2.6 per cent in Szabolcs. The northwesterly direction of migration is apparent in the figures for Abaúj (2.4 per cent) and for Borsod-Zemplén (1.9 per cent).

The extent and direction of forward migration from Transylvania are perceivable in the figures. Thus, whereas during the 1850 census, 78,906 of 140,092 Roma (i.e. 53 per cent) were living in Transylvania, by 1893 it was 105,000 of 280,000 Roma (i.e. 37.5 per cent).

As we have seen, Roma migrated from the Romanian principalities to Transylvania and from there to Royal Hungary. The migration flows began as early as the 15th century and grew stronger in the second half of the 18th century and in the first half of the 19th century. Migration became even more significant in the second half of the 19th century.

One-third of the Roma recorded in the census of January 31, 1893 were either recent migrants or migrants (or their children) who had arrived in the country after 1850. An additional 50,000 Roma were descendants of people who had arrived in the country after 1809.

Accordingly, 38 per cent spoke Hungarian as their native language, 30 per cent spoke Romani, and 24 per cent spoke Beás (Romanian). Other native languages spoken by Roma in Hungary were Slovak, Serbian, German, Ruthenian, and Croatian. In terms of the spoken language, there were substantial regional differences.

In the region between the Danube and Tisza, Hungarian was the native language of 82 per cent, while 8 per cent spoke Romani and 8 per cent spoke Serbian. In Transdanubia, Hungarian was the native language of 72 per cent, while 11 per cent spoke Romani, 8 per cent spoke Beás (Romanian), and 6 per cent spoke German. In what are today the eastern counties of Hungary, Hungarian was the native language of 89 per cent of Roma in Békés, 94 per cent in Hajdú, 98 per cent in Szabolcs, 70 per cent in Szatmár, and 45 per cent in Bihar; Romani was the native language of 12 per cent in Bihar and 17 per cent in Szatmár; and Beás (Romanian) was the native language of 29 per cent in Bihar and 13 per cent in Szatmár. In the northern counties, the Hungarian-speaking share of the Roma population was 76 per cent in Nógrád, 88 per cent in Borsod, 75 per cent in Abaúj, and 47 per cent in Zemplén; the Romani-speaking share of the Roma population was 16 per cent in Nógrád, 12 per cent in Abaúj, and 29 per cent in Zemplén. In these counties, the native language of some Roma was Slovak: 8 per cent in Nógrád, 11 per cent in Abaúj, and 22 per cent in Zemplén. In Borsod County, the native language of 10 per cent of Roma was Ruthenian.

As far as Hungary's current territory is concerned, in January 1893, Hungarian was the native language of 79.5 per cent of Roma, while 10 per cent spoke Romani, 4.5 per cent spoke Beás (Romanian), and 6 per cent spoke another language (Serbian, Slovak, German, Ruthenian, Croatian, etc.). One may observe substantial differences between pre-Trianon Hungary and the country's current territory, but the differences are even greater if one compares the Roma population living on territory that still belongs to Hungary with the Roma population living in Transylvania where Romani was the native language of 42 per cent and Romanian was the native language of 39 per cent; or with the Roma population living in the Tisza-Maros region where Hungarian was the native language of just 5 per cent.

The above is perhaps evidence that most of the Roma population living, in 1893, on territory that today still belongs to Hungary were descendants of earlier immigrants: their forebears had arrived in the country neither after 1850 nor during the 50 preceding years but during even earlier periods. However, recent migrants were clearly predominant in areas where the native language of Roma was not Hungarian: for example, in Baranya County, where Hungarian was the native language of just 53 per cent of the Roma population and Beás and Vlach Roma had immigrated from the Slav regions to the south; or in Bács-Bodrog County, where migration flows from the south had added to the relative significance of the Romani-speaking Roma population (22.5 per cent), the Serbian-speaking Roma population (38.5 per cent) and the Beás-speaking Roma population (4 per cent), while reducing the Hungarian-speaking share to just 34 per cent.

Roma in the Late 19th Century

Roma Settlement Patterns and Housing Conditions

As previously noted, at the end of the 18th century, 39,000 Roma were living in Hungary proper (Hungary without Transylvania and the Banat region) while 51,000 Roma were living in Transylvania and the Banat region. Thus, 43 per cent of the Roma population lived in Hungary proper and 57 per cent lived in Transylvania and the Banat region.

According to the 1850 census, 47,609 Roma—34 per cent of a total Roma population of 140,092—lived in Hungary proper, 12,121 (8.7 per cent) lived in the Banat region, 780,806 (56.3 per cent) lived in Transylvania, and 1660 (1.1 per cent) lived in Croatia-Slavonia.

According to the 1857 census, 46,040 Roma—32.2 per cent of a total Roma population of 143,150—lived in Hungary proper,

52,480 (57.6 per cent) lived in Transylvania, 12,950 (9 per cent) lived in the Banat region, and 1660 (1.2 per cent) lived in Croatia-Slavonia.

According to the Roma census of January 31, 1893, 20,905 Roma (7.61 per cent of a total Roma population of 272,776) lived in the 11 counties to the north of the Danube, 22,197 Roma (8.29 per cent) lived in the 11 counties of Transdanubia, and 22,328 (8.12 per cent) lived in the five counties between the Danube and Tisza. Overall, 24 per cent of the country's Roma population lived in these three regions. In each region, the Roma share of the population was below the national average: 1.12 per cent to the north of the Danube, 0.83 per cent in Transdanubia, and 0.81 per cent between the Danube and Tisza. The Roma population in the eight counties to the north of the Tisza (today, eastern Slovakia) was 30,076—or 10.94 per cent of the total Roma population. The Roma population in the seven counties to the south of the Tisza (the Great Plain region) was 36,336—or 13.21 per cent of the total Roma population. Overall, 24.15 per cent of the country's Roma population lived in these two regions. The Roma share of the total population was 1.98 per cent to the north of the Tisza and 1.76 per cent to the south of the Tisza. Meanwhile, the Tisza-Maros region had a Roma population of 35,300 (12.84 per cent of the country's Roma population) and Transylvania had a Roma population of 105,034 (38.20 per cent of the country's Roma population). These two latter regions together accounted for 51.04 per cent of the country's total Roma population.

Table 1:
**The Number of Roma and their Percentage of the County
 and Regional Populations**

County	Number of Roma	Roma Percentage of Population
Árva	216	0.35
Bars	2 034	1.33
Esztergom	565	0.72
Hont	1 465	1.33
Liptó	478	0.62
Nógrád	4 070	2.18
Nyitra	4 303	1.69
Pozsony	4 179	1.49
Trencsény	1 516	0.59
Túróc	297	0.59
Zólyom	1 182	1.65
<i>Region to the north of the Danube</i>	<i>20 905</i>	<i>1.12</i>
Baranya	3 899	1.35
Fejér	1 973	0.99
Győr	738	0.77
Komárom	2 347	1.45
Moson	349	0.41
Somogy	2 929	0.90
Sopron	1 355	0.55
Tolna	1 995	0.73
Vas	4 073	1.04
Veszprém	1 241	0.57
Zala	1 908	0.47
<i>Transdanubia</i>	<i>22 797</i>	<i>0.83</i>
Bács-Bodrog	4 709	0.72
Csongrád	2 152	0.99
Heves	3 905	1.67
Jász-Nagykun	4 375	1.41
Pest-Pilis-Solt	6 634	0.97
<i>Region between the Danube and Tisza</i>	<i>22 328</i>	<i>0.81</i>
Abaúj-Torna	4 150	2.43
Bereg	2 401	1.34
Borsod	4 174	1.92
Gömör	5 552	3.18
Sáros	3 261	1.94
Szepes	2 792	1.71
Ung	2 223	1.64
Zemplén	5 523	1.85
<i>Region to the north of the Tisza</i>	<i>30 076</i>	<i>1.98</i>

The Number of Roma and their Percentage of the County and Regional Populations (continuation)

County	Number of Roma	Roma Percentage of Population
Békés	2 520	0.97
Bihar	9 229	1.82
Hajdu	2 501	1.52
Máramaros	2 637	0.98
Szabolcs	5 005	2.04
Szatmár	7 771	2.41
Szilágy	4 887	2.56
<i>Region to the south of the Tisza</i>	<i>36 336</i>	<i>1.76</i>
Arad	2 003	1.99
Csanád	1 400	1.07
Krassó-Szörény	10 715	2.63
Temes	8 812	2.22
Torontál	7 370	1.28
<i>Tisza-Maros region</i>	<i>35 300</i>	<i>1.85</i>
Alsó-Fehér	8 171	4.22
Beszterce-Naszód	5 321	5.08
Brassó	3 100	3.57
Csík	2 505	2.20
Fogaras	4 377	5.42
Háromszék	3 448	2.65
Hunyad	8 503	3.17
Kis-Küküllő	7 242	7.17
Kolozs	8 934	4.26
Maros-Torda	11 051	6.49
Nagy-Küküllő	14 037	10.37
Szeben	9 372	6.39
Szolnok-Doboka	6 167	2.83
Torda-Aranyos	6 668	4.43
Udvarhely	5 738	5.21
<i>Transylvania</i>	<i>105 034</i>	<i>4.66</i>

The effect of various administrative boundary changes in the latter half of the 19th century should be noted. For instance, Transylvania's administrative territory declined from 60,700 square kilometers in 1850 to 57,804 square kilometers in 1876 and 1893. According to the 1850 census, 65 per cent of the country's Roma population lived in Transylvania or the Banat region. If the 1850 administrative boundaries had remained unchanged, 65–66 per cent of the country's Roma population would have been living in these two regions in 1893.

Table 2:
**The Numbers and Percentages of Roma
 in the Census Categories for the Various Regions**

Region	Permanently Settled Roma		Temporarily Resident Roma		Itinerant Roma	
North of Danube	19,545	93.5%	872	4.7%	488	2.3%
Transdanubia	17,781	78.0%	3617	15.9%	1399	6.1%
Between the Danube and Tisza	20,433	91.5%	1159	5.2%	736	3.3%
North of Tisza	26,707	88.8%	2775	9.2%	594	2.0%
South of Tisza	32,036	88.2%	3392	9.3%	708	2.5%
Tisza-Maros region	29,695	84.1%	2666	7.6%	2939	8.3%
Transylvania	97,235	92.6%	5925	5.6%	1871	1.8%

We have already noted that 65,000 Roma, or 23 per cent of the country's Roma population, were living in areas that still belong to Hungary today. Meanwhile, 58 per cent were living in areas subsequently ceded to Romania, 15 per cent in areas ceded to Slovakia, and 3.5 per cent in areas ceded to Serbia. Today, approximately 1.6 million Roma live in Transylvania and 400,000 Roma live in Slovakia.

The stated objective of the Roma census of 1893 was "to resolve the issue of vagrancy and to sedentarize itinerant Roma." The census-takers sought, therefore, to determine the numbers and describe the lifestyles of Roma that were "permanently settled," "temporarily resident" or "itinerant." According to the census, 89.2 per cent of Roma in the country were permanently settled, 7.5 per cent were temporarily resident, and 3.3 per cent were itinerant.

The census recorded Roma populations in 7962 (63 per cent) of the country's 12,693 communities. Permanently settled Roma were found in 7220 communities while temporarily resident Roma were found in 2399 communities. The category "temporarily resident" meant residence of up to one month in 167 communities, 1–6 months in 659 communities, 6–12 months in 383 communities, 12 months or more in 632 communities, and an unspecified duration in 543 communities. Thus, by the end of the 19th century, 90 per cent of Roma were settled.

In the regions to the north of the Danube and between the Danube and Tisza, as well as in Transylvania, more than 90 per cent of Roma were permanently settled. Approximately 90 per cent of Roma were permanently settled in the regions to the north and south of the Tisza, but the ratio was just 84 per cent in the Tisza–Maros region where one-third of itinerant Roma were living and as low as 78 per cent in Transdanubia where the percentages of itinerant Roma and temporarily resident Roma were twice the national average. In the Tisza–Maros region—and particularly in Krassó-Szörény County—a significant factor was immigration

from Romania and from Serbia. Immigration was also salient in the southern part of Transdanubia and especially in Baranya County. A general and self-evident observation is that earlier immigrants were more likely to be permanently settled than were more recent immigrants.

As already noted, there were 7220 communities with permanently settled Roma populations. Roma were living in segregation in 3750—or 52 per cent—of these communities, while in 2784 communities (38.6 per cent) they were living mixed with other local inhabitants, and in 596 communities (8.3 per cent) they were living partly segregated and partly mixed. In this regard, there were significant differences between the various regions.

The majority of the population was Slovak in both regions—which were ceded to Czechoslovakia after the First World War. The census findings indicate that in the Slovak-inhabited areas of Upper Hungary, where Roma tended to live in segregation, Roma were rather detached from their Slovaks neighbors. As Antal Hermann wrote in the report: “Relatively few [Roma] speak Slovak, and rarely do they assimilate to the extent that they no longer speak Romani.”

In the counties to the south of the Tisza—roughly, the Great Plain region—there were almost equal numbers of mixed and segregated communities, while in 11 per cent of communities Roma lived partly segregated from, and partly mixed with, other local inhabitants.

Between the Danube and Tisza, Roma lived in full segregation in 41 per cent of communities, mixed with other local inhabitants in 46 per cent of communities, and partly segregated and partly mixed in 12 per cent of communities.

In Transdanubia, Roma lived in full segregation in 44 per cent of communities, mixed with other local inhabitants in 51 per cent of communities, and partly segregated and partly mixed in 6 per cent of communities.

Table 3:
**Relatively Segregated Roma Populations
 in Two Regions of the Country**

Regions	Number and Proportion of Communities in which Roma were Living					
	in Segregation		Mixed		Segregated/Mixed	
North of the Danube	883	79 %	203	18%	28	3%
Transdanubia	292	44%	352	51%	44	6%
Between the Danube and Tisza	144	41%	161	46%	43	12%
North of the Tisza	1040	75%	279	20%	59	4%
South of the Tisza	495	45%	490	44%	125	11%
Tisza-Maros region	250	40%	294	47%	81	13%
Transylvania	646	32%	1095	55%	248	12%

In Transdanubia too, there were some counties where the percentage of segregated communities was higher than the percentage of mixed communities. Indeed, segregated communities were more common than mixed communities in the counties of Baranya, Komárom and Vas. Antal Hermann noted that German tended to be the dominant native language in districts where Roma lived in segregation. In Transdanubia, this was especially true in the districts of Felsőőr, Kőszeg and Némethújvár in Vas County.

In Hermann's view, Germans and Slovaks were more likely to reject Roma than were Hungarians. Thus Roma were more inclined to live among Hungarians than they were among Germans or Slovaks. But Roma mixed even more easily with Ruthenes and Romanians. For instance, in the counties of Bihar and Szatmár, mixed communities were more common than segregated communities in the predominantly Romanian districts, but they were less common in the predominantly Hungarian districts. Such analysis, however, could not explain differences between predominantly Hungarian districts and counties. For instance, it could not say why, in the region between the Danube and Tisza, mixed communities were more numerous than segregated communities in the counties of Bács-Bodrog, Csongrád and Pest-Pilis-Solt-Kiskun but less numerous in the counties of Heves and Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok. Nor could it explain why, in the region to the south of the Tisza, mixed communities were more numerous in the counties of Békés and Hajdú but less numerous in Szabolcs County.

Further, the native language of the majority population could not explain the differences between the three Szekler counties in Transylvania. In Csík County, Roma were present in each community, and everywhere they lived mixed with other local inhabitants. But in Háromszék County, Roma lived in segregation in 42 communities, mixed with other local inhabitants in 39 communities (42 per cent), and partly segregated and partly mixed in 12 communities (13 per cent). Meanwhile, in Udvarhely County, Roma lived in

segregation in 41 communities (30 per cent), mixed with other local inhabitants in 57 communities (50 per cent), and partly segregated and partly mixed in 16 communities (14 per cent).

Evidently, the native language of the local majority population did not determine the extent of the residential segregation of Roma. Antal Hermann identified other social factors underlying segregation. "There are villages in which some Roma, usually those working in the more disdained or filthy trades, live in segregation, while those working in more respected and clean trades tend to live dispersed among other local inhabitants." The methods employed in the 1893 census did not, however, make it possible to categorize whole Roma communities as either "disdained/filthy" or "respected/clean."

In this regard, the census report's analysis of housing conditions represents a point of reference—albeit an inadequate one. The analysis and accompanying table tell us how many permanently settled Roma were living in proper housing in the various regions: 77 per cent in Transdanubia, 73 per cent between the Danube and Tisza, 72 per cent in Transylvania and the Tisza–Maros region, 49 per cent to the south of the Tisza, 43 per cent to the north of the Tisza, and 39 per cent to the north of the Danube. The remaining Roma population lived in shacks, tents, hovels, etc.

As far as Hungary's current territory is concerned, mixed communities were more common than segregated communities at the time of the Roma census of 1893. We may therefore conclude that Roma were more likely to be living among non-Roma in 1893 than they were in either 1971 or 2003.

Employment and Livelihood

Of 275,000 Roma recorded in the 1893 census, 101,000 were aged under 16 years. Wage-earners accounted for 143,000 of 174,000 adults, while there were 18,000 homemakers and 13,000

unemployed. This latter group included those who were recorded by the census as making a living through begging, sooth-saying, fortune-telling, quackery, theft, and loafing.

Among the wage-earners, 50,506 were working in industry and 4453 in commerce. There were roughly 17,000 musicians, 5847 farm-workers, and 64,190 day-laborers. The latter two categories must have been a rather arbitrary distinction. Most Roma lived in villages, on the outskirts of villages or in isolated Roma settlements. Accordingly, almost all Roma day-laborers must have been working in agriculture, occasionally performing odd jobs for other villagers, who then paid them in kind. But such odd jobs could only have been secondary to the real work of the day laborers, which was first and foremost seasonal agricultural labor: hoeing in the maize, potato, sugarbeet and vegetable fields, reaping, swath-laying, threshing, assisting in treading the corn, corn-crushing, gathering of turnips, picking paprika and tomatoes, fruit and vine harvest, pruning and hoeing the vineyard, sheep-shearing, force-feeding geese, and plucking feathers.

In addition to paid work in agriculture, the day-laborers also undertook other kinds of work. "They will do anything and they are good for anything," wrote Lajos Kiss of the day laborers. "The day-laborers are in the most uncertain position; they are lucky to find work on 200 days in any given year."²⁶

Those lucky enough to find work on 200 days in a given year were unlikely to have been Roma, who usually found work on far fewer days. In winter, work was practically unavailable—as is the case even today. In spring, work was scarce. The most work was to be had in summer and autumn: harvesting, threshing and treading in summer; corn-crushing, collecting turnips, clearing, storing in pits, and vine-harvesting in autumn. Wages were also higher in summer and autumn. Indeed, day-laborers—both Roma and non-Roma—earned their food for the whole year during the summer and autumn months.

Of approximately 64,000 day-laborers, 28,000 were men and 34,000 were women. Many of the latter came from families where the menfolk were working in industry. In such cases, just a part of the family's livelihood—usually a minor part—stemmed from day labor. Large families limited the extent to which women could participate in day labor or undertake any other kind of paid work. In this respect, Roma day-laborers were no different from the other day laborers. "In most large families," wrote Lajos Kiss "the women are permanently pregnant; if their husbands merely touch their hats, they fall pregnant."²⁷ Large families with many children were the norm among non-Roma day-labourers, farmworkers and other rural poor. Indeed, until the Second World War and even afterwards, children were just as numerous in the non-Roma families as they were in Roma families.

The total number of farmworkers and day-laborers was 70,000. In other words, almost 50 per cent of the 143,000 Roma wage-earners worked mainly or principally in agriculture. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to conclude that, in 1893, 50 per cent of the livelihood of Roma stemmed from agriculture. As we have noted already, the earnings of some of the 34,000 female day-laborers were supplementary earnings. Moreover, the large number of children restricted the work and earnings of women. It seems therefore sensible to examine, in addition to the employment distribution of the total population, the employment distribution of male wage-earners.

Of approximately 85,000 male wage-earners, 32,000 (or 38 per cent) were farmworkers or day-laborers. If our goal is to estimate the extent to which the livelihoods of Roma stemmed from agriculture, then this ratio was probably very close to reality.

It would seem reasonable to proceed in a similar manner with regard to industrial workers. The 50,000 Roma working in industry represented 35 per cent of a total number of 143,000 wage-earners. Among male wage-earners, however, the percentages are different.

Of 85,000 male wage-earners, 33,930 (39.9 per cent) were working in industry. Thus, a little less than one half of the sum of livelihoods of Roma tended to stem from industry rather than from agriculture. In this respect, Roma differed significantly from the country's other inhabitants. At the time of the census, industrial workers comprised 54.5 per cent of the general population but just 18.4 per cent of the Roma population. Moreover, importantly and significantly, there were 171 women workers for every 1000 men among the general population but as many as 487 women for every 1000 men among the Roma population.

In his analysis of the employment of Roma in industry, Antal Hermann distinguished between jobs performed exclusively, mainly or mostly by men and jobs performed mainly or exclusively by women. The statistical tables only partly show this distinction. According to the statistics, jobs performed mainly or almost exclusively by women included rope- and brush-making. Thus, among Roma, almost all the rope-, string-, brush-, and limebrush-makers were women (4135 women from 4163 persons). Jobs performed exclusively by women included the making of lace, spinning, weaving, needlework, working in a tobacco factory, white-washing, washing, and plucking (2938 persons in total).

According to the statistics, jobs performed mainly by men included the metal-work trades. The tinsmiths (60 persons), bell-makers (41), knife-makers, knife-sharpeners (43), spoilers (175), coppersmiths (81) were all men, while the locksmiths (217 from 221) and gimlet-makers (370 from 380) were almost all men. However, the largest group comprised the blacksmiths: 12,749 persons. As Antal Hermann wrote: "The blacksmiths are the most numerous, comprising 36.5 per cent of Roma men working in industry and 22.5 per cent of the all the blacksmiths in the country (whose number the census of 1891 indicated as 7146 under the category of domestic or cottage industry and 47,710 under the category of regular industry). For centuries they have been practicing this

craft, which is so vital to the farmer. The guilded blacksmiths of the towns have quarreled with them, but in the villages and poorer rural areas they are almost irreplaceable. In many places, they are the contracted blacksmiths of the village and live in the local forge house. A far greater number of women than the 379 shown in the statistics are involved in the work of the blacksmiths. As spouses, they help the head of the family in his work, performing auxiliary tasks—in which their children help out. Apart from the musicians, the blacksmiths are the most popular and attractive figures in the Roma population and may be regarded as the most useful and respectable element.”²⁸

Roma blacksmiths were most numerous in Transylvania, followed by the region to the east of the Tisza and then the northern part of the country. The smallest numbers were recorded in the region between the rivers Danube and Tisza and in Transdanubia. As Antal Hermann observed, the lower a region's level of economic development, the higher its number and share of Roma blacksmiths.

We discover something rather similar in earlier periods, too. A majority of Roma heads of family and Roma men in general were blacksmiths at the time of the census in 1782—i.e. when the country was less developed and poorer than it was in 1893. At that time, the number of Roma blacksmiths was almost four times higher than the number of Roma musicians.

During the 111 years between the two censuses, rather than decline, the number of Roma blacksmiths actually doubled. Nevertheless, their share of the Roma population and their relative significance diminished substantially, because, during the same period, the total Roma population increased sevenfold and the number of Roma musicians by a factor of 10.5.

In addition to almost 13,000 blacksmiths, there were also 1661 nailsmiths whose separate classification was, as Antal Hermann concludes, “not always consistent.” According to the census, female nailsmiths numbered just 36, although in fact women were

involved in the work of the men in the same way as they were among the blacksmiths. Nailsmiths were relatively numerous in the northern counties.

Blacksmiths were predominant among the Roma population from the early 15th century onwards. Their role became slightly less dominant in the 18th century. Hungary's subsequent industrialisation in the second half of the 19th century reduced the significance of both blacksmiths and nailsmiths, particularly in the more developed regions.

The kettle-making and kettle-mending profession probably emerged among Roma in Hungary in the 18th century. Vlach Roma, or Kalderash Roma to be more precise, brought it to the country. In 1893, 2077 kettle-makers (including 139 women) were recorded by the census, principally in the Tisza-Maros region and in Transylvania. Half of the kettlemakers were settled Roma, one in three were nomadic Roma, and one in six were classed as "long-term residents."

The "advance guard" of Beás-speaking trough- and spoon-makers arrived in Transdanubia in the 18th century. Larger numbers immigrated in the 19th and 20th centuries. At the time of the census, they numbered 5147 (3808 men and 1339 women). They arrived in historical Hungary from two different directions: they came from Croatia to the counties of Baranya, Somogy, Tolna; and they came from the Romanian principalities to Transylvania and the Tisza-Maros region and then to the counties adjacent to Transylvania. Antal Hermann wrote the following about them: "In forested areas, usually at the site of wood production, they use primitive tools to make basic wooden utensils for the lower classes. Their work benefits the public to the extent that in many poorly accessible places, to which it would barely be profitable to supply wood, they sell products from the forest, offering a fair price or other consideration to the owners, and they make a decent living from their work."

The census divided the wood workers into two groups: makers of wooden spoons and makers of wooden troughs. Hermann wrote the following about the latter group: "Long-term residence is suited to making troughs. Groups functioning as business co-operatives stay in one place until they have used up the available raw material and have satisfied demand for their products in the area. The right bank of the Danube offers the trough-makers the most suitable types of wood and the best markets."²⁹ Hermann was also aware that there were no Roma wooden workers in the heavily wooded areas of the northern part of the country. His explanation was that in such regions "most of the inhabitants (Slovaks and Ruthenians) cover their own needs by means of the domestic wood industry."

In this regard, it is worth noting Gábor Havas's conclusion that as the peasants began to produce goods and to become part of bourgeois society, so "in the social distribution of labor, the Roma specialized increasingly in the production of appliances and the provision of services which the self-reliant peasant farms had previously provided for themselves."³⁰ Havas then classifies wood workers, as well as those working with reeds or wicker, as people working in such trades.

Let us now examine this latter group. In 1893 there were 74 matting- and bag-weavers, 963 basket-weavers, 1036 broom-makers, and 767 sieve-makers. The total number of Roma working with reeds or wicker was 2840 (1633 men and 1207 women).

Far more important than work with wood, reed or wicker and only slightly less important than metalwork was work associated with construction: plastering and mudding, firing bricks and tiles, making adobe, and stonemasonry. At the time of the census, 9385 men and 6010 women (in total 15,395 persons) were involved in such work.

Roma were involved in plastering, mudding and adobe-making as early as the 18th century. But the increase in the number of

adobe-makers and the importance of adobe-making was particularly great in the second half of the 19th century.

The 50 years after the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 were a time of growth and construction. The development and expansion of small towns and villages created a demand for adobe-making. (Three-quarters of the country's population lived in places where adobe, wood and reed were the typical construction materials.)

Ferenc Erdei has shown how adobe-making is a regular industrial enterprise. It requires expertise just like walling, thatching, brick-laying. Nevertheless, "the science of the craft is not studied during prescribed terms as apprentice and assistant, nor can an examination be taken in it. Instead, just as a farmer learns how to farm, so adobe-making is learned from tradition and practice."³¹

Adobe-making was seasonal work available from spring until autumn. As Gábor Havas notes "Even during the season, there would not be enough work where they were living, so the adobe-makers were forced to move around."³²

In the winter months, Roma adobe-makers had to make do on whatever they had put aside from spring until autumn. They worked on other jobs, too: for instance, from spring until autumn, they worked as agricultural day laborers; in winter they did a variety of jobs such as basket weaving, odd jobs around the house, and even music-making.

Roma families typically had several sources of income, and they had to select among them as the opportunities arose.

The exceptions were Roma musicians—or at least those musicians who were licensed and had steady livelihoods. But such musicians were rare. Antal Hermann also esteemed them: "The musicians are, among the Roma population too, highly respected group. They form a class that is the most distinguished in every respect; they are the most intelligent and the most significant as far as the nation is concerned."³³ As Bálint Sárosi repeatedly emphasized in

his excellent work, music offered Roma the only possibility of social advancement. Sárosi also concluded that the peak of "gypsy" music's popularity occurred in the mid-19th century.

In earlier periods, "gypsy" music had not been so popular. In the latter half of the 18th century, for instance, little mention was made of Roma music-making and it was not an important factor in their livelihood. Still, in the late 18th century, the Hungarian national movement developed a taste for modern Hungarian and European music. Only the violins of the "gypsy" musicians were capable of providing such music.

In the reform era, great numbers of "gypsy" musicians joined the growing national movement. It was then that the "gypsy" orchestra style was established. Roma also took part as musicians in the War of Independence of 1848–49. After the war "plaintive merriment [*sírva vigadás*] permitted a heartfelt encounter between 'gypsy' musicians and the Hungarian upper and middle classes. In spite of their subservient role, the best musicians gained the popularity and respect of the public."

The 1893 census recorded 16,784 musician Roma (16,638 men and 146 women), but the true number was substantially higher. The census did not include Budapest, where the greatest number of musicians was living (3000). In several provincial cities (Pécs, Székesfehérvár, and Szabadka), only nomadic Roma were counted. The authorities in Győr submitted merely a general description of Roma living in the Roma district of the city. It is thus very likely that the real number of musicians was well over 20,000.

The musicians were not a homogenous group. Alongside a small but celebrated group of first violinists and others who earned well and lived in security and comfort, there were many musicians who earned money by playing music at local weddings, balls or other occasional events, and who therefore had no choice but to work as laborers at other times.

The 4453 merchants accounted for 3 per cent of Roma wage-earners. There were 1978 men, representing 2.3 per cent of Roma male wage-earners. Women merchants numbered 2475, or 4.3 per cent of Roma female wage-earners. Of the male merchants, 1475 were horse-dealers. They were particularly numerous in the Tisza-Maros region (especially in Torontál County) and in the region between the rivers Danube and Tisza (especially in Pest-Pilis-Solt-Kiskun County).

All things considered, at the time of the 1893 census, the situation of Roma was significantly better than it had been in earlier decades or centuries. Economic historians have calculated that Hungary's national income doubled or even tripled between 1867 and 1900. This growth had a tangible effect on Roma livelihoods. As already noted, there was a greater demand for adobe and bricks. Even more importantly, there was a steady increase in the number of landowners, middle-class citizens and peasant farmers who could afford to invite "gypsy" musicians to play at weddings and other celebrations and festivals.

Nevertheless, opportunities were unequally distributed around the country. In the region between the rivers Danube and Tisza, 10.6 per cent of the 7400 male wage-earners made a living from primary production or day labor (the national figure was 38 per cent), 28 per cent from industry (the national figure was 39.9 per cent), 8.7 per cent from commerce (the national figure was 2.3 per cent), 52.5 per cent as musicians (the national figure was 19.3 per cent, or 23 per cent after the adjustment explained above). The share of blacksmiths was just 5 per cent, compared with a national figure of 15 per cent. One should also note that 23.4 per cent of the country's "gypsy" musicians lived in the region between the rivers Danube and Tisza.

In Transdanubia, 21.5 per cent of male wage-earners made a living from primary production and day labor, 37 per cent from industry, 4 per cent from commerce, and 37 per cent as musicians.

Blacksmiths accounted for 10 per cent of male wage-earners, a higher proportion than in the region between the Danube and Tisza but still below the national average. As in the region between the Danube and Tisza, the blacksmiths gradually shifted to music-making—a process accompanied by a language shift from Romani to Hungarian.

Roma musicians living in this part of the country accounted for 12.5 per cent of the national “gypsy” musician population.

In the region to the east of the Tisza, i.e. the counties of Békés, Bihar, Hajdú, and Szabolcs, as well as half of the county of Szatmár, 15.6 per cent of 6834 male wage-earners made a living from primary production and day labor, 56.6 per cent from industry, 2.9 per cent from commerce, and 24.6 per cent as musicians. The share of blacksmiths in the region was 21.2 per cent, a significantly higher rate than the national average. The percentage of brick-makers, adobe-makers, and plasterers also substantially exceeded the national average. Musicians in this region accounted for 10 per cent of the national population of musicians.

At the time of the census, 46 per cent of the national population of “gypsy” musicians lived in the three cited regions. Analyzed in terms of Hungary’s current territory, the proportion was even higher—51–52 per cent.

Roma between the Two World Wars

After the Roma census of 1893, the next comprehensive although merely representative survey of the Roma population was made in 1971. The survey covered 2 per cent of the Roma population. The questionnaire included a question concerning “father’s principal employment.” The responses to this question provide us with a rough idea of employment in the period before the Second World War.

Based on 1971 survey data for parental employment, more than one-third of Vlach Roma made a living from horse-dealing, pig-trading, carpet-selling, and other commercial activities. More than one in four made a living from agriculture, while the livelihoods of 20 per cent were based on kettle-making or other metal-working. Finally, somewhat less than 20 per cent coupled adobe-making and plastering with music-making.

Beás, speaking dialects of Romanian, based their livelihoods on the manufacture of wooden troughs and other wooden utensils. As Gábor Havas has shown, many Beás were brought by landowners from their Croatian-Slavonian estates to their estates in Hungary. Other Beás, however, came voluntarily to Hungary from Romania. This second group settled close to villages.

Over time, Beás living on the estates moved closer to the nearby villages. Both groups soon coupled forestry work with basket-weaving, partial harvesting, and other agricultural jobs. Between the wars, a third of their livelihoods stemmed from agriculture and day-labor.

As far as Hungarian Roma are concerned, we cite the 1971 survey report: "... in the preceding generation, more than a quarter of them had been living from agricultural work, while more than a half had coupled adobe-making and plastering with music-making. Meanwhile, the livelihoods of a small minority were based exclusively on music-making."³⁴

One should add to the above summary that many other trades are mentioned by survey respondents, such as nailsmith, building laborer, rag-and-bone man, and merchant. Moreover, some of the musicians coupled music with agricultural work.

A majority of Hungarian Roma respondents participating in the 1971 survey identified their forefathers as Musician Roma and considered their original families to have been musician families.

How many Musician Roma could there have been between the two wars?

Based on Miklós Markó's book about "gypsy" musicians, Bálint Sárosi writes that in 1927 Hungary was home to more than 12,000 "gypsy" musicians. He adds that at least one-quarter of these musicians were not in employment and that "many 'gypsy' musicians in rural areas were not to be included, because village musicians were generally without work." Sárosi also establishes that, after the First World War, many Musician Roma came to Hungary from areas ceded to other states.

When interpreting these estimates, one should bear in mind that in 1893 more than 20,000 "gypsy" musicians were living within the territory of historical Hungary. Of these 20,000, about 12,000 lived within the country's territory after 1920. All the musicians were Hungarian Roma—both in 1893 and between the two wars. At the turn of the century, 106,000 Hungarian Roma were living in the country, of which 35,000 were adult men of working age, that is, most of them made a living from music-making. And the share of musicians was even greater among those Hungarian Roma who were living within the diminished territory of post-Trianon Hungary. (The number of Hungarian Roma in this area was 25,000, and there were 16,000 men of working age.)

In 1927, there were approximately 100,000 Hungarian Roma, and the number of adult men of working age must have been about 30,000. Most of them had been born in "gypsy" musician families and had learnt how to make music in the family from early childhood. It is worth citing Sárosi once again:

In the "gypsy" music profession, more important than schooling and methodology, is that skills should be passed down from generation to generation. They are more inclined to undertake this profession rather than any other—even considering the associated risks of livelihood.

Of course, it would be a mistake to conclude that there were 30,000 applicants or candidates for 12,000 or even just 9000 posts.

Still, it does seem certain that the number of Roma wanting or hoping to make a living from music gradually increased to twice the previous level and then to more than twice the previous level towards the end of the interwar period. At the same time, however, the number of opportunities fell. Noblemen with a passion for "gypsy" music became increasingly impoverished, while the richer peasants who had once invited "gypsy" musicians to their wedding feasts grew less prosperous. Among Hungary's middle classes, jazz music and modern dance music became increasingly fashionable. Throughout the period, Hungarian Roma experienced a painful deterioration in their situation. They were now simply too numerous for the profession that constituted their livelihood. Not everybody experienced a downturn, since the best musicians were even more famous than their predecessors had been at the turn of the century. Nevertheless, some of those who got left behind sank into poverty—which was sometimes severe.

The situation of Hungarian Roma also grew worse in terms of the jobs that were undertaken in addition to or in place of music-making. As far as seasonal labor was concerned, demand exceeded supply. And the situation grew worse between the two wars, before it finally improved in the latter half of the 1930s. Roma blacksmiths—practitioners of the oldest and, for centuries, most important trade—continued to decline; by the end of the period, they had been completely pushed out of the economy. Demand for railway-track nails continued to provide nailsmiths with a livelihood. The adobe-makers also survived, but in this area too, the supply of both enterprise and labor exceeded demand.

Beás and Vlach Roma were similarly affected by a deterioration in their livelihoods. Large-scale immigration worsened their plight. Between 1893 and 1930, the Vlach Roma population rose from 10,000 to 30,000, while the Beás population rose from 4500 to 12,000. Even if the number of opportunities had remained steady, the population increases would have made it more difficult

to prosper. In fact, however, there were fewer opportunities, owing to a steady decline in demand for products such as wooden troughs and other utensils, baskets, brooms, doormats, bags, and kettles, as well as for labor in areas such as kettle-making, wire-binding, and thatching. Moreover, Beás and Vlach Roma were affected by the changes in seasonal agricultural work noted above.

The situation of all Roma—of Beás and Vlach Roma as well as Hungarian Roma—was made worse by the political ideology prevailing in the country and the manner in which such ideology was implemented in practice. After 1867, liberal legal principles held sway in the legislative process, thereby establishing a liberal system of institutions.

An example of the effect of such principles on the Roma population is the Industrial Act of 1872, which governed the issue of trade licenses and the conditions for practicing a trade. For instance, under the provisions of the Act, the authorities were required to issue trade licenses within three days of an application being made. If they failed to do so, one could practice the trade without a trade license. In his book László Pomogyi shows how some government authorities violated this act of law but also how their unlawful measures failed to prevent or restrict Roma from practicing their trades or from being active in commerce.

Very different circumstances emerged and became dominant in Hungary after 1919. Initially, the rule of law was openly disregarded. Later on, the anti-democratic process was continued, although efforts were made to preserve appearances—particularly with respect to certain social groups. In both industry and commerce, regulation became the guiding principle. Several worrisome examples of regulation and arbitrary administration may be found in Pomogyi's book as well as in Barna Mezey's collection of essays published in 1986. Attempts were repeatedly made to prevent Roma from receiving trade licenses. Where they did receive licenses, they were valid—under a ministerial decree of 1931—merely in the county of residence. Moreover:

When practicing their trade, they must go alone; they may not keep assistants even if they are peddlers; they may not take family members along with them; and they may not use a vehicle when practicing their trade.

Another of the many examples is the 1928 decree of the Minister of Interior on raids on Roma communities. According to the decree,

whether they practice migration in order to avoid work, or do so under the pretext of looking for work, the forces of public order are obliged to arrest and detain them where they are found and then to deposit them at the nearest police headquarters.

The decree stipulated that county police forces should undertake annual raids on Roma communities, but, as Pomogyi notes, in most counties such raids were actually undertaken twice yearly. Pomogyi even publishes a table identifying raids launched in Pest County in October 1940, which led to the detention of 131 Roma and the seizure of nine wagons and ten horses. Such foolish acts clearly diminished people's chances of survival. But perhaps the real purpose was to show that one could treat Roma more harshly than other people.

The thoughts and actions of ministers, state secretaries, deputy-lieutenants, district administrators, and police offices reached their lowest point—and with them the relationship between Hungarian society and Roma. It was only a matter of years before Roma could be subjected to anything, including genocide.

The German army occupied Hungary on March 19, 1944. The deportation of the Jewish population to the death camps began shortly afterwards. The first trains left Hungary on May 15, 1944. By the end of June, a majority of Jews living outside Budapest—440,000 people—had been deported. Protests from foreign governments and German military setbacks, including the Normandy

landings, prompted Horthy, the Hungarian leader, to put a hold on further deportations as of July 20, 1944. However, on October 15, 1944, Ferenc Szálasi and the Arrow Cross Party seized power. Adolf Eichmann returned to Hungary and, working in conjunction with the Hungarian authorities, resumed the destruction of the country's Jewish population. By February 1945, 50 per cent of Budapest's 200,000 Jews had been annihilated. The deportation of Transdanubia's Roma population began in November and December 1944 and continued in the first three months of 1945. During the deportation process, some Roma were murdered close to their homes by Hungarian military police and Arrow Cross party officials. In the 1970s, the Victims of Nazism Commission estimated the number of Roma victims to have been 28,000. In 1992, the historian László Karsai published a book in which he estimated, based on archival evidence, the number of murdered Roma to have been 5000. If the Germans had won the war, Hungary's Roma population would have been completely obliterated.

Changes after 1945

Developments in 1945 enabled the survival of Roma and rescued them from destruction. The period of limited democracy between 1945 and 1947 altered the relationship between Roma, Hungarian society and the Hungarian state. While the authoritarian regime of the pre-1944 period had denied Roma equality and subjected them to racial discrimination and the 1944 regime had actually placed them outside the law, democracy declared the principle of equality and prohibited racial or ethnic discrimination.

Nonetheless, in the economic field, Roma suffered very serious losses. We cite Zsolt Csalog: "The disappearance of the former consumer groups in society resulted in the end of the age-old market for musicians (even if it did then partly recover in the 1960s), and the remains of the other traditional forms of employment were

swept away by the tide of history. The colossal and hard-won historical capital of Roma was thus destroyed... A strange contradiction was that while the end of the Second World War had brought emancipation and removed the immediate danger of extermination, it had failed to establish opportunities for making a living."³⁵

Land distribution began in spring 1945. The process marked the definitive end of the economic and political rule of the landowners. Both poorer peasant farmers and the rural landless received land. Roma, however, were left out of the process of land distribution. Most Roma did not even request land. Apart from a few rare instances, even Roma who claimed land were not given any. Land was scarce, and the process of land distribution achieved no more than create out of a land of "three million beggars" a land of "two million beggars." It was quite easy to leave Roma out of the process—and they were indeed left out, in spite of the fact that many Roma, more than a third of them, made livelihoods from seasonal work in agriculture.

At the same time, land distribution also served to remove the job opportunities previously offered to Roma by medium and large landowners.

In commerce, the restrictions placed on Roma by the decrees and bureaucratic procedures of the former regime clearly no longer applied. Still, in 1945 and 1946, commercial activities were still highly risky and threatened by looting on the part of Soviet soldiers. Horses were taken first by the Germans and then by the Russians. Pigs were taken away or eaten on the spot. By 1947, looting was no longer a problem, but that year saw the beginning of Communist rule, which regarded private enterprise undertaken by Roma (and non-Roma) as pernicious, a threat to public welfare, and a public foe.

Roma Population Growth between 1893 and 1971
Changes in the Linguistic Distribution

At the time of the 1971 national survey, the Roma population in Hungary was 320,000. Between 1893 and 1971 there were substantial changes in the linguistic distribution of Roma. In 1971 the native language of 71.0 per cent of Roma was Hungarian, while 21.2 per cent spoke Romani as their native language, 7.6 per cent spoke Beás, and 0.2 per cent spoke some other language. There were 224,000 Hungarian Roma (Romungro), 61,000 Vlach Roma, and 25,000 Beás. Within a period of 78 years, there had been an almost fivefold increase in the Roma population within the territory in question. The Hungarian Roma population had increased fourfold, while the Vlach Roma population had increased more than ninefold and the Beás population more than eightfold. Immigration is the only possible explanation for an eightfold or ninefold increase—or even for a fivefold increase. Many Beás were brought by landowners from their estates in the south to estates in Hungary. A majority of them arrived in Hungary before 1914. But immigration continued between the two wars and also in the period immediately after the Second World War.

Katalin Kovalcsik has identified three language groups among Hungary's Beás population. The *muncsánok* live in the southern part of Baranya and maintain an affinity with their fellows in Croatia living on the other side of the border. The *argyelánok* speak the Banat dialect of Beás. The *ticsánok* came from the Nagyvárad region in the 1910s; they initially resided in Szabolcs and Szatmár counties and then moved to the Tiszafüred region.

A language shift may be observed among those Roma whose native language was Slovak, Ruthenian, Serbian or Croatian in 1893: Hungarian had become their native language by 1971. Linguistic assimilation thus partly explains the fourfold increase in the Hungarian-speaking Roma population.

In 1971 a majority of Beás were living in Southern Transdanubia: they comprised a majority of Roma in the counties of Baranya and Somogy.

Vlach Roma came from Croatia-Slavonia to Hungary in the late 19th century and early 20th century and to a lesser extent between the two world wars. In 1971, they accounted for one-fifth of the Roma population in Southern Transdanubia. Vlach Roma came from Serbia and the Banat region to the counties of Bács, Csongrád and Szolnok. In 1971 they accounted for 19 per cent of the Roma population of these three counties. A third group of Vlach Roma came from Transylvania, or Romania, to the counties of Szabolcs, Szatmár, Bihar, Békés and Hajdú. Together with earlier arrivals, they accounted for 22 per cent of the Roma population of the region.

Before 1918 it was quite natural for Romani-speaking Roma to move to areas now comprising the counties of Borsod, Nógrád and Heves. And there were few obstacles to such migration flows even during the interwar period. László Pomogyi cites a ministerial decree dating from 1927:

Villages near the Czechoslovakian border have witnessed the arrival of a large number of Roma families who come from other parts and have never been seen here before; they go from village to village ... From what I hear, the Czechoslovak state has expelled en masse itinerant Roma from its territory, who then come across at poorly defended border points, whence they disperse, primarily in the villages along the border.

The Vlach Roma percentage of the Roma population was the highest in the counties of Pest, Fejér and Komárom: 24.1 per cent. There were about 15,000 Roma in these three counties.

In addition to immigration and migration flows within the country, the period 1893–1971 saw many other changes in the country and in the lives of Roma. Nevertheless, the differences between the various native-language groups did not diminish.

A significant change was urbanisation, but in 1971 Roma were far less likely than other Hungarians were to be living in urban areas.

Table 4:
**The Percentage Distribution of the Roma Population
by Type of Settlement and Native Language**

Type of settlement	Hungarian Roma	Vlach Roma	Beás	Total
Budapest	8.3	9.9	-	7.7
Provincial urban	15.5	11.5	6.2	13.9
Rural	76.2	78.6	93.8	78.4
<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>

There were significant differences between the various native-language groups in terms of the percentage of people living in isolated or segregated settlements: 65 per cent of Hungarian Roma, 75 per cent of Vlach Roma, and 48 per cent of Beás resided in such settlements.

This was clearly a factor influencing the average number of persons per dwelling, which was 6.3 among Romani-speaking Roma, 5.5 among Hungarian-speaking Roma, and 4.9 among Beás-speaking Roma. Sixty per cent of Vlach Roma, 56 per cent of Hungarian Roma, and 40 per cent of Beás lived in families with three or more children. The number of dependents per 100 workers was 250 among Vlach Roma, 221 among Hungarian Roma, and 191 among Beás.

In 1971, 33 per cent of Hungarian native-speaking Roma, 54 per cent of Romani native speakers, and 57 per cent of Beás native speakers were unable to read or write.

The Communist Era

A period of forced industrialization began in Hungary in the 1950s. The process continued in the 1960s and 1970s and was concluded only in the latter half of the 1980s. In the Budapest agglomeration,

the Northern region, and large parts of Transdanubia, industrialization created full employment and even resulted in labor shortages, leading to a dramatic increase in Roma employment.

As a result of this process, by the time of the national survey in 1971, three-quarters of Roma males of working age (aged 15–59) were in permanent employment, a further 10 per cent were self-employed or in temporary jobs, while 15 per cent were dependents.

At the time of Hungary's census in 1970, 87.7 of males were active income earners, while 12.3 per cent were pensioners or recipients of other benefits. The difference between the Roma and non-Roma populations appeared to be small, but in reality it was quite significant.

Inactive income earners, that is, people unfit for work due to long-term illness or disability, accounted for 2.7 per cent of males of working age. The percentage of Roma males unfit for work was 7.3 per cent. Most of these men could not have been entitled to long-term illness or disability pensions, because they lacked the necessary service time in employment.

The student ratio among the male population in Hungary was 8.2 per cent. In contrast, just 0.5 per cent of Roma were students.

Table 5:
The Result of Hungary's Census in 1970

	Total Population	Roma
Active income earners	87.7 %	85.2 %
Inactive earners, people unfit for work	2.7 %	7.3 %
Students	8.2 %	0.5 %
Other	1.4 %	7.0 %
Total	100 %	100 %

Thus, the 1960s brought great changes to the lives of Roma families: full employment was almost achieved among adult Roma males. Roma families witnessed a dramatic improvement in terms of their livelihood, standard of living, job security, and general welfare. Such progress enabled many Roma families to build

"reduced-value" houses or to buy old peasant houses and thus to move away from the isolated Roma settlements to other towns or villages. Some Roma were able to use their own savings to construct or purchase their homes, but most of them required loans to do so. Continuous employment was, of course, a prerequisite for receiving such loans.

Although there was virtual full employment among Roma males in industrialized areas, this was not the case in rural areas. The ratio of dependent males was 5.5 per cent in the Budapest agglomeration, 4.3 in Transdanubia, and 3.8 per cent in the northern industrial counties. In contrast, it was 10.2 per cent in the Great Plain region and 15.2 per cent in the Eastern region. In the three industrialized regions, 4.5 per cent, 5.4 per cent, and 6.8 per cent of people were unfit for work. The corresponding figures were 8 per cent in the Great Plain region and 10 per cent in the Eastern region.

Employment differences were far greater among females than they were among males. At the time of the 1970 census, 64 per cent of women of working age (aged 15–54) in Hungary were active income earners, while 6 per cent were pensioners and 30 per cent were dependents. Data of the 1971 survey showed, however, that just 30 per cent of Roma women were active income earners while as many as 70 per cent were dependents. The survey report cited two reasons for the low employment rate among Roma women: the larger number of children and the fact that rural areas offered fewer employment opportunities to women (and especially to women without school education).

Another factor identified by researchers during the survey was the limited provision of nurseries and kindergartens. Some areas had no nurseries or kindergartens, but even where there was provision, it was generally inaccessible to Roma children.

In 1971, researchers identified two main reasons for the significant income differences between Roma and non-Roma. One reason was the large number of children, while the other was the

low level of female employment. Both factors led to more dependents and fewer income earners within Roma families. As the research report stated:

The lower the income, the higher the number of children, and the higher the number of children, the lower the income. An improvement in the situation of Roma would be both a means and a result of reducing the number of children, as is already the case among upwardly mobile Roma families ... In most Roma settlements, the lack of nurseries, kindergartens and employment opportunities render family planning meaningless. Yet family planning is on the advance wherever Roma have acquired basic housing, kindergartens, and employment opportunities for women.³⁶

In 1971, 11 per cent of Roma heads of family were skilled workers, 10 per cent were unskilled workers, 44 per cent were laborers, 15 per cent were agricultural laborers, 3 per cent were day laborers, and 6 per cent were self-employed or casual workers.

The ratio of skilled workers was highest among Hungarian-speaking Roma. Among this group, 15 per cent of heads of family were skilled workers. The rate was 25 per cent in provincial urban areas and 35 per cent in Budapest. The ratio of skilled workers was negligible, however, among Vlach Roma and Beás.

The three language groups exhibited a significant difference in terms of the contribution made by agriculture towards livelihoods. Agricultural laborers accounted for 8.8 per cent of heads of family among Hungarian Roma, 10.5 per cent among Vlach Roma, and 47.5 per cent among Beás. We have already noted the far greater role played by agriculture in the livelihoods of Roma prior to 1945. Since most Roma working in agriculture were not granted land under the post-war land redistribution programme, a smaller percentage of them were included in the system of co-operatives than had been active in agriculture prior to 1945. As the 1971 research report notes:

Their relative participation rate in the agricultural co-operative system fell even further in the 1950s and early 1960s. This was due in part to uncertain income levels, in part to their leaving the co-operatives for other forms of employment, but also in part to the fact that non-Roma members of co-operatives tended to be hostile to Roma. Jobs in industry did not just provide Roma with secure incomes—as in the case of non-Roma—but also offered them equality. They were accepted into jobs from which they had previously been excluded.³⁷

Prior to 1945, many Roma working in agriculture were seasonal laborers, while those in permanent employment tended to be shepherds or livestock-keepers. In 1971, 15 per cent of Roma heads of family worked in agriculture, but just 5 per cent of them were members of co-operatives, and 1.5 per cent were plant cultivators, while the rest were day laborers, park keepers, seedling planters, forestry workers, shepherds, livestock-keepers, and vineyard workers. Seasonal workers accounted for 40 per cent of agricultural laborers. Nine per cent of Roma active earners in permanent employment and almost one half of those in temporary employment worked in agriculture.

The 1950s and 1960s saw Roma turn away from agriculture towards industry. Seasonal (mostly summer) work in agriculture never provided the levels of income needed in order to live decently throughout the year. Industrialization offered Roma the possibility of regular and constant income and an opportunity to secure a respected position in modern industrial society.

Nevertheless, seasonal work in agriculture continued to play an important role in Roma livelihoods. Most typically, this was the case where the men were working throughout the year in mines, blast furnaces and factories and the women took on work as day laborers in seasonal agricultural work. It was quite common for a man to take part in the agricultural seasonal work too—with or

without his employer's permission. During this period, Roma livelihoods stood on two (or more) legs, and Hungarian agriculture could not have done without the Roma seasonal workers.

Seasonal work was not limited to agriculture, but covered other forms of work performed by the rural poor. Seasonal work in the rural areas of Hungary included seasonal employment in the food industry (preserves, mills, sugar, and alcoholic beverages), seasonal employment in forestry, wood-processing, wood mills, saw mills, and seasonal work in the construction materials industry, road and rail construction, as well as the itinerant industries and trades. Roma undertaking such jobs had no land or property. Still, they were not the agricultural proletariat but—as the 1971 research report referred to them—“freely wandering proletariat.” They worked in economic sectors with frequent changes in the location of work—and where labor tended to accompany the job opportunities over small distances.

This life-style thus links sedentarization with some degree of movement, and is characterized by the long-term absence of men—heads of families and fathers. During the Horthy regime, the relationship between Roma and non-Roma laborers was not constant in the various rural areas across the country. In some places, Roma and non-Roma comprised a more or less uniform working class, while in other areas ‘poor whites’ distanced themselves from Roma.³⁸

The forced industrialization of the 1950s and 1960s led to the re-emergence and indeed dominance of families with absent fathers—this time in the form of commuting workers. But there was a significant difference; namely, that commuting workers were generally working at great distances from their families.

In the 1950s and 1960s, most Roma were subjected to a process of proletarianization. This development amounted to a fall in status for Roma musicians. According to a statistical table for

January 1968, 3670 "gypsy" musicians were in employment, but Bálint Sárosi argues that the number of part-time Roma musicians was at least as high or even higher.

The process of proletarianization amounted to a reduction in status for merchants too. As the 1971 research report notes:

Roma with livelihoods based on the horse or pig trade were pushed out, because on the one hand we slaughtered our horses and, on the other, such trade was prohibited. In recent years, horse-breeding and horse-trading has recovered, but only a negligible number of Vlach Roma now make a living from these activities. Two smaller groups of horse dealers had switched to trading in automobile spare parts and to fattening cows, while a slightly larger group had become carriers (or were involved in the carrier trade as secondary work). Most of them, however, had found work in industry. The few horse-trading Roma families who continued to work in the trade (that is, those who traded horses legally for the state livestock company or who carried on the craft in wagons as rage-and-bone men) gradually became detached from the rest of the Roma population and began to consider themselves as the only real "Roma."³⁹

In some counties, commerce and trading were specifically prohibited, but in others such activities were merely subject to restrictions—permission was granted, but only within the borders of the county in question. The carpet-traders offer an example of this. They moved from Transylvania to Hungary in 1916 after the Romanian invasion. Calling themselves Szekler Roma and speaking a distinctive dialect of Romani, the carpet-traders settled in the counties of Somogy, Veszprém and Zala, as well as in Budapest. They made a living from the itinerant textile trade and were also involved in the cottage industry production of rugs and coarse blankets. The carpet-traders of Budapest found their place in Budapest

society, but their trade license was withdrawn in Somogy County and they were removed from municipal housing in Kaposvár and rehoused in barracks. The survey of 1971 revealed an image of a doomed community.

If commercial opportunities were geographically disparate, they varied even more over time. Periods of relative leniency towards private commerce were followed by periods of outright hostility. The recurring policy of clamping down and then liberalizing led, in the 1980s, to conditions that were more permissive than ever before. The early 1980s saw the publication of Gábor Havas's inquiries into the employment transfer strategies of Roma communities, including the "mobile-initiator lifestyle." Diminishing markets in traditional areas led Roma to look for other income sources obtainable by similar means, Havas noted. Collecting feathers and collecting iron are forms of commerce that could be undertaken with a horse and cart. The state purchased the feathers and the iron, while the population bought the goods distributed by peddlers. The mobile-initiator life-style is based on familial relations.

The involvement of the family network is indispensable to acquiring information and making better use of any opportunities ... In such communities, extended family centres are formed—usually around the household of a patriarchal grandfather. And all of this is pictorially visible: brick houses of higher quality are surrounded by the shacks of younger relatives (the children and grandchildren).

In the mid-1980s (between 1984 and 1986), Michael Sinclair Stewart studied the lives of Vlach Roma living in a Roma settlement in the town of Gyöngyös. He concluded that Roma involved in horse-trading or some other business activity were becoming more prosperous and were respected by the non-Roma community. In his book, however, he acknowledged the truth of the following

words written by Gábor Havas: "Roma with such life-styles live necessarily and permanently on the margins of illegality, and thus the group is subject to persecution."

Forced industrialization was continued for a decade and a half after the 1971 survey. During this period the labor shortage became even more acute, and new jobs were formed even in areas that had been some way from full employment in 1971. Jobs for women also became more numerous, and Roma women were more inclined to undertake regular paid work. The ratio of female earners (which had been 30 per cent in 1971) rose to almost 50 per cent in the late 1970s and exceeded 50 per cent in the early 1980s.

Roma Population Growth between 1971 and 1993

Changes in the Linguistic Distribution

The 1993 survey indicated a Roma population of 468,000. According to the 1993 data, 5.5 per cent of Roma non-students aged 15 or over identified Beás as their native language, while 4.4 per cent stated that Romani was their native language and 0.6 per cent stated that it was another language other than Hungarian. These figures indicate an increase in the share of Hungarian native speakers from 71.0 per cent in 1971 to 89.5 per cent in 1993. In both 1971 and 1993, Beás- and Romani-speaking Roma were bilingual: in addition to their native languages, they also spoke Hungarian. In 1993 the native-language distributions differed significantly from the spoken language distributions. Thus while just 5.5 per cent of Roma identified Beás as their native language, 11.3 per cent said they spoke the language. Similarly, just 4.4 per cent of Roma identified Romani as their native language, but 11.1 per cent said they spoke the language.

After the Political Changes of 1989–90

In the latter half of the 1980s, the employment rate began to fall—slowly at first, but then more quickly. In late 1993, the employment rate among males aged 15–59 was 64 per cent in the general population but 29 per cent in the Roma population. The discrepancy was even greater among the female population: in late 1993, 66 per cent of Hungarian women aged 15–54 were in employment, but just 15 per cent of Roma women.

The decline in employment was accompanied by corresponding increases in the number and percentage of unemployed people and inactive earners.

At the time of the research project in 1993–94, the number of registered unemployed was very high in Hungary: on average, it stood at 640,000 between October 1993 and January 1994. The number of registered unemployed remained below 100,000 until late 1990. It then rose to a peak of 703,000 in February 1993. Thereafter the rate gradually decreased to 496,000 in 1995, 477,000 in 1996, 464,000 in 1997, and 404,000 in 1998. A fall in the number of registered unemployed is not the same as a fall in the actual number of unemployed persons, for some of those who are not entitled to benefits do not bother to register themselves.

In late 1993, the number of unemployed Roma in Hungary was approximately 57,000. Thus, 8.9 per cent of Hungary's registered unemployed were Roma. Males accounted for 37,000 and females for 20,000 of the 57,000 unemployed Roma. Thus, 9.6 per cent of the Hungary's 386,000 registered unemployed males and 7.9 per cent of its 254,000 registered unemployed females were Roma.

The registered unemployment rate in late 1993 was 12.84 per cent among the non-Roma population and 49.68 per cent among the Roma population. The rates were more favorable in Budapest (8.1 per cent among non-Roma and 31.8 per cent among Roma) and less

favorable in rural areas. The worst unemployment rates were recorded in the Northern and Eastern regions: 17 per cent among non-Roma and 59 per cent among Roma.

According to the ILO definition and based on the labor statistics of the Integral Civil Data Service System, the unemployment rate among non-Roma in late 1993 was 11.08 per cent—or 13.15 per cent together with the passive unemployed, that is, those who wanted to work but had given up hope of finding work. Meanwhile, the unemployment rate among Roma was 37.91 per cent—or 48.19 per cent if the passive unemployed are added in.

We know, however, that most inactive persons are in fact unemployed. This conclusion is valid not just for the Roma population but also for the general population as a whole. In 1982, Hungary had 5 million active earners (or 5.437 million together with working pensioners). In 1995, however, there were just 3.7 million active earners (or 3.882 million together with working pensioners). The difference between the two figures was some 1.3 million. In 1994, of these people, 632,000 were registered unemployed, 100,000 were passive unemployed, and the rest were inactive persons.

Over the years, some people who had previously been active earners had become inactive. Fleeing unemployment, they took some form of retirement—a trend indicated by the increase in the number of people on disability pensions from 500,000 in 1989 to 700,000 in 1995. Other formerly active earners were no longer recorded, having broken off contact with the labor office after the expiry of their unemployment benefits and income support.

A third group of active earners became inactive after a transition period rather than immediately. They went on maternity or childcare benefit, but when such benefits expired they were then unable or unwilling to return to work. Finally, after a period on unemployment benefit, they joined the inactive group.

A fourth group of formerly active earners became inactive when, having lost their jobs, they started working in the unofficial economy. Such people were in fact active earners rather than inactive, but they were not classified as employed persons in the official statistics because they were not officially registered as such.

Finally, one should also mention the young people who would doubtless have found jobs in the 1960s and 1970s, but who, in 1993, had no hope at all of finding work and did not bother to register at the labor office.

Among the Roma population, such trends were particularly strong and began relatively early on. This becomes very apparent if we examine, by age groups, the rates of employment, unemployment and inactivity among the Roma and non-Roma populations. First of all we shall examine the non-Roma population, based on the labor survey of late 1993:

Among 30–39 year-olds, 75 per cent were employed, 11 per cent were unemployed, and 14 per cent were inactive. Among 40–54 year-olds, 72 per cent were employed, 9 per cent were unemployed, and 19 per cent were inactive. Among 55–59 year-olds, 9 per cent were employed, 3 per cent were unemployed, and 23 per cent were inactive.

Among the Roma population (based on national research in 1993–94), the same trends prevailed, but there were far higher percentages of unemployed and inactive persons. Among 30–39 year-olds, 28 per cent were employed, 30 per cent were unemployed, and 42 per cent were inactive. Among 40–54 year-olds, 24 per cent were employed, 20 per cent were unemployed, and 56 per cent were inactive. Among 55–59 year-olds, 9 per cent were employed, 3 per cent were unemployed, and 23 per cent were inactive.

The transition between unemployment and inactivity and, indeed, the dominance of inactivity are apparent among the younger age groups. Among 15–19 year-olds, 16 per cent of both Roma and non-Roma were employed, 5 per cent of non-Roma and

11 per cent of Roma were unemployed, and 79 per cent of non-Roma and 73 per cent of Roma were inactive. There is, however, a fundamental difference between the two groups. While 70 per cent of young non-Roma were students (including 55 per cent in secondary education, 5 per cent in higher education, and 6 per cent in primary education), the corresponding rate among the same age group in the Roma population was just 25 per cent (including 3.4 per cent in secondary education). Thus, the real unemployment rate among young Roma aged 15–19 was 48 per cent—with 11 per cent registered as unemployed and 37 per cent not registered as unemployed.

In late 1993, 58,000 Roma were in work and 57,000 were out of work. At the same time, the number of inactive Roma was 151,000, almost three times the number of unemployed. Among Roma, 56.5 per cent of 15–74 year-olds were inactive, while the corresponding rate among non-Roma was 44 per cent. Among males, the rates were obviously quite different. There were approximately 37,000 employed males, roughly the same number of registered unemployed males, and 55,000 inactive males. Thus, 42 per cent of Roma males aged 15–74 were inactive, while the corresponding rate among non-Roma males was 36 per cent.

The differences between Roma and non-Roma in the field of employment were even greater among women. There were 136,000 Roma aged 15–74, of whom 95,000—or 70 per cent—were inactive, while 21,000 were employed and 20,000 were unemployed. Meanwhile, the inactivity rate among non-Roma women was 52 per cent. Of course, one should also bear in mind the large number of children among the Roma population when interpreting these figures.

Lack of education may be identified as the primary reason for the differences between the two populations. Before 1986, a completed primary education (8 grades) made it easier to find work, but by 1993 a primary or basic vocational education was no longer sufficient. According to a labor survey carried out by the Hungarian

Central Statistical Office in the final quarter of 1993, the unemployment rate among the non-Roma population was 12.84 per cent—2.94 per cent for those with a higher education, 9.91 per cent for those with a secondary education, 15.55 per cent for those with a vocational education, and 17.52 per cent for those with a primary education (8 grades).

A second reason was the place of residence of most Roma. The unemployment rate was significantly higher in rural areas than it was in urban areas, and particularly high rates were registered in small villages. Sixty per cent of Roma lived in rural areas and 40 per cent in small villages. The unemployment rate was significantly lower in Transdanubia and the Budapest agglomeration but far higher in the Northern, Eastern, and Great Plain regions, where 56 per cent of Roma resided.

A third reason was that Roma were working in industrial sectors that quickly collapsed after 1990. By way of illustration, in 1993 the unemployment rate in the construction industry was almost twice the national average. And in 1971, 26 per cent of Roma in employment had been working in the construction industry or on building sites. They must have numbered about 25,000, accounting for 10 per cent of all construction workers at the time.

However, even in combination, these three factors did not fully explain the high level of Roma unemployment. A fourth reason to consider would be discrimination, but we were unable to measure its effect.

Roma Population Growth between 1993 and 2005

At the time of the national survey in 2003, the Roma population was approximately 600,000. In May 2005, the estimated Roma population was between 600,000 and 650,000. In 2015, the Roma population is projected to be between 700,000 and 800,000.

There are various forecasts for Hungary's population in 2015, but all of the estimates predict a population of less than 10 million

but greater than 9 million. Thus, Roma are expected to account for 7–8 per cent of Hungary's total population in 2015.

The period 1993–2003 saw a continuation of the linguistic assimilation of Beás native speakers but a reversal of the language shift among Romani native speakers. In 2003, 87 per cent of Roma identified Hungarian as their native language, while Beás was the native language of 4.6 per cent and Romani was the native language of 7.7 per cent.

The Present Situation of Roma

Roma population growth, declining numbers of non-Roma, and migration from slum settlements, have reinforced residential segregation. In 2003, 6 per cent of Roma families were living in isolated/segregated Roma settlements, 2 per cent were living outside such settlements but away from other villages, 42 per cent were living on the outskirts of villages, and 22 per cent were living within villages or towns but in areas inhabited mainly by Roma. Thus in 2003, 72 per cent of Roma families were living in segregation.

In 2003, 28 per cent of Roma males aged 15–74 were in jobs, while the employment rate was 15 per cent among the Roma female population.

A major weakness of Hungary's economy is the low employment rate.

The employment rate is particularly low among those with no more than a primary education (8 grades) and it is even lower among those who failed to complete their primary education. The majority of Roma thus share in the fate of Hungary's poorly educated, although their employment rates are even worse than those of poorly educated non-Roma.

Data for March 2003 indicate that 82.5 per cent of Roma aged 20–24 have completed 8 grades of primary education. Still, rarely

have they achieved this at the normal age of 14 or 15, but usually at an older age.

Five per cent of Roma aged 20–24 have completed secondary education, and just 1.2 per cent are attending college or university.

One in five Roma children who fail to complete primary education face long-term unemployment, and a similar fate awaits those who fail to complete secondary education.

The integration of Roma has been the declared aim of successive Hungarian governments in the field of Roma policy. A prerequisite for integration is, however, that young Roma should be able to participate in secondary and higher education to the same degree as non-Roma.

Notes

1. József Vekerdi, *A cigány népmese* [The Gypsy Folktale], (Budapest, 1974), p. 9.
2. Barna Mezey, ed., *A magyarországi cigánykérdés dokumentumokban* [Documentary Evidence Concerning the Issue of Roma in Hungary] (Budapest, 1986), p. 140–141.
3. László Szegő, ed., *Cigányok, honnét jöttek, merre tartanak?* [Roma, where did they Come from and where are they Going?] (Budapest, 1893), p. 43.
4. Mezey, ed., *A magyarországi cigánykérdés ...*, p. 8.
5. Angus Fraser, *The Gypsies* (Oxford, 1995), p. 130.
6. Pál Nagy, *A magyarországi cigányok története a rendi társadalom korában* [The History of Roma in Hungary during the Feudal Era] (Kaposvár, 1998), p. 69.
7. Mezey, ed., *A magyarországi cigánykérdés ...*, p. 71.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 71.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 71.
10. Angus Fraser, *The Gypsies* (Oxford, 1995), p. 108.
11. Bálint Sárosi, *Cigányzene* [Gypsy Music] (Budapest, 1971), p. 50.
12. Archduke József and Henrik Wlislöcki, *A cigányokról* [About Roma] (Budapest 1894), p. 4.
13. Sárosi, *Cigányzene*, p. 51.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 51.
15. László Mészáros, "A hódoltsági latinok, görögök és cigányok története" [The History of Latins, Greeks and Roma in Ottoman Hungary], *Századok* (1976): 484.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 484.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 485.
18. Mezey, ed., *A magyarországi cigánykérdés ...*, p. 94.
19. Fraser, *The Gypsies*, p. 148–149.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 148.
21. Nagy, *A magyarországi cigányok ...*, p. 133.
22. Sárosi, *Cigányzene*, p. 52.
23. Mezey, ed., *A magyarországi cigánykérdés ...*, p. 101.
24. Sárosi, *Cigányzene*, p. 109.

25. *A Magyarországon 1893. január 31-én végrehajtott cigány összeírás eredményei* [Findings of the Roma Census in Hungary of January 31, 1893] (Budapest, 1895), p. 11.
26. Lajos Kiss, *A szegény ember élete* [The Poor Man's Life] (Budapest, 1981), p. 189.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 191.
28. *A Magyarországon 1893. január 31-én végrehajtott cigány összeírás eredményei*, p. 51.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 52.
30. Gábor Havas, "Hagyományos mesterségek," in István Kemény, ed., *A magyarországi romák* [The Roma of Hungary] (Budapest, 2000), p. 88.
31. Ferenc Erdei, *A magyar paraszttársadalom* [Hungarian Peasant Society] (Budapest, 1940), p. 127.
32. Gábor Havas, "Korábbi cigány foglalkozások," in *Cigányvizsgálatok* [Roma Surveys] (Budapest, 1982), p. 164.
33. *A Magyarországon 1893. január 31-én végrehajtott cigány összeírás eredményei*, p. 59.
34. István Kemény, *Beszámoló a magyarországi cigányok helyzetével foglalkozó 1971-ben végzett kutatásról* [Report on Research Carried out in 1971 on the Situation of Roma in Hungary] (Budapest, 1976), p. 54.
35. Zsolt Csalog, "A cigánykérdés Magyarországon 1980 előtt" [The Roma Issue in Hungary Prior to 1980]. In: *Bibó Emlékkönyv* (Budapest, 1979), II: p. 291.
36. Kemény, *Beszámoló* ..., p. 53.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 54.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 55.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 66–67.

ROMA POPULATION OF HUNGARY 1971–2003

Foreword

Three representative surveys of the Roma population in Hungary have been conducted over the past 35 years: in 1971, in late 1993, and in the first quarter of 2003. All three surveys covered the entire Roma population. The data collected thus relate to each of the three language groups (Hungarian, Romani and Beás),¹ to urban and rural inhabitants, and to lower and higher income groups. This publication draws together the findings of the three research projects. Data from the “Roma census” of January 31, 1893 are also employed.

The aim of the 1971 survey was to offer a comprehensive view of the social situation of Roma, including their linguistic and ethnic composition, settlement types, regional distribution, housing conditions, family size, the numbers of children and live births, education, the effects of industrialization in the 1950s and 1960s, employment, and income levels.

The survey of 1993 sought to reveal and quantify changes in the economic and social situation of Roma resulting from the political transition of 1989–90.

In the decade between 1993 and 2003, further changes took place in the economy, the labor market, income levels, and government policies. Thus, our objective in the survey of 2003 was to monitor the effects of the changes on the lives of Roma. The title given to our research and published findings was *The Roma Population in Hungary at the Beginning of the 21st Century*. An alternative title would have been *Changes in the Lives of Roma in the Past 33 Years*.

The 1971 survey was conducted by István Kemény, the 1993 survey by István Kemény, Gábor Havas and Gábor Kertesi, and the 2003 survey by István Kemény and Béla Janky. In 2003, the sampling design was developed by István Kemény (with the assistance of Béla Janky, Gabriella Lengyel, Tibor Szűcs and Zita Szűcs.) The questionnaire used in 2003 was drawn up by István Kemény, while the fieldwork was carried out by Gabriella Lengyel and fellow researchers in Budapest and by Tibor Szűcs, Zita Szűcs and fellow researchers in other communities across the country. The surveys of 1971 and 1993 were launched under the auspices of the Institute of Sociology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The Minority Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences conducted the 2003 survey under the auspices of the National Research and Development Program. The title of the research project was *The Situation of the Roma Population in Hungary at the Beginning of the 21st Century (Segregation, Employment and Living Conditions, Education, and Self-Governance)*.

The first part of this chapter examines the demography of the Roma population. The second one discusses the language groups and ethnic data, while the third investigates settlement patterns and housing conditions. The fourth part looks at issues of education and the last one reviews labor market conditions and incomes.

I. Main Features of the Roma Population

The Representative Survey of 2003

In February and March 2003, we conducted a survey of the Roma population in Hungary. Previous representative surveys of the Roma population were undertaken in 1971 and in 1993.² Both of these earlier surveys were based on 2 percent representative samples of the Roma population. The estimated total Roma population was 320,000 in 1971 and 468,000 in 1993. We may state that the number of Roma was between 270,000 and 370,000 in 1971 and between 420,000 and 520,000 in 1993.

In 2003, we were limited to a 1 percent representative sample. The survey was therefore less accurate than in 1993. Another factor also restricted accuracy. In the 1993 survey, we used educational statistics from 1992 to determine how many Roma—very many, many, few, or none—were living in communities across the country and in electoral constituencies within cities.³ In 2003, the most recent of such statistics were more than 10 years old. Thus, in order to determine how many Roma were living in the various communities across the country and in electoral constituencies within cities, we made use of data on Roma ethnicity recorded in the 2001 census. This procedure was clearly less accurate than the previous one based on educational statistics.

Our final sample comprised 5408 individuals in 1165 households. If the survey were to be regarded as fully accurate, this would mean a Roma population of 540,000 in Hungary in early 2003. Nevertheless, no survey can hope to reach all Roma families or ensure that all data are compiled and all questionnaires completed. Even in the 1993 survey, we assumed an error margin of 10 or 5 percent, adjusting the figures by 5 percent in some publications and 10 percent in others. Estimating that 10 percent of Roma households and individuals were ignored in the census and assuming, therefore, that the figure of 540,800 represents just 90 percent of

the real number of Roma, we may conclude that 600,000 Roma were living in Hungary in February/March 2003. If, however, we estimate that 5 percent of Roma households and individuals were left out of the census and assume, therefore, that the figure of 540,800 represents just 95 percent of the real number of Roma, then we may estimate the number of Roma living in the country at 570,000. Thus, we may say that in early 2003 there were between 520,000 and 650,000 people living in Roma households in Hungary.

The basic sampling unit of the survey is the household, that is, people living together in one dwelling. Not all people living in Roma households are Roma. In fact, non-Roma account for 5.9 percent of all adults recorded in 2003. In the 1993 survey, the non-Roma ratio was as much as 7 percent. The 2003 survey therefore shows a reduction in the ratio of mixed marriages over the 10-year period. In the 1993 survey, taking into account a moderate (5 percent) recording error, Gábor Kertesi and Gábor Kézdi estimated the number of non-Roma at 19,000. At present, non-Roma may account for 19,000–20,000 of the 570,000–600,000 people living in Roma households.

Who is Roma?

The 1971 survey classified as Roma all persons whom the surrounding non-Roma community considered to be Roma. The same principle was applied in the surveys of both 1993 and 2003.⁴ This was the only way to ensure full consistency in the selection of a sample population. Official records relating to the places of residence and addresses of Roma do not exist, and thus the selected method is the only means of compiling a sample. Clearly, a sampling population cannot be compiled by classifying as Roma anybody who identifies his/herself as Roma. As with other categories of Roma, records of such people do not exist and are not permitted.

Which individuals are regarded by the surrounding community as Roma? An attempt to answer this question was made in the article *A cigány nemzetiségi adatokról* [On Roma Ethnic Data].⁵ We here quote several paragraphs of the article:

The surrounding community regards people with dark skins or Roma ancestry as Roma. Further, if somebody's parents are Roma, he or she is considered to be Roma. Generally speaking, people who are half-Roma are also regarded as Roma. The point is that Roma are defined on the basis of their descent. In this sense, a professional who is known by his/her colleagues to be the child of Roma parents is considered to be Roma even if he/she says otherwise or denies having a Roma background. Evidently, there are some people who are not known to be Roma and who are able to conceal their ethnic background. But they are the exceptions. There are, further, some pale-skinned Roma who are able, under exceptional circumstances, to keep secret their ethnicity. They, too, are the exceptions. In general, descent will be the deciding factor. In 1989, László Márton wrote the following in his book entitled *Kiválasztottak és elvegyülők* [The Chosen Ones and the Mingled Ones]: "Evidently, Jewish descent is a reality;... the more it is a burden, the more it becomes reality; and while nobody is entitled to judge Jewish people for wanting to break free of a burden, it is worth their knowing (as Jews, in particular) that one cannot escape reality; and those that try to flee, find that their flight becomes a part of reality, the most destructive part." Obviously, the word Jew may be exchanged for the word Roma. Elsewhere in his book, Márton writes that "few are the people in whom an awareness of being Jewish is not activated by circumstances, in particular and oddly by the distorted fact that there are many people who conceal their Jewishness, or from whom it was concealed during childhood. And then, when such people become aware of their

background, the feeling of being shut out becomes irrevocable and final.” A person’s Jewishness is limited to his or her descent—to cite Márton once again—and this applies both to Jews and to non-Jews, that is, to an awareness of being Jewish among Jews and to being aware that someone is Jewish among non-Jews. This is also true of Roma, for they themselves are aware of their Roma descent, while non-Roma make a mental note of their Roma descent and call them Roma on this basis.

The people included in the first two surveys and the 2003 survey were regarded as Roma by the surrounding community. And they also saw themselves as Roma.

The 1993 survey sample comprised 2222 households. The questionnaire was completed on a voluntary basis. Respondents were told that it was part of a survey of the Roma population; they were included in the sample as Roma and responded to the questions voluntarily. The survey failed in 405 of the 2222 households, but in only 21 cases was this due to the fact that the respondents did not consider themselves to be Roma. (Households that dropped out were replaced by supplementary addresses.) The 2003 survey sample comprised 1165 households. The survey failed in 105 households, but in only 19 cases was this due to the fact that the respondents did not consider themselves to be Roma.

Regional Distribution

The regional distribution of the Roma population underwent changes between 1993 and 2003—just as it did between 1971 and 1993. The number of Roma and the regional share of the total Roma population increased significantly in the Northern region (counties of Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén, Heves and Nógrád). The numbers of Roma increased but the regional shares declined in the Eastern region (counties of Szabolcs-Szatmár, Hajdú-Bihar and

Békés), in the Great Plain region (counties of Bács-Kiskun, Csongrád and Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok), in the Budapest agglomeration (Budapest, and the counties of Fejér, Pest and Komárom) and in Southern Transdanubia (counties of Baranya, Somogy, Tolna, Veszprém and Zala). But the number of Roma and the regional share also increased in Western Transdanubia (counties of Győr-Moson-Sopron and Vas).

Table 1:

Regional Distribution of the Roma Population in Hungary⁶

	1971	1993	2003
Northern	20.4	24.3	32.1
Eastern	23.0	19.8	19.7
Great Plain	16.0	12.0	9.4
Budapest agglomeration	19.0	18.2	17.8
Southern Transdanubia	20.0	22.8	17.5
Western Transdanubia	1.4	2.9	3.5
Total	99.8	100.0	100.0

Table 2:

Size of the Roma Population in the Various Regions

	1971	1993	2003
Northern	65 000	114 000	183 000
Eastern	74 000	93 000	112 000
Great Plain	51 000	56 000	54 000
Budapest agglomeration	61 000	85 000	101 000
Southern Transdanubia	64 000	107 000	100 000
Western Transdanubia	5 000	13 000	20 000
Total	320 000	468 000	570 000

The tables show that although Roma live throughout the country, their distribution is not uniform. There are considerable differences in their share of the population by region and by county. In 1971 one in five Roma lived in the Northern region; by 2003 the ratio was almost one in three. The Roma share of the total regional

Table 3:
County Population Figures and Percentages in 2003

County	Roma Population	Percentage	
		of Hungary's Total Roma Population	of Total County Population
Bács-Kiskun	11 500	2.0	2.0
Baranya	28 900	5.1	7.1
Békés	43 300	7.6	10.9
Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén	99 300	17.5	13.3
Csongrád	15 800	2.8	3.7
Fejér	17 800	3.1	3.7
Győr-Moson-Sopron	11 900	2.1	2.7
Hajdú-Bihar	31 300	5.5	5.7
Heves	52 000	9.2	16.0
Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok	25 700	4.5	6.1
Komárom-Esztergom	3 500	0.6	1.1
Nógrád	31 300	5.5	14.2
Pest	20 400	3.6	1.9
Somogy	29 600	5.2	8.8
Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg	38 500	6.6	6.6
Tolna	11 900	2.1	4.8
Vas	7 500	1.3	1.8
Veszprém	15 800	2.8	4.2
Zala	13 300	2.3	4.5
Budapest	60 000	10.4	3.5

population is correspondingly high: Roma account for just over 13 per cent (almost 100,000) of Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County's population of 745,000, for 16 per cent (52,000) of Heves County's population of 325,000, and for 14 per cent (31,000) of Nógrád County's population of 219,000.

Twenty-three per cent of Roma lived in the Eastern region in 1971, while one in five did so in 2003. The Roma share of the regional population is smaller than in the Northern region, but it is still greater than the national average: Roma account for 6.6 per cent (38,500) of Szabolcs County's population of 586,000, 5.7 per cent (31,300) of Hajdú County's population of 552,000, and 10.9 per cent (43,000) of Békés County's population of 396,000.

In the Great Plain region, the ratio is above average in just one county—Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok. It is far below average in Bács-Kiskun County and Csongrád County. The Roma share of the population is relatively low throughout the Budapest agglomeration: only in Fejér County does it reach 4 per cent, while in Budapest it is 3.5 per cent. The Roma ratio is significantly above average in two Transdanubian counties—Somogy and Baranya, and it ranges between 4 per cent and 5 per cent in three further counties—Tolna, Veszprém and Zala. The Roma share of the total population is small in the western part of the country: 2.7 per cent in Győr-Moson-Sopron County, and 1.8 per cent in Vas County.

It should be noted that the sample comprised just 1 per cent of the Roma population. This limits the accuracy of both national and regional data. The sampling errors of county data are particularly grave.

Types of Settlement

Recent decades have also witnessed changes in the distribution of the Roma population by type of settlement. In 1971, 25,000 Roma—or just under 8 per cent of the total Roma population—lived in Budapest, the capital city. In 1993, 44,000 Roma lived in

Budapest—9.1 per cent of the total Roma population. In 2003, 60,000 Roma, 10.4 per cent of the total Roma population, lived in the city. The shift towards Hungary's provincial urban centers was even more pronounced. In 1971, 45,000 Roma, or 14 per cent of the total Roma population, lived in towns and cities outside Budapest. Between 1971 and 1993, the number of Roma living in such areas more than tripled—to 30.4 per cent of the Roma population. In 2003, 282,000 Roma, or 49.7 per cent of the total Roma population, lived in provincial urban areas.

Nevertheless, urbanization is only partly due to migration. Between 1971 and 1993—and again between 1993 and 2003—many rural communities were incorporated as towns. In this way, many Roma—and non-Roma—became urban-dwellers without ever migrating to urban areas. This process affected both Roma and non-Roma populations. Currently, 227,000 Roma, or 39.9 per cent of the total Roma population, still live in rural areas.

Table 4:
Population of Hungary by Type of Settlement, 1970

	Number	Percentage
Budapest	1 940 000	18.8
Provincial urban	2 708 000	26.3
Rural	5 667 000	54.9

Source: Hungarian Central Statistical Office

Table 5:
Population of Hungary by Type of Settlement, 1993

	Number	Percentage
Budapest	2 009 000	19.5
Provincial urban	4 566 000	44.3
Rural	3 736 000	36.2

Source: Hungarian Central Statistical Office

Table 6:
Population of Hungary by Type of Settlement, 2003

	Number	Percentage
Budapest	1 719 000	17.0
Provincial urban	4 863 000	48.0
Rural	3 560 000	35.0

Source: Hungarian Central Statistical Office

Table 7:
Roma Population by Type of Settlement, 1971

	Number	Percentage
Budapest	25 000	7.9
Provincial urban	45 000	13.9
Rural	250 000	78.2

Table 8:
Roma Population by Type of Settlement, 1993

	Number	Percentage
Budapest	44 000	9.1
Provincial urban	142 000	30.4
Rural	283 000	60.5

Table 9:
Roma Population by Type of Settlement, 2003

	Number	Percentage
Budapest	60 000	10.4
Provincial urban	282 000	49.7
Rural	227 000	39.9

Population Growth, Number of Births, and Age Distribution

In the 32-year period after 1971, Hungary's population grew in the first ten years and then declined. Hungary's total population figures are as follows: 10,352,000 in 1971; 10,709,000 in 1980; 10,375,000 in 1990; and 10,200,000 in 2001. Meanwhile the Roma population grew continuously from 3 per cent of the total in 1971, to 5 per cent in 1993, and to 6 per cent in 2003.

Among the Roma population, the number of live births per 1000 inhabitants was 32 in 1971 and 28.7 in 1993. In the 1993 survey report, we predicted a further decrease over the next 10–15–20 years. According to our survey, in 2002 the number of live births per 1000 Roma inhabitants was 25.3. It seems, therefore, that the number of births continued to fall after 1993. It should be noted, however, that our sample is not sufficiently large and that, owing to fluctuations in the number of births, conclusions should not be drawn from the data of a single year. For the various years, the number of live births in our sample was as follows:

Table 10:
**The Number of Live Births for the Various Years
in the 2003 Survey Sample**

Year	Number of Children within the Sample Born in the Given Year	Year	Number of Children within the Sample Born in the Given Year
1993	142	1998	150
1994	162	1999	146
1995	158	2000	144
1996	123	2001	150
1997	153	2002	137

Despite striking fluctuations, these figures show that after 1993 the number of births initially increased, then stagnated (with an exceptional fall in 1996), and finally decreased steadily between 1997 and 2002. It is possible that preferential mortgages for married couples with children compensated for the long-term trend of a reduction in the number of births. When evaluating the figures, one should also bear in mind the steady increase in the total Roma population over the period. The figure of 137 in 2002 relates to a substantially larger population than does the figure of 142 in 1993.

During the 22-year period between 1971 and 1993, the number of live births per 1000 Roma inhabitants fell by about 10 per cent. According to our survey, this decrease continued after 1993. By 2003, the number of live births per 1000 Roma inhabitants was 15–20 per cent lower than in 1971. An even more substantial decrease in the number of births was registered among the population as a whole. In 1970, the number of live births in Hungary per 1000 population was 15. The rate fell to 11.3 in 1993, and it has been lower than 10 since 1997.

The number of live births in Hungary was 152,000 in 1970, 116,000 in 1993, and 97,000 in 2001. According to the 1993 survey, in that year 13,000 Roma children were born in Hungary, accounting for more than 11 per cent of total live births. Based on the 2003 survey, the number of Roma children born in 2002 may be estimated at 15,000—or more than 15 per cent of all children born in Hungary. In 1971, 6 per cent of children reaching compulsory school age were Roma. This figure rose to 11 per cent in 1999 and will reach 15 per cent in 2008–2009. Further increases are expected thereafter.

Birth rates are far higher among the Roma population, but so is mortality. The combination of higher birth rates and higher death rates means that the share of under-15-year-olds among the Roma population is more than double the national average: 16.8 per cent of Hungary's total population but 37 per cent of Roma are aged

under 15. On the other hand, among the general population the ratio of people aged over 60 is five times higher than among the Roma population: 20.2 per cent of Hungary's total population but just 3.9 per cent of Roma are aged over 60.

Table 11:
Age Distribution of People Living in Roma Households
(percentage)

Age Group	1993	2003
0–14	35.4	36.8
15–19	11.8	10.3
20–24	9.4	9.1
25–29	7.5	8.7
30–34	8.0	7.7
35–39	7.6	6.5
40–44	6.0	6.4
45–49	4.0	5.0
50–54	3.2	3.1
55–59	2.4	2.5
60–64	2.0	1.6
65–69	1.4	1.3
70– x	1.6	1.0

If—of the two possible estimates—the figure of 570,000 is a more realistic estimate of the Roma population, then between 1993 and 2003 the Roma population grew by 10,000 per year, or by 100,000 over the 10-year period. If, however, 600,000 is a more realistic estimate, then the Roma population grew by 13,000 per year, or by 130,000 over the 10-year period. In comparison with the 1971 figures, the increase would be 250,000 (78 per cent) in the first case and 280,000 (87 per cent) in the second case.

The increase was even greater in comparison with 1893. According to our estimates, at that time 65,000 Roma lived in

regions that belong to Hungary today. Thus, between 1893 and 2003, the Roma population in Hungary grew ninefold.

Marital Status

Regarding legal marital status, there is no significant difference between Roma and non-Roma males. Twenty-one per cent of Roma males (aged 15 and over) marry before the age of 30. According to HCSO data for January 2003, the corresponding national ratio was 15 per cent. In all age groups, the ratio of single Roma males (those not legally married) was similar to the ratio of single males for the population as a whole. The number of divorced males among the Roma population is somewhat less than the national average, but this is due in part to a different age structure. Owing to the lower life expectancy of Roma, there are more widowers among the older age groups.

In many Roma communities, long-term relationships are regarded as proper marriages even when they are not officially recognized as such. Accordingly, we also collected data concerning persons living in such unions ("actually" married persons). Such data show that 36 per cent of males aged under 30 have married or lived in a union. Among Roma, the ratio of single males based on their actual marital status is significantly lower than the ratio of single males based on their legal marital status. Legally speaking, 46 per cent of Roma males are single, but in actual terms just 34 per cent are single.

In the survey sample of 2003, 72 per cent of females aged 15–29 were single. This closely mirrors the national figure of approximately 74 per cent. However, the married ratio among middle-aged Roma women is substantially lower than it is among non-Roma women. This discrepancy was absent among the male groups. As expected, there are more widows among Roma women aged 50–70 than there are among non-Roma women in the same age group. The discrepancy disappears among the oldest age groups.

Among women too, an examination of actual marital status gives a rather different picture. In terms of their actual marital status, barely more than half of Roma women aged 15–29 are single. In subsequent age groups, however, the share of married Roma women is close to the national average.

The data thus show that Roma are younger than average on their first marriage. On the other hand, the ratio of those who remain single is no lower than it is among other groups in society.

Table 12:
**Percentage of Single Men and Women
among the Roma Population and among the Population
as a whole, by age Group (January 2003)**

Men	Single		
Age Groups	Total Population	Roma Legally Single	Roma—Actually Single (Non-Cohabiting)
15–29	85.4	78.8	64.2
30–39	29.9	31.9	16.0
40–49	14.1	16.6	7.8
50–59	7.1	10.1	2.0
60–69	4.7	7.4	4.4
70–	3.5	(0.0)	(0.0)
Women	Single		
Age Groups	Total Population	Roma Legally Single	Roma—Actually Single (Non-Cohabiting)
15–29	74.2	71.6	53.2
30–39	16.6	28.4	14.4
40–49	5.9	12.8	6.9
50–59	4.1	3.9	3.3
60–69	3.3	8.0	5.7
70–	4.1	(13.9)	(8.3)

Source: *Statistical Yearbook 2002*, p. 48. Cf. *Cigányvizsgálat* [Survey of the Roma Population]. The figures in brackets are to be interpreted with caution due to the small number of cases.

Early marriage is often considered a feature of Roma culture. Another common preconception is that the traditions of Roma communities have been best preserved in rural areas.

Based on the 2003 survey data, at least one of these assumptions needs to be revised. For, in terms of their actual marital status, single people in their teens or twenties are almost as numerous in rural areas as in urban areas. Still, the number of persons subsequently remaining single is significantly higher in the provincial urban centers.

Table 13:

Percentage of Single Men and Women in the Various Age Groups by Type of Settlement (based on actual marital status)

Men	Single				
Age Groups	Rural	Provincial Urban	Budapest	Combined	N
15-29	62.9	66.9	52.5	64.2	726
30-39	16.3	18.5	(2.9)	16.0	374
40-49	7.1	9.8	(0.0)	7.8	308
50-59	1.8	2.5	(0.0)	2.0	149
60-69	3.4	6.5	(0.0)	4.4	68
70-	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	0.0	20
Combined	31.6	37.5	22.6		1645
N	662	837	146	1645	
Women	Single				
Age Groups	Rural	Provincial Urban	Budapest	Combined	N
15-29	52.9	55.3	43.4	53.2	780
30-39	8.4	23.4	(0.0)	14.4	388
40-49	3.9	10.0	(0.0)	6.9	304
50-59	1.8	4.8	(0.0)	3.3	153
60-69	2.3	12.1	(0.0)	5.7	87
70-	(11.1)	(6.7)	(0.0)	8.3	36
Combined	26.5	33.0	17.9		1748
N	672	892	184	1748	

The figures in brackets are to be interpreted with caution due to the small number of cases.

Roma living in the western half of Hungary tend to get married later than do those living to the east of the River Danube. The share of early marriages among Roma is particularly high in the Northern region. Here, persons who are, or have been, married comprise more than half of the 15-29 age group ("actually" married rather than merely legally married). Among Roma living close

to the western border, this ratio is less than 20 per cent. The central region of the country also exhibits a high share of marriages before the age of 30. But here the divorce rate is also high—even among younger age groups.

A comparison of the various ethnolinguistic groups fails to offer a clear picture. Beás native speakers tend to marry early, whereas those with a Beás ethnic identity who are not native speakers of Beás tend to marry late. The situation is the exact reverse among Vlach Roma.

The Number of Children Born to Roma Women

Data on the fertility of Roma women collected during the census of 1990 were published by Árpád Mészáros and János Fóti.⁷ The data relate to Romani native speakers (*cigány anyanyelvűek*) and to Roma with a Roma ethnic identity—rather than to the entire Roma population.

Table 14:
**Number of Children Born Alive per 100 Married Women
Aged 15 and over, 1990**

Age Group	Married Women		Married Women in Hungary
	Romani Native Speakers	with a Roma Ethnic Identity	
15–24	174	175	91
25–34	207	306	176
35–49	428	429	190
50 and over	531	546	205
Combined	358	354	188

Source: Mészáros and Fóti⁸

The value of the data is severely limited because, as in the census, Mészáros and Fóti classified as single women those Roma

women who were living in unions considered by Roma communities—in line with their customs—to be marriages. Elsewhere in their article, they state that, in the 30–39 age group, 5.1 per cent of the general population, 18.6 per cent of Romani native speakers, and 25.9 per cent of people with a Roma ethnic identity were cohabiting. The figures of 358 children born to 100 married native-speaker women and of 354 children born to 100 women with a Roma ethnic identity resemble the national figure of 362 children born to 100 women recorded in the Hungarian census of 1920. As Janky has demonstrated, the age structure of the Roma population in 1990 resembles the age structure of the Hungarian population as a whole in 1920.⁹

By 2003 a significant change had taken place in the fertility of Roma women. The table below presents the number of children born to married women of various age groups who were Romani native speakers or of Roma ethnic identity.

Table 15:
**Number of Children per 100 Married Women
Aged 15 and over, 2003**

Age Group	Married Women	
	Romani Native Speakers	with a Roma Ethnic Identity
15–24	150	219
25–34	314	293
35–49	323	351
50–	431	379
Combined	334	321

In 1990 the number of children indicated for Romani-speaking married women was 358. In 2003 the number of children indicated for Romani-speaking married women was 334, while for Beás-speaking married women it was 284. Taking the two groups together, the figure was 304—a 14 per cent decrease. The number of children indicated for married women with a Roma ethnic identity was

354 in 1990 and 321 in 2003—a 9 per cent decrease. One should note that more than 80 per cent of married Roma women are Hungarian native speakers (rather than Romani or Beás native speakers) and only a third of such women declared a Roma ethnic identity. Overall, the number of children born alive per 100 legally married Roma women was 305 in 2003. (The number of children born alive per 100 “actually” married Roma women was 284). The figures are significantly higher than the national figure of 188 for 100 married women, but they are also substantially lower than the rates in 1990. Thus, there was a clear decline in fertility—of an estimated 10–15 per cent—between 1990 and 2003.

As already noted, the number of children born alive per 100 women is lower among those who are “actually” married than it is among those who are legally married. But the difference is not particularly great. The following table demonstrates a similar situation among single women.

Table 16:
**Number of Children Born Alive per 100 Women
 Aged over 14, among the Roma Population
 and the Total Population**

Legal Marital Status	Roma	Total Population
Single	147.7	20
Married	305.3	188
Actual Marital Status		
Single	107.3	
Married	284.4	

There are also differences between the various language groups, but they are not significant.

Table 17:
Number of Children Born Alive per 100 Women
Aged over 14, by Native Language

Native Language	Number of Children per 100 Women
Romani	241.6
Beás	251.3
Hungarian	232
Combined	234

The differences between the various ethnic identity groups are somewhat greater, but they are not crucial.

Table 18:
Number of Children Born Alive per 100 Women
Aged over 14, by Ethnic Identity (self-identification)

Ethnic Identity	Number of Children per 100 Women
Hungarian	211.1
Hungarian Roma	245.7
Roma	251.5
Beás	267.1
Combined	234.4

There are, however, important differences according to the level of education.

Table 19:
Number of Children Born Alive per 100 Women
Aged over 14, by their Level of Education

Level of Education	Number of Children per 100 Women
Primary (grade 8)	270
Vocational	168
Secondary	161
Combined	241

We have already met with the argument that education is the cause and the smaller number of children is the effect. The relationship is not so simple, however. It is perhaps more accurate to

say that girls—and their families—face a choice at the end of primary school: Is the girl to continue her education or is she to have a child? Various factors will influence their decision. One factor is the availability of funds necessary for completing school. It is usually the better-off girls that complete vocational or secondary education. A willingness to adapt, integrate or assimilate among Roma families also influences whether or not a girl will go on to complete her education.

For the population as a whole, 7.5 per cent of married women in Hungary have no children, one-quarter have one child, 48 per cent have two children, and one-fifth have three or more children. Among the Roma population, 6 per cent of married women have no children, 10 per cent have one child, 23 per cent have two children, and 60 per cent have three or more children. It would be a mistake, however, to project the current figures and percentages back into the past, believing that “it was always like this.” In 2003, 33 per cent of Roma women had four or more children, but in 1920, nationally, the share of women with four or more children was 42 per cent. The following table serves to indicate the changes occurring between 1920 and 1990 (or 1993) and between 1990 and 2003.

Table 20:

**Breakdown of Married Women by the Number of Children
Born Alive—Census Data,
and Data from the Surveys of 1993 and 2003**

Total Population	Number of Children						Total
	0	1	2	3	4	5--x	Total
1920	17.9	16.6	12.5	10.0	9.2	32.9	100.0
1949	18.4	22.3	20.7	13.1	8.3	17.2	100.0
1970	13.8	29.2	31.0	12.7	5.8	7.5	100.0
1990	8.8	26.2	45.9	12.9	3.6	2.6	100.0
2001	7.5	24.9	48.6	13.9	4.2	0.9	100.0
Roma							
1993	3.3	13.3	23.5	23.0	14.5	22.4	100.0
2003	6.2	10.85	23.3	27.0	15.9	17.1	100.0

Two other points should also be made. The estimated fertility rates for Roma in the early 1990s were similar to the national figures for 1921. For example, in 1921 the number of children born alive per 1000 women aged 15–49 was 117. This same index was 112 among Roma between 1990 and 1993, based on the 1993 Roma survey. In addition, the age distribution of the Roma population was relatively similar to that recorded for the total population in 1921. Nevertheless, it would be wrong to state that current birth trends among Hungary's Roma reflect the childbearing features of the country's population in the years following the First World War. Among Roma, both the first and the last child are (it would seem) born to mothers at a younger age than was customary among the general population even 80 years ago. At the same time, however, the percentage of mothers bearing five or more children was not as high among the Roma in the early 1990s as it was among the general population in the 1920s.

An important lesson of the 2003 survey was that the childbearing propensity of Roma continued to fall in the decade following the political changes of 1989–90. The reduction was not particularly significant, but the trend may be clearly demonstrated. In the late 1990s, Márta Gyenei reported that, in a village surveyed by her, the number of children had increased among poorer Roma and non-Roma families.¹⁰ Gyenei considered the increase in the number of children to be a national phenomenon. She called it a demographic explosion that could be explained as the response of the poor to unemployment: poor people were having “strategic” children in order to gain family allowance and other social benefits. “One cannot escape the fact,” she wrote in *Népszabadság* on 14 November 1998, “that more and more women are having children in order to help provide for their families. They call them strategic children, because they form part of a household strategy, whose goal is survival.” At the same time, Gyenei also emphasized that “the system will only be profitable if the ‘costs of having a child’ are lower than

the amount that can be made from family allowance and other child benefits.” Gyenei’s data do indeed show an increase in the number of children among poor families living in the village surveyed by her and at the time of her survey. We think it quite possible that social benefits played a part in this, as well as the strategy supposed by Gyenei. In all likelihood, poorer Roma or non-Roma families in other villages pursued the same strategy too. Nevertheless, the data of the 1993 and 2003 surveys demonstrate that the factors reinforcing fertility weakened both between 1971 and 1993 and between 1993 and 2003.

Families do, of course, take family allowance into consideration when having children. Their calculations were clearly influenced by the rise in the level of family allowance—its highest level was in 1989 after two increases in 1988 and in 1989. But the decrease in its real value as of 1991 presumably had an effect, too. The extent of the rise and fall in the family allowance, measured in 1990 prices, was presented by András Gábos and István György Tóth in a study published in 2000.¹¹

Table 21:
**Family Allowance for Two Children,
Measured in 1993 Prices (HUF)**

1985	2832
1986	2690
1987	2687
1988	3680
1989	4176
1990	4140
1991	3807
1992	3397
1993	3195
1994	2690
1995	2098
1996	1698
1997	1854
1998	1816
1999	1636

We turn now to changes in the national live birth rates by age of mother. Between 1975 and 2001, the live birth rate per 1000 women in the 15–19 age group fell to less than a third of the previous rate. The reduction occurred in two stages. The rate fell from 72.1 to 39.5 between 1975 and 1990 and from 39.5 to 21.8 between 1990 and 2001. The change was just as rapid but far more significant in the 20–24 age group. The rate fell from 183.5 to 147 between 1975 and 1990 and from 147 to 65 between 1990 and 2001.

Studies conducted in the 1990s investigated the reduction in the number of children among women aged 20–24.^{13,14} The researchers established that in Hungary the average age of a woman at the birth of her first child used to be 20–22 (e.g. in the 1970s). Giving birth at a young age was regarded as characteristic of the eastern type of childbearing behavior—as against the western type, where the average age of a woman at the birth of her first child was 25–29. They postulated that in Hungary the western type would replace the eastern type, that the average age of a woman at the birth of her first child would rise to 25–29, and that the average number of children would also increase.

So far, their expectations have been only partly fulfilled. Between 1975 and 1999, the live birth rate for women aged 25–29 fell from 133.8 to 90.7. It rose in 2000 to 94.6 but declined in 2001 to 92.7. However, live birth rates have risen slightly among the 30–34 and 35–39 age groups.

The table shows that the most typical age of Roma women at the birth of their first child is between 20–24 rather than between 15–19. A further observation is that the ratio of children born to women aged 15–19 has fallen substantially over the past ten years. Moreover, the average live birth rate has also fallen significantly.

Table 22:
**Live Birth Rates per 1000 Women among the Roma Population
 and the Total Population by Age of Mother**
HCSO Data, and Data from the Surveys of 1993 and 2003

	15–19	20–24	25–29	30–34	35–39	40–49	15–49
Total Population							
1921	40.7	202.0	212.1	126.7		25.2	116.8
1930–31	40.9	158.5	151.8	110.7	74.8	15.7	88.0
1948–49	46.5	163.0	137.7	88.5	54.5	11.0	76.1
1969–70	51.0	162.2	111.1	52.8	19.0	2.3	56.6
1975	72.1	183.5	133.8	62.0	20.2	2.2	72.8
1990	39.5	147.0	115.2	46.8	16.4	1.6	49.4
1999	23.2	73.5	90.7	50.3	17.1	1.6	36.8
2000	23.3	70.1	94.6	54.4	19.2	1.7	38.1
2001	21.8	65.0	92.7	58.1	21.1	1.8	38.1
Roma							
1990/93	137.0	217.8	141.6	98.4	51.9	10.4	111.7
2002	121.1	219.2	133.8	64.1	48.7	6.8	102.2

The autumn 2001 edition of *Századvég* included an article by Judit Durst on childbearing customs in a rural Roma community. Roma accounted for 75 per cent of the 560 inhabitants of the village surveyed. The average age at the birth of the first child was 20–21 for the 30 Roma women born between 1950 and 1969, while it was 16–17 for the 20 Roma women born between 1970 and 1989. Judit Durst wrote, “young girls today are becoming mothers in adolescence, three years earlier than the previous generation, on average at the age of 16.” In the Roma community surveyed, the average age of giving birth for the first time had clearly shifted from the 20–24 age group to the 15–19 age group. It is likely that such a shift occurred in other rural Roma communities, too. Nationally, however, the reverse trend was true: the typical age for the first birth switched from the 15–19 age group to the 20–24 age group.

Size of Households. Number of Children per Household

In 2003, the average number of persons per Roma household was significantly higher than the national average. According to the 2001 data, the number of persons per 100 households was 257 in Hungary. Among Roma households, however, the figure was 464. The high number is linked to the financial position of Roma. Often several families share a household. Whereas nationally, according to the HSCO data for 2001, 26 per cent of households consist of a single person, among the Roma the figure was just 5 per cent. In 2001, nationally, 94 per cent of households consisted of a single person or family. But just 74 per cent of Roma households included in our sample fell into this category. The difference is still significant even accounting for any slight differences in the definition of household.

The above-average size of households also reflects a higher number of children. The number of persons per 100 households in the single-person/single-family category is 405, which is more than

1.5 times the national average for all types of household. We estimate that the number of children aged under 15 per 100 families (for the sake of comparability, we include single-person households as well as “families”) is 43 nationally, but 126 among the Roma. The average size of a Roma family is 3.43 (including single-person “families”).

The number of persons per household is no higher in rural areas than it is in the provincial urban centers or in Budapest. Slight regional differences are, however, apparent: households are smaller in the western part of the country than in the east. In Southern Transdanubia there are 421 persons per 100 households, whereas in the Eastern region (comprising the counties of Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg, Hajdú-Bihar, and Békés) the corresponding figure is 495. Thus, even in regions where smaller Roma households are typical, the average number of persons per household is significantly higher among the Roma population than it is among the non-Roma population. Differences based on the ethnic identity of household members are not particularly significant. The index is 494 in the case of households consisting mostly or exclusively of Roma, but 416 in the case of Beás households (this relatively low figure is an estimate based on just 43 households).

Married or cohabiting couples live in 56 per cent of the families registered in our survey. Excluding the single-person households or “families,” this ratio is 67 per cent. According to the roughly comparable HCSO index for 2001, 84 per cent of families include married or cohabiting partners.

The ratio of cohabiting couples interests us primarily in terms of the children. If we only examine families with children aged under 15, then we arrive at similar percentages to the ones above. At least 68 per cent of Roma families raising children and forming part of our sample are two-parent families. Based on HCSO data for 2001, the corresponding national rate may be estimated at 83 per cent. Although the divorce rate among Roma is no higher than

Table 23:
**The Number of Persons per Roma Household,
 the Number of Families per Household,
 and the Number of Children Aged under 15 per Family
 in the Various Regions of Hungary**

Region	Number of Persons per Household	Number of Families per Household	Number of Children Aged under 15 per Family
Budapest agglom.	4.69	1.32	1.34
Eastern	4.95	1.44	1.17
Great Plain	4.75	1.52	0.96
Northern	4.70	1.24	1.52
Transdanubia	4.21	1.31	1.06
Western	4.35	1.26	1.26
Altogether	4.64	1.33	1.26
N	1165	1165	1575

the national average, it is likely that separation (or widowhood) affects a larger proportion of families with small children. Though Roma households tend to be large and on average consist of more families than do non-Roma households, the proportion of parents raising their children alone (lone parents) still does not seem to be particularly low even if we consider only those parents that are raising children aged under 15 in single-family households. We estimate that 12 per cent of Roma households (or perhaps somewhat fewer) consist of single-parent families with at least one child aged under 15. Based on various HCSO reports, the estimated national average is just a third of this rate. (If single-person households are ignored, the rate for Roma households rises to 13 per cent and the national average to 5 per cent.)

The comparability of the figures is doubtful in the case of this index. In the course of our survey, which concentrated on households and dwellings, there was no opportunity to map out the precise relationships within small families. We may have overestimated the number of single-parent families. Further, based on our data, the proportion of single-parent Roma families may in fact be close to the national average. However, in the light of the data, it is highly unlikely that in Roma households, more children than the national average are being raised in two-parent families or at least in one-parent families benefiting from the assistance of local relatives (if comparisons of the percentages of children raised in the various family types were possible, we might be able to refine the analysis, and Roma might be more favorably portrayed). When analyzing the structure of the Roma population, we continue to reckon on a 68–32 per cent division in respect of families raising children aged under 15.

One-parent families account for one in four rural families raising children aged under 15. The corresponding rate in the provincial urban centers is 37 per cent (and 35 per cent in Budapest). The small number of cases prevents analysis of regional differences, but

the ratio of one-parent families is probably below average in the Northern region but quite high in Transdanubia. On the other hand, among the various ethnolinguistic groups, there appear to be no essential differences.

II. Ethnolinguistic Data

Native Language

Roma in Hungary comprise three main linguistic groups. These are as follows: Hungarian Roma [*magyar cigányok*], who speak Hungarian, identify themselves as Hungarian or Musician Roma, and are sometimes called Romungro; Vlach Roma [*oláh cigányok*], who speak two languages, Hungarian and Romani (Lovari and Kalderash dialects), and who identify themselves as Roma or Rom; and Beás people [*beások*], who speak two languages, Hungarian and Beás (dialects based on an archaic form of Romanian), and who identify themselves as Beás.

In the following, linguistic changes are outlined based on data for the years 1893, 1971, 1993 and 2003.

On 31 January 1893, one-third of the 280,000 Roma living in the Kingdom of Hungary¹⁵ were either immigrants who had entered the country after 1850 or the children of such immigrants. Hungarian was the native language of 38 per cent of the Roma population, while 30 per cent spoke Romani and 24 per cent Romanian (including the Beás dialects). The remainder spoke Slovak, Serbian, German, Ruthenian, Croatian or another language.

On territory that today belongs to Hungary, Hungarian was the native language of 79.5 per cent of the Roma, while 10 per cent spoke Romani and 4.5 per cent spoke Romanian. The remainder—6 per cent—spoke Serbian, Slovak, German, Ruthenian, Croatian or another language. Thus, there was a substantial difference between the country as a whole (now referred to as historical

Hungary) and the territory that now belongs to Hungary (present-day Hungary). And the difference was even greater between the territory of present-day Hungary and Transylvania. In Transylvania, in 1893, Romani was the native language of 42 per cent of the Roma, while 39 per cent spoke Romanian. On territory now belonging to Hungary, the Hungarian-speaking Roma tended to be the descendants of earlier immigrants, while the non-Hungarian speaking Roma population was made up of more recent immigrants. Thus, in Baranya County, where Vlach Roma and Beás had arrived from the south, Hungarian was the native language of just 53 per cent of the local Roma population. In Bács-Bodrog County, where Vlach Roma (23 per cent), Serbian Roma (39 per cent), and Beás (4 per cent) had arrived from the south, the Hungarian-speaking share of the Roma population was just 34 per cent.

By 1971, the breakdown based on native language was as follows: the share of Hungarian-speaking Roma had fallen from 79.5 per cent to 71 per cent; the share of Romani-speaking Roma had risen from 10 per cent to 21.2 per cent; and the share of Beás-speaking Roma had risen from 4.5 per cent to 7.6 per cent. In total, there were 320,000 Roma. Hungarian Roma numbered 224,000, Vlach Roma 61,000, and Beás 25,000. The Roma population was five times higher than before, the Hungarian Roma population four times higher, the Vlach Roma population nine times higher, and the Beás population eight times higher. Such large increases can only be explained by immigration. Most of the Beás living in Southern Transdanubia had immigrated from Croatia, but some of them had come from Romania. Most of them arrived in the country in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, but their immigration continued between the two world wars and immediately after the Second World War. It was during these same periods that most Vlach Roma arrived in the country across the southern border. In 1971 they accounted for one in five Roma living in Southern Transdanubia. Vlach Roma living in the counties of Bács, Csongrád and Szolnok

came from Serbia and from the Banat region of Romania. In 1971 they comprised 19 per cent of the three counties' Roma population. Vlach Roma living in the countries of Szabolcs, Szatmár, Bihar, Békés and Hajdú came from Transylvania and from Romania. Together with earlier arrivals, they comprised 22 per cent of the region's Roma population in 1971.

Before 1918, it was quite natural for Vlach Roma to move to areas that now comprise the counties of Borsod, Nógrád and Heves. And there were no real obstacles to such migration even between the two wars.

The Roma who were registered in 1893 as native speakers of Slovak, Ruthenian, Serbian or Croatian had either disappeared without trace or undergone language shift by 1971.

The period between 1971 and 1993 saw a large-scale language shift. The share of Vlach Roma (Romani-speaking Roma) fell from 21.2 per cent to 4.4 per cent and the share of Beás from 7.6 per cent to 5.5 per cent. Meanwhile, the Hungarian-speaking share of the total Roma population rose from 71 per cent to 89.5 per cent. In absolute terms, the Romani-speaking population fell to 21,000, while the number of Beás rose from 25,000 to 26,000. Most of the Roma that changed their native language continued to be bilingual. Thus, 53,000 Roma, or 11.3 per cent of the Roma population in Hungary, spoke Beás and Hungarian, and 52,000 Roma, or 11.1 per cent of the Roma population, spoke Romani and Hungarian. The percentage of bilingual Roma, as a proportion of the total Roma population, fell from 28.8 per cent to 22.4 per cent, but in absolute terms their number grew from 86,000 to 105,000.

The shift from Beás or Romani to Hungarian took place within a bilingual framework. In her description of this framework, Zita Réger has noted that one of the languages tends to be "the intimate, familial means of communication within a group" whereas the other is "used in education, in public offices, at places of work, and in contact with members of the other language community, and

even for intra-group communication when discussing matters of education, public offices, places of work, etc.”

The elimination of isolated Roma settlements between 1965 and 1985 contributed to the language shift. In 1971, 75 per cent of Vlach Roma and 48 per cent of Beás lived in such settlements. By 1993 the corresponding ratios had fallen to 4.9 per cent and 1.1 per cent. While they were living in segregated, isolated settlements, Roma were in contact only with members of their own group. But once they moved away, they came into daily contact with non-Roma and began speaking Hungarian regularly.

Language shift was boosted by the fact that in 1971, 84 per cent of Beás men and 75 per cent of Vlach Roma men were required to use Hungarian at work. At the same time, 30 per cent of women—or 50 per cent of them by the end of the decade—found themselves in a similar situation. They had no option but to speak Hungarian with health visitors, physicians, chemists and lawyers. Moreover, Hungarian was needed for administrative matters and for communicating in shops or at the market. Nevertheless, kindergartens and schools had the greatest effect. With a couple of exceptions, teachers at kindergartens and primary and secondary schools did not speak a word of Romani or Beás.

School education tended to assimilate Roma not just in childhood but later on, too. As adults, Beás and Vlach Roma recalled how they had done badly at school because of their poor Hungarian. Many of them wished to spare their children the failure and humiliation. So they spoke Hungarian with them even at home, and in this way Hungarian became the children's native language.

Beás and Vlach Roma whose knowledge of Hungarian was poor suffered discrimination and failure in the workplace, in public offices and elsewhere. Moreover, in the 1970s and 1980s, it seemed that knowledge of Hungarian and assimilation into Hungarian society was a guarantee of employment, income and housing. Changing one's native language seemed a sensible strategy.

Even in 1971, many people were surprised to discover that Hungarian was the native language of 71 per cent of Roma in Hungary. (The figure was widely cited in the 1980s and 1990s, and the 71 per cent figure is still often heard.) But even more surprising was the rapid linguistic assimilation of the Beás and Vlach Roma between 1971 and 1993.

It should be noted, however, that linguistic assimilation in Hungary is not limited to Roma but is a general phenomenon. For instance, the number of Croatian native speakers fell from 59,786 in 1920, to 21,855 in 1970, and to 17,577 in 1990. Serbian native speakers numbered 17,131 in 1920, 7989 in 1970 and 2953 in 1990. Romanian native speakers numbered 23,760 in 1920, 12,624 in 1970 and 8730 in 1990. The number of Slovak native speakers was 21,176 in 1970 and 12,745 in 1990.

The percentage of Beás native speakers continued to fall between 1993 and 2003—from 5.5 per cent to 4.6 per cent. Among Romani native speakers, however, the language shift came to a halt. Indeed, the share of Romani native speakers rose from 4.4 per cent to 7.7 per cent. Thus, among the Roma population as a whole, the percentage of Hungarian native speakers fell from 89.5 per cent to 86.9 per cent. Some Vlach Roma have moved from language shift to a reversal of language shift. The number of Beás-speakers was unchanged, while the Vlach Roma population rose to 44–46,000.

Table 1:
**Roma Population by Native Language
in 1893, 1971, 1993 and 2003 (percentage)**

	Hungarian	Beás	Romani	Other	Total
1893	79.5	10.0	4.5	6.0	100
1971	71.0	7.6	21.2	0.2	100
1993	89.5	5.5	4.4	0.6	100
2003	86.9	4.6	7.7	0.8	100

Source of the 1893 data: Hungarian National Royal Statistical Office¹⁶

Obviously, people have changing attitudes towards what constitutes the native language. In this context we refer to Tove Skutnabb-Kangas's definitions of native language. We do so based on an article by Miklós Kontra published in the January 2003 issue of the Hungarian magazine *Kritika*:

1. background—the first language learnt as a child
2. identification/identity
 - a) the language with which the speaker identifies;
 - b) the language with which the speaker is identified
3. the best known language
4. the usual language

Skutnabb-Kangas draws several conclusions from these definitions:

1. A person may have more than one native language.
2. A person's native language may vary, depending on the various definitions.
3. A person may change his/her native language perhaps several times in the course of his/her life.
4. We may place definitions of native language in a hierarchical order based on society's awareness of human language rights.

In the population census of 2001, the Hungarian Central Statistical Office announced that questions 23–25 were to be answered voluntarily. Question 23.3 asked: What is your native language?

The native language must be indicated, without prejudice, as the language learnt by the subject in his/her childhood (usually first), which he/she uses with family members and which he/she identifies as his/her native language.

The native language of mute persons and of infants that cannot speak yet is the language normally spoken by their next of kin. Since members of the ethnic minority population learn and speak in

childhood several languages to native level, three languages may be indicated.

The drafters of the census forms were not aware that they had made three different definitions of native language. Nor, of course, did they inform the census-takers.

Both in the population censuses and in the surveys of 1971, 1993 and 2003, the native language identified by a respondent was recorded as his/her native language. In most, but not all, cases, this was the language first learnt as a child. The native language identified by respondents is what we know for sure. In a great majority of cases, it is the same language as the language first learnt as a child. But in an unknown number of cases, this is not the case. As Skutnabb-Kangas has written, a person may change his/her native language several times in the course of his/her life. We might also add that a person's native language is sometimes a matter of choice.

According to the 1971 national survey, 61,000 (or 21.2 per cent) of the 320,000 Roma were Romani native speakers, while 25,000 (or 7.6 per cent) were Beás native speakers.

The census of 1990 recorded 48,072 Romani native speakers. But Beás native speakers were included in this number. School statistics suggest a Roma population at the time of 445,000. If this estimate is correct, the figure of 48,072 represented 10.8 per cent of the total Roma population. Thus, between 1971 and 1990, the combined sum of Romani and Beás native speakers fell from 86,000 to 48,000 and their share of the Roma population from 28.8 per cent to 10.8 per cent.

In the 1993 national survey, 5.5 per cent of respondents identified themselves as Beás native speakers and 4.4 per cent as Romani native speakers. The sum of these two figures is 9.9 per cent, which is close to the figure of 10.8 per cent recorded in the census of 1990.

The census of 2001 recorded a combined sum of 48,685 Beás and Romani native speakers. We estimate that the Roma population

was between 550,000 and 570,000 at the time of the census. Thus, by 2001, the combined share of persons identifying Beás or Romani as their native language had fallen to 8.5–8.9 per cent. Data on the numbers of Romani native speakers and Beás native speakers and the numbers of those speaking the languages at home could have been noted in *Nemzetiségi kötődés* [Ethnic Attachment], a volume published in 2002 on the basis of the 2001 census. Regrettably, however, the lengthy volume gave merely cumulative figures for Romani and Beás native speakers as well as for those speaking the languages at home.

The native language ratios demonstrate how the factors underlying language shift continued to exert an effect between 1993 and 2001. This is still the case today and it will remain so in the future.

At the same time, a reverse trend was set in motion by the Roma and Beás ethnic, linguistic and cultural movements, which provide social and economic opportunities to those joining them. The fact that assimilation no longer provided jobs, incomes and livelihoods also slowed down linguistic assimilation. It may have contributed to the renewed use of Romani by 23–24,000 people. A limited reversal of the language shift took place throughout the country, but it was particularly noticeable in urban areas—above all Budapest—and less so in rural areas. The proportion of Roma identifying Romani as their native language was 5.8 per cent in rural areas, 8.9 per cent in the provincial urban centers, and 9.6 per cent in Budapest.

Table 2:
**Roma Population by Native Language
and Type of Settlement in 2003 (percentage)**

Type of Settlement	Native Language				
	Romani	Beás	Hungarian	Other	Total
Rural	5.8	4.6	88.7	1.0	100
Provincial urban	8.9	5.5	84.7	1.0	100
Budapest	9.6	0.2	90.2	0.9	100
Total	7.7	4.6	86.9	0.9	100

In 1971, Romani native speakers accounted for 21 per cent of the Roma population. In other words, Vlach Roma made up 21 per cent of Hungary's total Roma population. Also to be noted is that in the 1993 survey the ratio of those who spoke Romani in addition to Hungarian was 11 per cent. All this greatly facilitated a shift back to Romani as the native language.

The higher percentages recorded in urban areas and particularly in Budapest were due in part to migration. Romani native speakers tended to be more mobile and could migrate more easily to urban areas. They were attracted to urban areas and especially to Budapest, and they were more inclined to look for and find livelihoods there. We consider the effect of political action, movements and campaigns to have been equally or even more important. There is little doubt that the effect of such movements, campaigns and political struggles was greater in urban areas and particularly strong in Budapest.

The percentage of Beás native speakers is slightly higher in urban areas than it is in rural areas. And hardly any Beás appear to have moved to Budapest.

Language shift and its reversal are proceeding within a bilingual framework. Currently, 40–43,000 people—7.1 per cent of the Hungary's Roma population—speak Beás and Hungarian, while 97–102,000 people—17 per cent of the total Roma population—speak Romani and Hungarian. In the course of ten years, the number of bilingual Romani-Hungarian speakers—or those declaring knowledge of Romani—has almost doubled.

The percentages of Croatian, Romanian and Slovak native speakers among the population as a whole continued to decline between 1990 and 2001. Apart from the Vlach Roma, the Serbs were the only other linguistic group to reverse the language shift. But the reversal was a small one in absolute terms, with the number of Serbian native speakers increasing from 2953 to 3388.

Table 3:
**Languages Spoken by Roma Population in 2003,
 by Age Group**

Age Group	Hungarian Only	Romani	Beás	Other	Total
0–6 years	88.1	8.0	2.8	1.1	100.0
7–14	80.1	12.0	5.0	2.9	100.0
15–19	76.9	13.0	4.5	5.5	100.0
20–24	73.0	17.2	6.2	3.5	100.0
25–29	72.1	17.3	8.2	2.4	100.0
30–39	65.6	19.7	10.4	4.4	100.0
40–54	65.7	20.9	10.5	2.0	100.0
55– x	61.7	20.5	12.6	5.3	100.0
Total	74.2	15.4	7.1	3.3	100.0

Ethnic Identity

Shifts may also be observed in terms of ethnic identity. A point worth underlining is that Roma who otherwise regard themselves as Roma may not always identify themselves as Roma at the time of a census. There are many who regard themselves as both Roma and Hungarian (or Hungarian and Roma). However, when asked to state their ethnic identity, they may choose to identify themselves as Hungarian (or Hungarian-Roma) rather than as Roma.

In the 1990 population census, 143,000 people identified themselves as Roma. Based on the school statistics from 1990, an estimate for the Roma population in that year is 440–450,000. That is to say, 32 per cent of all Roma identified themselves as Roma in the 1990 census.

In the 2001 population census, 190,000 people identified themselves as Roma. We already know that in the year of the census the Roma population in Hungary was probably about 550–570,000. If we accept the figure of 570,000, this would mean that

33 per cent of all Roma identified themselves as Roma. The ratio rises to 34.5 per cent, based on a total Roma population figure of 550,000. While the number of those identifying themselves as Roma increased, their share of the total rose only slightly.

When collecting data as part of the 1993 survey, we asked all respondents aged over 14 to state their ethnicity. Of more than 5000 respondents, 56.2 per cent identified themselves as Hungarian, 22 per cent as Roma or Vlach Roma, 18.2 per cent as Hungarian Roma, and 0.7 per cent as Romanian or Beás.

Among the 18 per cent of respondents who stated, in the 1993 survey, that they were Hungarian Roma, there were some—in the census of 2001—who identified themselves as Roma and some who identified themselves as Hungarian. It would seem likely that just over half said they were Roma and just under half said they were Hungarian.

In the 2003 survey, we asked respondents once again to state their ethnic identity. The results in the sample of 5408 persons were as follows: 37.8 per cent Hungarian, 29.8 per cent Hungarian Roma, 26.8 per cent Roma, 4.5 per cent Beás, and 1.0 per cent other. The 37.8 per cent of respondents who stated they were Hungarian in the 2003 survey probably identified themselves as Hungarian in the 2001 census. Likewise, the 26.8 per cent who said they were Roma probably identified themselves as Roma in the census, too. But the 4.5 per cent who said they were Beás in 2003 seem also to have identified themselves as Roma in 2001. In fact, they had no choice, since the 2001 census did not distinguish between Roma and Beás ethnic identities or between Roma and Beás native speakers. Instead, Roma and Beás were placed in a single category. Most of the 29.8 per cent of respondents identifying themselves as Hungarian Roma in the 2003 survey declared themselves to be Hungarian in the census of 2001.

There is no recognizable shift between the two censuses, but one may identify a shift between the 1993 survey and the 2003

survey: One-third of the 56 per cent of Roma who stated they were Hungarian in 1993 identified themselves as Hungarian Roma in 2003. Perhaps they felt themselves to be less Hungarian and more Roma than before. But the figures may indicate feelings of being less integrated and less part of Hungarian society and of being more segregated and discriminated against. Another small group who stated they were Hungarian in 1993 identified themselves as Roma (without the attribute “Hungarian”) in 2003.

In the 1993 survey, among the Roma population, 60.18 per cent of Hungarian native speakers identified themselves as Hungarian, 18.76 per cent as Hungarian Roma, 18.46 per cent as Roma, and 0.22 per cent as Beás. Thus, 60.2 per cent of Romungro considered Hungarian native speakers of Roma ethnic descent to be Hungarian in terms of their ethnic identity. On the other hand, these same people acknowledged that they were Roma inasmuch as they responded to a questionnaire whose explicit objective was to survey the situation of Roma families. They saw themselves as Roma, but as Roma of Hungarian ethnic identity.

In 2003, the ratio of Roma holding such a position fell to 38.6 per cent. The share of those identifying themselves as Roma rose from 18.46 per cent to 25 per cent, while the share of those identifying themselves as Beás increased from 0.22 per cent to 4.5 per cent. These people are probably the offspring of those who in 1971 still identified themselves as Romani or Hungarian native speakers. The increase in the two ratios may be attributed both to the effect of the minority organizations and to the failure of policies of assimilation. Even more striking is the increase in the percentage of those identifying themselves as Hungarian Roma, from 18.76 per cent to 32 per cent.

Since publication of the census data, which included ethnic data, many people have cited the finding that just 190,000 of the 600,000 Roma living in Hungary identified themselves as Roma. Nevertheless, our data demonstrate that although 60.2 per cent

(1993 survey) and 38.6 per cent (2003 survey) of Hungarian-speaking Roma identified themselves as Hungarian, nevertheless they still acknowledged that their background was Roma and that they belonged to the Roma community. They have no alternative, since the surrounding community pays close attention to their ethnic descent.

When Hungary's Minorities Act was being drafted, it was proposed that the Jewish community should be included as one of the country's national minorities. A majority of Jews in Hungary rejected this suggestion. In 1999, the Minority Studies Department of the Institute of Sociology, ELTE University, Budapest, carried out a survey of the Jewish population in Hungary.¹⁷ One of the points on the questionnaire related to the Jewish identity of respondents. There were five possible responses, including, at one end of the spectrum, "I am a Jew living in Hungary." This response was chosen as first preference by 23 per cent of respondents and as second preference by 16 per cent of respondents. At the other end of the spectrum was the response "I am Hungarian." This was chosen by 13 per cent as first preference and by 10 per cent as second preference. A majority of respondents chose responses indicating dual identity. The response "I am a Hungarian of Jewish religion (descent)" was chosen by 30 per cent and 25 per cent, while the response "I am both Hungarian and Jewish" was chosen by 24 per cent in both categories.

The ancestors of Jewish people currently living in Hungary immigrated to the country in the 18th and 19th centuries. Prior to their arrival, Hungarian was naturally not their native language. Today, Hungarian is their native language, and when asked in the 2001 census to state their ethnic identity, a great majority of Jews identified themselves as Hungarian. The ancestors of Romungro migrated to Hungary in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. Today, Hungarian is their native language, and when asked in the 2001 census to state their ethnic identity, a majority of them identified themselves as Hungarian.

A dual identity is clearly visible among respondents identifying themselves as Hungarian Roma. However, as we have already emphasized, we know that those identifying themselves as Hungarian also have a dual identity. And we can only guess the meaning of the choice of Hungarian Roma. Evidently, it could mean, "I am both Hungarian and Roma," but there may be another meaning, too. Use of the word Hungarian may be linked to the "Hungarian Musician Roma" identity of Romungro, to the envisaged place and prestige in Hungarian society of the Musician Roma, to the myth of an aristocracy within Roma society, and to an awareness of, and emphasis on, difference from Vlach Roma. Still, among those who used to see themselves as "pure" Hungarian but who now identify themselves as Hungarian Roma, perhaps we should look primarily to the bitter experiences of recent years, to discrimination and to segregation. For such people, Hungarian Roma form a separate ethnic entity, distinct from both the Roma ethnic group and the Hungarian ethnic group.

In the 1993 survey, 19 per cent of Beás native speakers identified themselves as Hungarian by ethnicity, 49 per cent as Roma, 8 per cent as Beás or Romanian, and 22 per cent as Hungarian Roma. In the 2003 survey, 39.8 per cent identified themselves as Hungarian, 32.8 per cent as Roma, 11.5 per cent as Beás or Romanian, and 15 per cent as Hungarian Roma. Thus, the trend exhibited by the group differed notably from that shown by Romungro. While many Romungro drew away from society, Beás people tended to choose the path to integration.

Among Vlach Roma too, one could observe an increased share of those identifying themselves as Hungarian and a decreased share of those identifying themselves as Roma. In the 1993 survey, 21 per cent identified themselves as Hungarian, 59.6 per cent as Roma, 2 per cent as Beás or Romanian, and 15 per cent as Hungarian Roma. In the 2003 survey, 29 per cent identified themselves as Hungarian, 42 per cent as Roma, 3 per cent as Beás and 17 per cent as Hungarian Roma.

Table 4:

**Roma Population by Native Language and Ethnic Identity
(Self-Identification) in 1993 (percentage)**

Native Language	Ethnic Identity					Total
	Hungarian	Hung. Roma	Roma	Beás	Other	
Hungarian	60.2	18.8	18.5	0.2	2.3	100
Romani	21.2	18.3	59.6	1.8	1.7	100
Beás	18.9	22.4	48.7	8.1	1.9	100
Total	56.2	18.2	22.0	0.7	2.9	100

Table 5:

**Roma Population by Native Language and Ethnic Identity
(Self-Identification) in 2003 (percentage)**

Native Language	Ethnic identity					Total
	Hungarian	Hung. Roma	Roma	Beás	Other	
Hungarian	38.6	31.9	25.1	4.2	0.2	100
Romani	29.3	17.1	42.3	3.2	8.1	100
Beás	39.8	15.2	32.8	11.5	0.7	100
Total	37.8	29.8	26.8	4.5	1.1	100

Both surveys exhibited a positive correlation between the level of education and Hungarian ethnic identity. There are three obvious explanations for this. First, the assimilating effect of school education. Second, those who participate in education tend to be those wanting to fit in and assimilate—those who want to be Hungarians. Third, the link with the native language. Hungarian native speakers have a higher level of school education and are more likely anyway to identify themselves as Hungarian.

The relationship is reciprocal in terms of employment status, too. Among employed persons, the mere fact of having a job tends to indicate an acceptance of Hungarian ethnicity. This is related to

the need for contact with colleagues at work (associated with the fear of losing one's job) and the fact that integrated or assimilated people find it easier to keep their jobs or find employment. The favorable position enjoyed by Hungarian native speakers in the labor market has strengthened the link between Hungarian ethnic identity and employment prospects. The level of school education is a further influential factor, because people with a higher level of school education generally choose a Hungarian ethnic identity.

In 1993 there was also a correlation between participation in Roma organizations and ethnic self-identification (the 2003 survey did not ask about membership of such organizations.) One might think that active members of Roma organizations would be less likely than average to identify themselves as Hungarian and more likely than average to identify themselves as Roma. In fact, however, the situation is not so clear-cut. While members of Roma organizations were more likely than other Roma to identify themselves as Roma, the difference between the two groups was not all that great. If we subscribe to the argument that Roma are those people who identify themselves as such, then we must also accept that almost 50 per cent of members of the Roma organizations in Hungary are not Roma.

III. Settlements, Housing and Migration

Settlements and Housing

In 1971, two-thirds of Roma lived in isolated or segregated Roma settlements. The inhabitants of Roma settlements accounted for 30 per cent of Roma living in Budapest, 52 per cent of Roma living in provincial urban areas, and 68 per cent of Roma living in rural areas. Nationwide, 65 per cent of Hungarian-speaking Roma and 75 per cent of Beás or Romani-speaking Roma lived in Roma settlements. In Budapest, 22 per cent of Hungarian-speaking Roma

and 52 per cent of Romani-speaking Roma lived in Roma settlements. In provincial urban areas, 74 per cent of Hungarian-speaking Roma, 62 per cent of Romani-speaking Roma, and 87 per cent of Beás-speaking Roma lived in Roma settlements. In rural areas, 68 per cent of Hungarian-speaking Roma, 80 per cent of Romani-speaking Roma, and 45 per cent of Beás-speaking Roma lived in Roma settlements.

Some of the Roma settlements had arisen spontaneously, while others had been artificially created. The settlements of Hungarian-speaking Roma were usually to be found on the outskirts of larger settlements, while those of Romani or Beás-speaking Roma were often, but not always, situated at some distance (frequently 4–5 kms) from larger settlements. In the past, the settlements of Hungarian-speaking Roma were also located at some distance from larger settlements, but they have often been swallowed up by expanding villages. The inhabitants of Beás settlements on the outskirts of villages previously lived in isolated forest settlements, but they moved closer to villages in the years preceding the 1971 survey.

We cite the following sentences from the 1971 survey report: In the settlements, Roma construct their own dwellings out of adobe or mud-and-wattle. They do not dig foundations or insulate walls. Floors are made of pounded earth, while doors and windows fit badly since they usually come from demolitions. The rooms are 9–12 square meters in size. Damp, rising from the floor or coming through the walls, permeates everything and rots clothing as well as the poor and inadequate furniture. It is very drafty due to poorly fitting doors and windows, but the windows are too small for proper ventilation. Gaps in the roof are common, so that the rain comes in. And even when there are no gaps, the roof still leaks. A fireplace is used for heating, but it only provides warmth until the fire goes out. Mould is common, the air is heavy and musty... The lack of

clean drinking water and latrines, as well as the discarded rubbish, result in high rates of infectious diseases such as dysentery, typhoid and hepatitis... In long-established settlements, dwellings are crowded together, because expansion beyond the settlement boundaries is impossible. This is also the primary obstacle to the construction of latrines. The area surrounding the settlement is full of discarded waste, rubbish, old belongings, and faeces... There is not enough space for a proper number of beds; people share beds or simply sleep on the floor. Overcrowding drives people mad, turning them against each other and making communal life difficult.

Official rehousing policies were crucial to the establishment of three types of new settlements. In the first type, Roma living in long-established settlements were rehoused in existing old buildings (farm granges, former worker hostels, abandoned distilleries, barns, etc.). Generally speaking, the authorities rehoused too many individuals in poorly maintained—often uninhabitable—non-residential buildings. The result was overcrowding, making communal life unbearable. Sanitary conditions were rarely better (if so, then only slightly) than they had been in the older settlements.

In the second type, Roma on the rehousing list were granted plots of land—where they could build their own shacks. And these were no better than the dwellings in the long-established settlements. Under the third type, Roma were rehoused in existing or newly built barrack-type settlements. Evidently, these too were no better than the older settlements.

Still, official rehousing policies were not the only explanation for new settlements. Sometimes they would arise when Roma built or purchased homes using their own resources. Prior to describing that process, we offer an overview of housing conditions in 1971.

There was no electricity supply in 44 per cent of Roma dwellings, including 39 per cent of Hungarian Roma dwellings, 48

per cent of Beás dwellings, 65 per cent of Vlach Roma dwellings, 21 per cent of dwellings in Budapest, 35 per cent of dwellings in provincial urban settlements, and 48 per cent of rural dwellings.

There was a supply of running water in 8 per cent of dwellings (55 per cent of dwellings in Budapest, 11 per cent of provincial urban dwellings, and 2 per cent of rural dwellings). A well was available on site in 16 per cent of dwellings (15 per cent of dwellings in Budapest, 8 per cent of provincial urban dwellings, and 18 per cent of rural dwellings). A well was available at less than 100 meters in 37 per cent of dwellings and at more than 100 meters in 39 per cent of dwellings. In provincial urban areas, a well was available at less than 100 meters in 43 per cent of dwellings and at more than 100 meters in 37 per cent of dwellings. In rural areas, a well was available at less than 100 meters in 38 per cent of dwellings and at more than 100 meters in 42 per cent of dwellings.

The table below shows access to water among Roma households of the various language groups.

Table 1:
**Access to Water among Roma Households in 1971,
by Native Language**

	Hungarian	Romani	Beás	Combined
Running water	9.7	4.5	3.9	8.1
Well on site	13.7	18.4	32.4	16.4
< 100 metres	35.6	39.5	31.8	36.7
> 100 metres	41.0	37.6	25.3	38.8
Total	100	100	100	100

A relatively large percentage of dwellings had no access to clean water even beyond 100 meters or at an even greater distance. The inhabitants of such dwellings were forced to drink contaminated water. The proportion of such dwellings was 16 per cent for the whole country, 14 per cent among Hungarian-speaking Roma, 14

per cent among Beás, 21 per cent among Romani-speaking Roma, and 37 per cent in the Eastern region.

Indoor flush toilets were available in 3 per cent of dwellings and outdoor flush toilets in 5 per cent of dwellings. A third of dwellings did not even have a latrine, and the ratio was 47 per cent among Romani-speaking Roma and 59 per cent in the Eastern region.

Two-thirds of Roma lived in adobe or mud-and-wattle huts, most of which lacked foundations. Such dwellings were most common in rural areas, but even in provincial urban areas most dwellings were built of adobe—as were more than a quarter of dwellings in Budapest.

Table 2:
**Construction Type of Dwellings Inhabited by Roma
Households in 1971, by Native Language
and in the Various Types of Settlement
Budapest**

	Hungarian	Romani	Beás	Combined
Brick, concrete, stone, concrete block	78.3	54.5		73.4
Adobe, with foundation	13.3	4.6		11.4
Adobe, without foundation	8.4	40.9		15.2
Total	100	100		100

Provincial Urban Areas

	Hungarian	Romani	Beás	Combined
Brick, concrete, stone, concrete block	42.7	64.3		45.3
Adobe, with foundation	15.3	14.3		15.9
Adobe, without foundation	42.0	21.4		38.8
Total	100	100		100

Rural Areas

	Hungarian	Romani	Beás	Combined
Brick, concrete, stone, concrete block	24.0	24.3	46.3	26.1
Adobe, with foundation	17.6	14.4	5.3	15.6
Adobe, without foundation	58.4	61.3	48.4	58.3
Total	100	100	100	100

Total

	Hungarian	Romani	Beás	Combined
Brick, concrete, stone, concrete block	32.1	32.2	44.7	33.0
Adobe, with foundation	16.9	13.4	6.8	15.3
Adobe, without foundation	51.0	54.3	48.5	51.7
Total	100	100	100	100

In 1971, 61 per cent of Roma households lived in earthen-floor dwellings and 14 per cent in stone-floor dwellings. The combined share of earthen and stone-floor dwellings was 68 per cent in provincial urban areas and 37 per cent in Budapest.

Table 3:

**Floor Type of Dwellings Inhabited by Roma Households
in 1971**

	Earthen	Stone	Insulated	Total
Budapest	15.2	21.9	62.9	100
Provincial urban	51.2	16.7	32.1	100
Rural	67.8	12.4	19.8	100

The number of persons per room (note that most rooms were no larger than 9–12 square meters) was greater than 2.5 in 69 per cent of Roma households and greater than 4.5 in 25 per cent of Roma households.

Radios were present in 35.5 per cent of Roma dwellings, and televisions in 24 per cent. When evaluating these two figures from 1971, one should consider that in 1969 there were, in Hungary as a whole, 115 radios and 75 televisions per 100 industrial worker households and 89 radios and 37 televisions per 100 agricultural worker households.

Washing machines and refrigerators were present in 4 per cent of Roma dwellings. In 1969, there were 76 washing machines and 37 refrigerators per 100 industrial worker households and 54 washing machines and 6 refrigerators per 100 agricultural worker households.

Our description of the situation in 1971 began by pointing out that two-thirds of Roma lived in Roma settlements. We should now point out that we did not classify isolated Roma dwellings lying outside villages and towns as Roma settlement dwellings. Nor did we classify groups of two or three Roma dwellings lying outside villages or towns as Roma settlements. Nevertheless, 76 per cent of Roma dwellings were situated outside villages and towns.

A policy of eradicating Roma settlements began in 1965. Home loans at reduced rates of interest represented its primary means. The Roma could use such loans to build dwellings that were smaller and of lower quality than the average family house. Such dwellings became known as houses of reduced value. Sometimes Roma used the loans to buy old peasant houses in villages with declining populations. The loan scheme initiated in 1965 was largely concluded by 1985. In 1964, prior to the advent of the scheme, 222,000 persons inhabited 49,000 Roma-settlement dwellings. By 1984, 42,000 persons were living in 6277 Roma-settlement dwellings.¹⁸

Table 4:
Roma Dwellings by Their Location in 1971

	Outside Village or Town		On the Outskirts		Within Village or Town		Total
	Roma Settlement	Not Part of Roma Settlement	Roma Settlement	Not Part of Roma Settlement	Roma Settlement	Not Part of Roma Settlement	
Hungarian Roma	12.0	2.7	29.3	5.2	24.3	26.5	100
Vlach Roma	20.8	5.3	26.6	5.8	27.0	14.5	100
Beás	39.1	2.0	10.8	14.7	6.9	26.5	100
Combined	16.1	3.1	27.3	6.2	23.0	24.3	100

At the time of the 1993 survey, 13.7 per cent of Roma—just over 60,000 people—lived in Roma settlements. By that time, however, long-established Roma settlements were less common. Most of the settlements surveyed were of the newer type. They had been established particularly in the Northern region and especially in Borsod County.

In 1997 the government of Gyula Horn adopted a medium-term action plan for improving the situation of the Roma population. The plan foresaw the holding of a population census in the Roma settlements. It was several years before the census actually took place, and even then it was deficient and inaccurate. According to the census, approximately 100,000 people lived in Roma settlements.

The survey of 2003 showed that 6 per cent of Roma, or 30,000 people, lived in Roma settlements.

The eradication of Roma settlements reduced but did not put an end to the segregation of Roma. Four out of five Roma moved from areas outside towns and villages to areas inside towns and villages. Once there, however, they soon encountered new forms of segregation. They built “reduced-value” houses, crowded together in areas set aside for this purpose, thus reproducing the previous segregation. Old peasant houses could be bought only in villages where it was difficult to make a living, which meant that people soon moved on. Moreover, house purchases by Roma accelerated the departure of non-Roma. This process was most notable in small villages and hamlets. As early as 1991, Károly Kocsis and Zoltán Kovács found that the share of Roma inhabitants was over 8 per cent in 675 municipalities, over 25 per cent in 94 municipalities and over 50 per cent in 9 municipalities.¹⁹ Since then, the number of settlements becoming Roma ghettos has risen substantially.

In 1987 Gábor Havas conducted research on villages that were becoming Roma ghettos in Baranya and Borsod counties.²⁰ According to data provided by the Roma Affairs Co-ordination

Committee of Baranya County, 15 per cent of the county population lived in villages of fewer than 1000 inhabitants that lacked a local council or co-operative centre. At the same time, 37 per cent of the county's Roma population resided in such villages. In the county as a whole, 148 villages fell in this category.

Roma comprised over 75 per cent of the population in three of the 148 villages. Their share was over 50 per cent in three further villages, more than one-third in ten further villages, more than 25 per cent in sixteen further villages, and more than 20 per cent in seventeen further villages. Thus, in Baranya County, there were in total 49 small villages that were becoming Roma ghettos. In this context, Havas identified a figure of 20 per cent as the critical level at which conflicts begin to multiply, the departure of non-Roma accelerates, and ghettoization becomes irreversible.

In 1984, Borsod County had 16 villages of less than 1000 inhabitants in which Roma comprised over 25 per cent of the population.

In 1991, Éva Fekete, a staff member of the Department for Northern Hungary, Center for Regional Research of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, carried out research in 76 settlements in Borsod County.²¹ Roma comprised more than 10 per cent of the population in two-thirds of the 76 settlements, more than 20 per cent in half of them, and more than 50 per cent in nine of them.

The same process has also been underway in the larger villages, towns and cities. Roma move in as non-Roma move out. In other words, they move to the neglected and dilapidated areas of towns and villages. The arrival of Roma hastens the departure of non-Roma, leading to a further deterioration in the situation.

In the 1993 survey, we also attempted to record the ethnic composition of the immediate neighborhoods of respondents. Thirty per cent of respondents said that only/mainly Roma lived in the vicinity, 29 per cent that both Roma and non-Roma lived in the vicinity, 29 per cent that mainly non-Roma lived in the vicinity, 9

per cent that no Roma lived in the vicinity, and 3 per cent that it was difficult to say.

In the 2003 survey we recorded the Roma share of the population living in the vicinity of respondent families. We separated the category “only Roma” from the category “mainly Roma.” The responses demonstrate escalating segregation. Twenty-five per cent of respondents said that only Roma families lived in the vicinity, while 31 per cent said that mainly Roma families lived in the vicinity (in 1993 these two categories together had amounted to 30 per cent). Twenty-two per cent of respondents said that both Roma and non-Roma families lived in the vicinity (compared with 29 per cent in 1993); 17 per cent said that mainly non-Roma lived in the vicinity (compared with 29 per cent in 1993); and 5 per cent said that no Roma lived in the vicinity (compared with 9 per cent in 1993).

In this field, there are great differences between the various types of settlement and between the various regions. In Budapest and in Pest County, 16 per cent of respondents said that only Roma families lived in the vicinity, 20 per cent that mainly Roma families lived in the vicinity, 29 per cent that both Roma and non-Roma families lived in the vicinity, 34 per cent that mainly non-Roma lived in the vicinity, and 1 per cent that no Roma lived in the vicinity. Even these figures indicate a significant level of segregation, and they are higher than in 1993.

A further indication of segregation is that 50 per cent of respondent families live in the inner zone of a settlement, 42 per cent on the outskirts, and 2 per cent at some distance from a settlement. Moreover, as we have already noted, 6 per cent live in segregated Roma settlements.

Based on these figures, we might think that 50 per cent of Roma live in segregation. However, almost a half of Roma living in the inner zones of settlements also live in segregation: 15 per cent of them live in neighborhoods inhabited only by Roma families and 29 per cent of them live in neighborhoods inhabited mainly by

Roma families. To sum up, of 1165 dwellings included in the survey, 483 (42 per cent) lie on the outskirts of a settlement, 23 (2 per cent) at some distance from a settlement, 73 (6 per cent) in segregated Roma settlements, and 254 (22 per cent) in the inner zone of a settlement but in a neighborhood inhabited exclusively or mainly by Roma. Thus, overall, 72 per cent of Roma families live in segregation.

As already noted, in 1971 two-thirds of Roma lived in Roma settlements in segregation. By the time of the 1993 survey, segregation had been greatly reduced. But in 2003, rates of segregation typical of 1971 were encountered once again. The form of segregation was different—because there were now far fewer Roma settlements—but the degree of segregation was the same.

It should be added that the rate of 72 per cent reflected the situation in the first quarter of 2003. Nevertheless, it was indicative of the gradual rise in segregation, and all indicators suggest the process will continue in the future.

In terms of the location and segregation of Roma dwellings, Budapest differs significantly from other urban areas and from rural communities.

Table 5:

A Distribution of Roma Households by Location of Dwelling, for the Various Types of Settlement in 2003 (percentage)

Location of Dwelling	Rural	Provincial Urban	Budapest	Total
Inner zone of a settlement	40.5	46.8	100	49.8
Outskirts of a settlement	54.7	39.7	-	41.6
At some distance from a settlement, but not in a Roma settlement	3.0	1.6	-	2.0
In a Roma settlement	1.7	11.3	-	6.3
Other	-	0.7	-	0.3
Total	100	100	100	100

Table 6:
**Residential Segregation of Roma Households
 by Type of Settlement in 2003 (percentage)**

People living in the vicinity of the family are...	Rural	Provincial Urban	Budapest	Total
all Roma	24.0	25.5	6.7	23.4
mainly Roma	31.9	33.6	23.3	31.8
a mixed population	24.5	19.0	29.2	22.3
mostly non-Roma	13.2	15.8	39.3	17.2
all non-Roma	5.4	5.2	1.7	4.9
It is difficult to say	-	0.5	-	0.3
Total	100	100	100	100

We have already noted that, in 2003, 6 per cent of Roma, or 36,000 people, lived in Roma settlements. Dwellings in Roma settlements were recorded in the counties of Békés, Borsod, Csongrád, Heves, Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok and Nógrád. In Budapest, Roma live in the inner zone of the city. Here, people living in the vicinity are all or mainly Roma in the case of 30 per cent of dwellings; the population is mixed in the case of 30 per cent of dwellings; and most of the population is non-Roma in the case of 40 per cent of dwellings. In rural areas, 60 per cent of Roma live on the outskirts of—or at some distance from—a settlement. In such areas, people living in the vicinity are all or mainly Roma in the case of 57 per cent of dwellings. Such figures demonstrate the magnitude of regional differences.

Table 7:
**A Distribution of Roma Households by Location of Dwelling,
 for the Various Regions in 2003 (percentage)**

Location of Dwelling	Budapest Agglom.	Eastern	Great Plain	Northern	Trans- Danubia	Western	Total
Inner zone of a settlement	70.1	21.6	39.6	54.3	51.1	71.4	49.8
Outskirts of a settlement	29.9	65.3	49.1	33.5	42.2	28.6	41.6
At some distance from a settlement, but not in a Roma settlement	-	1.9	0.9	1.9	4.9	-	2.0
In a Roma settlement	-	10.8	10.4	10.0	0.9	-	6.3
Other	-	0.5	-	0.3	0.9	-	0.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 8:
**Residential Segregation of Roma Households
 by Region of Residence in 2003 (percentage)**

People living in the vicinity of the family are...	Budapest Agglom.	Eastern	Great Plain	Northern	Trans-Danubia	Western	Total
all Roma	14.3	37.7	36.0	14.4	27.6	20.9	23.4
mainly Roma	19.2	26.9	24.0	47.9	29.3	14.0	31.8
a mixed population	32.0	22.2	8.0	24.1	18.7	14.0	22.3
mostly non-Roma	31.5	11.8	20.0	10.5	15.1	37.2	17.2
all non-Roma	2.0	1.4	12.0	3.0	4.3	11.6	4.9
It is difficult to say	1.0	-	-	-	-	2.3	0.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Housing conditions underwent a fundamental change between 1971 and 1993. In 1971, two-thirds of Roma lived in huts or shacks, but the proportion was 6 per cent in 1993. Currently, 5 per cent of Roma dwell in huts or shacks.

In 1993, one in three Roma dwellings were one-room dwellings, 43 per cent had two rooms, and 24 per cent had three or more rooms. In the same year, one-room dwellings accounted for 16 per cent of the total housing stock in Hungary, 43 per cent of dwellings had two rooms, and 40 per cent had three or more rooms.

In 2003, 28 per cent of Roma dwellings had one room, 42 per cent had two rooms, and 30 per cent had three or more rooms. One-room dwellings accounted for 12 per cent of the total housing stock in Hungary, 41 per cent of dwellings had two rooms, and 47 per cent had three or more rooms.

In 1993, 80 per cent of Roma dwellings were in brick, concrete or stone buildings, while 20 per cent were in adobe or mud-and-wattle buildings. Dwellings in brick or concrete buildings accounted for 96 per cent of dwellings in Budapest, 78 per cent in Miskolc, 74 per cent in other urban areas, and 52.5 per cent in rural areas.

In 2003, 77 per cent of dwellings were in brick, concrete or stone buildings and 19 per cent in adobe or mud-and-wattle buildings. There is no data for 4 per cent of dwellings. Dwellings in brick or concrete buildings accounted for 98.3 per cent of dwellings in Budapest, 82.6 per cent in provincial urban areas, and 64.2 per cent in rural areas.

The share of dwellings with earthen floors was 10 per cent in 1993 and 4 per cent in 2003.

In both 1993 and 2003, the share of Roma homes supplied with electricity was 98 per cent. In 1993, the share of Roma homes with running water was 65 per cent (95 per cent in Budapest, 75 per cent in provincial urban areas, and 55 per cent in rural areas). Water was drawn from a well on site in 10 per cent of homes, from a well

at less than 100 meters in 20 per cent of homes, and from a well at more than 100 meters in 5 per cent of homes. The share of homes with a toilet was 49 per cent (61 per cent in urban areas and 41 per cent in rural areas). Forty-eight per cent of homes had a bathroom.

In 2003, the share of Roma homes with running water was 72 per cent (94 per cent in Budapest, 68 per cent in provincial urban areas, and 67 per cent in rural areas). Water was drawn from a well on site in 6 per cent of homes. The share of homes with an indoor toilet was 51 per cent (59 per cent in Budapest, 54 per cent in provincial urban areas, and 44 per cent in rural areas) while 7 per cent of homes had an outdoor toilet (33 per cent in Budapest, 5 per cent in provincial urban areas, and 3 per cent in rural areas). In 2003, the share of Roma homes with a bathroom was 57.6 per cent (66.7 per cent in Budapest, 57.4 per cent in provincial urban areas, and 55.5 per cent in rural areas).

Among the Roma population, there were 2.27 persons per room in 1993 and 2.4 persons per room in 2003. In the same year, the share of persons with 5 square meters of living space or less was 9.3 per cent, while 26.5 per cent had between 5.1 and 10 square meters, 44.4 per cent between 10.1 and 20 square meters, and 19.7 per cent more than 20 square meters.

To many people the increase in residential segregation between 1993 and 2003 may seem surprising; it certainly requires explanation. We have already noted that even before 1990, Roma were able to move to those settlements—or parts of settlements—which non-Roma were leaving due to worsening conditions. In a research paper, Gábor Havas discussed the causes and effects of migration trends in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s.²² He examined the effects of government policies, such as the collectivization of agriculture and the merger of agricultural co-operatives, councils, schools and other public services. By the 1990s and 2000s, other factors had come into play: higher income and wealth differentials, and the efforts of better-off people to segregate or isolate

themselves. As they become richer and more capable of investment, households in the upper third of society move away to form new segregated residential areas, leaving their old residential areas empty. As a result of the economic crisis of the early 1990s, more than one million people lost their jobs, and they were still unemployed or inactive in 2003. Some jobless families moved to cheaper areas, to settlements and urban districts inhabited by poor people and by Roma.

At the time of the crisis, Hungary became divided geographically. Unemployment and the associated poverty were far less severe in the more developed central and north-western parts of the country than they were in the less developed northern, eastern, and south-western regions. The subsequent economic recovery, which began in 1997, eliminated unemployment and established relative prosperity in the central and western regions. But in the regions most affected by the crisis, unemployment, inactivity and poverty remained. The official jobless figures of 2002 serve, in part, to show the differences: 2.2 per cent in Budapest, 3.7 per cent in Pest County, 4.0 per cent in Győr-Moson-Sopron County, and 4.5 per cent in Vas County, but 16.7 per cent in Szabolcs-Szatmár County and 19.1 per cent in Borsod County. These figures offer only a partial indication, because differences between areas within regions were significantly greater. The more active move away from less favorable areas, leaving those who are not so mobile behind.

Segregation was accentuated by the home loan system and house construction, where attention was always paid to the strict segregation of Roma. But an even greater effect was had by urban rehabilitation schemes, whose stated aim and much-repeated achievement was the *cleansing* of whole districts—the removal of Roma.²³ Local authorities reinforced segregation by preventing Roma from moving into homes near non-Roma. Indeed, during construction work, separate streets were assigned to Roma and to non-Roma. Such conduct has become more common and more

serious over the past 14 years, and the trend looks set to continue. The degree of segregation has not peaked; worse is to follow.

*Migration*²⁴

In this chapter we address migration. In Hungarian statistical surveys, migration is defined as the movement (migration) of people across local administrative boundaries. In data published by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office, a distinction is also made between permanent and temporary migration. Permanent migration occurs when there is a change of permanent address. Temporary migration occurs when there is a change of temporary address. The 2003 survey did not investigate changes of address. However, on the 1993 survey questionnaire, we did record all changes of address. In addition to migration between settlements, we also considered changes of address within settlements if the new address was in a different part of a settlement. In the following, we disregard migration of people within settlements.

The 1993 survey variables relating to migration are only partially comparable with data provided by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office. In the former, we used a different method to distinguish permanent and temporary changes of address. The HCSO data were based on official forms for registering a permanent place of residence. While most people continue to register (even though they are no longer required to do so), some people clearly do not take the trouble. Indeed, some people even register a new permanent place of residence without ever actually moving there. The survey, on the other hand, registered cases of migration that were permanent in a substantial sense. In addition to cases of migration classified as permanent by the HCSO, the survey also contains data relating to cases of migration regarded as temporary by the HCSO. Nevertheless, when processing the 1993 data, we worked on the assumption that the survey migration data relate to cases of permanent migration.

A rougher but more reliable means of measuring migration is to compare the place of residence with the place of birth. Both the 1993 survey and the 2003 survey contain data in this regard. Such data may be compared with data from the 1996 micro-census and the 2001 population census. A relative certainty is that the sedentarization of Roma is not the product of recent decades. The 1893 census of the Roma population found that nine-tenths of the 257,000 Roma living in the Kingdom of Hungary in areas outside Budapest were completely settled. That finding is particularly noteworthy, given that the reason for the census was concern over what was regarded as the "problematic" nature of itinerant Roma. The findings showed that such "problematic" Roma were fewer than anticipated. In the course of the 100 years since the 1893 census, the nomadic groups have all but disappeared. Moreover, the findings of the 1993 survey disproved the existence of "semi-sedentarized groups of Roma."

Table 9:
Sedentary and Itinerant Roma in 1893,
Based on the Census of the Roma Population*

Definition of Group	Number Recorded	Percentage
Permanently settled	243 432	88.5
Temporarily settled	20 406	7.4
Nomadic	8 938	3.3
Military service or prison	2 164	0.8
Total	274 940	100.0

*Source: Hungarian National Royal Statistical Office²⁵

Based on data from the 1993 survey and the 1996 micro-census, and despite the limited comparability of data from these sources, we may conclude that in Hungary itinerancy is hardly more common among the Roma population than among the non-Roma population. The only significant differences relate to the rate

of permanent migration. But, based on sample data, the rate is unlikely to be more than double, say, the national average. An interesting difference may be observed if we examine the relative ratios of intra-county and inter-county migration, as part of total migration, during the period of Hungary's political transition. According to the retrospective data of the 1993 survey, between 1988 and 1993 roughly two-thirds of Roma migrants chose a new place of residence within their own county. Among the population as a whole, the corresponding ratio was approx. 55 per cent.

The 1993 survey and the 1996 micro-census show merely a small (but not negligible) difference between the Roma population and the population as a whole, in terms of the share of people residing at their birthplace. Once again, this contradicts those who claim that Roma are more inclined to migrate—especially since the difference observed contradicts their preconceptions about Roma itinerancy.

At the time of the 2003 survey, the number of Roma residing in places other than their birthplace was greater than the number of Roma residing at their birthplace. Still, the relative shift was not great and has, in fact, approached the national average in the past decade.

Table 10:

**A Comparison of Birthplace with Current Place of Residence,
for the Roma Population and the Population as a whole
Persons aged 15 and over (percentage)**

Birthplace and current place of residence...	Total Population 1996	Roma 1993	Roma 2003
differ	49.1	44.0	49.4
are the same	50.9	56.0	50.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Still, when evaluating the results, one should also take into account the lower average age of the Roma population. There may be more people among the Roma who have not *yet* moved away from their birthplace. For this reason, it is also worth examining the data by age group.

Table 11:

**Percentage of Persons Currently Residing in their Birthplace,
by Age Group**

Age Group	Total Population 1996	Roma 1993	Roma 2003
15–39	66.4	60.2	48.7
40–59	43.4	48.1	51.1
60–x	42.9	43.0	48.1
Total	50.9	56.0	49.1

In the approximate age-group distribution available to us in 1993, the findings largely resemble those we made when examining the aggregated figures. There was no indication that Roma were more or less likely than the population as a whole to move away from their birthplace at some time in their lives. The difference registered for the total Roma population may be attributed to the effect of its composition—the differing age structures of the Roma and non-Roma populations. The 2003 data show a different picture. The percentages of those who have moved away from their birthplace are the same among both younger and older age groups. Among middle-aged and older age groups, one may assume that the share of those leaving their place of birth after many decades fell considerably. Changes in the labor market may have contributed to this development. Jobs in industry no longer tempted Roma to move away. Some Roma may, possibly, have moved back to their place of birth, although we have no data on the volumes involved. Also worth noting is the increase in spatial mobility among young

people, who were probably looking for jobs. In the under-40 age group, the share of those who had moved away from their birthplace was the same among those in work as it was among other groups. Among middle-aged groups, however, those still residing in their birthplace were less likely to be in employment. However, in this age group, data indicating a low rate of migration tend to suggest a reverse process: people commuting to work (mostly from rural areas) had been the first to lose their jobs, and they were now the ones who had greatest difficulty in finding work (in urban areas). Another possibility is that some people who were unable to find work had moved back to their birthplace. The higher propensity of young people to migrate may indicate a strategy for starting a family, which leads them to look for inexpensive housing in another settlement. Such housing is most likely to be found in settlements isolated from the labor market. Thus, in certain cases, migration can actually reduce the chances of finding employment in the future.

A comparison of the type of settlement of birthplace with the type of settlement of place of residence in 1993, demonstrates a reduction in the number of rural inhabitants. The share of people residing in rural areas in 1993 was 10 per cent lower than the share of those born in rural areas. Half of the missing number had been swallowed up by the provincial urban areas, and half by Budapest. This reflects Budapest's relatively higher rate of growth. Just 3 per cent of the 1993 sample were natives of Budapest, but 8 per cent lived there. The rural-urban migration flow does not indicate, however, that larger settlements were generally more attractive to Roma. If we ignore Budapest, from which just 10 per cent of natives moved away, population retention capacity was no greater in urban areas than in rural areas. In the samples comprising all respondents, there are significant numbers of people in their teens or twenties who have yet to move away from their birthplace. This may give a false impression of the retention capacity of the various

types of settlement. But emigration from rural areas is not much more striking even among people aged over 29.

In 2003 the share of people residing in rural areas was no lower than the share of those born in rural areas (according to their present classification). A higher share of people residing in rural areas have a birthplace in an urban area.

Table 12:

**A Combined Distribution of Birthplace
and Current Place of Residence**

by Type of Settlement. In 1993, for Roma aged 30 and over*

Birthplace	Place of Residence			
	Rural	Provincial Urban	Budapest	Total
Rural	77.9	17.5	4.7	2168
	91.3	46.5	49.3	75.6
Provincial urban	24.3	67.9	7.8	639
	8.4	53.3	24.4	22.3
Budapest	9.7	3.2	87.1	62
	0.3	0.2	26.3	2.2
Total	64.4	28.4	7.1	100
	1849	815	205	2869

* Content of inner cells: upper figure = row percentage; lower figure = column percentage. Content of column aggregate cells: upper figure = row percentage; lower figure = sum of column elements. Content of row aggregate cells: upper figure = sum of row elements; lower figure = column percentage. Content of bottom right cell: upper figure = sum of row/column percentages; lower figure = total sample number.

An important finding of the 1993 survey was the low level of inter-regional migration in the 1970s and 1980s. Most migration by Roma took place within counties, affecting 2–3 per cent of the Roma population in any given year. Even so, there was a slow flow towards Budapest and the western parts of the country. The balance

of migration was probably negative in eastern Hungary and positive in the Budapest region and in Transdanubia. Levels of emigration were particularly high in the north-eastern region of eastern Hungary, but there were no signs of a large-scale population increase in western Hungary. The slight positive balance of migration in Transdanubia may have been the result of a small percentage of inter-regional migration. Most inter-regional migration took place between the eastern counties and the central region prior to the political changes of 1989–90. This explains why, despite the gradual population increase in western regions, in general people tended to migrate from Budapest to the east rather than to the west. The Roma share of the total population remained low in Transdanubia. In the 1970s and 1980s the most typical flow of inter-regional migration was from eastern Hungary to the Budapest region. But migration in the opposite direction was more than negligible. Indeed, rather uncertain—and perhaps distorting—data from the 1993 survey indicate that during the 20-year period preceding the political changes of 1989–90, the rate of emigration from the central region (including Budapest) to eastern Hungary was already greater than the rate of emigration from eastern Hungary to the central region. Still, it is also true that eastward migration from the Budapest region was directed mainly at the region between the Danube and Tisza, whereas migration towards the centre usually involved people from beyond the Tisza and from the north-east of the country.

If we compare the current region of residence of persons aged 15 and over in 1993 with the region of their birthplace, we draw the same conclusion as in the direct analysis of migration. The number of Roma residing in Budapest was greater than the number born there. But fewer were residing in the counties of Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg, Hajdú-Bihar and Békés in 1993 than had been born there, among those included in the sample. It is only when we examine data for people aged 30 and over that the above discrepancies

become relatively significant. By that time, the first instances of migration have taken place.

Nevertheless, owing to natural increase as well as the balance of migration, the regional distribution of the Roma population has altered significantly. This is due less to events in the two decades preceding the political changes of 1989–90 than to the substantial changes of the past decade. Recent years have seen a significant increase in the share of the Roma population living in the Northern region. At the same time, the share of the Roma population living in the Great Plain region has fallen steadily, and there has also been a reduction in Southern Transdanubia. Birth data indicate that regional differences in birth rates are responsible in part for these changes.

Table 13:

**Percentage Distribution of Roma Population
by Region of Residence Based on the Surveys of
1971, 1993 and 2003 (0– X years)**

Region	1971	1993	2003
Budapest agglom.	19.0	18.2	17.77
Eastern	23.0	19.8	19.69
Great Plain	16.0	12.0	9.39
Northern	20.4	24.3	32.17
S. Transdanubia	20.0	22.8	17.51
Western	1.4	2.9	3.46
Total	100	100	100

Different migration patterns may be observed among the various language groups. In the 1993 survey, differences were revealed in respect of native language and spoken language groups (although in the case of certain variables, the extent of deviation declined substantially when groups were defined on the basis of

spoken rather than native language). As far as migration is concerned, the age structure of the groups being compared is also relevant, since Roma whose native language is not Hungarian are older than average. Thus, using simpler regression models, we attempted to filter out the effects of disparate age structures. In terms of the number of places of residence, Beás deviated significantly from other groups in the Roma population in 1993. But the migration patterns of Romani native speakers were also slightly different from those of Hungarian native speakers. A model filtering out the effects of gender, marriage, age, language and regional variables verified this.

Table 14:

A Comparison of Birthplace with Current Place of Residence in 1993, by Native Language (percentage)

	Beás	Hungarian	Romani	Total
Different	62.5	43.9	47.7	45.1
Same	37.5	56.1	52.3	54.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total (persons)	277	4561	222	5060

Table 15:

Comparison of County of Birth with Current County of Residence in 1993, by Native Language (percentage)

	Beás	Hungarian	Romani	Total
Different	13.5	16.9	21.3	16.9
Same	86.5	83.1	78.7	83.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total (persons)	275	4471	221	4967

The findings were similar when we compared birthplace and place of residence in 1993. Still, Beás native speakers in the 1993 sample were slightly more likely to be living in the county or region of their birthplace than were Hungarian native speakers. But this slight difference should be evaluated in the light of the fact that Beás native speakers are significantly less likely than Hungarian native speakers to be currently residing in their birthplace. As already noted, the 1993 data showed that, generally speaking, these findings also apply to native speakers undergoing language shift. Still, an importance difference may be observed. Namely, whereas native speakers of Romani (based on native language identified) also differ in terms of their migration patterns from Hungarian native speakers, they do not always do so, based on spoken language. The 1993 data led us to infer that differences would be found in the migration patterns of the various groups of Roma. In line with our expectations, in the period preceding the survey, Beás changed their place of residence somewhat more frequently than the other groups. However, their group was characterized by local migration. Migration was also more frequent among Romani speakers, but the difference was not as great.

The 2003 survey did not permit a thorough examination of the migration data. Nevertheless, based on a comparison of birthplace and current place of residence, we may infer significant changes. Beás native speakers no longer deviate so significantly from the average. The share of those residing in their birthplace resembles that for the Roma population as a whole. This does not necessarily indicate a decreasing propensity to migrate among Beás, since the number of people identifying themselves as Beás native speakers is declining and their average age is increasing. People losing their linguistic identity are necessarily more mobile. However, even when broken down according to spoken language, the data still exhibit the same trend. Moreover, the share of young Beás native speakers residing in their place of birth

is similar to the corresponding share among other Roma in their age group. And it is no longer true that Beás tend to favor intra-county migration. The 2003 data indicate an increased spatial mobility among Romani native speakers. Among this group, it is the middle-aged that are more likely than average to have moved away from their birthplace. Further analysis may clarify the processes underlying such findings. The share of inter-county migration is particularly high in this group. The migration of Romani-speaking families may possibly account—more so than other factors—for the Roma ghettoization of poorer villages and districts. Still, based on spoken language, we were unable to identify a significant difference between the migration rates of Vlach Roma and Hungarian Roma.

Table 16:

**Comparison of Birthplace with Current Place of Residence
in 2003, by Native Language (percentage)**

	Beás	Hungarian	Romani	Other	Total
Different	53.7	48.2	56.6	(53.3)	49.4
Same	46.3	51.8	43.4	(46.7)	50.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total (persons)	190	2529	290	(30)	3039

Table 17:

**Comparison of County of Birth with Current County
of Residence in 2003, by Native Language (percentage)**

	Beás	Hungarian	Romani	Other	Total
Different	24.9	20.0	30.7	14.3	21.3
Same	75.1	80.0	69.3	85.7	78.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total (persons)	185	2490	283	(28)	2986

It is worth devoting a few sentences to differences between the sexes. In the 1993 survey, we found that women were more likely to reside in a settlement that was not their birthplace than were men. Forty per cent of men, but 50 per cent of women did not live in their birthplace. The explanation for this lies not only in differences in the age-sex structure, but also in customs associated with marriage. Thus, the ratio of those who had moved away from their birthplace was ten per cent higher among women even in the 15–29 age group. Data from the 2003 survey show that, in this regard, differences between the sexes have declined over the past ten years. Fifty-three per cent of women and 49 per cent of men reside in a settlement that is not their birthplace. Among the younger age group, the difference was slight: 45 per cent of men and 47 per cent of women aged 15–29 no longer live in their birthplace. In this age group, the ratio of men living somewhere else was one and a half times higher in 2003 than it had been ten years earlier.

The findings of the 2003 survey indicate that the Roma population's propensity to migrate has increased over the past decade. Particularly among young people, the data show an increase in spatial mobility. Persons aged under 40 are about as likely to reside in their birthplace as the middle-aged or older age groups. A further important observation is that, as a share of the total, inter-county migration has increased in relation to local migration.

IV. Roma and Education

In the representative survey of 1971, we recorded the educational histories of 3510 adult respondents. We found that 70 per cent of Roma aged over 59 had never been to school. They were born in the late 19th century or first decade of the 20th century and were of school age prior to the First World War. At the time, 40 per cent of Hungarian Roma children and 10 per cent of Vlach Roma children, but no Beás children, went to school. The latter could not have

gone to school, because they lived in isolated forest settlements at some distance from villages, and they did not speak Hungarian. Many Vlach Roma were traveling Roma, the so-called tents-dwellers, while others were classified as “temporary residents and not permanently settled” or were sedentary but living a long way from a school. Most Hungarian Roma children also lived a long way from a school. Even among those who did go to school, attendance was irregular, and few children completed more than two or three years of education. Less than one-fifth of children completed four years.

In the early 20th century, education at school was still not universal in Hungarian society. In 1870, 50 per cent of children aged 6–12 attended school, and the figure increased to 81 per cent in 1890 and 85 per cent in 1913. Most children completed four years or less of education and then began work at the age of 10. Many villages had no school; if there was one, it usually consisted of just one classroom.²⁶

Between the two world wars, the Hungarian authorities made great efforts to ensure that a broader section of the population attended school for at least four years. Such efforts accompanied the largely successful attempts to “settle” itinerant Roma. Even so, the 1971 survey revealed that 50 per cent of Roma in the 35–59 age group (those of compulsory school age during the interwar period) had never attended school. The school attendance rate increased among Vlach Roma from 40 per cent before the First World War to 60 per cent between the two world wars. The 10 per cent rate recorded among Vlach Roma and the 0 per cent rate recorded among Beás rose to 30 per cent. Most Beás attending school lived on the outskirts of villages, having abandoned the isolated forest settlements. Absenteeism was still common, and most Roma completed just two or three years of education. One-third of children completed four years of education. In the survey, 1 per cent of respondents aged 50–59 and 5 percent of respondents aged 35–49

had completed eight years of education. By 1930–31, the rate of children not attending school had fallen to 8 per cent among the non-Roma population, and it subsequently declined even further.

Major changes took place in education after 1945. Enacted in 1940, primary education (grades 1–8) became universal and compulsory in August 1945. Successive governments worked hard to implement the program. The percentage of children not attending school declined from 37 per cent among those of compulsory school age between 1943 and 1948 to 27 per cent among those of compulsory school age between 1948 and 1953. It then fell to 13 per cent for the period 1953–1957 and to 9 per cent for the period 1957–1962.

The percentage of children attending school increased most rapidly—from 30 per cent in the interwar period to 90 per cent after 1957—among Beás. In the 1971 survey, we explained this principally in terms of changes in settlement patterns. Having abandoned their isolated forest settlements, Beás moved to the outskirts of villages and began to move into villages. By way of interaction, the position of Beás in the employment structure had changed. Mining and industry were thriving in Baranya County, providing Beás men with employment and granting them higher incomes than elsewhere.

Among Hungarian Roma, the percentage of children not attending school fell more rapidly than it did among Vlach Roma. Among the former, it declined from 40 per cent in the interwar period to 6 per cent after 1957, whereas among the latter it fell from 70 per cent to 17 per cent. Roma in the 30–34 age group in 1971 were born between 1937 and 1941, reaching compulsory school age between 1943 and 1948. In this age group, the percentage attending school rose to 63 per cent, while 48 per cent had four years of education and 11 per cent eight years of education.

Roma in the 25–29 age group in 1971 were born between 1942 and 1946, reaching compulsory school age between 1948 and 1953.

In this age group, the percentage attending school rose to 73 per cent (27 per cent still did not attend school), while 53 per cent had completed four years of education and 16 per cent eight years of education. Roma in the 20–24 age group in 1971 were born between 1947 and 1951, reaching compulsory school age between 1953 and 1958. In this age group the percentage attending school rose to 87 per cent, while 63 per cent had completed four years of education and 27 per cent eight years of education.

The 27 per cent rate was a major achievement in relation to the 5 per cent rate recorded before 1945. Even so, three-quarters of Roma children still completed four years or less of education. In the 1971 survey, we drew attention to the fact that the rapid educational advance of the non-Roma population between 1945 and 1971 had resulted in a widening of the educational gap between Roma and non-Roma. We wrote: "There is a danger that the difference in education levels will become an ethnic characteristic, contributing to the development of a colored minority."²⁷

The following assessment was of even greater concern:

Roma children with less than seven years of education are almost completely illiterate. Apart from signing their names, they cannot write at all. They can only read capital letters and their comprehension skills are poor. This makes it more difficult for them to take part in the social division of labor, or it limits them to jobs that do not require formal education. There is a rapid rise in the number of unskilled Roma workers ... Another factor to consider is the restructuring of the country's economy and industry, which has already begun. Unskilled labor replicated itself in the 1950s, but not at the pace required by the increase in demand for unskilled labor. This meant that industrial expansion reached its own limits, forcing a change in direction. In the future, the demand for unskilled labor will decline or remain stationary rather than increase. Thus, one may foresee a surplus of Roma labor within a decade or two,

and it will be impossible to find employment for this surplus.²⁸

Perhaps, there is no need to add that our prediction came true within two decades.

In the 1993 survey, 77.7 per cent of Roma in the 20–24 age group had completed eight years of education (grades 1–8). This was the achievement of the 22 years since 1971.

Although a favorable change, it proved insufficient. By 1993, even Roma with eight years of education faced long-term unemployment if they had no other school education.

As in the 1971 survey, in 1993 we traced the educational histories of adults in order to monitor changes in school attendance and levels of education. Roma in the 35–39 age group in 1993 were born between 1954 and 1958, reaching compulsory school age between 1960 and 1965. In this age group, 6 per cent had no school attendance, while 55 per cent had completed eight years of education. Roma in the 30–34 age group in 1993 were born between 1959 and 1963, reaching compulsory school age between 1965 and 1970. In this age group, 3 per cent had no school attendance, while 70 per cent had completed eight years of education. Roma in the 25–29 age group in 1993 were born between 1964 and 1968, reaching compulsory school age between 1970 and 1975. In this age group, 2.5 per cent had no school attendance, while 75 per cent had completed eight years of education. Roma in the 20–24 age group were born between 1969 and 1973, reaching compulsory school age between 1975 and 1979. In this age group, 1 per cent had no school attendance, while 77.7 per cent had completed eight grades of primary education. But eight grades did not always mean the normal eight years of education. On completion of primary education (grade 8), most Roma children were considerably older than the standard age of 14 or 15.

In the 1990s, among the general population, 81–82 per cent of children completed primary education (grade 8) at the age of 14. The cumulative ratio increased to 90 per cent for children aged 15 and 96 per cent for children aged 16. Among Roma, however, just 31.3 per cent of students were aged 14 on completion of primary education (grade 8). The cumulative ratio increased to 43.6 per cent for children aged 15, 62.7 per cent for children aged 16, 64.4 per cent for children aged 17, and 77.7 per cent for children aged 18. The later a student completed his/her primary education, the less real knowledge lay behind the qualification.

An explanation for the delay was that Roma parents tend to enroll 7-year-olds rather than 6-year-olds at school. In 1993,

- 38.7 per cent of Roma 7-year-olds were enrolled in grade 2,
- 31.5 per cent of 8-year-olds in grade 3,
- 33 per cent of 9-year-olds in grade 4,
- 31.2 per cent of 10-year-olds in grade 5,
- 33 per cent of 11-year-olds in grade 6,
- 33 per cent of 12-year-olds in grade 7,
- and 27.5 per cent of 13-year-olds in grade 8.

We also observed regional differences in school attendance and education levels in 1993. For instance, the proportion of Roma 25–29 year-olds with eight years of education was

- 75 per cent for the country as a whole,
- 84 per cent in the Budapest agglomeration,
- 74 per cent in the Northern region,
- 73 per cent in the Great Plain region,
- 72 per cent in the S. Transdanubia region,
- and 70 per cent in the Eastern region.

There were also significant differences by type of settlement. The proportion with eight years of education was 84.5 per cent in Budapest,

76 per cent in provincial urban areas,
and 73 per cent in rural areas.

The greatest differences, however, were registered by native language.

The proportion of Roma 25–29 year-olds with eight years of education was

78 per cent among Hungarian native speakers,
58 per cent among Beás native speakers,
and 52 per cent among Romani native speakers.

In terms of education levels, the 2003 survey demonstrated a continuation of the figures recorded in 1993. In 2003, 79 per cent of 35–39 year-olds, 81 per cent of 30–34 year-olds, 80 per cent of 25–29 year-olds, and 82.5 per cent of 20–24 year-olds had completed primary education (grades 1–8). The 2003 survey revealed a lack of progress in the sense that Roma children continue to be older than average on completion of primary education. Eighty-four per cent of 15-year-olds, 48 per cent of 16-year-olds and 19 per cent of 17-year-olds were still at primary school. In February 2003, 64 per cent of 17-year-olds and 76 per cent of 18-year-olds had completed primary education (grades 1–8).

Even so, a significant change was observed among Beás native speakers. As already noted, in 1993, 42 per cent of Beás-speaking 25–29 year-olds had not completed primary school education. By 2003, however, this ratio had fallen to 22 per cent. Thus, in 2003, in the 25–29 age group,

19 per cent of Hungarian native speakers,
22 per cent of Beás native speakers,
and 34 per cent of Romani native speakers
had not completed primary school education.

In the 20–24 age group,
16 per cent of Hungarian native speakers,
15 per cent of Beás native speakers,
and 28 per cent of Romani native speakers
had not completed primary education.

For many years, young Roma coming out of primary school had little chance of going on to vocational secondary school or grammar school. They were limited to industrial trade schools, just one of the three possible options. But even at this type of school, participation rates were not very high. In 1993, 13 per cent of Roma aged 25–29 and 16 per cent of Roma aged 20–24 had completed industrial trade school, and many of them had qualifications in trades with poor employment opportunities.

Few Roma went on to vocational secondary school or grammar school, and of those who did, half dropped out. Just 1.5 per cent of each cohort completed secondary school education in the 1970s; 2 per cent in the 1980s.

The situation began to change at the time of the political transition of 1989–90. The survey of 1993 showed that 3 per cent of Roma who were aged 20–29 in that year had completed secondary education. This was somewhat more than the 2 per cent recorded in the 1980s.

The perspectives and ambitions of young Roma also changed. Fifty-one per cent of Roma students completing grade 8 of primary education in 1993 continued their education: 9.4 per cent at vocational primary school, 30 per cent at industrial trade school, 10 per cent at vocational secondary school, and 0.6 per cent at grammar school. In some cases, of course, to say that such children continued their education is inaccurate and misleading. The figures merely record enrolment in the various institutions, that is, how many children began to study there; and many of them soon dropped out. In the same year, 56 per cent of non-Roma began

studying at vocational secondary school or at grammar school. Thus, opportunities improved only for some, and the gap between most Roma young people and non-Roma young people grew.

A book entitled *Cigány gyerekek az általános iskolában* [Roma Children at Primary School] by Gábor Havas, István Kemény and Ilona Liskó contains data and analyses about students' study plans. According to a survey conducted by the authors in 1999–2000, 62 per cent of Roma students completing primary education in 1997 went on to industrial trade school and 13 per cent to secondary school (9.3 per cent to vocational secondary school and 3.7 to grammar school). In 1998, 58 per cent went to industrial trade school and 16 per cent to secondary school (12 per cent to vocational secondary school and 3.8 per cent to grammar school). In 1999, 57 per cent went to industrial trade school and 19 per cent to secondary school (15.4 per cent to vocational secondary school and 3.6 per cent to grammar school).²⁹

One reason for the changes was that grammar school places increased by 40 per cent and vocational secondary school places by 70 per cent between 1985 and 1996. Admittance to such schools became easier. A second reason was the steady decline, after 1989, in the number of children completing primary education in Hungary. The total figure fell from 171,000 in 1989 to 114,000 in 1999. There were, therefore, fewer non-Roma students competing for places. A third reason was the introduction of normative funding in education. This motivated secondary schools to take on, and keep, as many students as possible. Children were in demand, and since there were not enough non-Roma children, Roma children were needed as well. The situation resembled the labor shortage of the 1960s and 1970s, when Roma workers were recruited for the mining, metallurgy and construction sectors—indeed, ultimately for almost every industrial sector. Now, half-empty schools were trying to fill up the schools with both non-Roma and Roma children.

Evidently, some grammar schools, and even some vocational secondary schools, could still pick and choose among applicants. Nevertheless, the above conclusions are valid for secondary schools overall.

In the 2003 survey, we looked once again at further study intentions. We found that 26 per cent of Roma students completing primary education wanted to go on to industrial trade school and 24.5 per cent to secondary school (14 per cent to vocational secondary school and 10.5 per cent to grammar school). Five per cent did not want to continue their education and 46 per cent had not made any decision.

Thus, the number and proportion of young Roma continuing their education and enrolling at secondary schools has increased in recent years. The 2003 survey presented the first evidence of this process.

As we have seen, the proportion of Roma children with primary education admitted to secondary school was 13 per cent in 1997, 16 per cent in 1998, and 19 per cent in 1999. Of such students, those admitted in 1997 and 1998 should have completed their secondary education by the time of the 2003 survey.

We found that 10.2 per cent of 15–19 year-olds were studying at secondary school and 1.1 per cent had completed secondary education. Among 20–24 year-olds, 1.7 per cent were studying at secondary school and 5.1 per cent had completed secondary education. We do not know how many of the 10.2 per cent of 15–19 year-olds currently attending grammar school or vocational secondary school, will complete their secondary education. It is quite possible that the proportion completing their secondary education will fall to 5–6 per cent in this group too.

The drop-out rate has always been high among Roma students. Teachers of Roma students used to say that about a half of Roma children enrolled at secondary school would actually complete their secondary education. But Ilona Liskó showed that, in fact, almost

two-thirds of Roma students drop out of secondary school in the initial two years.³⁰ At any rate, a 5 per cent rate is less than half the 13, 16 or 19 per cent rate. Does this mean that the "great breakthrough" is to result in a rate of five per cent? It seems more likely, however, that the share of Roma students completing secondary education will be 20 per cent or higher within several years.

This conclusion is based on our estimate that 15–20 per cent of Roma families have reliable incomes and live above the poverty level. For it costs money to complete secondary education. Only Roma families living above the poverty level are able to raise the necessary funds. And such families are generally willing to pay the extra cost, because they have learnt that it is impossible to find a job without secondary education.

As Gábor Havas has written, the first to recognize this fact were those who set out on the slow, but relatively secure, path to social integration during the more favorable period of the 1970s and 1980s. In other words, Roma who acquired a trade or even completed secondary education, those with proper living conditions, a stable income and life-style, and those who had managed to adapt after the political transition. It was such people who became the leaders of local minority self-governments and civil society organizations. Successful Roma business people should also be included among this group.

As we have seen, secondary education became both a possibility and a rational choice in the 1990s. It would not have been a rational choice in earlier periods of full employment and no fear of displacement. At that time, people with secondary education had no advantage in terms of wages. The costs of further study did not pay off. In the 1990s, however, people who only had primary education lost their jobs, and income differentials widened between people with secondary education and those without. Today 20 percent of Roma parents are in a position to send their children to secondary school. The others—four-fifths of Roma parents—are unable to do

so. In the population as a whole, 70–80 per cent of parents send their children to secondary school. Regardless of government policy and action, it would seem unlikely that the ratio could be more than 70–80 per cent of Hungarian society—if defined in terms of those who successfully complete secondary education rather than those who merely enroll in secondary school. Evidently, the 20–30 per cent of the population without secondary education will be disadvantaged in the labor market. In fact, four in five young Roma face unemployment. Moreover, in 2002 almost one in five Roma children did not even complete primary education. Thus, the educational gap between Roma and non-Roma young people has not lessened.

We have already underlined how a lack of financial resources prevents four out of five Roma families from sending their children to secondary school and from helping them to complete secondary education. It is worth recalling that in 1993 and in early 2003, 60 per cent of married Roma women had three or more children. Furthermore, it is more difficult and costly to send children to secondary school in rural areas, particularly in villages with poor transport connections.

In addition to the financial difficulties, other factors, such as low kindergarten attendance rates, prevent Roma children from performing well at school. Data from the 1993 survey show that 40 per cent of Roma three-year-olds, 54 per cent of four-year-olds, and 72 per cent of five-year-olds were in pre-school education. It should be noted that such education is compulsory from the age of five—although this is merely a formal stipulation. Kindergartens and government authorities seem to be satisfied with the 72 per cent rate. In many communities, pre-school education amounted to just four hours of compulsory sessions weekly. Some Roma children were unable to attend kindergarten due to a lack of places. Many villages had no kindergarten, while in other villages Roma children were not admitted to kindergarten due to a lack of space.

Financial concerns were another factor. Sándor Loss wrote: "One-third of parents said they were too poor to send their children to proper kindergartens; the children did not have the right clothes or shoes."³¹

The situation was worse in 2003. In that year, just 41.5 per cent of Roma 3–5 year-olds attended kindergarten, while 58.5 per cent did not. When evaluating the data, one should note that kindergarten is officially compulsory for one-third of 3–5 year-olds (i.e. for 5-year-olds).

Generally speaking, children need to spend three years at kindergarten. In Hungary one of the most important activities at kindergarten is preparing children for school. Children can only cope with their first year at school if they have already attended three years of kindergarten. This is especially true for Roma children, most of whom do not have access to books, newspapers, magazines, pens and paper at home and whose families use a language that differs completely from the language at school. Many Roma 3–5 year-olds do not learn the words and customs that become familiar to other children at kindergarten. This makes it more likely that they will be assigned to the remedial class.³² But even those Roma children who remain in the mainstream class find it more difficult to keep up. Meanwhile, skills and abilities learnt automatically by pre-school children are more difficult to catch up on later on, and this makes the situation even worse.

In this field, there are major differences by type of settlement. In Budapest, 44.2 per cent of Roma children do not attend kindergarten, but the corresponding ratio is 59.6 per cent in provincial urban areas and 61.4 per cent in rural areas.

Regional differences are even greater. The share of children not attending kindergarten is 44.6 per cent in the Budapest agglomeration, 56.4 per cent in the Great Plain region, 57.1 per cent in the Western region, 60.3 per cent in the S. Transdanubia region, 62.4 per cent in the Eastern region, and 62.7 per cent in the Northern region.

Another disadvantage is that most Roma children are at least seven years old, rather than six years old, at the start of primary school. The 1993 survey showed that 38.7 per cent of Roma children were six years old on commencing grade 1. Even now, 38.7 of Roma children are six years old when they start school, while 52.6 per cent are seven years old, and 8.7 per cent are even older. This initial delay is made worse by subsequent failures and the need to repeat grades. According to parents and children, 18.4 per cent of children lose at least one school year and 10.7 per cent more than one school year.

As early as 1971, we concluded that segregation is one of the main obstacles to learning faced by Roma students. In an article³³ published in the January 2001 edition of the magazine *Beszélő*, we wrote that the first Roma classes were introduced in schools around the time that Roma children who had not attended school before were being integrated into the education system. Ministerial instructions issued in 1962 stipulated the formation of Roma study groups. The number of Roma classes was 70 in 1962, 94 in 1963 and 181 in 1974.

Teaching conditions were poorer in such classes than in other classes. Teachers were less informed and the demands on students were less strenuous; it was easier to get good marks. The Roma classes were initially designed to be temporary, but they turned out to be permanent: children were never transferred from Roma classes to mixed classes.

Arguments against segregation finally persuaded the authorities to abandon their original position. A decree issued by the Council of Ministers in 1985 declared that "Roma classes should gradually be discontinued."

Thereafter, central government did not establish any Roma classes and gave no support to their establishment. Other factors, however, tended to increase the segregation of Roma students. Such a factor was selection between schools and selection between parallel classes within schools. This process began in the 1960s and

is still underway today. The 1971 survey report established the following: "Selection occurs when a child is enrolled in grade 1—on strict social lines, which may or may not be acknowledged. Where there are two parallel classes, Roma children and disadvantaged non-Roma students are put in Class B. And where there are three parallel classes, they are put in Class C... Where Roma children are sufficiently numerous, they will often be the only students in Class C. Elsewhere, they are grouped together with other socially disadvantaged children."³⁴

Residential segregation, discussed in the chapter *Settlements and Housing*, accentuates the process of segregation in schools.

Residential segregation and selection/segregation between schools and within schools are topics addressed in the book—cited above—by Gábor Havas, István Kemény and Ilona Liskó. According to the authors:

- In the school year 1999/2000, Roma students accounted for more than 50 per cent of students in 1230 classes in schools in Hungary. Approx. 13,300 Roma children were studying in such classes;
- The share of Roma children was more than 75 per cent in as many as 740 classes. Approx. 10,300 Roma students were studying in such classes;
- Approx. 770 classes had only Roma students, and about 9000 children were studying in such classes;
- Thus, at least one-third of Roma primary school students (37,000 of 93,000) were studying in classes with a majority of Roma students.

In the 2003 survey, we asked respondent families about the composition of their children's classes at school. The responses were as follows: 3.4 per cent—only Roma children in the class; 9.1 per cent—mainly Roma children in the class; 53.9 per cent—the class is mixed; 32.5 per cent—mainly non-Roma in the class; 1.9 per cent—don't know.

Obviously, these responses reflected families' knowledge of class composition rather than the real circumstances. We estimated that there were 9000 Roma children attending all-Roma classes in 1999/2000. The responses in 2003 put the number at 5000. The "mainly Roma children" response roughly corresponds to a ratio of more than 75 percent: our estimate in 2000 was 10,300, and based on the responses in 2003 we may estimate the number of children attending such classes at 13,200. On the other hand, classes in which Roma account for 50–75 per cent of students were probably called "mixed" by families.

The table below shows great differences by type of settlement. In Budapest, 7.7 per cent of Roma children attend all-Roma classes, while 14.2 per cent attend classes where most students are Roma. The corresponding ratios are 3.6 per cent and 10.4 per cent in provincial urban areas and 1.9 per cent and 6.0 per cent in rural areas.

Table 1:

**Roma Students by the Composition of their Classes at School.
Percentage Distributions in the Various Types of Settlement**

Composition of Class	Rural	Provincial Urban	Budapest	Total
Only Roma children	1.9	3.6	7.7	3.4
Mostly Roma children	6.0	10.4	14.2	9.1
Mixed	60.7	54.0	32.5	53.9
Mostly non-Roma children	31.1	30.5	44.4	32.5
Don't know	0.4	1.5	1.2	1.0
Total	100	100	100	100

Another type of segregation is when Roma children are placed in special schools or remedial classes. As early as 1971, we concluded in our survey report that "remedial classes are to be found almost everywhere near larger Roma settlements" and that "in effect, these are used as Roma schools."

In the school year 1974/75, 7730 Roma children, or 12 per cent of Roma students, attended special schools or remedial classes. By the school year 1985/86, their number had risen to 15,640, or 18 per cent of Roma students.

During this period, primary schools assigned many Roma children to remedial classes even though the children were not mentally handicapped but simply lived in poor conditions and were slow to learn and badly behaved. Many people were critical of this practice. In the first half of the 1970s, Budapest council commissioned Endre Czeizel, assisted by 24 institutions, to examine the mental state of the 1364 children attending the city's 21 remedial schools or the three special schools for the mentally handicapped. The results of the inquiry were published in 1978.³⁵

The most important finding was that while 49.3 per cent of students at remedial schools were indeed mentally handicapped, 50.7 per cent of them were normal. These figures were based on taking an IQ of 70 as the boundary between disability and normality, as recommended by the WHO. Still, the conductors of the inquiry did not propose the transfer of normal children to regular schools. Instead, in a "complex assessment procedure," they classified 62 per cent of the children as disabled, 31 per cent as retarded, and 7 per cent as average. Then they established whether or not individual children among the 7 per cent group of average students should have been placed in special remedial education.

In the 1970s and 1980s, István Kemény, Zita Réger, Ottilia Solt and many others criticized the practice of sending disadvantaged children with learning disabilities to remedial schools. The criticism led to the adoption of Act I of 1985 on Education, which

declared leaving certificates issued by remedial schools to be the equivalent of those issued by primary schools, and which also tightened up the conditions for placing children in special remedial schools.

In fact, leaving certificates issued by remedial schools became only nominally equivalent to those issued by regular primary schools: remedial school was still a dead-end for children. Nevertheless, stricter rules governing the placement of children in such schools and a change in the general atmosphere led to a persistent decline in the number of children classified as mentally handicapped and placed in remedial schools. According to the HCSO yearbooks, 39,572 children were attending remedial schools or classes in 1985. And the number fell to 36,516 in 1988 and to 33,595 in 1990. The trend continued after the political changes of 1989–90. In 1992, 32,437 children were attending special schools or remedial classes.

In an article entitled *Roma gyerekek és a speciális iskolák* [Roma Children and Special Schools], Katalin Pik analyzed data provided by the Ministry of Education.³⁶ According to the data, in total 39,395 students attended remedial schools in 1985/86 and 32,099 in 1992/93. Meanwhile, the number of Roma remedial students was 15,640 in 1985/86 and 13,602 in 1992/93. Ministry of Education data were also published in a chapter of *A cigány népesség Magyarországon* [The Roma Population in Hungary], a book by Gábor Kertesi and Gábor Kézdi. The data showed that there were 88,182 Roma primary school students in 1992/93, of whom 74,241 attended regular schools and 13,941 remedial schools. The percentage of Roma children attending remedial schools or classes had thus fallen to 15.8 per cent—from 18 per cent in 1985.

Kertesi and Kézdi also published related data from the 1993 survey. In the survey, students attending remedial schools or classes accounted for 11.6 per cent of total Roma students. Clearly, in

this area, the educational statistics are more authoritative than data from the representative survey. In the survey, parents were asked to state whether their child attended special school or remedial classes. The term "special school" probably embarrassed some families, while other parents may not have been aware that their child was attending a remedial class at school.

Between 1985 and 1992, there was a gradual but steady reduction in the number of children classified as mentally handicapped and placed in remedial schools or classes. And, within this decline, there was also a steady reduction in the number of Roma students classified as mentally disabled and sent to remedial schools or classes. There was also a decline in the share of remedial Roma students as a percentage of total Roma students.

At the same time, however, as the following table shows, there was an actual increase in the share of remedial Roma students as a percentage of total remedial students. This was because the number of remedial Roma students fell more slowly than the total number of remedial students.

Table 2:
Roma Students in Remedial Education

Academic Year	Number of Students		Share of Roma Students	
	Total students	Roma students	as a percentage of total Roma students	as a percentage of total remedial students
1985/86	39 395	15 640	18.0	39.7
1992/93	32 099	13 662	15.8	42.6

Source: Pik³⁷

Since 1994 the number of children classified as mentally handicapped—and thus placed in remedial schools or classes—has been increasing. As a percentage, the increase is particularly steep

in light of the steady decline in the total number of primary school students since 1989—from 1,183,573 in 1989 to 930,386 in 2002/2003. Meanwhile, the number of children classified as mentally handicapped has risen from 32,000 in 1992 to 37,026. Thus, as a percentage of total students, the share of mentally handicapped children increased from 3.1 per cent in 1992 to 4 per cent in 2003.

The cited book by Gábor Havas, István Kemény and Ilona Liskó provides estimates of the share of Roma children attending remedial schools or classes as a percentage of total Roma students. When making such estimates, we used the finding of the survey that 7 per cent of Roma children and 1 per cent of non-Roma children attended remedial schools or classes and that 84 per cent of remedial students were Roma. Overall, therefore, we estimated that between 18 and 22 per cent of all Roma students attended remedial schools or classes.

According to the 2003 survey, in the first quarter of 2003, there were 115,000 Roma primary school students aged 7–14 and 23,000 Roma primary school students aged 15–18. Thus, the total number of Roma primary school students was 138,000. Eleven thousand students, or 8 per cent of the total, attended special remedial schools (9000 in the 7–14 age group and 2000 in the 15–18 age group). And 9000 students, or 6.5 per cent of the total, attended remedial classes (approx. 7500 in the 7–14 age group and 1500 in the 15–18 age group). The combined sum of Roma students attending special schools or remedial classes was 20,000, or 14.5 per cent of the total.

At the same time, we were almost certain that the relative and absolute numbers of children at special schools or in remedial classes are even higher—for the same reasons as in 1993.

If the actual statistics in 2003 differ from the parental survey data to the same extent as they did in 1993, then we might well conclude that 19.7 per cent of Roma children have been classified as mentally handicapped and placed in special schools or remedial classes—where teaching stops at the level reached in grade 6 of

regular schools and where some subjects are not taught at all. Although the leaving certificate issued in such schools or classes is the legal equivalent of the leaving certificate issued in regular schools, nevertheless, in practice, children from remedial schools are unable to enroll in secondary schools.

It is possible, of course, that parental responses were closer to the truth in 2003 than in 1993. Even so, the share of Roma students attending remedial schools or classes must now be between 14.5 per cent and 19.7 per cent, and it is probably closer to 19.7 per cent. Moreover, 1.5 per cent of Roma children attend low-number classes and 1.7 per cent catch-up classes, that is, classes where fewer demands are made and where Roma children are segregated from non-Roma children.

Astonishing differences may be observed between rural and urban areas in terms of the placement of children in special schools. Special school pupils account for 6.2 per cent of total students in rural areas, 7.8 per cent in provincial urban areas, and 12.3 per cent in Budapest. Such differences demonstrate the arbitrary manner in which children are classified. It is surely unreasonable to believe that, based on any objective criteria, the share of mentally handicapped children in Budapest would be twice as high as it is in rural areas.

Regional differences are even greater and even more remarkable. In the Great Plain region, 3.9 per cent of children are sent to special schools, but this figure rises to 5.3 per cent in the Northern region, 7.8 per cent in the Eastern region, 9.2 per cent in the S. Transdanubia region, 10.8 per cent in the Budapest agglomeration, and 11.1 per cent in the Western region.

Differences between the types of settlement and between the regions are just as great in terms of the placement of children in remedial classes. The combined sum of students at special school or in remedial classes is 10.4 per cent in rural areas, 16.7 per cent in provincial urban areas, and 20.8 per cent in Budapest. In the

regions, it is 6.0 per cent in the Great Plain region, 13.4 per cent in the Northern region, 14.5 per cent in the Eastern region, 15.0 per cent in the S. Transdanubia region, 18.6 per cent in the Western region, and 19.2 per cent in the Budapest agglomeration.

The percentage of young Roma going on to college or university is far lower than the 5–6 per cent who successfully complete their secondary education. Just 1.2 per cent of 20–24 year-olds are studying in higher education. Thus, whereas 40 per cent of young people in the non-Roma population go to college or university, among young Roma the corresponding ratio is just one in a hundred. Kálmán Gábor published tables showing the ethnic composition of first-year college and university students in the academic year of 2001/2002.³⁸ The first question on the questionnaire was: Do you have any Bulgarian, Roma, Greek, Croatian, Polish, German, Armenian, Romanian, Ruthenian, Serbian, Slovak, Slovene, Ukrainian, Jewish or other ancestry? Among respondent full-time students, 2.8 per cent indicated Roma ancestry, 2.8 per cent Croatian ancestry, 4.7 per cent Polish ancestry, 18.8 per cent German ancestry, 3.4 per cent Romanian ancestry, 1.0 per cent Ruthenian ancestry, 3.9 per cent Serbian ancestry, 9.4 per cent Slovak ancestry, 5.6 per cent Jewish ancestry, 0.6 per cent Bulgarian ancestry, 0.7 per cent Greek ancestry, 0.8 per cent Armenian ancestry, 0.7 per cent Slovene ancestry, 0.9 per cent Ukrainian ancestry and 4.9 per cent some other ancestry. Based on these responses, however, it would clearly be wrong to conclude that 9.4 per cent of first-year students in 2001/2002 were Slovak, or that 4.7 per cent were Polish, 3.9 per cent Serbian, 18.8 per cent German, and 2.8 per cent Roma. Likewise, it is mistaken to state that 2.8 per cent of students were Roma. A person cannot be said to have a Roma background just because one of his/her eight, sixteen or even more ancestors is Roma.

To sum up the changes that have taken place during the past century in the relationship between Roma and education: Prior to

1945, Roma in Hungary had no school education. The musicians knew how to make music and the craftsmen knew their crafts, but they stayed away from school. The result of policies since 1945 is that now, at the beginning of the 21st century, four out of five young Roma complete primary education (grades 1–8)—but often with several years delay and without proper knowledge levels. Indeed, even now, one in five Roma fails to complete primary education (grades 1–8). In the 1970s, 1.5 per cent of young Roma completed secondary education, and this ratio rose to 2 per cent in the 1980s, to 3 per cent in the 1990s, and to 5 per cent in the 2000s. Owing to a lack of infrastructure and proper funding, most Roma children of kindergarten age do not go to kindergarten. Roughly one-fifth of Roma children of school age attend special school or remedial classes. More than a half of students in such schools and classes are Roma. An additional one-third of Roma children are in classes where the majority of children are non-Roma but where funding and staffing conditions are below average. Little more than one per cent of Roma are studying in higher education—and we do not know how many of them will actually get a college or university degree.

One in five Roma children—those who fail to complete primary education—face long-term joblessness and privation. Unemployment and poverty are likely to be the fate of the sixty-seventy per cent of young Roma who successfully complete primary education but who are prevented from studying any further by the income and housing situation of their families. Both groups currently live and attend school in segregation, and segregation awaits them in the future. Roma will attain social equality when a decisive majority of young Roma complete secondary education and a significant proportion of them go on to graduate from college or university. At present, however, there is little chance of this.

V. Employment and Income

The Labor Market Situation of the Roma Population Employment Trends Affecting Roma and Non-Roma

A period of forced industrialization began in Hungary in the late 1940s. The process continued in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, coming to an end only in the mid-1980s.³⁹ In the Budapest agglomeration, the Northern region, and large parts of Transdanubia, industrialization created full employment and even resulted in over-employment and labor shortages. In the Eastern region and in the Great Plain region, a level approaching full employment was reached. In the mining and metallurgy sectors, the recruitment of Roma workers began in the late 1940s. By the 1960s, Roma were being recruited throughout the country and for all sectors of the economy. Full employment and labor shortages made it imperative to recruit and employ Roma, many of whom took on unskilled jobs in industry.

The findings of our retrospective analysis of the 1993 data permit the following conclusions: The high employment rate in Hungary under state socialism resulted in job opportunities even for those who were later prevented from working by their lack of education or by the distance of their homes from potential places of work. In the mid-1980s and late 1980s, differences in employment levels between groups of various social backgrounds and living conditions, were usually not very significant. Differences between men and women are the exception, however. The female participation rate in the labor market was significantly lower than the male participation rate.

Data from the 1971 survey of the Roma population indicated that 85 per cent of Roma men of working age (aged 15–59) were active income earners (working people with a regular income). Seventy-five per cent were in permanent employment, while 10 per

cent had temporary jobs or were self-employed. In the same year, 87.7 per cent of males in Hungary were active income earners. Thus, there was only a small difference between Roma and non-Roma in terms of the male employment rate. Even so, in the population as a whole, more than half of inactive males were students, whereas the corresponding ratio was one in three among inactive Roma. In the general population, 8 per cent of men aged 15–59 were students and 4 per cent were on benefits; among Roma, 5 per cent were students and 14 per cent were on benefits.

Retrospective data from the 1993 survey indicated a slight reduction in Roma male employment by the late 1980s—with an increase in the number of students. In the 1980s, three-quarters of men of working age were in jobs.

The situation among women was different. In 1971, 64 per cent of all women and 30 per cent of Roma women were active income earners. The difference is primarily the result of a higher number of children in Roma families. The employment rate among Roma women increased in the 1970s: by the end of the decade, it reached 50 per cent and remained at that level until the end of the 1980s.

Employment peaked in Hungary in the mid-1980s. In 1985, there were 5,400,000 employed persons—5 million active income earners and 400,000 working pensioners. Recession struck in the second half of the 1980s, and after 1990 the country faced an unprecedented economic crisis. Examining the period in which jobs were lost, we see that Roma were displaced from their jobs more quickly than non-Roma.

By 1993, the number of employed persons in Hungary fell to 3.8 million: since 1985, 1,600,000 people had lost their jobs. Many people had themselves pensioned off. Between 1989 and 1993 the number of pensioners rose by 400,000. Among Roma the flight into retirement began even earlier. The number of Roma pensioners rose from 16,000 in 1985 to 47,000 in 1993. By 1993, 700,000

people were officially unemployed in Hungary. The remainder—half a million people—were inactive persons, that is, they were unemployed people classified as inactive. By 1993, alongside the increase in the unemployment rate, cultural and demographic differences between people in work and people out of work had also increased—among both Roma and non-Roma. People with poor education were the first to lose their jobs. Compared to college and university graduates, people with secondary education were 2.5 times as likely to become unemployed, while those with primary education (grade 8) were five times as likely. Regional differences were also significant. The unemployment rate was 6.6 per cent in Budapest, but it was 20.2 per cent in Borsod County, 20.6 per cent in Szabolcs-Szatmár County, and 21.3 per cent in Nógrád County.

The rate of job losses was even higher among Roma. The number of Roma in work was 125,000 in 1985, 109,000 in 1989, and 56,000 in late 1993. Between 1985 and 1993, 69,000 Roma lost their jobs. Nationwide 30 per cent of jobs were lost, but the ratio was 55 per cent among Roma.

Low levels of education were the primary factor: 43 per cent of Roma aged over 20 had less than eight years (grades) of primary education, while 41 per cent had no more than eight years (grades) of primary education. Among the non-Roma population, the corresponding ratios were 19 per cent and 25 per cent.

The second factor was the regional distribution of Roma. Very few Roma lived in the counties of Fejér, Komárom-Esztergom, Vas and Veszprém, and their number was particularly low in Győr-Moson-Sopron County. It was precisely in these countries that the unemployment rate was the lowest. In contrast, the number and share of Roma was already the highest in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County. Borsod was followed by Szabolcs County and then by the counties of Nógrád, Heves, Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok, and Hajdú and by Baranya and Somogy in Transdanubia.

The third factor was that during the earlier period of full employment, Roma had found work in sectors that subsequently collapsed during the crisis. For instance, the jobless rate in the construction industry was twice the national average—and in 1971, 26 per cent of Roma had been working in construction. They must have numbered about 25,000: Roma accounted for 10 per cent of workers in the construction sector.

However, even in combination, these three factors do not fully explain the level of Roma unemployment in 1993 or, for that matter, in 2003. The fourth reason is discrimination. But it is difficult to measure its effect.

As far as differences within the Roma population are concerned, in addition to the principal causes mentioned above, other factors also influenced job retention or job loss. For example, the position of the home within a settlement had once been of negligible significance, but by the 1990s it became more significant. At both points in time, it had little effect on a person's chances of finding a job. The data available are not so unequivocal in respect of the importance of ethnolinguistic factors within the Roma community. On the one hand, both before and after the political changes of 1989–90, people who identified themselves in surveys as Hungarian were more likely to be in work than were Romani native speakers (although this is not true for Beás). On the other hand, it seems that the difference is largely the result of other factors acting in combination, such as differences in the regional, educational and residential breakdown of the various ethnolinguistic groups.

We have already noted how the unemployment figures rose to 700,000 in 1993. The figure of 0.7 million is for February 1993. By late 1993 the number of registered jobless had fallen to 640,000. This was not a real decrease, but merely a fall in the number of registered unemployed. Some jobless people who were not entitled to benefits, did not bother to register.

At the end of 1993, 57,000 Roma were registered as unemployed. This represented 9 per cent of unemployed persons in Hungary. Unemployed Roma men accounted for 37,000 of the 57,000, or 9.6 per cent of the 386,000 unemployed males in Hungary. At the same time, there were 20,000 unemployed Roma women—8 per cent of the 254,000 unemployed females in the country.

A method of calculating the unemployment rate is to compare the number of registered unemployed with the size of the economically active population, that is, the sum of employed and unemployed persons. At the end of 1993, this rate was 13 per cent among the general population and 50 per cent among the Roma population. The rates were lower in Budapest and higher in rural areas. The highest rates were recorded in the Northern and Eastern regions: 17 per cent among the general population and 59 per cent among Roma.

Another way of calculating unemployment rates is based on the ILO definition. This definition counts as unemployed those people who have not done an hour of paid work in the week before the survey, who have actively sought a job in the last four weeks, and who are available to start work in the next two weeks. Unemployment rates based on the ILO definition can be calculated based on the HCSO labor survey conducted at the end of 1993. The unemployment rate of the non-Roma population was 11 per cent—or 13 per cent, including inactive unemployed persons, that is, those who want to work but have no hope of finding work. Meanwhile, the unemployment rate of the Roma population was 38 per cent—or 48 per cent, including the inactive unemployed.

The number of people in work continued to decline between 1993 and 1997. The real unemployment rate therefore grew. Between 1997 and 2001, however, the number of people in work increased—but only slightly. In 2001, the number of active income earners was no higher than it had been in 1993. In other words, the real unemployment rate had not fallen.

A decline was, however, observed in the number of registered unemployed. It fell from 700,000 to 364,000. The registered unemployment rate in 2001 was 9.8 per cent. The real number of jobless people was significantly higher; it stood at 364,000. Thus, the real rate of unemployment was 9.8 per cent. As already noted, jobless people who are not entitled to benefits often do not bother to register as unemployed. Many people fail to register because they have given hope of finding a job through the labor office.

The number of unemployed fell even further, according to data provided by the HSCO's quarterly labor surveys. The surveys showed a fall in the number of jobless to 233,000 in 2001—an unemployment rate of 5.7 per cent.

The contradiction between the two rows of data provided by the survey was evident: while the number of people in work was the same in 2001 as it had been in 1993, the number of jobless had fallen to less than half. Hidden unemployment is the explanation for this contradiction.

In 1998, R. István Gábor published a paper in *Közgazdasági Szemle* on workers who had lost hope. The study referred to the Keynesian belief that unemployment deters people from seeking work. Hidden unemployment arises, increasing during an economic recession or crisis. For shorter or longer periods, the "hidden" unemployed give up looking for work. They return to the labor market after the economic upturn.

A publication entitled *2001. Foglalkoztatási helyzetkép* [The Employment Situation in 2001] indicated the extent of hidden unemployment. Based on a survey of the labor force, it showed that, when respondents were asked to classify themselves, "413,000 saw themselves as unemployed." If we accept this figure, then the number of unemployed in 2001 rises from 233,000 to 646,000, and the unemployment rate increases to over 10 per cent.

According to the 2001 census data (which were published in 2002), the number of people in work in 2001 was 3.69 million, that

is, 170,000 fewer than in the labor force survey. The number of jobless, however, was 426,000, that is, 183,000 more than in the labor force survey. It should be noted that the census also adhered to the ILO definition of unemployment. Based on these data, the unemployment rate in 2001 was 10.1 per cent rather than 5.7 per cent.

According to a survey conducted by the Employment Office and the Autonomía Foundation in 2001, the findings of which were published in 2003, Roma unemployment did not decline between 1993 and 2001. The staff of Hungary's 171 labor offices were asked in the survey to indicate the percentage of Roma among people receiving unemployment benefit or participating in employment programs. Respondents could select between five domains: Roma represent less than 10 per cent, 10–25 per cent, 26–50 per cent, 51–75 per cent, 76–100 per cent of such people. Based on a mean value of 16 per cent, the number of registered unemployed Roma was 56,000. This was clearly an approximate figure. As noted, the 1993 survey indicated 57,000 registered unemployed Roma. Thus, according to the Autonomía Foundation survey of 2001, the number of registered unemployed Roma was roughly the same as it had been in 1993.⁴⁰

In 1993, the 57,000 registered unemployed Roma represented 9 per cent of the 640,000 jobless persons in Hungary. In 2001, the estimated 56,000 Roma unemployed represented 15 per cent of the 364,000 jobless persons in Hungary.

Different figures were obtained in the nationwide survey of 2003. At the time of the survey, 21 per cent of Roma in the 15–74 age group were in work—compared with 22 per cent in 1993. Twenty-eight per cent of males were in work, compared with 28.5 per cent in 1993. Fifteen per cent of females were in work—the same rate as in 1993.

Pensioners accounted for 17 per cent, while women on maternity or child care benefit (GYES, GYED, etc.) comprised 30 per cent. Notably, almost 3 per cent of men in the sample were on child

care benefit. At the same time, 11 per cent of Roma aged 15 and over were students. Unemployment benefit, supplementary income support or other regular benefit payments were the primary source of income for 17 per cent of Roma. And this was true for 13 per cent of Roma women and 22 per cent of Roma men. The proportion of students increased significantly over the decade. Currently, 60 per cent of Roma 15–19 year-olds are students. At the same time, however, fewer than half of non-students are working: 23 per cent of the age cohort are dependent non-students living at home, 4 per cent are on benefits, and just 7 per cent have some kind of work.

*Changes in the Employment Rate
among the Various Roma Groups between 1971 and 2003*

As noted above, in 1971, 85 per cent of men of working age were actually working, according to data from the survey conducted in that year. Seventy-five per cent of them were in permanent employment, while an additional 10 per cent had temporary jobs or were self-employed. The 85 per cent rate was almost as high as the corresponding rate for the population as a whole. Until the late 1980s, a slight drop in employment may be observed—with a corresponding increase in the number of students (by 1993, 5.5 per cent were studying).⁴¹ In the 1980s, three-quarters of Roma men of working age were in jobs. This ratio fell sharply to 28 per cent in 1993. The situation for Roma women was somewhat different. In 1971 less than a third of Roma women of working age were in jobs. This proportion was significantly lower than the national figure of 70 per cent. The primary reason for this was that Roma women tended to have more children. By the second half of the 1970s, the female employment rate had increased significantly among Roma. The rates were more or less stable during the 1980s. By then, roughly every second Roma woman of working age had a job. The decline in female employment following the political changes of

1989–90 resembled in magnitude the fall in male employment. The female employment rate fell to a third of the previous level.

Table 1:
**Male and Female Employment Rates
As a Percentage of Roma of Working Age**

	1971		1978		1987		1993		2003	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Men	85.2	na.	77.3	1421	74.4	1966	28.8	2456	28.0	1616
Women	30.3	na.	47.0	1454	49.3	1922	16.3	2386	15.1	1718
Total	na.	na.	62.0	2875	62.0	3888	22.6	4842	21.4	3334

Source of 1978 and 1987 data is the 1993 survey of the Roma population

Examining the national data on employment, we see that the male employment rate among Roma was just a few percentage points lower than the national rate until the late 1980s. The discrepancy between the Roma female employment rate and the national rate fell gradually prior to the political changes of 1989–90. Whereas in the early 1970s the employment rate was twice as high among non-Roma women, by 1987 it was just 1.5 times as high. In the 1990s, however, enormous differences appeared. The divergence between the male employment rates of the Roma population and non-Roma population grew rapidly, and even among women the difference was greater than in 1971.

Examining the nominal figures rather than percentages, we observe an increase in the number of Roma in work. The number of employed Roma persons has actually risen during the past decade from 57,000 to 80,000. This includes an increase in the number of Roma men in jobs from 37,000 to 50,000 as well as an increase in the number of women from 20,000 to 30,000. At the same time, the number of registered unemployed has gone up from 57,000 to 90,000. Based on these figures, the registered unemployment rate is 52 per cent. The unemployment rate falls to 40 per cent

if the unemployed are defined as those who actively sought work in the four weeks prior to the survey.

*Differences between the Regions
and between the Various Types of Settlement*

Significant differences may be observed between the various regions and types of settlement in respect of employment. As early as 1993 the chances of Roma men finding work were largely determined by where they lived. In the eastern parts of the country, the proportion of Roma men in work was half the level in Budapest or in Transdanubia. The findings showed that in the Eastern region less than one-fifth of men of working age were in jobs, whereas the corresponding ratio was greater than 40 per cent in the Budapest agglomeration. Such regional differences in the chances of finding a job were greater among the Roma population than they were among the non-Roma population. In 2003 the most favorable data were recorded in the Budapest region. In this central part of the country, 43 per cent of Roma men and women had some kind of work, and the ratio was 49 per cent in Budapest. Sixty-four per cent of Roma men in Budapest were employed, self-employed or casually employed, which is a high rate even in relation to the activity rates for the general population. Still, in Transdanubia just 28 per cent of Roma had jobs. And in eastern parts of the country, the ratio fell to 14 per cent of the population aged 15 and over. In such areas, less than 10 per cent of Roma women were in work. Outside Budapest, male activity rates were everywhere higher than female activity rates, but nowhere did they approach the 64 per cent rate observed among Roma men in Budapest.

Differences may also be observed within the eastern and western parts of the country. We investigated such differences in the earlier surveys, too. In 1971 roughly similar male employment rates were recorded in the northern, central and western parts of the country. A clear exception was the Eastern region, comprising the

counties of Hajdú, Szabolcs and Békés, where the employment rate was 15 per cent lower than elsewhere. The rate was slightly lower in the Great Plain region as well. In the following two decades, Transdanubia registered the largest decline in the employment rate, while the smallest increase in the share of unemployed persons was observed in the Eastern region. Even in the late 1980s, the lowest male employment rates were recorded in the three eastern counties, but the difference was no longer significant. By that time, the employment rate in the Northern region was roughly 5–6 percentage points higher than it was in the Budapest agglomeration or in Transdanubia. The regional structure of labor force participation changed radically after the political changes of 1989–90. In the Northern region, there was a 60 percentage point difference between the 1987 employment rate and the rate recorded in 1993. In 1993 the chances of finding work were largely determined among Roma men by where they were living. In eastern parts of the country, the proportion in work was less than half what it was in Budapest and the western counties. In the east the share of those in work fell to a quarter of its previous level, but in the Budapest region every second job was kept. In Transdanubia too, the fall in the share of those in work was less severe than it was in the Great Plain region, the Eastern region and the Northern Region. Thus, by the early 1990s, in Transdanubia and central parts of the country roughly 40 per cent of Roma men were in work, whereas in eastern and northern parts as well as the Great Plain region roughly one in five Roma men were working. The chances of finding work in the various regions have continued to change in the past decade. While conditions have improved in the Budapest agglomeration, they have tended to deteriorate in Transdanubia, where currently about 30 per cent of Roma men are in work. In the Great Plain region and the Northern region there has been no real change, while in the three eastern counties the situation has deteriorated further. In this latter region, just 14 per cent of Roma men have jobs. This is a lower rate than the nationwide employment rate for Roma women.

Table 2:
Regional Male Employment Rates
As a Percentage of Roma of Working Age

	1971		1978		1987		1993		2003	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Budapest	90.0	na.	81.4	204	75.4	325	40.5	420	57.7	274
Eastern	74.8	na.	76.2	269	68.4	358	18.4	479	14.2	323
Great Plain	81.8	na.	72.0	175	71.8	227	23.7	300	23.8	172
Northern	90.8	na.	81.1	360	80.8	479	22.9	607	19.7	498
Transdanubia	88.9	na.	77.2	377	73.9	540	36.6	650	31.5	349
Total	85.2	na.	78.0	1385	74.6	1929	28.8	2456	28.0	1616

Regional variations in the female employment rate took a different course both prior to and after the political changes of 1989–90. In 1971 the employment rate among Roma women living in the Budapest differed greatly from the rate elsewhere in the country. The female employment rate was particularly low in the Eastern region. By the 1980s, the difference between Budapest and the other regions was relatively slight, although the Eastern region was slow to catch, in comparison with other regions. Regional differences hardly altered in the 1990s. The female employment rate in 2003 was 16–22 per cent in four regions of Hungary (Northern, Great Plain, Budapest, Transdanubia) and less than 10 per cent in the three eastern counties. Employment opportunities in 2003 were most favorable—for women too—in the Budapest agglomeration (with an employment rate of 36 per cent), and the employment rate was higher than 20 per cent in two northwestern counties. In other parts of Transdanubia (excluding Fejér County), the Great Plain region and the Northern region, the female employment rate fell slightly to 10–14 per cent. In the Eastern region the rate in 2003 was just 6 per cent.

In 1971 the male employment rate was 5–6 per cent higher in Budapest than it was in provincial urban areas. And the Budapest rate was several additional percentage points higher than the rate in rural areas. By the 1980s, the rural areas had caught up with provincial urban areas, but Budapest still had an advantage. After the political changes of 1989–90, the gap between Budapest and the provincial urban areas widened. Both in rural areas and in provincial urban areas, the employment rate fell to a third of its previous level, while in Budapest it was half the previous rate.

During the past decade, Budapest has offered new employment opportunities to Roma too. Conditions in the provincial urban areas have not changed, while a further deterioration in the labor market situation has been observed in rural areas. In Budapest the proportion of men in work has risen by a factor of 1.5 to reach 64

per cent. Even so, the rate is still significantly lower than it was prior to the political changes of 1989–90. Meanwhile, in rural areas just 20 per cent of Roma men are working, compared with a rate of 27 per cent ten years ago.

Differences in employment linked with the type of settlement have taken a divergent course among women. Thirty-two years ago, Roma women's chances of finding employment in Budapest were quite different from elsewhere. This difference gradually declined and even disappeared by the late 1980s. After the political changes of 1989–90, more jobs were kept in Budapest than elsewhere, but the difference was not as great as it was among men. Still, during the past ten years, a gap has appeared between the female employment rate in Budapest and the rate elsewhere. Whereas Budapest has shown an improvement, provincial urban areas have tended to stagnate, while employment opportunities in rural areas have worsened. Even so, women in Budapest are still less likely to be working now than they were prior to the political changes (37 per cent compared with the previous rate of 55–61 per cent), but unlike men, their employment rate is now just as high as it used to be in provincial urban areas in the 1970s and 1980s.

Differences Based on Native Language

The male employment rate among Beás native speakers was similar to or slightly higher than it was among Hungarian native speakers throughout the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. The employment rate among Romani native speakers was somewhat lower than average. On the other hand, female employment rates were similar among both Beás native speakers and Romani native speakers prior to the political changes of 1989–90. In the early 1990s, however, the chances of finding work declined more rapidly among Romani native speakers, so that they fell well below the levels of employment displayed by other groups.

If we group respondents according to their spoken language, a slightly different picture emerges (the situation in 1978 is examined for the 1970s, rather than conditions in 1971). In 1978, among the male group, there is still no sign of Romani speakers falling behind. Among women, however, in all three surveyed years, the employment rate was lower among Romani speakers than it was among Beás speakers. Meanwhile, the rate among Beás speakers is lower than it is among Roma who only speak Hungarian. Among Beás native speakers the rate of employment was still higher in 2003 than it was among Hungarian native speakers. The most recent data indicate that the male employment rate is higher among Romani native speakers than it is among Hungarian native speakers. Rates of casual employment and self-employment are high among Romani native speakers, whereas Beás are more likely to be in paid employment. Indeed, while 27 per cent of Beás native speakers are in paid employment, the corresponding ratio is just 20 per cent among Romani native speakers and 17 per cent among Hungarian native speakers. The surprising result in the case of the Beás is related to the fact that they leave school earlier. Just 4 per cent of Beás are students, whereas the ratio is 12 per cent among Hungarian native speakers. In the case of Romani native speakers, the over-representation of Budapest may lie behind the figures.

Education and its Effect on Employment Rates

In 1978, men with primary education (grade 8) and those with secondary or higher education exhibited similar employment rates. Among men with primary education below grade 8, the rate was 6–8 percentage points lower. By 1987 greater differences had emerged between men with primary education (or higher) and those without completed primary education. In this latter poorly educated group, the employment rate fell significantly, whereas among other groups it hardly changed. After the political changes

of 1989–90, a significant difference in the employment rate could be observed between those with primary education (grade 8) and those with secondary or higher education. While 35 per cent of the former group were in work, the proportion was 48 per cent among the latter group. Meanwhile, the most poorly educated group fell even further behind—just one in six were working in 1993. The level of education continued to be an influential factor in 2003. Whereas more than 50 per cent of men with secondary education—but no longer studying—had some kind of work, just 28 per cent of men with primary education (grade 8) or less were in work.

Table 3:

**Male Employment Rates by Level of School Education
As a Percentage of 19–59 year-olds**

	1978		1987		1993		2003	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Less than grade 8	81.0	500	67.9	558	17.3	602	16.9	225
Primary (grade 8)	87.1	418	85.8	739	35.0	1029	35.5	732
Higher than primary	89.1	147	88.1	302	48.4	405	43.7	293
Combined	84.5	1065	80.0	1599	32.4	2036	34.1	1250

Differences in the employment rate related to the level of school education were as great among women in 1978 as they were among men in 1993. In 1987, the employment rate of the more educated women was lower than it had been in 1978. There was little change in 1993 and the differences were still present in 2003. Thus, among women, the employment rate of those with primary education differs from the employment rate of those with secondary or higher education to a greater extent than it does among the male population.

Differences between Age Groups

In 1978, 85–90 per cent of 24–40 year-olds were employed. Four-fifths of 20–25 year-olds and 40–60 year-olds had jobs. By 1987, employment among persons aged under 40 had declined to a degree, but the reduction was most significant among older age groups. Less than half of those aged over 55 were in work. Many of the cohort differences emerging in the late 1980s had disappeared by 1993. In the 20–55 age group, differences became negligible. In the two outer marginal cohorts, however, employment levels continued to be below average. In 1978, among women, the highest employment rate was observed in a narrower age group. Around 55 per cent of women aged 30–40 were employed, while in other age groups (aged over 20) the female employment rate was 45–50 per cent. There was little structural change in 1987, but the proportion of women in work increased in all age groups. The situation among women changed in the 1990s. In contrast to the male employment rate, the decline in the female employment rate was smaller among the over-40s than among younger age groups.

Table 4:
Female Employment by Age Group
As a Percentage of the Cohort

	1978		1987		1993		2003	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
15–19	38.2	343	35.3	346	8.2	403	2.6	274
20–24	49.7	316	51.6	335	13.9	433	14.6	246
25–29	48.3	242	53.3	336	15.1	317	14.1	255
30–39	56.1	285	57.0	535	20.3	665	23.1	386
40–54	44.4	268	45.4	370	19.7	568	21.9	384
Combined	47.0	1454	49.3	1922	16.3	2386	16.3	1545

It is worth examining in detail the most recent data from 2003. Most individuals in the 15–19 age group (approx. 60 per cent of both males and females) are still students. Most non-students are

still dependents. Indeed, 21 per cent of males and 23 per cent of females in the age group are dependents, while just 9 per cent of males and 3 per cent of females have jobs. Maternity or child care benefits are received by one in ten women aged 15–19. This is more than negligible, but indicates nevertheless that most Roma women have their first child in their twenties. To put it another way, most Roma women that have left school but not found jobs, do not have children in their teens. In their early twenties, however, child-bearing increases rapidly among Roma women—just as it used to among the population as a whole until the late 1980s. Almost a half (47 per cent) of women aged 20–24 receive maternity or child care benefits (GYES, GYED, etc.). The proportion of women receiving such benefits is even higher among the 25–29 age group and the 30–34 age group. The unfavorable labor market situation of Roma may explain why a small but significant proportion of Roma men (3 per cent of those in their twenties) are also on child care benefit. Still, from their early twenties, a relatively high number of men are in work. As many men are working in the 25–29 age group as in the older age groups up to the age of 45 years. The employment rate then gradually decreases in the older age groups. Among women, the highest employment rate is initially observed at a slightly higher age—in the 30–34 age group. On the other hand, women in their forties still have a relatively good chance of finding work. Thus, in the 45–59 age group, women are just as likely as men to have work. Indeed, in our sample, in the 45–49 age group, more women than men had permanent jobs (although a greater proportion of men had casual work). Many Roma in work take advantage of early retirement. At the same time, significant numbers of 55–59 year-olds are unable to stabilize their situation by taking early retirement. For one in five Roma in this age group, benefits or the support of family members represent the primary source of income. The above reveals significant differences in male and female employment rates stemming primarily from the family strategies and opportunities of 20–35 year-olds.

Segregation and Employment

In 1978, Roma men living outside towns and villages were slightly less likely—by a few percentage points—than other Roma men to be working. By 1987 this small difference had disappeared. After the political changes of 1989–90, however, the gap between the two groups widened once more. One third of Roma men living in towns or villages had work, while just 18 per cent of those living in isolated Roma settlements did so. The female employment rate was already lower in isolated Roma settlements than elsewhere in 1978 and 1987. And the gap widened in the 1990s. Another observation is that Roma who live in greater relative segregation are less likely to find work than those who live in areas inhabited mainly by non-Roma. The employment rate rises as the degree of segregation declines. In this regard, a similar trend may be observed among both male and female employment rates (even so, in our sample, the highest employment rate was recorded where there were some other Roma families living in the vicinity).

The Relative Importance of the Variables

The above review does not tell us whether or not the various factors can explain, in themselves, why the various Roma groups have different chances of finding work. Thus, for 1987 and 1993, we established a regression model to explain employment prospects.

The findings showed that even in 1987, all other things being equal, work was more difficult to find in the Eastern region than elsewhere. The better prospects of Roma living in Budapest could be observed. By 1993, the effect of the regions had become more potent. The Eastern region and the Budapest region were still powerful determinants, while the chances of finding a job had increased to well above the average in Transdanubia. The impact of the school education level on the employment rate was significant in both years. The differences between those with or without primary

education (grade 8) were considerable even in the 1980s. The advantage enjoyed by those with a higher level of education became significant in 1993, but it was already more than negligible even earlier on. The middle-aged were at a considerable advantage in both years. The number of children in a household appeared to have a negative effect on the female employment rate in the 1980s and on both female and male employment rates later on. An important change was that in the 1990s differences between the sexes occurred only as a function of the number of children in the household. Thus, in families where children had left home or were still to be born, men and women of the same level of education, age, etc. were equally likely to find a job. As the number of children rose, the likelihood of working declined more rapidly among women than among men. In 1987, Roma living in towns or villages found it no easier—*ceteris paribus*—to find work than Roma living in isolated Roma settlements. By 1993, however, the situation had changed. The advantage enjoyed by Roma living in towns and villages was significant in that year.

Based on regression analysis, we may attribute the differences in employment rates among the three major language groups to residential, educational and other factors. At the same time, we should not ignore the importance of a person's native language in determining his or her level of school education. Hungarian non-native speakers do less well at school.

Based on the sample, non-Roma living in Roma households have a somewhat better chance than others of finding work, but the difference falls within the statistical margins of error. The age structure and higher level of school education of non-Roma included in our sample may have contributed to their higher rate of employment.

The Changes of the Transition Years

In the following, based on retrospective data from 1993, we examine how the labor market transition resulted in many Roma losing their jobs. The data under examination demonstrate that the loss of jobs among Roma began in the 1980s. Initially, however, this did not mean long-term unemployment for everyone. At first, many people left and then returned to the labor market.

Employment Rates

The previous chapter showed that in 1987 three out of four men aged 15–60 and about half of women aged 15–55 were in work. The female employment rate fell by 2 percentage points and then 4 percentage points per year in the late 1980s and by 6–9 percentage points per year in the 1990s. Male employment exhibited an even sharper decline. The male employment rate fell by 3–5 percentage points per year until 1990 and then by 10–11 percentage points in both 1991 and 1992.

The first table on the next page demonstrates that the major change came in the 1990s. But it also shows how Roma were more quickly affected than non-Roma by the decline in employment.

A more nuanced picture is obtained if we count military conscripts and people on child care benefits as employed persons. As far as the majority of such people are concerned, this is evidently an unrealistic proposition. Nevertheless, the procedure does have its advantages—and not just in terms of achieving compatibility with official statistics (which often do make the same assumption). Being unemployed is not the same—in terms of livelihood or social esteem—as being a soldier or caring for one's children.

Table 5:
Annual Employment Rates
As a Percentage of Roma of Working Age

	1987		1988		1989		1990		1991		1992		1993	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Men	74.4	1966	71.5	2033	66.1	2110	57.2	2210	46.5	2307	36.5	2382	29.4	2469
Women	49.2	1923	47.0	1991	43.0	2087	37.2	2179	30.8	2242	21.9	2323	16.3	2409
Total	61.9	3889	59.4	4024	54.6	4197	47.3	4389	38.8	4549	29.3	4705	23.0	4878

Table 6:
Annual Employment Rates, Counting Conscripts
and Recipients of Child Care Benefits as Employed Persons
As a Percentage of Roma of Working Age

	1987		1988		1989		1990		1991		1992		1993	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Men	75.2	1966	72.4	2033	67.2	2110	58.2	2210	47.5	2307	37.9	2382	31.3	2469
Women	55.2	1923	53.5	1991	51.3	2087	47.1	2179	42.7	2242	36.4	2323	31.1	2409
Total	65.3	3889	63.1	4024	59.3	4197	52.7	4389	45.2	4549	37.2	4705	31.2	4878

The male employment rates are not all that different from the previous data. Evidently, only for a small group of men and only for a short period does conscription substitute for employment or unemployment. The situation is quite different in the case of recipients of child care benefits. In the 1990s, an increasing proportion of jobless women with small children chose this status—probably because it offered better conditions than (official) unemployment.

Duration of Unemployment

Seven out of ten unemployed men in 1993 had lost their jobs in the 1990s. Among women, the ratio was just over 50 per cent. For both men and women, the first perceptible increase in the job displacement rate came in 1989. It should be remembered, however, that—like recipients of child care benefits—people taking retirement added to the mass of people losing their jobs. Thus, we also examined why respondents left work. We separated family, health and demographic factors linked to individuals from job losses caused (initiated) by employers. In the 1993 sample, most people losing their jobs in the 1980s had become inactive by becoming pensioners or recipients of child care benefits. In contrast, most people losing their jobs in the 1990s had been displaced by their employers. The change is easier to perceive if we focus exclusively on those who left their jobs for reasons other than pensions or child care benefits. In this group, five out of six men and three out of four women lost their jobs in the 1990s. This group exhibits a smaller difference between men and women in terms of the duration of unemployment.

People Entering and Leaving Work in the Various Years

Despite the rapid increase in the number of unemployed and inactive persons, some people were still entering or returning to employment. In what follows, we examine the number of people entering and leaving jobs in the various years.

In 1987/1988 about the same number of Roma men entered (or re-entered) work as left work. By the 1990s, the number of those leaving their jobs for various reasons had risen considerably, but at the same time the number of entrants also grew slightly, rather than decline. Similar trends can be observed among women, too. However, in 1991 and in 1992, they do not exhibit the moderate increase in entrants. The fact that absolute numbers were not in decline does not mean a change in relative numbers. Examining the percentage of unemployed people of working age who found work in the various years, we naturally discover a reduction in the 1990s compared with the 1980s. In the late 1980s, one in ten unemployed men re-entered (entered) work each year, while 7–9 per cent of women did so. In the 1990s, the re-entry rate among women fell to just half its previous level. The 6–7 per cent entry rates observed among men are also well below the previous constant rate of around 10 per cent.

Table 7:

**The Number of Persons in the Sample
Entering or Leaving Work in the Various Years**

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
Males leaving	87	78	137	219	263	280	242
Males entering	86	68	78	88	69	76	97
Females leaving	96	95	121	181	184	225	189
Females entering	91	87	83	82	61	45	72

Table 8:
New Entrants as a Percentage of Total Entrants

	1987		1988		1989		1990		1991		1992		1993	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Males	60.5	86	66.2	68	61.5	78	53.4	88	55.1	69	36.8	76	17.5	97
Females	40.7	91	39.1	87	45.8	83	45.1	82	49.2	61	44.4	45	22.2	72
Total	50.3	177	51.0	155	53.4	161	49.4	170	52.3	130	39.7	121	19.5	169

If we look at under-25s, we see the same trends among both men and women. Thus, in the early 1990s, just as many young people, but a smaller proportion of them, found work as in the mid-1980s and late 1980s. This surprising result may be due to the fact that some young people were displaced but then quickly found new jobs—possibly, once again, short-term employment. Thus, in the 1990s, a growing army of re-entrants could supplement a declining number of new entrants.

This supposition is confirmed by data for the final two years. Whereas until 1991 new entrants accounted for at least 50 per cent of total entrants, in 1992 and 1993 their ratio fell significantly.

Examining the proportion of young new entrants in relation to their unemployed counterparts, we observe a significant decline in the early the 1990s. Until the late 1980s, one in seven unemployed 15–19 year-olds entered their first job each year, but the rate fell to just 7–10 per cent in the 1990s.

The above train of thought is underlined by data for new and re-entrants in the period under investigation who lose their jobs. Just one in six women entering employment in 1989 was working in 1993. But even among women who entered employment in 1991, less than 50 per cent were working in 1993. Among men, the percentage in work in 1993 was somewhat higher.

Table 9:

**The Percentage of Entrants in the Various Years
Who were Working in 1993**

	1989		1990		1991		1992	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Males	41.0	78	39.8	88	39.1	69	59.2	76
Females	15.7	83	32.9	82	37.7	61	47.7	44
Total	28.0	161	36.5	170	38.5	130	55.0	120

People Becoming Unemployed

In the next section, we use various factors to analyze the distribution of persons becoming unemployed in the various years. Once again, our point of departure is people becoming unemployed permanently (that is, those who were still unemployed at the time of the survey) in each of the various years. Generally speaking, we take all such respondents into account. However, for the purposes of analysis, in a couple of the tables we separate those who voluntarily left work from those who were forced into unemployment.⁴²

Table 10:

**Unemployed Men by Age Group and the Years
in which they Became Unemployed, as a Percentage of Men
Who were Unemployed in 1993
and Who Lost their Jobs in the Given Year**

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	Altogether
15–29	27.3	38.6	44.6	40.6	47.4	43.3	50.0	44.5
30–39	36.4	28.1	23.2	32.1	30.6	33.6	29.3	30.6
40–59	36.4	33.3	32.1	27.3	22.0	23.1	20.7	24.9
Cases N	44	57	112	187	232	268	270	1170

We did not assume in advance a difference between the various age groups in terms of the time of period over which jobs were lost. The initial data suggest, however, that such an assumption would have been correct. In the 1990s, men aged under 40 became slightly more common among people losing their jobs. There may be simple reasons for this, linked with the retrospective analysis rather than of any particular substance. Still, the extent of the differences argues against this. The wave of job redundancies affected young people more than older people. Among women, the proportion of under-30-year-olds leaving work is fairly stable throughout the period under investigation. The increasing share of young people observed among the male group relates only to those aged

between 30 and 40. The difference between men and women is perhaps due to women going on child care. To find out whether young people really did leave their jobs later on, we need a more precise mode of analysis.

To us an apparently reasonable supposition was that Roma lost their jobs more quickly in rural areas than in urban areas. We could explain this, so we thought, primarily by a fall in the number of commuters. But, here too, the data do not fully support our preconceptions. Among men, the ratios based on type of settlement do not vary excessively. In rural areas there was a relatively larger number of people losing their jobs in 1990–91, whereas in urban areas the share of people leaving employment was greater in 1992–93. Among women, the share of rural inhabitants among those losing their jobs was relatively high in 1989, but otherwise the ratios were relatively constant.

Among men, the years of greatest displacement in the construction industry, i.e. 1987 and 1989–1991, are particularly important. In the services sector the proportion was higher a little later on, in 1992–93 (but by then a higher share of people were working in the sector). With respect to women, special mention should be made of light manufacturing industry. In this sector, the share of worker displacement was slightly higher in 1988, but there were no other exceptional years in the subsequent period. The proportion of service sector workers among women losing their jobs (as well as women in jobs) was slightly higher in the 1990s than in the late 1980s.

We have already noted the presence of commuters. We concluded that people commuting to their places of work lost their jobs sooner than others did. The data show that, generally speaking, commuters did lose their jobs sooner than those who lived where they worked. Until 1991, people living where they work accounted for 40 per cent of worker displacement. The ratio then increased by a factor of 1.5 and was still at that level in 1993. In fact, the number of weekly or monthly commuters was not particularly high, and

so they were not a large share of those losing their jobs. Their share was 10–15 per cent until 1991 and then fell to below 10 per cent.

Table 11:

A Distribution of Unemployed Men according to how they Got to Work in the Year in which they Became Unemployed As a Percentage of Men Losing their Jobs in that Year

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	Combined
Local	46.0	43.5	40.7	46.9	41.9	61.8	58.5	51.2
Daily commuter	48.0	45.2	41.6	38.8	46.6	31.1	33.8	38.4
Weekly, monthly	4.0	9.7	16.8	12.8	11.4	5.9	5.4	9.2
Unknown	2.0	1.6	0.9	1.5	0.0	1.1	2.2	1.2
Cases N	50	62	113	196	236	270	275	1202

In this field, the trends are less acute among women. There are, nevertheless, indications that commuters tended to be displaced sooner. As in other areas, among women the changes may be felt earlier. Until 1989, one in two women leaving employment had been working locally. In the 1990s, the proportion fell to 40 per cent.

Neither among men nor among women is it possible to identify a relationship between the time of displacement and the native language of people losing their jobs. Even as far as Roma settlement dwellers are concerned, there is no clear trend—although there are large fluctuations between the various years. In some years, they represent a large proportion, but in others just a small proportion of the total. Perhaps such fluctuations are linked to the sample peculiarities mentioned in the introduction. Respondents from Roma settlements come from a limited number of such settlements. It is therefore possible that a large number of people living in one settlement were working at the same place of work.

We assumed that people with a better school education were able to keep their jobs for longer periods than were those without skills. Perhaps this supposition requires no particular justification. Unskilled workers tended to lose their jobs sooner than others. To

a lesser degree, this was also true of Roma with primary or vocational education but no secondary education. In this instance, too, the tendency was stronger among men than among women.

Table 12:

**A Distribution of Unemployed Men by Level of Education
and the Year in which they Lost their Jobs
As a Percentage of Men Aged >20 Losing their Jobs in that Year**

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	Combined
Less than grade 8	72.3	58.9	41.0	36.0	35.4	31.4	25.3	35.8
Primary (grade 8)	21.3	33.9	43.0	52.7	49.1	50.2	56.6	49.0
Higher than primary	6.4	7.1	16.0	11.3	15.6	18.4	18.0	15.2
Number of cases	47	56	100	186	212	245	233	1079

A further supposition was that non-Roma living in Roma households are better able to cope in the labor market. One explanation for this would be their higher than average level of education. The sample includes few non-Roma, so it is difficult to draw conclusions. Minor changes are, nevertheless, perceptible. In the 1980s, non-Roma accounted for 2–3 per cent of men losing their jobs. This ratio increased to 5–10 in the 1990s. Among women, however, there is no apparent trend.

People Entering Work

We have already noted how in the 1990s the share of new entrants, as a percentage of total entrants, declined due to changes in the labor market. Not surprisingly, we observe a reduction in the share of people aged under 30 among entrants. The decline is, however, smaller than that observed among new entrants. And among women, the relative cohort shares exhibited an even smaller change.

In the late 1980s, three-quarters of men entering work lived in villages or towns (rather than in Roma settlements). By 1992–93 their share had risen to 85 per cent. The political changes in 1989–90 brought no change to the situation among women. Roughly four-fifths of entrants lived in villages or towns. This ratio mirrors the residential distribution of adult Roma women in Hungary. Forty-three per cent of men entering work in 1987–88 did so where they lived. By the 1990s this ratio had risen by an additional 15 percent. Among women, there was no change in this respect during the period under investigation. The share of non-Hungarian native speakers among entrants declined perceptibly both among women and men. In the late 1980s, the share of Beás-speaking or Romani-speaking Roma entering work corresponded with their share of the population, but after the political changes their chances of finding work declined by almost a half. The fact that they lived in villages and that only a very few of them were living in Budapest is a possible explanation.

In the late 1980s, one-quarter of men entering work had not completed primary education (grade 8). The ratio declined to 12 per cent in the 1990s. The percentage of entrants or re-entrants with vocational qualifications increased from 21 per cent to 30 per cent. The changes were just as spectacular among women. In 1988 and 1989, 6 per cent of entrants had a level of school education that was higher than primary. By 1992–93 the proportion had risen to 17 per cent. The share of non-Roma household members among entrants did not change perceptibly at the time of political transition.

Significant changes may be observed in terms of the capacity of the various sectors to provide jobs. In 1988–89, one in five men took on work in the services sector, and the rate increased to 45 per cent in 1990–91. In the subsequent two years, more than a half of men entering employment took on work in the sector. At the same time, the share of men working in agriculture and construction fell to half the previous level. In the late 1980s, agriculture provided

work to 28 per cent of men entering employment. In the 1990s, this ratio fell to just 16 per cent and then 13 per cent. During the period under analysis, the construction industry's share of total entrants fell from 22 per cent to 11 per cent. The changes were somewhat less significant among women. The proportion of women taking up working in services increased from one-third to 50 per cent. The proportions of other sectors fell across the board by 6–7 per cent at the time of the political changes of 1989–90.

An important lesson of the analysis is that the loss of employment in 1989–90 did not mean, for Roma, permanent exclusion from the labor market. In the early 1990s, just as many people entered work as before. It was, of course, increasingly difficult to find work, and the average age of new entrants to the labor force shifted upwards. A further observation is that most people entering work during the transition lost their jobs within 2–3 years. In other words, the chances of Roma finding stable employment during the years of political change were quite minimal. This has already been pointed out by Béla Janky in an article published in 1998 and entitled *Cigányok munkaerőpiaci helyzete a hetvenes, nyolcvanas és a kilencvenes években* [The Labor Market Situation of Roma in the 1980s and 1990s], as well as by Gábor Kertesi in a study entitled *A cigány foglalkoztatás leépülése és szerkezeti átalakulása 1984 és 1994 között* [The Decline and Restructuring of Roma Employment between 1984 and 1994].

As far as worker displacement is concerned, there are no truly significant differences between the various groups. Perhaps one conclusion is that those with the lowest level of school education began to lose their jobs in larger numbers than other groups prior to the all-embracing changes of the 1990s.

*Worker Stratification**An Analysis of Data from 1993*

Temporary employment has already been mentioned elsewhere in this report. The number of temporary employees has changed significantly since the 1970s. In 1978, the number of Roma men and women working at the end of the year was about the same as at any time during the year. However, in 1987, there was a 4–5 per cent discrepancy between the figures for the end of the year and those for during the year. Still, by that time, employment levels had declined significantly among Roma. The difference thus says little about the number of temporary workers. The same is true for the considerable differences observed in 1993.

Table 13:

Percentage of Men and Women Employed at some Time during the Year—As a Percentage of People of Working Age

	1978		1987		1993	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Men	78.5	1421	78.0	1966	42.4	2334
Women	50.1	1454	54.8	1922	27.4	2281
Total	64.1	2875	66.5	3888	35.0	4615

Examining the relative numbers of people who were working during a given year but who were unemployed both at the end of the preceding year and at the end of the given year, we observe the greatest changes among the male population. In both 1978 and 1987, less than 1 per cent of Roma men of working age were working during the year but not at the beginning or end of the year. In 1993, however, 4 per cent worked during the year but not at the beginning or end of the year. As early as 1978, more than 1 per cent of women worked only at some time during the year. The proportion increased to 3 per cent in 1987 and remained at that level even in the 1990s.

An alternative method of taking stock of temporary workers is to examine how many people work less than 12 months of a given year. For men and women, the proportion of employees working less than 12 months is relatively constant throughout the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. The rate fluctuates between 13 and 17 per cent. The proportion of employees working less than 6 months fluctuates to a greater degree. There is a perceivable increase—from 4.3 per cent in 1987 to 7.9 per cent in 1993—in the proportion of men working just a few months. The percentages given in the previous paragraph thus seem to underestimate the proportion of temporary workers. On the other hand, the results outlined here may show more temporary workers than the actual number.

Table 14:

**Male Employees by the Number of Months Spent in Work
A Percentage Distribution for Various Years**

	1978	1987	1993
1–6 months	4.2	4.3	7.9
7–11 months	8.3	10.2	9.4
Entire year	87.5	85.5	82.7
No. of cases	1069	1431	693

The 2003 Data

In 2003, 71 per cent of Roma in some kind of work had regular income opportunities throughout the year. According to the data, the work of an additional 19 per cent provided occupation for several weeks or months per year. Ten per cent of respondents with some kind of work were in casual employment. Commuters account for 35 per cent of workers, with 30 per cent commuting daily. Based on the statements of respondents, 77.5 per cent are working legally and the rest illegally.

Currently, few Roma have employment and even fewer have stable full-time jobs. And most Roma in work find employment in the lower segment of the labor market. Seventy per cent of employed Roma work as laborers or unskilled workers. Skilled workers and trained blue-collar workers account for 22 per cent. Just 8 per cent of employed Roma work in white-collar positions or as members of one of the uniformed services.

Based on the above data, we constructed a composite factor to identify the labor market status of respondents by way of the regularity and amount of work and the legal status of any such work. We distinguished between three categories. In the first group, we placed those people who have regular work and a declared employment occupying them for 40 hours per week. In the 15–74 age group, sixteen per cent of men and 10 per cent of women fell in this category. In the second group we placed those people who have some kind of work, but whose work is “atypical” in some way or other. Thus, this category comprised people with constant employment whose work was part-time or full-time but seasonal, as well as people working eight hours per day throughout the year but whose employment was not officially declared and who were therefore not protected by labor legislation. Fourteen per cent of Roma men of working age and 6 per cent of Roma women have such employment. In the third group, we placed inactive or unemployed persons who have no paid work. It is apparent that, when grouped in this way, the proportion of people in work slightly exceeds the figure previously given. The reason for this is that we have placed among the employed group those people whose main source of livelihood is some benefit or allowance or family member’s income but who still perform some kind of casual paid work.

The data further refine our knowledge of people’s livelihoods, for they demonstrate not only that few Roma are in work but also that just 60 per cent of those in work have full-time jobs. The rest have employment providing them with irregular, low or illegal

income. Moreover, it is quite possible that the number in undeclared jobs is somewhat higher than our figure, which is based on the statements of respondents.

Compared with rural areas, provincial urban areas provide men with more casual employment opportunities, whereas women are more likely to be in legal employment. Budapest has more to offer in both categories of employment. In most parts of the country, men in full-time jobs are roughly equal in number to those doing some kind of atypical work. Exceptions are the Western region and the S. Transdanubia region, where most people in work are in full-time legal employment. Although the percentage of Roma men in full-time employment is lower in the western counties than in the Budapest agglomeration (22 per cent versus 30 per cent), nevertheless the significant difference is linked with other employment opportunities: in the Budapest region, an additional 30 per cent of men are in some kind of atypical employment, whereas in the three western counties this ratio is just 7 per cent. The tendency is even more apparent among Roma women. Indeed, if we limit ourselves to legal employment, the female employment rate in the western border counties is almost as high as the rate in the Budapest area (18 per cent versus 21 per cent). Even so, whereas in the Budapest agglomeration an additional 17 per cent of women have some kind of less regular paid work, the corresponding ratio is just 3 per cent in the Western region. There is a relationship between the regularity of employment and the quality of work. The level of education is closely connected to the proportion of people in regular full-time work. Atypical employment is far more common among the poorly educated.

As part of the 2003 survey, we examined the earnings of employed persons. Most of the data concern workers in full-time employment. The responses indicate that full-time workers earn, on average, HUF 61,000 net per month. Among full-time male workers, the average figure is HUF 66,000, while women take home, on

average, HUF 51,000. The average figure is HUF 44,000 in the three eastern border counties but HUF 67,000 in the Budapest agglomeration. In Budapest, employees working at least 40 hours per week earn on average HUF 78,000 per month. Remarkably, in the Northern region (the counties of Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén, Heves and Nógrád), Roma in full-time employment earn, on average, HUF 64,000. On the other hand, fewer people have work in that region. The average earnings of full-time workers in provincial urban areas (HUF 55,000) are significantly lower than the average for Budapest. In rural areas, average earnings (almost HUF 59,000) are slightly higher than in provincial urban areas.

We have already noted that people with a higher level of school education have a better chance of finding work. Still, the survey data show that differences in earnings linked with the level of school education are relatively slight. People in full-time employment with secondary or higher education take home, on average, HUF 66,000, while people with primary education (grade 8) or less earn HUF 60,000 (the differences are insignificant). Wage differentials are not particularly great in terms of the type of work. Laborers earn almost as much as trained blue-collar workers or white-collar workers (once again, there is no significant difference between the various categories). Even so, the sample data suggest that weekly commuters to distant workplaces (5 per cent of Roma in full time employment) earn more. Their average wage is HUF 86,000.

Differences between groups based on ethnic identity or native language require further analysis. Whereas the best education and employment data are recorded among Hungarian Roma, workers' earnings show a different pattern. The earnings of employed Beás are particularly deviant, and this is not clearly attributable to the regional distribution of the various native-language and ethnic groups.

Incomes

The 2003 survey also inquired into respondents' incomes. Obviously, a questionnaire-based survey is only capable of producing approximate income data. Still, according to our estimates, in February 2003 the average monthly per capita income in Roma households was HUF 20,900, while the median income was HUF 16,800. This includes all monetary income, such as pensions and benefits. On average, employment income accounts for less than half of total monetary income. We estimate average employment income per household member to be HUF 8,800. The remaining HUF 12,100 comes from pensions, child care support and various other benefits.

Table 15:

**Roma Households by Average Monthly per Capita Income
(in HUF) in 2003**

Income Category (HUF)	No. of Cases (Valid Responses)	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
0–14 999	477	41.5	41.5
15 000–19 999	232	20.2	61.7
20 000–29 999	225	19.6	81.2
30 000– X	216	18.8	100.0
Total	1150	100.0	

Significant income differences lie behind the averages cited. Indeed, in 56 per cent of households, there was nobody, at the time of the survey, with an income from employment (in such households, it is possible that all members of the family are involved in some joint income-producing activity, such as foraging). In 12 per cent of households, less than half of adult household members have employment income. The share is 50–50 in 18.5 per cent of households, more than half in 5.3 per cent of households, and all members in 8.1 per cent of households. The 56 per cent figure for

households without workers is particularly high, given that pensioner households are so rare among the Roma population.

In households with no income earners, the average per capita income is HUF 14,900 (the median value is HUF 12,800). In the 8 per cent of households where all members are income earners, the average per capita income is almost HUF 40,000 (the median value is HUF 36,000). As the share of income earners in a household increases, so both the relative and the absolute value of pensions and benefits decreases. Where all adult household members are working, pensions and benefits are worth just HUF 6500 per capita.

Table 16:
**Estimated Average Monthly per Capita Income (HUF)
for Various Types of Roma Household in 2003**

Share of Adult Household Members with Employment Income	Average Monthly per Capita Income	Average Monthly Employment Income per Capita	Average Monthly Transfer Income (Pensions and Benefits) per Capita
None	14 852	534*	14 318
Less than half	20 830	9 777	10 553
50-50	26 932	16 746	10 187
More than half	35 824	28 975	6 849
All	39 554	33 083	6 470
Total	20 852	8 779	12 074

* A household may still have employment income even when none of its members have earnings. Casual work jointly performed by family members (e.g. collecting medicinal plants) may result in income at household level rather than at individual level. A separate section in the questionnaire addressed such collective sources of income.

The average monthly per capita income for the population as a whole was about HUF 40,000 in 2001 and HUF 60,000 in the autumn of 2003. The average monthly per capita income in Roma households in January-February 2003 was therefore just over one-half of the 2001 figure and just over one-third of the autumn 2003 figure.⁴³

In 2003, for the country as a whole, monthly per capita income in the lower decile stood at HUF 19,173. Even this low level of income was not reached in as many as 56 per cent of Roma households. In the second decile, monthly per capita income was HUF 29,585 in 2003. An additional 12 per cent of Roma households failed to reach this level, while 18.5 per cent of households were at this level. In the third decile, monthly per capita income was HUF 36,548 in 2003. This amount exceeded the monthly per capita income of an additional 23 per cent of Roma households. In such households, most or all adults have employment income. In the fourth decile, monthly per capita income was HUF 42,175 in 2003. Even those Roma households in which all adult members have employment, income did not reach this level.

A more realistic picture of the situation of households may be gained by examining income per unit of consumption rather than income per capita. Given the large number of children, this is especially true for Roma households. To calculate income per unit of consumption, we used the OECD2 equivalence scale. Thus, the first adult in a household received an equivalence value of 1, each further adult received an equivalence value of 0.7, and each child received an equivalence value of 0.3.⁴⁴

Table 17:
**Roma Households by Average Monthly Income
per Unit of Consumption (HUF) in 2003**

Income Categories (HUF)	No. of Cases (Valid Responses)	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
0–14 999	121	10.5	10.5
15 000–19 999	118	10.3	20.8
20 000–29 999	328	28.5	49.3
30 000– X	583	50.7	100.0
Total	1150	100.0	

Table 18:
Estimated Average Monthly Income per Unit of Consumption (HUF)
for Various Types of Roma Household in 2003

Share of Adult Household Members with Employment Income	Average Monthly Income per Unit of Consumption	Average Monthly Employment Income per Unit of Consumption	Average Monthly Transfer Income (Pensions and Benefits) per Unit of Consumption
None	24 815	884	23 930
Less than half	36 731	17 263	19 468
50-50	48 988	29 721	19 267
More than half	62 732	50 447	12 285
All	67 469	55 715	11 754
Total	36 172	15 240	20 932

Eighteen per cent of Roma households just about make ends meet, but they are incapable of saving or investing. Eighty-two per cent of Roma households have incomes below the HCSO's subsistence level, thus satisfying only some of the basic needs. Fifty-six per cent of Roma households are in the lower income decile; people in such households live in abject poverty and are unable to feed themselves properly.⁴⁵

Regional differences in income only partly reflect the differing levels of economic development of the regions. Although households with no income earners account for 73 per cent of households in the eastern counties (Szabolcs, Hajdú, Békés) but less than 57 per cent in Transdanubia, nevertheless average household income per capita is only 22 per cent higher in the latter region than in former region. (Incomes in the Great Plain region and the Northern region are higher than in the eastern counties but lower than in Transdanubia.) Likewise, although employment income per capita is 2.9 times higher in Transdanubia than in the Eastern region, the high proportion and compensating effect of transfer income (pensions and benefits) reduces the difference between the two regions. The same relationship may be observed if we compare rural and urban populations. There is hardly any difference, on average, between incomes in rural households and incomes in provincial urban households, despite the fact that employment income per capita is about 40 per cent higher in the urban areas.

Households in Budapest and the surrounding area are the exception when it comes to the relationship described above. In this central region of the country, both the proportion of households with income earners and the level of household income exceed the proportions and levels of income observed elsewhere. In Budapest, just 17 per cent of households do not have any income earners, while in 30 per cent of households all adult members have employment income. Average income per capita in the region is HUF 32,900—90 per cent higher than the average income recorded in the three eastern counties that comprise the poorest region. In

Table 19:
Estimated Average Monthly per Capita Income (HUF)
of Roma Households in Various Regions in 2003

Region	Average Monthly per Capita Income	Average Monthly Employment Income per Capita	Average Monthly Transfer Income (Pensions and Benefits) per Capita
Budapest agglom.	29 362	18 771	10 592
Eastern	17 255	3 361	13 893
Great Plain	19 823	7 010	12 813
Northern	18 442	6 237	12 205
Transdanubia	20 525	9 397	11 128
Western	22 949	10 957	11 992
Total	20 852	8 779	12 074

Table 20:
Average Monthly per Capita Income Categories (HUF)
Percentage Distributions for the Various Regions in 2003

Region	0–14 999	15 000–19 999	20 000–29 999	30 000 or over	Total
Budapest agglom.	20.1	11.8	27.9	40.2	100.0
Eastern	50.5	22.0	16.4	11.2	100.0
Great Plain	35.8	23.6	25.5	15.1	100.0
Northern	50.6	20.7	16.3	12.4	100.0
Transdanubia	41.9	23.4	16.7	18.0	100.0
Western	33.3	21.4	23.8	21.4	100.0
All	41.5	20.2	19.6	18.8	100.0

terms of employment income, the difference is far greater (by a factor of almost 6.5). Still, transfer income (pensions and benefits) is no higher in Budapest than elsewhere.

Table 21:
Estimated Average Monthly per Capita Income (HUF)
in Rural Areas, Provincial Urban Areas,
and Budapest in 2003

Type of Settlement	Monthly per Capita Income	Monthly Employment Income per Capita	Monthly Transfer Income (Pensions and Benefits) per Capita
Rural	12 969	5 877	18 546
Provincial urban	19 960	8 417	11 544
Budapest	32 919	21 756	11 164
Total	20 865	8 786	12 078

The average values for total households differ slightly from the values given in *Table 16* because the use of different variables results in different households being left out of the total.

Table 22:
Average Monthly per Capita Income Categories (HUF)
Percentage Distributions for the Various Types of Settlement
in 2003

Type of Settlement	0–14 999	15 000–19 999	20 000–29 999	30 000 or over	Total
Rural	46.9	21.4	16.8	14.9	100.0
Provincial urban	43.5	21.4	19.3	15.9	100.0
Budapest	10.8	10.0	31.7	47.5	100.0
Total	41.4	20.2	19.6	18.8	100.0

Table 23:
Estimated Average Monthly Income per Unit of Consumption (HUF)
in Rural Areas, Provincial Urban Areas, and Budapest in 2003

Type of Settlement	Monthly Income per Unit of Consumption	Monthly Employment Income per Unit of Consumption	Monthly Transfer Income (Pensions and Benefits) per Unit of Consumption
Rural	32 559	10 258	22 300
Provincial urban	34 367	14 351	20 016
Budapest	58 834	38 779	20 054
Total	36 194	15 253	20 940

The average values for total households differ slightly from the values given in *Table 16* because the use of different variables results in different households being left out of the total.

On average, child care benefits account for about 25 per cent of the total income and 45 per cent of the transfer income (pensions and benefits) of Roma households. The sum of child care benefits per household member is greater where there are several children in the family—although the increment is minimal from the fourth child onwards. (Examining the sum of child care benefits per child, we find no significant increment even for the first three children—and the sum of child care benefits per child decreases from the fourth child onwards.) The slight increase mentioned is reflected in part in the sum of transfer income. That is to say, transfer income is greater in households with many children than in households with few children; but the difference is slight. (The highest level of transfer income was measured in households with no children, because they tended to include elderly people on pensions). Still, employment income per household member is much lower in households with many children. Thus per capita income in such households is somewhat lower than in households with fewer children. (Per capita income in households with two children is 36 per cent higher than in households with five or more children.) The incomes of households with few or many children still differ slightly even if we attempt to calculate the various indices of income per unit of consumption.

The differences noted do not mean, however, that families with many children are worse off in the labor market. The proportion of active adults is somewhat lower among families with many children, but there is no negative effect on earnings per adult. Indeed, the more children there are in a family, the higher the average earnings of non-student family members aged over 15 tend to be. In part, this is due to the fact that many adolescents do not find jobs. Some households with few children are, in reality, families with adolescent children who have left school but do not yet have earnings.

Household income does not vary significantly among the various ethnic groups. Among Roma households in Transdanubia, it is possible to show that households dominated by persons identifying themselves as Hungarian are somewhat better off than average. But no such difference may be observed in eastern parts of the country. On the other hand, by focusing on employment income, we may perceive differences between the various ethnic groups—even in the east. But in Budapest and the surrounding area there is still no acute difference. Likewise, per capita income is only slightly above average in households with some non-Roma members.

In rural areas, families living in integrated areas are no better off than are those living in segregated areas. In provincial urban areas, a correlation between segregation and income status may be observed in some regions but is absent elsewhere. The relationship is particularly manifest in urban areas in Transdanubia; but in Budapest too, the better off are less likely to live in segregated residential areas. In Budapest, per capita income in Roma households living in non-Roma neighborhoods is 40 per cent higher than per capita income in Roma households living in Roma neighborhoods. (Moreover, average employment income in households in integrated areas is 72 per cent higher than in households in segregated areas.)

The analysis data do not disprove the supposition that ghettos of poorer Roma may develop in larger urban settlements, which better-off Roma try then to leave. Even so, our findings indicate that as far as Roma in Hungary are concerned, acute boundaries tend to be drawn *between* settlements and regions rather than within them. Thus, employment income among Roma households living in segregated areas of Budapest is 2.5 times higher than employment income among rural Roma households living in predominantly non-Roma areas. Moreover, while potential earnings vary greatly between regions, transfer income is shared almost equally among the various groups of Roma and constitutes an important source of income in most households.

Having surveyed monetary income, we now look briefly at household farming, which serves as an additional source of food for families. Household farming is a particularly significant activity in light of the low levels of income described above. Almost a third of households grow vegetables or keep livestock—almost always for their own use and in small volumes. In 1–2 per cent of households, household farming is able to provide perceptible (additional) income.

In response to our questioning, 20–22 per cent of households said that they grew potatoes, onions, beans, tomatoes or paprika. However, for none of these crops were more than 5 per cent of households able to meet the entire family needs from household farming. Fifteen per cent of households kept pigs, usually slaughtering one or two per year. One per cent of households had sold a fattened pig in the previous 12 months. Cattle are less typically kept: just 0.5 per cent of households keep cows. On the other hand, chickens are kept by 13 per cent of households. Poultry numbers reach a hundred in 2 per cent of households. Little more than 1 per cent of households keep horses. This piece of data corresponds with previous observations and symbolizes the changes in the livelihoods of all Roma. Out of 1165 households included in our survey, just one household had sold a horse in the previous 12 months.

Nine per cent of families grow vegetables but keep no livestock, while 7 per cent keep livestock but grow no vegetables. Fifteen per cent of households are active in both areas. Some kind of household farming is practiced by 57 per cent of households. Worth noting is that, even in provincial urban areas, 16 per cent of families practice household farming.

Table 24:

**Roma Households by Type of Household Farming
Percentage Distributions for the Various Types of Settlement
in 2003**

Type of Settlement	None	Grow Vegetables	Keep Livestock	Both	Total
Rural	42.9	15.9	11.4	29.8	100.0
Provincial urban	84.3	5.0	5.4	5.4	100.0
Budapest	99.2	0.8	0.0	0.0	100.0
Total	69.2	8.9	7.2	14.6	100.0

Household farming is strongly related to local conditions. A comparison is worthwhile only among rural populations. Even so, as we focus on rural households, we struggle to identify the factors rendering household farming more or less likely. The most significant differences are between regions. In Central and Southern Transdanubia, 64 per cent of families living in rural areas practice household farming. In the Northern region, comprising the counties of Nógrád, Heves, and Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén, the ratio is 60 per cent. But in the villages of the counties of Pest, Fejér and Komárom-Esztergom, just 36 per cent of households practice household farming. In the Great Plain region, just under half of rural families grow vegetables or keep livestock. Breaking down the data to the level of individual villages within the sample, we find that household farming is almost completely absent in some rural communities. Even so, it is difficult to find a village where household farming is almost universal. Thus, unfavorable local conditions may put people off household farming, but favorable conditions do not automatically mean that all families have the resources necessary for household farming.

Table 25:
Roma Households in Rural Areas
by Types of Household Farming.
Percentage Distributions for the Various Regions in 2003
(N=466)

Region	None	Grow Vegetables	Keep Livestock	Both	Total
Budapest agglom.	64.1	0.0	23.1	12.8	100.0
Eastern	45.4	18.5	9.3	26.9	100.0
Great Plain	52.5	5.0	22.5	20.0	100.0
Northern	39.5	16.4	10.7	33.3	100.0
Transdanubia	36.1	18.6	6.2	39.2	100.0
Western*	(0.0)	(100.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(100.0)
Total	42.9	15.9	11.4	29.8	100.0

* The distribution contains data for just five households.

Larger households, sometimes consisting of several families, are more likely to practice household farming, although, by itself, the number of children is not an influencing factor. At the same time, it cannot be said that families with limited monetary income are more likely to be active in household farming or, for that matter, that those with the proper resources are more likely to be involved. Nor can we demonstrate that an increase in the number of employed persons in a family leads to a corresponding decrease in the family's involvement in household farming (or vice versa). Nevertheless, indicators relating to residential area, and thus to the financial circumstances of families, do help to predict the probability of household farming. Households living in the inner zones of settlements or in dwellings with modern amenities are more likely to practice household farming. Indeed, household farming is practiced by 65 per cent of people living in dwellings with flush toilets but by only 42 per cent of people living in other dwellings. Similar differences may be observed by employing other indicators, such as the presence of a kitchen, a bathroom or running water.

Presumably, therefore, household farming is influenced by the disposable financial resources of households. It would seem that regional and local conditions, acting in combination with household resources, determine whether or not people take up household farming. The role of necessity or subsistence is less evident.

Notes

1. More information on the three ethnolinguistic groups is given at the beginning of the second part of this chapter.
2. For the background to the 1971 survey, see István Kemény, *Az alacsony jövedelmű népesség életkörülményei Magyarországon* [The Living Conditions of Low-Income Population Groups in Hungary] (Budapest, 1972). For analysis of the 1971 survey, see István Kemény, ed., *Beszámoló a magyarországi cigányok helyzetével foglalkozó, 1971-ben végzett kutatásról* [Report on the 1971 Survey of the Situation of the Roma Population in Hungary] (Budapest, 1976), as well as István Kemény, "A magyarországi cigány lakosság" [The Roma Population in Hungary], *Valóság*, January 1974, and István Kemény, "A budapesti cigányokról" [Roma in Budapest], *Budapest*, 1975, no. 5. For the 1993 survey, see—*inter alia*—Gábor Havas and István Kemény, "A magyarországi romákról" [Roma in Hungary] *Szociológiai Szemle*, 1995, no. 3, pp. 3–20; István Kemény, "A romák és az iskola" [Roma and School Education] *Educatio*, Spring 1996; István Kemény, "A magyarországi roma (cigány) népességről" [Roma in Hungary] *Magyar Tudomány*, 1997, no. 6, pp. 641–655; István Kemény, "A magyarországi cigányság szerkezete a nyelvi változások tükrében" [The Structure of Roma Society in Hungary as Reflected in Linguistic Changes] *Régió*, 1999, no. 1; István Kemény, "Tennivalók a cigányok/romák ügyében" [Measures Needed to Assist Roma], in István Kemény, ed., *A cigányok Magyarországon* [Roma in Hungary] (Budapest, 1999), pp. 229–256; Gábor Kertesi, "Cigány gyerekek az iskolában, cigány felnőttek a munkaerőpiacon" [Roma Children at School and Roma Adults in the Labor Market] *Közgazdasági Szemle*, 1995, no. 42, pp. 30–65; Gábor Kertesi, "Cigány foglalkoztatás és munkanélküliség a rendszerváltás előtt és után" [Roma Employment and Unemployment before and after the Political Changes of 1989–90] *Esély*, 1995, no. 4, pp. 19–63; Gábor Kertesi, "Megalázottak és megszorítottak. Cigány emberek beszámolója az őket ért sérelmekről és megaláztatásokról az 1993/94. évi országosan reprezentatív cigányvizsgálat megkérdezettjei közül" [They Humiliated and Depressed Us. Reports of Roma People

Participating in the 1993/94 National Representative Survey of the Roma Population on Bad Treatment and Humiliation] *Esély*, 1996, no. 3; Gábor Kertesi, "A cigány foglalkoztatás leépülése és szerkezeti átalakulása 1984 és 1994 között" [The Decline in and Restructuring of Roma Employment between 1984 and 1994] *Közgazdasági Szemle*, 2000, no. 47, pp. 406–443; and Béla Janky, "Lakóhely-változtatások a cigányok körében" [Changes in Place of Residence among Roma], in István Kemény, ed., *A cigányok Magyarországon. Magyarország az ezredfordulón* [Roma in Hungary. Hungary at the Turn of the Century] (Budapest, 1999), pp. 175–203. For the 2003 survey, see István Kemény and Béla Janky, "A cigány nemzetiségi adatokról" [Ethnic Data on Roma], *Kisebbségkutatás*, 2003, no. 2, pp. 309–315; István Kemény and Béla Janky, "A 2003. évi cigány felmérésről—Népesedési, nyelvhasználati és nemzetiségi adatok" [The Survey of the Roma Population of 2003—Demographic, Linguistic and Ethnic Data] *Beszélő*, 2003, October, pp. 64–76; István Kemény and Béla Janky, "A cigányok foglalkoztatottságáról és jövedelmi viszonyairól" [The Employment and Incomes of Roma] *Esély*, 2003, no. 6, pp. 58–73; István Kemény and Béla Janky, "Települési és lakásvizonyok" [Settlement Patterns and Housing] *Beszélő*, April 2004, pp. 96–111, 190. The three representative surveys of the Roma population in Hungary are the source of data for 1971, 1993 and 2003. In recent years, in addition to research led by Kemény, a national survey was conducted by Ladányi and Szelényi in 2002, which also permits thorough analysis of the living conditions of Roma in Hungary. See János Ladányi and Iván Szelényi, "Cigányok és szegények Magyarországon, Romániában és Bulgáriában" [Roma and Poor People in Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria] *Szociológiai Szemle*, 2002, no. 4, pp. 72–94.

3. For issues of sampling and estimating numbers, see Gábor Kertesi and Gábor Kézdi, *A cigány népesség Magyarországon* [The Roma Population in Hungary] (Budapest, 1998); Gábor Kertesi and Gábor Kézdi, "A cigány népesség lélekszáma Magyarországon a kilencvenes évek elején" [The Size of the Roma Population in Hungary in the Early 1990s], in István Kemény, ed., *A cigányok Magyarországon* (Budapest, 1999), pp. 45–72; and Gábor Kertesi, "Két cigányvizsgálat (Kritikai elemzés)" [Two Surveys of the Roma Population (Critical Analysis)] *Szociológiai Szemle*, 1996, no. 1.

Participating in the 1993/94 National Representative Survey of the Roma Population on Bad Treatment and Humiliation] *Esély*, 1996, no. 3; Gábor Kertesi, "A cigány foglalkoztatás leépülése és szerkezeti átalakulása 1984 és 1994 között" [The Decline in and Restructuring of Roma Employment between 1984 and 1994] *Közgazdasági Szemle*, 2000, no. 47, pp. 406–443; and Béla Janky, "Lakóhely-változtatások a cigányok körében" [Changes in Place of Residence among Roma], in István Kemény, ed., *A cigányok Magyarországon. Magyarország az ezredfordulón* [Roma in Hungary. Hungary at the Turn of the Century] (Budapest, 1999), pp. 175–203. For the 2003 survey, see István Kemény and Béla Janky, "A cigány nemzetiségi adatokról" [Ethnic Data on Roma], *Kisebbségkutatás*, 2003, no. 2, pp. 309–315; István Kemény and Béla Janky, "A 2003. évi cigány felmérésről—Népesedési, nyelvhasználati és nemzetiségi adatok" [The Survey of the Roma Population of 2003—Demographic, Linguistic and Ethnic Data] *Beszélő*, 2003, October, pp. 64–76; István Kemény and Béla Janky, "A cigányok foglalkoztatottságáról és jövedelmi viszonyairól" [The Employment and Incomes of Roma] *Esély*, 2003, no. 6, pp. 58–73; István Kemény and Béla Janky, "Települési és lakásviszonyok" [Settlement Patterns and Housing] *Beszélő*, April 2004, pp. 96–111, 190. The three representative surveys of the Roma population in Hungary are the source of data for 1971, 1993 and 2003. In recent years, in addition to research led by Kemény, a national survey was conducted by Ladányi and Szelényi in 2002, which also permits thorough analysis of the living conditions of Roma in Hungary. See János Ladányi and Iván Szelényi, "Cigányok és szegények Magyarországon, Romániában és Bulgáriában" [Roma and Poor People in Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria] *Szociológiai Szemle*, 2002, no. 4, pp. 72–94.

3. For issues of sampling and estimating numbers, see Gábor Kertesi and Gábor Kézdi, *A cigány népesség Magyarországon* [The Roma Population in Hungary] (Budapest, 1998); Gábor Kertesi and Gábor Kézdi, "A cigány népesség lélekszáma Magyarországon a kilencvenes évek elején" [The Size of the Roma Population in Hungary in the Early 1990s], in István Kemény, ed., *A cigányok Magyarországon* (Budapest, 1999), pp. 45–72; and Gábor Kertesi, "Két cigányvizsgálat (Kritikai elemzés)" [Two Surveys of the Roma Population (Critical Analysis)] *Szociológiai Szemle*, 1996, no. 1.

4. For the debate concerning the procedure, see Gábor Havas, István Kemény and Gábor Kertesi, "A relatív cigány a klasszifikációs küzdőtéren" [The Relative Roma in the Classification Battlefield] *Kritika*, March 1998, p. 189; Gábor Kertesi, "Az empirikus cigánykutatások lehetőségéről" [Potential Methods of Empirical Research on Roma] *Replika*, 1998, p. 29; János Ladányi and Iván Szelényi, "Ki a cigány?" [Who is Roma?] *Kritika*, December 1997; János Ladányi and Iván Szelényi, "Az etnikai besorolás objektivitásáról" [The Objectivity of Ethnic Classification] *Kritika*, March 1998; János Ladányi and Iván Szelényi, "Még egyszer az etnikai besorolás objektivitásáról" [The Objectivity of Ethnic Classification Revisited] *Replika*, 1998, p. 30. For problems associated with ethnic classification, see also István Kemény and Béla Janky, "A cigány nemzetiségi adatokról" [Ethnic Data on Roma] *Kisebbségkutatás*, 2003, no. 2, pp. 309–315, and János Ladányi and Iván Szelényi, "A roma etnicitás társadalmi konstrukciója Bulgáriában, Magyarországon és Romániában a piaci átmenet korában" [The Social Construction of Roma Ethnicity in Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania during the Era of Market Transition] *Szociológiai Szemle*, 2001, no. 4, pp. 85–95.
János Ladányi and Iván Szelényi, "Van-e értelme az underclass kategória használatának?" [Is It Worth Using the Category of Underclass?] *Beszélő*, November 2001, pp. 94–98.
5. István Kemény and Béla Janky, "A cigány nemzetiségi adatokról" [Ethnic Data on Roma] *Kisebbségkutatás*, 2003, no. 2, pp. 309–315.
6. Tables without indication of source are based on the data of the three representative surveys of the Roma population.
7. Árpád Mészáros and János Fóti, "A cigány népesség jellemzői Magyarországon" [Features of the Roma Population in Hungary] *Statisztikai Szemle*, 74 (11): 908–929.
8. *Ibid.*
9. Béla Janky, "A cigány nők helyzete" [The Situation of Roma Women], in Tiborné Pongrácz and István György Tóth (eds.), *A nők helyzete* [The Situation of Women] (Budapest, 1999), pp. 217–238.
10. Márta Gyenei, "A 'stratégiai gyerek'" [The 'Strategic Child'] *Népszabadság*, 14 November 1998.
11. András Gábor and István György Tóth, *A gyermekvállalás támogatásának gazdasági motívumai és hatásai* [The Economic Motives

for, and Consequences of, Financial Support for Childbearing] (Budapest, 2000).

12. *Ibid.*
13. László Hablicsek, *Demográfiai forgatókönyvek, 1997–2050* [Demographic Scenarios, 1997–2050] (Budapest, 1998).
14. Ferenc Kamarás, "Termékenység, népesség-redukció" [Fertility and Population Decline], in Tamás Kolosi, István György Tóth and György Vukovich, eds., *Társadalmi riport 2000* [Social Report] (Budapest, 2000), pp. 409–432.
15. The present territory of Hungary is smaller than the former territory of the Kingdom of Hungary.
16. "A Magyarországon 1893. január 31-én végrehajtott cigányösszeírás eredményei" [Results of the Roma Census in Hungary of 31 January 1893] *Magyar Statisztikai Közlemények*, new series, vol. IX, 1985.
17. András Kovács, ed., *Zsidók a mai Magyarországon* [Jews in Present-Day Hungary] (Budapest, 2002).
18. For a description of the policy of eradicating Roma settlements, see Katalin Berey, "A szociális követelményeknek meg nem felelő telepek felszámolása" [The Eradication of Isolated Settlements not Fulfilling Social Requirements], in Katalin Berey and Ágota Horváth, *Esély nélkül* (Budapest, 1990).
19. Károly Kocsis and Zoltán Kovács, *A magyarországi cigány népesség társadalomföldrajza* [Social Geography of Roma Population in Hungary] (Budapest, 1991).
20. See Gábor Havas, "A kistelepülések és a cigányok" [Small Villages and Roma], in Kemény, ed., *A cigányok Magyarországon. Magyarország az ezredfordulón*, pp. 163–204.
21. Éva Fekete, "Cigányok a Cserhátban" [Roma in the Cserhát Region], in *Észak- és kelet-magyarországi földrajzi évkönyv* [Geographical Yearbook of Northern and Eastern Hungary] (Miskolc, 1994).
22. Gábor Havas, "A kistelepülések és a cigányok" [Small Villages and Roma], in Kemény, ed., *A cigányok Magyarországon. Magyarország az ezredfordulón*, pp. 163–204.
23. For analyses of the situation in Budapest, see János Ladányi, "A lakásrendszer változásai és a cigány népesség térbeni elhelyezkedésének alakulása Budapesten" [Changes in the Housing System and the Spatial Distribution of the Roma Population in Budapest] *Valóság*, 1989, no. 8, pp. 73–89; and János Ladányi and

- Iván Szelényi, "Szuburbanizáció és gettósodás" [Suburbanisation and Ghettoisation] *Kritika*, July 1997.
24. The processing of the 1993 data in this chapter is based on analysis presented in Béla Janky, "Lakóhely-változtatások a cigányok körében" [Changes in Place of Residence among Roma], in Kemény, ed., *A cigányok Magyarországon. Magyarország az ezredfordulón*, pp. 175–203.
 25. "A Magyarországon 1893. január 31-én végrehajtott cigányösszeírás eredményei" [Results of the Roma Census in Hungary of 31 January 1893] *Magyar Statisztikai Közlemények*, new series, vol. IX, 1985, p. 21.
 26. Cf. Ignác Romsics, *Magyarország története a XX. században* [Hungarian History in the Twentieth Century] (Budapest, 1999), pp. 39–40.
 27. István Kemény, ed., *Beszámoló a magyarországi cigányok helyzetével foglalkozó, 1971-ben végzett kutatásról* [Report on the 1971 Survey of the Situation of the Roma Population in Hungary] (Budapest, 1976), p. 45.
 28. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
 29. Gábor Havas, István Kemény and Ilona Liskó, *Cigány gyerekek az általános iskolában* [Roma Children in Primary Education] (Budapest, 2002), p. 181.
 30. Ilona Liskó, *Cigány tanulók a középfokú iskolákban* [Roma Students in Secondary Education] (Budapest, 2002), p. 37.
 31. Sándor Loss, "Egy csapásra" [All at Once] *Beszélő*, January 2001, p. 74.
 32. See István Kemény, "A nyelvcsereéről és a roma/cigány gyerekek nyelvi hátrányairól az iskolában" [Language Shift and the Linguistic Disadvantages of Roma Schoolchildren], in Ágota Horváth, Edit Landau and Júlia Szalai, eds., *Cigánynak születni* [Born to Be Roma] (Budapest, 2000), pp. 313–330.
 33. István Kemény, "A cigányok és az iskola" [Roma and Education] *Beszélő*, January 2001.
 34. Kemény, ed., *Beszámoló a magyarországi cigányok helyzetével foglalkozó, 1971-ben végzett kutatásról*, p. 42.
 35. Endre Czeizel, Ágnes Lányiné Engelmayer and Csaba Rátay, eds., *Az értelmi fogyatékosok köreredete a Budapest-vizsgálat tükrében* [Causes of Learning Disabilities as Reflected in the Budapest Inquiry] (Budapest, 1978).

36. Katalin Pik, "Roma gyerekek és a speciális iskolák" [Roma Children and Special Schools] *Educatio*, 1999, no. 2.
37. *Ibid.*
38. Kálmán Gábor, *Az első éves hallgatók szociológiai vizsgálata. Táblázatok* [Sociological Study of First-Year Students. Tables] (Budapest, 2002).
39. For an overview, see István Kemény and Béla Janky, "A cigányok foglalkoztatottságáról és jövedelmi viszonyairól" [The Employment and Incomes of Roma] *Esély*, 2003, no. 6, pp. 58–73. Based on data from the 1993 survey, a detailed analysis of changes in the labor market affecting Roma and associated with Hungary's political transition is presented in Gábor Kertesi, "A cigány foglalkoztatás leépülése és szerkezeti átalakulása 1984 és 1994 között" [The Decline in, and Restructuring of, Roma Employment between 1984 and 1994] *Közgazdasági Szemle*, 2000, no. 47, pp. 406–443.
A survey of conditions after the political changes was also conducted by Kertesi in 1994 based on HCSO data. See Gábor Kertesi, "Cigányok a munkaerőpiacon" [Roma in the Labor Market] *Közgazdasági Szemle*, 1994, no. 41, pp. 991–1023. Cf. Gábor Kertesi, "Ingázás a falusi Magyarországon" [Commuting in Rural Hungary] *Közgazdasági Szemle*, 2000, no. 47, pp. 775–798. For an analysis of the processes underway in the 1990s, see also István Kemény, ed., *Romák/cigányok és a láthatatlan gazdaság* [Roma and the Invisible Economy] (Budapest, 2000); István Kemény, "Foglalkoztatás, munka, munkanélküliség" [Employment, Work and Unemployment], in Ernő Kállai and Erika Törzsök, eds., *Cigánynak lenni Magyarországon* [To Be Roma in Hungary] (Budapest, 2000), pp. 25–31; István Kemény, "A teljes foglalkoztatottságtól a munkanélküliségig és a láthatatlan gazdaságig" [From Full Employment to Unemployment, and to the Invisible Economy] *Kisebbségkutatás*, 2000, no. 4, pp. 599–608; István Kemény and Béla Janky, "A cigány nemzetiségi adatokról" [Ethnic Data on Roma] *Kisebbségkutatás*, 2003, no. 2, pp. 309–315; István Kemény and Béla Janky, "A 2003. évi cigány felmérésről—Népességi, nyelvhasználati és nemzetiségi adatok" [The Survey of the Roma Population of 2003—Demographic, Linguistic and Ethnic Data] *Beszélő*, 2003, October, pp. 64–76. Additional data may be found in Béla Janky, *Cigányok munkaerőpiaci helyzete a hetvenes, nyolcvanas és a kilencvenes években* [The Employment Situation of Roma in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s] (Unpublished, 1998).

40. Concerning the survey, see János Köllő, "A roma munkanélküliség és a munkanélküli segélyrendszer 2000. évi reformja" [Roma Unemployment and the Reform of the Unemployment Benefit System in 2000], in Anna Csongor and György Róbert Lukács, eds., *Roma munkaerőpiaci programok* [Roma Labor Market Programs] (Budapest, 2003), pp. 29–44; and György Róbert Lukács, ed., "Roma munkaerőpiaci programok" [Roma Labor Market Programs], in Csongor and Lukács, eds., *Roma munkaerőpiaci programok*, pp. 45–88.
41. The retrospective analyses were possible due to the employment history section in the 1993 survey.
42. Unfortunately, conclusions based on the statistics are tentative in the case of several variables, due to low cell frequencies. Definitive opinions may only be given where there are strong trends. As well as low case numbers, another factor renders the results uncertain. Due to the means of sampling, many respondents may have worked at the same place. A major decision on redundancies may have affected many respondents of similar status at the same time. Thus, in some cases, we may have recorded 'exceptional' years that may be explained by local rather than national factors.
43. For the latest national estimates, see Péter Szivós and István György Tóth, eds., *Stabilizálódó társadalomszerkezet* [Stabilising Social Structures] (Budapest, 2004).
44. See Ödön Éltető and Éva Havasi, "Az elemzési egység és az ekvivalenciaskála megválasztásának hatása a jövedelmi egyenlőtlenségre és szegénységre" [The Analysis Unit and the Effect of the Choice of Equivalence Scale on Income Inequalities and Poverty] *Szociológiai Szemle*, 2002, no 4, pp. 157–170. A different scale for calculating equivalence values and consumption units was used in Zsolt Spéder, ed., *Demográfiai folyamatok és társadalmi környezet. Gyorsjelentés* [Demographic Trends and Social Milieu. An Express Report] (Budapest, 2002) and in Balázs Kapitány and Zsolt Spéder, *Szegénység és depriváció* [Poverty and Deprivation] (Budapest, 2004).
45. Slightly different results are presented in János Ladányi and Iván Szelényi, "Cigányok és szegények Magyarországon, Romániában és Bulgáriában" [Roma and Poor People in Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria] *Szociológiai Szemle*, 2002, no. 4, pp. 72–94.

ETHNOGRAPHIC AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL RESEARCH ON ROMA

Roma in Hungary cannot be referred to as a uniform ethnic group. The impression of uniformity tends to be subscribed to by politicians, civil servants and the media, and it is the one commonly believed by ordinary members of the public. In reality, however, people who call themselves Roma tend to differentiate between at least three ethnic groups. Differences in native language define the three groups. Any ethnographic description of Roma has to take into consideration this fact. But differences between Roma groups based on occupations or livelihoods—as well as the associated differences in economic and social status—give rise to even greater complexity. Thus, ethnographers would be foolish to claim that “this is what Roma eat” or “this is what they wear.” They will be more accurate if they state: “the food and clothing of some successful Vlach Roma looks like this” or “the food and clothing of Hungarian Roma living in unemployment and poverty looks like that.” In this way, groups may be formed of local Roma communities on the basis of shared features or similar features. Under ideal conditions, the first step towards compiling an ethnographic description is to determine—within the given communities—the cultural norms and rules that characterize the community as a whole and then to describe the ideal forms of the given phenomena as professed to and practiced by the group. Phenomena differing from the average are adjusted to the mean. In the second step, the cultural norms of the various different groups are brought together. This creates group versions of the system of clothing and nutrition. Only by placing the group versions alongside one another is it possible to describe the clothing and nutritional characteristics of Roma.

It is extremely important to understand that a dual system of these phenomena exists. On the one hand, ethnography and anthropology establish and develop systems that are derived from making observations of Roma. On the other hand, the Roma communities themselves also formulate systems of rules as part of their social functioning. A further question is the extent to which these cultural sub-systems—such as clothing and nutrition, but also weddings, burials and, more generally, the whole system of customs relating to individuals within the community or to the community as a whole—are explained, at the ideological level, by ethnic factors and the extent to which they are bound to the framework deemed characteristic of the community. In other words, what we are asking is whether “the inhabitants of Tyukod” do something in such and such a way or “the Roma inhabitants of Tyukod” do this or that, thereby distinguishing themselves from the peasants farmers of Tyukod, or whether as Roma they do something in such a manner, thereby distinguishing themselves from the *gadzo*.

The classification of Roma that enjoys wide acceptance even today was first proposed by Kamill Erdős in 1958. There were, however, attempts prior to this—attempts that have also served to influence political and administrative practices over the years. The census of 1893 considered migration and settlement to be the yardstick of development. It therefore distinguished between wandering Roma, Roma who were temporary residents somewhere, and permanently settled Roma. The idea of two extreme types of Roma stuck. For instance, two decades later, in a work entitled *Cigány a magyar irodalomban* [Roma in Hungarian Literature], Gyula Fleischmann mentioned, in the introduction to his work, the following two categories:

We should distinguish between two types of Roma: 1. Wandering Roma 2. Settled Roma. There are important differences between the two groups. The real ancient Roma traits comprising the essential features of the race, are found in wandering Roma. Pride, melancholy reminiscent of the Indus

race, reticence with regard to strangers, an attraction to the vagrant life, and a love of nature—all of these characteristics are now to be found only in wandering Roma. Owing to their self-reliant lifestyles, they have been able to preserve a greater number of the racial traits than have sedentarized Roma living in servitude. Wandering Roma look down upon their degenerate and debased brothers, the sedentarized Roma, seeing in them mere pariahs who have fallen into slavery and who are unworthy of the name of the great Roma nation.

In this context, however, it is the ethnographic and culturological observation (rather than the political) that is dominant, even if it is tangibly a somewhat romantic attitude. The emphasis laid on wandering Roma is a continuation of Mihály Zámolyi Varga's romantic ethnography of tent-dwelling Roma. The work of the researchers who become known as the "Romologist triad"—Henrik Wlislöcki, Archduke Joseph of Austria, and Antal Hermann—was not free of romantic attitudes. Although the three researchers "employed" the participant observation method, in the course of which they characterised Roma as people who disliked social ties, who were reluctant to join with the rest of society, and who were nature's children and not entirely honest. Their academic interest in Roma was driven by a kind of enlightened absolutism: they "devoted their efforts" to the sedentarization of wandering Roma. Archduke Joseph wanted to settle a group of wandering Roma on his estate in the village of Alcsut, while Antal Hermann sought, as chief counsel at the Ministry of Interior, to prepare for and co-ordinate the ministerial decree of 1916. These men apparently had little understanding of the culture of the wandering Roma. They acknowledged neither the economic necessity of nomadism nor the distrust and suspicion encountered by Roma. The long appendix in the *Pallas Nagylexikon* entitled "*czigány*" may be regarded as a summary of the work of the three authors.

An article by Antal Heiczinger published in 1939 was one of the first to describe the three groups of Roma in Hungary, giving equal recognition to trough-making Roma. In a work entitled "Data relating to the Roma question in the village," the language, migration, occupation and livelihood, lifestyle and relations towards the village and towards peasant farmers are employed as observation criteria. In a series of essays entitled "Roma of Békés County—Roma dialects in Hungary" and "Roma in Hungary—tribes and clans," Kamill Erdős attempted a classification of groups in Hungary that were referred to as Roma. Even today his classification is the most detailed available. It has also served to codify areas of academic study concerned with Roma, providing the terms of expressions for ethnographic and anthropological inquiry. Moreover, in its fundamental categories, it has served to influence subsequent sociological research.

Two types of Roma may be distinguished in Hungary:

- A) Romani-speaking Roma*
- B) Non-Romani-speaking Roma*

The first group may be divided into two very distinct groups:

- A1) Speakers of the so-called Carpathian dialect of Romani*
- A2) Speakers of the so-called Vlach (Vlax) dialect of Romani*

The A1) group may be divided into three sub-groups:

- a) Nógrád County*
- b) Budapest region (Páty, Csobánka, Pomáz, Zsámbék, Pilisvörösvár, Bia, Pesthidegkút, Budakalász) and the Transdanubian region (Pécs, Mohács, Versend, Dunaszekcső)*
- c) Knife-grinder and carousel Roma (migrating throughout the country and calling themselves "German" or "Vend"—i.e. Slovenian—Roma)*

The dialect spoken by Vlach Roma living in Nógrád County is different from that spoken by other Vlach Roma in Hungary.

Carpathian Roma and Vlach Roma are unable to communicate with each other in Romani, because of the great difference between their respective dialects.

Vlach Roma (A2) are divided into several tribes (types), and within these tribes there are numerous clans. Their tribal names indicate their occupations, while their clan-names stem from the names of their forefathers or some esteemed predecessor (sometimes even a nickname) or from the name of the place where the clan first settled down (toponym). The names of tribes and clans sometimes go back centuries, but sometimes they are only a few decades old.

The types of Vlach (Vlax) Roma are as follows: a) Lovari (horse-traders; horse-dealers); b) Posot'ari (pick-pockets); c) Kherari (casual laborers, house-owners); d) Colari (carpet dealers); e) Kelderari (copper-smiths, kettle-menders); f) Cerhari ("tent-dwellers"); g) Mašari ("fishermen"); h) Bugari; i) Čurari ("knife-grinders"); j) Drizar ("robbers"); k) Gurvar (fodozovo) (dish-makers, cutlery-menders).

The main Vlach (Vlax) Roma clans are as follows: Hercegešt'e (from the village of Hercegszölös), Čokešt'e, Kodešt'e, Ducešt'e, Dudmešt'e, Pirancešt'e, Migurešt'e, Sosoješt'e, Čiriklái (meaning: bird), Ruva (meaning: wolf), Markulešt'e, Notari, Nemeka (forefather: from the name Voivode Neneka), Buzešt'e, Trandešt'e, Čampašošt'e (from a nickname), Kozak, Kolompar, Stojka, Rafael, etc.

The second main group of Roma comprises the non-Romani native speakers. They are divided into two sub-groups:

B1 group comprises Hungarian native speakers;

B2 group comprises Romanian native speakers.

The B1 group (Romungro, "Rumungro") are the descendants of Carpathian and Vlach (Vlax) Roma whose ancestors did not teach their children Romani—probably hoping that this would facilitate their assimilation into Hungarian society. It is now almost impossible to distinguish between the Carpathian and Vlach elements.

They are sub-divided into two sub-groups:

- a) musicians ("gentlemen" group)*
- b) adobe-makers, basket-weavers, casual laborers, etc. (poorer group)*

The B2 group is also divided into two sub-groups:

- 1) Romanian Roma (e.g. in the communities of Elek and Méhkerék in Békés County)*
- 2) Trough-making Roma.*

The Romanian Roma have no sub-groups. Three types of trough-making Roma live in Hungary:

- a) "Roma from the region behind the Tisza" [tisza-háti cigányok]: mainly in the Nyírség region; they have neglected their native language and tend increasingly to speak Hungarian;*
- b) "Smoky Roma" [füstös cigányok]: constitute the transition; live in Füzesabony, Békéscsaba and Tiszafüred;*
- c) "Danube Roma" [dunás cigányok]: live in Transdanubia; many of the men have shoulder-length hair, while the women wear necklaces of tiny seashells and pearls.*

The classification system now used by analysts is far simpler than the extraordinarily complex system proposed by Kamill Erdős. Today, the following groups tend to be mentioned: A2 (Vlach Roma), B1 (Hungarian native speakers), B2.1 (Romanian native speakers), and sometimes A1.c (Slovenian Roma). Kamill Erdős was careful to differentiate between the various groups.

When making descriptions, he always referred to just one of the groups and never claimed that his findings would be valid for other groups.

Having overcome the difficulties of classifying the various Roma groups, ethnographers showed varying amounts of interest in compiling descriptions of Roma. In terms of attitudes and issues, research undertaken in the 1950s represented a continuation of the efforts of the 1930s. The interest was manifest in two areas. On the one hand, researchers were inquisitive about traditional crafts; on the other, they wished to understand folkloristic elements. Their positivist descriptions of traditional or ancient crafts, the collection of objects in museums, and photographic documentation, have enriched our knowledge of Roma (descriptions of Roma trough-makers were made by Béla Gunda, Margit Békeffy, Tivadar Petercsák and János Bencsik, and descriptions of iron-workers by Ferenc Bakó, Kamill Erdős, Ferenc Bodgál, Ilona Ladvenicza and Zsuzsa Bódi; moreover, the analyses also included adobe-making, brick-baking, rag-weaving, basket-weaving). However, such works are limited to learning about crafts; they are not embedded in the history of the community as a whole or in the community's real framework of relationships. Thus, rather than record real social historical processes, the descriptions tend to relate to the history of technology.

Folkloristic research efforts were initially motivated by the fact that Roma had adopted elements of Hungarian folk culture and continued to exhibit them. The researchers assumed that Roma did not possess their own ethnic culture but, as archaic communities, had preserved numerous cultural elements adopted from Hungarian dance folklore and folktales. Thus, the purpose of research was not to describe Roma culture, but to gain insights into archaic systems of Hungarian folk culture. Emphasis on the co-existence of Roma with non-Roma gave legitimacy to the idea that the Roma culture was exclusively the result of the adoption of elements from

Hungarian culture. There is no denying that folklore knowledge is to be considered dependent upon social class or status, but one should not ignore the ethnic knowledge that arises during the formulation of group identity. Folklore researchers concentrated on collecting folktales, so that the articles published by the Romology Section of the Ethnographic Research Group of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences contained collections of folktales, but mention should also be made of the work of Olga Nagy and József Vekerdi.

A very different approach was employed by Katalin Kovalcsik, who, in the course of folklore research, concentrated on a given community rather than on the surviving elements of a specific genre. Her research thus sought to describe the folklore system of specific communities. In contrast to the two other schools of thought, Károly Bari formulated, in his summary work, an attempt to construct the formerly homogenous Roma folklore knowledge by means of the folklore artefacts surrounding Roma.

In recent decades, folkloristic interest has spread to the traditional beliefs of Roma and to several elements of traditional customs such as the subsystems relating to birth, death and mourning, and to describing curses and oaths. The studies of Kamill Erdős represent an example of such interest. As far as the specificity of the description, we should distinguish between the works of Melinda Rézműves, Gusztáv Balázs and Julianna László Kalányosné on the one hand, who relate specific findings in the field to specific communities, and the works of György Rostás-Farkas, Ervin Karsai and Pál Farkas on the other, who tend to take their own experiences of Vlach Roma communities and generalize them for Roma as a whole. They are also the ones who attempted to compile a Roma ethnography in their synthesizing work. The scholarly value of their attempt is diminished by their failure to include references and their rather romantic portrayal of Roma.

The “second triad” of scholars comprises Kamill Erdős, József Vekerdi and András Hajdú. From our point of view, the first two of these researchers had the greatest influence on subsequent ethnographic research. The similarity of their approaches is perhaps best demonstrated by the fact that both of them believed that Roma could be persuaded to abandon “their outdated lifestyle.” Researchers continue to cite the works of Kamill Erdős, but József Vekerdi is now a discredited figure. In his latter works—as a philosophical comment on cultural theory—Vekerdi even stated that an independent Roma culture did not exist, as its development had been prevented by a lack of traditions, and that Roma “were characterized by material and spiritual simplicity.”

The first major synthetic work of recent decades was edited by László Szegő and published in 1983 as *Cigányok, honnét jöttek—merre tartanak* [Roma, where did You Come from and where Are You Going?]. The book includes a variety of texts with differing approaches, including scholarly analyses as well as other texts urging the integration and upward mobility of Roma. In recent decades, several researchers have attempted to publish monographs or collected essays on Roma customs (e.g. Zsuzsa Bódi, Tibor Tuza, Elemér Várnagy and Katalin Kovalcsik and Anna Csongor). Another possible name on the list is Géza Csemer, who argues in his book *Habiszti* against over-politicizing Roma culture.

In summary, we may state that in recent decades ethnographic and folkloristic researchers have tended to concentrate on Vlach Roma—who are considered to be traditional Roma—and have been limited to describing an archaic phenomenon. They have tended not to regard the community or group as the point of departure and have usually ignored modern-day processes. Thus, it is no accident that the ethnographic notes in manuals and other educational material are often archaic and usually describe the cultural phenomena of Vlach Roma as if they were typical of Roma culture in general.

Perhaps the most accurate descriptions and analyses of the cultural systems of the various Roma groups are to be found in social anthropological works. Under this approach, researchers investigate the culture of Roma groups as an existing culture whose principal purpose is to organize community life and to promote the existence of the group. It is not possible to describe the culture in itself, but only in its relationship with majority society. Of such anthropological researchers, Michael Stewart, a British researcher, has produced the most significant work.

The fieldwork undertaken by Michael Stewart among Roma in Hungary in the 1980s as well as his published findings opened up new horizons in our knowledge of Roma, because Stewart used methods that were quite different from the ethnographic approach. Stewart intentionally selected a Vlach Roma group, because he supposed that they would have preserved a greater number of independent elements in their cultural system and would have tried harder to preserve traditional values and lifestyle. While compiling the description of Vlach Roma, Stewart also examined their relationships with peasants and other Roma groups. In this way, he was able to unravel something that scholarly research and governments had muddled over for years. Stewart also succeeded in revealing something that public opinion often passes judgment upon without understanding the situation. Stewart drew a line between Vlach Roma with traditional lifestyles and aspirations that differed from mainstream society and from its value-system on the one hand, and Hungarian Roma with lifestyles and aspirations that attempted to accommodate the values of society.

Research of an anthropological nature was subsequently carried out by Gábor Fleck and Tünde Virágh in Beás communities and by Viktória Burka in Hungarian Roma communities.

One should mention two further cultural historical works that may assist readers in acquiring further knowledge. A work entitled *A magyarországi cigánykutatások története* [History of Research

on Roma in Hungary] by József Vekerdi covers many different areas of scholarly study, while Csaba Prónai's work entitled *Cigánykutatás és kulturális antropológia* [Roma Research and Cultural Anthropology] evaluates, primarily in terms of cultural anthropology, international and Hungarian research projects of the past and present.

THE SELF-DEFINITIONS OF ROMA ETHNIC GROUPS AND THEIR PERCEPTIONS OF OTHER ROMA GROUPS

Here we have reached the point where, approaching from the folk culture of the groups in Hungary that are referred to as Roma, we may examine the classification of the groups and their relationship with one another, including their opinions of other Roma groups. We have already noted that it is possible to register, as a general trend among the groups, a desire to be separate and distinctive. Indeed, almost all the groups referred to as Roma seek to clearly distinguish themselves from other groups referred to as Roma, often rejecting any comparison with the other groups.

People in Hungary who are referred to in the scholarly literature as Vlach Roma [*oláh cigányok*] tend to call themselves *Rom* or *Roma*. The so-called Hungarian Roma [*magyar cigányok*] tend to call themselves “musicians” [*muzsikusok*], while the Romanian Roma [*román cigányok*] usually call themselves *Beás* [*beások*]. Of course, one should not assume these three groups must always constitute the basis for any classification, but there is no denying that the various groups do usually place themselves in one of these three main groups. At the same time, Roma placing themselves in one of the main groups do not necessarily accept all other Roma placing themselves in the same main group. In other words, some Roma who declare membership of a group are not regarded as belonging to the group by others in the same group.

In the late 1980s, Hungarian intellectuals who were favorably disposed towards Roma began using the word *roma* instead of *cigány* when referring to anybody who was considered to be Roma,

because they felt that *cigány* and other related words were pejorative or insulting. However, the “musicians” [*muzsikusok*] protested against the use of the term *roma*, claiming that they were not Roma but Musician Roma [*muzsikus cigányok*]. Nevertheless, most Hungarian-speaking Roma politicians were willing to use the term Roma when referring to the civil society and political organizations of Roma people, such as the Roma Parliament [*Roma Parlament*], Roma Civil Rights Foundation [*Roma Polgárjogi Alapítvány*], Roma Press Centre [*Roma Sajtóközpont*], Roma Veritas [*Roma Veritas*], while other bodies received names in the Romani language: *Phralipe*, *Amaro Drom*, *Lungo Drom*, and *Romano Kher*. These facts indicate that at the level of “Roma politics” the various groups’ unity and cultural and social integration has been established—although this does not mean that such unity is universally recognized at the level of everyday culture. Even in today’s “journalese,” the term Roma has won legitimacy, although it can be a euphemism or an accommodation with the spoken language. Often interpretations about Roma merely devalue the term.

A crucial sociological fact is that there exists between the three main groups a firm boundary in terms of marriage. The groups are endogamous, and even within the three main groups there are endogamous subgroups. This means that individuals belonging to a certain group can only marry within the group. Within groups calling themselves Musicians or Rom, there are firm boundary lines. These subgroups can be based on occupations, lifestyle, material wealth or geography, but they may also derive from the clan or kinship systems. Another trenchant expression of social segregation is residential segregation, when people belonging to two or three of the main groups reside in different parts of the village and do not “mix” or where in a given village there is a Roma settlement, within such a settlement one can observe a dividing line, an imaginary boundary. Segregation of the main groups can also be seen in the field of employment. In earlier decades,

people belonging to different groups formed separate work-brigades, and they tended to ask for separate quarters at workers' hostels. The same could be observed in respect of general social relations (such as friendship, "bonding" within the same age group). All this serves to demonstrate that whereas society at large classifies anybody referred to as Roma in one uniform group, Roma themselves express their differences and their belonging to one of the groups through symbolic means.

We can observe such efforts in the linguistic separation of the groups referred to as Roma. The terminology of the groups referred to as Vlach Roma classifies people or groups as follows. Members of our group are Roma. People opposed to our group are "gadzo," which can be further divided into peasants and nobles (generally speaking, those opposed to the group with hostile sentiments are called peasants, while those who show solidarity with the group are called nobles). The category inbetween are called Romungro, a term that implies that they are neither Roma nor Hungarian. Hungarian Roma divide the world up in a similar manner, calling their own group "musicians, and calling Vlach Roma those people defined as Vlach Roma in the scholarly literature. Like the Vlach Roma, Hungarian Roma call non-Roma "gadzo"—a word derived from Romani.

If we take some local groups or communities as our point of departure, we see that the classification of Roma is unclear and contradictory. In a work entitled *A magyarországi cigányok helyzetéről* [On the Situation of Roma in Hungary], György Pogány and Géza Bán cite a categorization given by a Roma person living in Salgótarján:

Roma living in Hungary comprise six groups: a) tent-dwelling itinerant Vlach Roma; b) trough-making Roma; c) carpet-makers and trading Roma; d) rural casual workers who are also basic musicians; e) provincial urban and Budapest urban dwellers, working in industry but with a casual attitude and

nature; f) musicians living in provincial urban and Budapest urban areas, who are more greatly esteemed as musicians. It is important that we consider within the various groups and categories the greatest level of development.

This classification evidently makes simultaneous use of ethnic, occupational and settlement factors. Members of a Romani-speaking group in Szalkaszentmárton think that Roma can be divided into Romungro ("musicians"), Vlach Roma, tent-dwelling Roma, hovel-dwelling Roma, knife-grinders, and trough-makers. They then divide the Vlach Roma into further subgroups—Lovari, Pantestyu, Kudestyi, Sosoyi, and Hodestyu; in other words, they mix up and regard as identical groups defined in Kamill Erdős's terminology as tribes and clans. When asked to define themselves, they state definitively that they are Lovari, irrespective of which tribes or clans their ancestors belonged to. Hungarian-speaking Roma in Nagycserkesz note the existence of the following groups: Vlach Roma, tent-dwelling Roma, trough-makers, "musicians," and Hungarian Roma. Hungarian-speaking Roma in Tarnalelesz mention the following: "musicians," adobe-makers, Vlach Roma, Lovari, and trough-makers. Romani-speaking Roma in Ároktő distinguish between Vlach Roma, Gurvari, tent-dwelling Roma, Romungro, and trough-makers. Romani-speaking Roma in Kétegyház call all Hungarian-speaking Roma Romungro; they then distinguish between Beás and Vlach Roma, including groups such as Mashari, Lovari, Kelderash and Churari. Romanian-speaking Roma in Véménd use the names Kolompár or Lakatár for Vlach Roma; they also distinguish Hungarian Roma, and divide the Romanian-speaking Roma into three distinct groups: Beás (or *árgyelán*), *tincsán* and *muncsán*. Lakatari are then subdivided into the following groups based on employment: *kisiris* (knife-grinders), *abrosár* (peddlers of textiles), *bokráncsos* (cutlers) and *kupec*. Other *muncsán* groups call themselves *cigán* and refer to

Beás as *árgyelán*. The Beás themselves recognize just two distinct groups: *árgyelán* and *muncsán*.

Among Romani-speaking groups, one may observe a process of increasing unity. Lovari has gradually become the self-designation of groups whose ancestors belonged to other tribes or clans. The former tribal and occupational designations have practically disappeared, because the traditional forms of employment no longer exist and there is increasing uniformity in terms of livelihoods. Special Roma occupations such as horse-trading and other forms of business have become popular among increasing numbers of Romani-speaking groups, who were not necessarily active in such fields previously. In earlier periods, Lovari (i.e. "those with money") were considered to be at the top end of the Romani-speaking Roma hierarchy, so that other Roma who became involved in similar work chose to be called Lovari too. The "original Lovari" also use this self-designation, but they try to exclude other Romani-speaking groups that are poor, live in segregated Roma settlements, or are not involved in business. Thus, the term Lovari has come to mean indirectly "real Roma"—Roma who are merchants and businessmen or who trade in horses, automobiles or non-ferrous metals.

Among Romani-speaking groups, the determining factors are social status and social function. A real Rom is not dependent upon the hierarchical system of the social division of labor; he seeks to be his own boss. This is true despite the fact that his activities are dependent upon his connections with peasants and the rest of society. That is to say, real Roma make a living by purchasing goods from peasants and other producers and then by selling them. In this regard, beneficial and successful business deals constitute the supreme value, because they will ensure independence from the majority and from the institutions of the majority. At the same time, the visible expression of a person's wealth serves as a symbol of the real Rom. Thus, he will accumulate and show visible items of wealth and live "the good life." Romani-speaking

Roma communities that are unable to fulfill such expectations are not regarded as real Rom, even though "they speak the language" and see the purpose in life in entertainment, in mutual self-respect, and in nurturing relationships with family and friends. One of the status groups manages to accomplish all these expectations, while the other is capable of realizing just one element of the system.

We observe a similar phenomenon among the Hungarian-speaking Roma ethnic group. Almost without exception, Hungarian Roma define themselves as "musicians," irrespective of whether they or their immediate ancestors made a living from music. Consequently, "musician" [*muzsikus*] is the self-designation used by people whose forebears were adobe-makers, day laborers or—more recently—agricultural or industrial workers. However, in their view, "musician" denotes their original ancestry, because the common mythical ancestor was a musician. Moreover, it is a group name that can be applied to all Hungarian-speaking Roma, thereby distinguishing them from Vlach Roma or trough-making Roma. Those Roma who consider themselves to be real musicians naturally reject this usage and try to limit the meaning by emphasizing the principle that "all musicians [*muzsikusok*] are Hungarian Roma [*magyar cigányok*], but not all Hungarian Roma are musicians." Real musician Roma consider the "good life" to be something like that of the "genuine artist" or, nurtured by an earlier idea, close to the "gentry ideal." Thus, the real musician is respectful of others, generous, hospitable and charitable, thereby achieving symbolic superiority. Although the musician is dependent for his livelihood upon peasants and guests, his values are not identical to theirs. He seeks to express the good life by means of the material world, but he tends to consume rather than accumulate goods. Since his livelihood is based on making music (that is, providing a service), he does not attempt to achieve "enhanced reproduction" as do Roma merchants and businessmen.

For groups of Hungarian Roma defining themselves as “musicians” but not making a livelihood from music, peasant and lower middle-class values have been the desired norm in recent decades, despite the attraction of the (unattainable) status of the real Roma musicians. Security—employment, the family, and the security of the family—has become the purpose of life. The perceived objective was the partial or limited independence of the peasant or worker lifestyle. In previous decades, industrial work or even full-time work in agriculture provided the basic livelihood. A general aim for members of this group was to define themselves first and foremost as Hungarian citizens rather than refer to their “Roma descent.” Roma living in isolated and segregated settlements wished to move to villages and towns and live among non-Roma, and they were offended when others called them Roma [*cigány*]. Despite all their efforts, they did not succeed in moving to prosperous villages to live among the non-Roma. Everywhere they were forced to face the social consequences of their ethnic background. Nevertheless, there was general acceptance of the government and administrative policies of assimilation. Moreover, members of these groups blamed Vlach Roma for the prejudices they faced.

We know now that the assimilation attempts of Hungarian-speaking Roma were only partially successful. From the latter half of the 1980s, many Roma—above all unskilled workers and laborers—became unemployed and lost their stable and secure livelihoods. Many Roma who had already attained a lower middle-class quality of life, were forced once again into casual work and insecure livelihoods. Cultural forms typical of the culture of poverty arose. During this period, business and enterprise offered the securest form of livelihood—as the many examples of Vlach Roma livelihood strategies demonstrate. Even in communities where the men used to work in industry or in agriculture, buying and selling and street-vending became possible livelihood solutions. In recent

years, there has been a fusion between the two groups, based on the cultural system of the commercial “business” occupations. The category of adapters has been pushed into the background, despite the fact that, in comparison with previous decades, a greater number of groups have realized the consolidated peasant farmer/middle-class way of life required by the state, such as, for instance, rural Roma employing peasant practices in agricultural production.

The various Roma ethno-linguistic groups—although the various sub-groups almost amount to “life-style groups” or even “academic concepts”—continue to maintain inter-group rivalry and attempt to assign a place to the various ethnic groups within the Roma hierarchical system. A hierarchy accepted by all does not exist. A possible universal observation is that the Romanian-speaking Beás sub-groups feel that both the Hungarian Roma and the Vlach Roma look down upon them, isolating them to the point of exclusion. Yet at the same time, Beás also believe that they possess the greatest intellectual abilities: for instance, they have established a grammar school in Pécs—the Gandhi Grammar School. The Vlach Roma—especially those who have become self-reliant economically and consider themselves to be rich—place themselves at the top of the hierarchy. They are rather contemptuous of what they call the Romungro, including “musicians”—whom they refer to as “five hundred *Forints* people,” who earn just enough money from music to live from day to day. They consider Roma with permanent jobs or making a living as peasant farmers to be slave-like people working in drudgery. They do not regard such people as real Roma. This is not because they don’t speak Romani, but because they don’t live the Roma life and tend to copy the lifestyle of the *gadzo*. Nevertheless, some of the poorer, more destitute Romani-speaking groups think that the most distinguished Roma are the “gentleman” Roma, the musicians—but only those who really are musicians.

The musicians—the real musicians—place themselves at the top of the hierarchy. They are proud that they are able to popularize Hungarian music (which in their view is really Roma music),

thereby enhancing the reputation of the country. Defining themselves as Hungarian citizens and as being placed high up on Hungary's social hierarchy, they consider themselves to be "esteemed members of society" because they conform to the values of society. They blame the Vlach Roma for anti-Roma prejudice, arguing that the rich ones have doubtless acquired their wealth by criminal and dishonest means. The prejudice against them is thus justified. Meanwhile, the poor ones—who are themselves to blame for their poverty—live outdated lifestyles, thereby discrediting the musicians, because society tends to generalize about Roma. People's judgments of Vlach Roma may be transposed on to them, thereby preventing their integration into society.

The Romani-speaking groups distinguish themselves from the Hungarian-speaking groups because they think that the latter have abandoned their ancient Roma culture, seek to adapt to the cultural norms of the majority, and are determined to assimilate into society. They fear that they will be identified with an ethnic group whose group identity they do not profess, because for them one of the most important elements of a purposeful life is to live as a Roma and to maintain the Roma characteristics of their culture. This difference in view gave rise to the debate concerning which Roma group has an authentic cultural system. As far as anthropology is concerned, the question is clearly a pointless one, because a cultural system is always a changing and developing structure. Our description of the cultural system of the Hungarian-speaking groups cannot be so profound as our description of the cultural system of the Romani-speaking groups, because previous researchers have tended to assume the greater originality of the culture of the Romani-speaking communities and have thus spent less time on describing the culture of the Hungarian-speaking groups. (In other words, descriptions such as those of Kamill Erdős and Michael Stewart are not available for the Hungarian-speaking groups.) In our experience, however, Hungarian-speaking Roma communities do consider their own cultural system to be a part of Roma culture.

Perhaps it is not simply a phantasmagoria to hypothesize that the conflicts between the various groups could be resolved if researchers would consider the cultural systems of the Roma ethnic groups to be equivalent and if the findings of research would be better applied, enhancing knowledge of Roma both among politicians and members of the general public. If the classification and internal value systems of Roma groups were better known, then they might face less ignorance and prejudice in everyday life. They would prevent the boundaries between the various groups from becoming more rigid, and this would increase the degree of solidarity within the community. Although the intellectual representatives of Hungary's Roma ethnic groups are working to achieve their cultural integration, nevertheless at the level of popular culture one may perceive "trench warfare" between the various groups.

MAGAURA ROMA
ROMA ENTREPRENEURS IN 1998¹

In 1971, the employment rate for Roma males of working age was 85 per cent. This ratio hardly differed from the non-Roma rate of 87 per cent. By the end of 1993, however, the Roma male employment rate had decreased to 29 per cent, while the non-Roma rate was 64 per cent. By 1998, many Roma who became jobless between 1989 and 1992 as a result of the drastic reduction in employment that accompanied Hungary's political transition, were no longer counted among the officially unemployed; they had lost their right to unemployment benefit and income assistance. But as István Kemény noted in 1997, despite the dramatic changes, it was not the case that all Roma had automatically been pushed to the margins of society. "Among the Roma there are people who have benefited from the political changes, as well as those who have lost out. Some Roma used to make a living from trading in goods, and they tried to do so even during the command economy of the communist era. Now the world has opened up for them, and they are making good use of the opportunities."² The primary purpose of this article is to explore the areas in which Roma were active in 1998, after their "disappearance" from the official labor statistics. Do their activities provide them with a stable livelihood in the long term? Has their progress been influenced by their Roma identity? Are there any special features to their identity? And what do they think about "Roma policy/politics"?

The survey could not be a representative one, because many entrepreneurs in Hungary (both Roma and non-Roma) operate in the grey zone between legality and illegality. In the light of changing tax and social insurance regulations and a lack of legal security

since the political changes of 1989–90, business people have been more or less forced to look for loopholes in the law. (In some cases, the muddy waters probably made it easier for entrepreneurs risking capital and family livelihoods to stay afloat in the market.) The sensitivity of the subject thus ruled out a “traditional sampling” of opinion. Instead, we tried to make contact with, and gain the trust of, various types of entrepreneurial and self-employed Roma through our acquaintances and by means of referral. Snowball sampling inevitably limited the extent of our inquiry: for instance, the survey was restricted to Roma living in the Budapest area. Nevertheless, we are confident that the survey managed to reveal new data, which had previously been hidden from researchers. At the same time, we caution against generalization. More detailed research will be necessary for a more realistic picture. We were merely able to take the first steps.

The collection of data was a dual process: first, conversations with entrepreneurs were recorded based on a prepared interview plan; second, during each interview, observation notes were compiled about the circumstances of the conversation and the living conditions of the entrepreneur. The interviews produced findings about respondents’ families, educational qualifications, employment histories and business activities. They also offered insights into the circumstances that led the entrepreneurs to become their own bosses. The fact-finding process also addressed general business conditions, operational difficulties, respondents’ plans for the future, their relationship with Roma culture, and any possible links between Roma identity and the business activities in question. Since almost all the interviews took place in the homes of Roma entrepreneurs (this was one of our express objectives), we were able to observe living conditions, facilities in the home, as well as the clothing and speech of family members. In addition, we also attempted to obtain information about the family’s living circumstances and business activities from other sources that were not

closely related to the family. Such information, which served to nuance the impressions formed in the interviews, was then recorded in the observation notes.

Types of Activities

In the case of Roma entrepreneurs, two interconnected factors had a decisive influence on the choice of entrepreneurial activities: educational qualifications and work undertaken in previous decades. In our sample, 70 per cent of respondents had merely 8 grades of education and just 30 per cent had taken part in vocational education or other further education courses. None of the entrepreneurs had a college or university degree. The educational qualifications of the entrepreneurs included in the sample was somewhat better than the national average for the Roma population, but it was far below the average for Hungary's general population. It is difficult for people with just 8 grades of education or basic vocational education to be competitive in the labor market. A poor education not only limits a person's opportunities but also restricts his/her horizons and relationship networks. There are also negative effects on oral skills and social acceptance.

Most of the entrepreneurs benefited from the fact that in the early 1990s business licenses could be obtained by people without special occupational qualifications. Today, most of the entrepreneurs would not be able to launch their businesses legally. Moreover, given their lack of general education, most of them are incapable of reviewing by themselves the management, taxation and other legal tasks faced by business people—all of which require special skills.

The Roma entrepreneurs did not take their decisions in the light of detailed market surveys, risk analysis reports and business plans. Instead, most of them simply wished to continue their previous work activities as private entrepreneurs. The methods they used

were similar to those that led, after the political changes of 1989–90, to the appearance of a great number of self-employed persons and family businesses with little or no capital. The difference lies in the ratio of such businesses; among Roma, most businesses were launched in this manner. Twenty per cent of the entrepreneurs in the sample were operating in the construction industry, 25 per cent in the flower and greengrocery market, 20 per cent in the catering industry, and 45 per cent in the wholesale, retail and market sectors. Some families were active in several business fields: typically, the wife of a husband working in construction would be active in the retail sector.

Concerning the circumstances of and motives for their entering business, we managed to distinguish four types, based on the data collected: entrepreneurs out of necessity (necessity entrepreneurs); entrepreneurs preserving family traditions; self-made men recognizing and exploiting opportunities in the market (opportunity entrepreneurs); and entrepreneurs transforming political capital into economic benefit.

Self-Employment out of Necessity

I had a job; I was working in the construction industry, alongside the stonemasons. But in the early 1980s, there were fewer and fewer construction projects. So I tried looking elsewhere. I knew some people at the wholesale market, and I went out there to help them load, when there was no work at the construction site. It was there that I become acquainted with the market for flowers, but I never imagined I would become involved in it. In the mid-1980s, however, I realized my time in construction was short. I didn't wait for them to give me the sack, as others did. (Male florist)

At first I tried to find some regular work in construction, but by the mid-1990s little was being built, and when they saw my dark skin color, they told me in several places 'it's not your time now, darky'. But I didn't give up; I've never been afraid of work, whatever they say about Roma not wanting to work. I went to work as a loader and general helper at various different markets. It was around this time that the Kőbánya and Józsefváros markets were getting off the ground; more and more Chinese started coming. They needed someone who knew the city, who could help them load when the lorries came in. I did that for a year and a half. They didn't pay well, but at least we didn't die of starvation. Then, when our child was old enough for my wife to be free to move around, we decided that we should think of something too. (Male Roma market trader)

The largest group of respondents, 45 per cent of those included in the survey, fell in this category. Necessity was the main reason for setting up a business, after their jobs disappeared or they were dismissed in the late 1980s. The families of such workers were suddenly left without any income. There was little choice but self-employment. Typically, the chosen business activity would be their original job now performed on an entrepreneurial basis (construction industry) or some other commercial activity that was "fashionable or in vogue" and which provided a reasonable livelihood to other people who were known to them.

In the latter group, we find street-vendors of paprika as well as greengrocers with "proper" market stalls or even shops, but most of them were (market) traders in fashion goods, clothes, or music tapes. Such activities generally did not require any special knowledge, occupational skills or capital investment. Generally speaking, such entrepreneurs were not particularly keen on their work, given the uncertain livelihood. When we asked them whether they would like to go back to being employees—with the security of livelihood

and less risk this implied, they all answered affirmatively. Uncertainty of livelihood and income was the main negative feature of their current activities; it was impossible to plan ahead. None of them had professional training; most had attempted to learn the skills of the "occupation" on the job. But they were still rather insecure despite years of practice. Most were sole traders, with family members sometimes assisting them. They were unable to employ staff. Although currently all businesses are required to employ an accountant, they did not have the resources to do so. They tried, therefore, to avoid the attention of the authorities by trusting in their own craftiness and luck.

You know, what we do is not permitted. But I'll tell you about it, if you don't tell anyone else. In the early hours of each morning, I go out to the wholesale market and buy the goods. It's not always paprika, but sometimes some other vegetable, depending on what's in season. Then with my wife and kids, I go to a subway passage, and we sell the goods out of cardboard boxes. We sell everything for a hundred Forints; that's the price that everyone's used to, and it's easy to shout out. The children watch out for the police or the streetwardens. And we run for it, if they do come. The problem is not that they take the name and address—I'm not a registered in Budapest anyway—but that they confiscate the goods. That means we lose all our money. It's impossible to earn a lot; we make just a few Forints on each paprika. That's just enough for us to be able to buy tomorrow's goods and to eat something, but nothing more. If they confiscate the goods, then we have to start off from the bottom again. (Male street-vendor of paprika)

Most Roma entrepreneurs became involved in business after 1990, having been encouraged to so by the quick success of those who exploited the unstable political situation and easing of travel restrictions in the latter half of the 1980s.

My parents helped me to buy a little shop, where I initially sold clothes, toys and perfumes. Later on, my girlfriend took over; she then became my wife. Since it was quite difficult to obtain goods here in Hungary and I had seen the abundance of goods on my many trips abroad, I decided that I too should import goods. The main direction initially was Poland; you could import perfumes and leather items very cheaply from there. Then there was the "sweater run" to East Germany. I still don't know why the Germans needed so many sweaters, but they bought in great quantities, and you could buy up everything else they had really cheaply. The East German Mark cost less than five Forints. Later on, I imported toys from Czechoslovakia. Some weeks, I would make three journeys there. When it became easier to travel to Austria, I imported a lot of stuff from there. But I even went to Turkey a few times for jeans. (Trader in fashion goods)

This was the poorest group of respondents, but there were wide variations in the extent to which they were poor. Two of the traders were living in virtual misery; trading for them amounted to a daily struggle for survival. One of them was a paprika street-vendor; having fled rural unemployment, he was living in a squat in Budapest's Eighth District. A man whose main activity was trading in clothes was living in similar conditions. He had managed to acquire an apartment of 30 square meters, but had no money for a car, so he transported the goods by bus or by tram. The standard of living of most of these entrepreneurs was about average for the urban working class: they had their own flats (on average 40–60 square meters), which were not particularly well furnished but had a bathroom and toilet. They usually had a color television as well as a used car that was between 8 and 10 years old. They had enough money for food and were able to send their children to school, but they lived no better than did people in normal jobs, and they were

unable to save income or accumulate capital. They lived stressful and tiring lives, and they were traumatized by the many uncertainties, including erratic revenues and the dubious legal status of their business activities.

Just one of the necessity entrepreneurs was living in conditions significantly above the average, but he had acquired his six-room house while he was still a middle manager rather than as an entrepreneur. Maintenance of the building was proving to be a burden. The costs he faced were threatening the profitability of his business, because he was spending the modest revenue on his house. But given the lack of a potential buyer and his emotional ties to his home (including memories of his previous better life), he could not sell the house; perhaps he did not even want to.

The Roma necessity entrepreneurs placed themselves—probably rightly—among the losers of Hungary's political and economic changes. The country's economic restructuring had left them with few choices, and they had resigned themselves to surviving at the current standard of living with few prospects. They and their children faced an uncertain future, with increasingly restrictive regulations that rendered it more and more difficult to continue business activities. Their businesses, which had sometimes been able to exploit the loopholes created by the inadvertent carelessness of the authorities during the economic transition period, were unable to cope under the stricter conditions of the market economy. The problem was not just that state regulations and controls were damaging their businesses or that the grey and black economy was gradually becoming a part of the official economy, but that in a prosperous economy there was simply less demand for their services. Their lack of educational qualifications prevents them from finding work even under conditions of economic growth. And they are unable to switch to other forms of business because they lack the capital.

Keepers of the Family Tradition

Thirty per cent of respondents may be placed in this group of entrepreneurs—who tend to be active in well-defined areas of business. A typical business activity was the flower trade; the entrepreneurs tended to have learnt it as children working alongside their parents. Typically, they were women, who had received the industrial license and shop from their mothers.

...My mother managed to get an industrial license just after the war, and I carried on her trade. This was quite a big thing from the 1960s onwards, because they weren't too keen on private entrepreneurs. I began working alongside my mother with my little sister—who later set up on her own. After her death, it was almost a matter of course that I should receive her license and the shop. (Female florist)

In the course of our inquiries, we noticed that the husbands of these women were often musicians and that the women were working in order to supplement family income. Prior to the political changes, most income had come from the work of the male head of the family. However, privatization had soon spread to Hungary's restaurants and bars, resulting in the dismissal of the larger gypsy orchestras. In 1998, such men were typically working alongside their wives, generally as buyers. One can only imagine the embarrassment and shame caused in these patriarchal Roma families—which had once been the "aristocracy" of the Roma community—by the sudden decline in the status of the head of the family. The *pater familias*, whose authority had once been beyond question, had lost his leading position within the family and had become financially dependent upon his wife.

Another typical activity of the group was running a business in the catering industry. In this field too, we found roots in the industry going back several generations: waiters, cooks, and restaurant

managers. Most of the respondents in this group had learnt the trades at school rather than on the job. They had then gone to work for state enterprises. When catering industry units were privatized, as managers and workers, they had secured rental or ownership rights.

My grandmother had a coffee shop in C. Then I came along. First of all, my husband, he also worked in the catering, as a manager. Then I trained as a manager, a waiter, and then as restaurant manager. I've been in the trade for 30 years (...) I have a son and a daughter; they work in the catering industry too. My son has worked in the bigger places; he worked in the Hotel Intercontinental for 10 years, and then went to work in West Germany (...) My daughter kept working in Hungary, as did my son-in-law. (...) Árpád has two sons. One of them is a waiter, while the other is an apprentice cook at the Hotel Penta. My daughter's son is a waiter here in A., at the Kossuth restaurant. (Woman working in the catering industry and clothes trade)

Members of this group have occupational qualifications, having attended vocational schools or training courses. They consciously prepared for their career. But escaping from an overprotective state sector and setting up in business proved more difficult than they had anticipated.

Well, yes, I've been in catering for 30 years now. We used to like it a lot, because it was very different from now. People used to respect waiters. If someone was a waiter, he was a respected member of the community. (...) Not like it is now—he takes it out, but nobody speaks to him. Whenever I went to arrange something in C., there were always so many acquaintances that all doors were opened for us. (Man that used to work in catering but who now runs a grocery store)

Two Roma entrepreneurs who had learnt the antiques trade from their father were also continuing the family traditions. Their business licenses had expired by 1998, but they were very rich and somewhat afraid of the people around them. For these reasons, they were working in secrecy and without the proper permits.

We used to have a little shop, with a proper license and permit, but we had to give it up. There were several reasons for this. However much you earn, the taxes and other costs spoil it completely. The other thing is that it's obvious to everyone if you have an antiques shop. We weren't rich enough to be able to prevent the constant break-ins, and we couldn't pay the money for "protection" or employ our own people to protect the family. So it seemed better to sell up; now our minds are at rest. Officially, I am a house caretaker, while my brothers are unemployed. (Antique dealer).

The entrepreneurs in this group were relatively well qualified: they knew their profession and had studied it too. They were content with the entrepreneurial lifestyle, especially with the freedom, independence and business success that accompanies it. Still, most of them were dissatisfied with the unfavorable social conditions surrounding their businesses.

Almost all of the flower traders have gone bankrupt or are heading in that direction. It seems that flowers have become a luxury good, and most people do not even have enough money for their daily groceries, let alone flowers. (The most recent observations point to a reversal of this unfavorable development.) The entrepreneurs were quite aware that their occupation produces fluctuations in revenue: most profits were made on important name-days or during major festivals or social events. And such profits were enough to supplement revenue on "thinner" days. Today, however, revenues are so low that it is impossible to pay the higher rents or bear the other financial burdens.

Entrepreneurs in the catering sector did not have sufficient capital for the investments that were required in order to maintain competitiveness. Meanwhile, credit was subject to impossible terms or was obtainable through connections that they lacked. Flourishing competitors with capital soon pushed them out of the market. Under such conditions, they were forced to use up their investments or sell their assets.

Nevertheless, these enterprises were not yet destitute at the time of the survey. They had managed to accumulate assets during the decades before the political changes under the beneficial protection of state economic management. The smallest apartments we visited covered at least 60 square meters and were in good condition and well equipped. There was even a widow who lived with her family in a three-storey house with 20 rooms over a total area of 580 square meters. Surrounded by her many valuable antiques and paintings, we felt like we were in a museum.

In general, however, the financial situation of the entrepreneurs was deteriorating from year to year. Almost all of them had debts, and the florists were closing their shops one after another. Entrepreneurs in the catering industry were trying to survive by changing their profile and by opening various types of establishments—but they were less and less successful. Almost all entrepreneurs in the group had employed a number of staff when they set up their businesses, but by 1998 staff numbers had dwindled. They had business licenses, because this was only because they could not have run a restaurant or a florist shop without them. But they considered taxes and other public dues to be excessively high, and most of them had accumulated debts with the tax authority and social security. Debt collection had been initiated against several of them. They would probably slide further down the social ladder. If they were fortunate, they might end up at about the average level.

The Self-Made Men

Twenty per cent of respondents were placed in this group: they were the ones who recognized the opportunities at the time of the political changes in 1989–90. Entrepreneurs in this group should have been the most numerous by 1998, because this is hardly the “normal” manner of becoming an entrepreneur. However, owing to the historical circumstances and the disadvantages suffered by Roma, few of them had had such opportunities.

The group recognizing and exploiting the free market opportunities was not so homogenous as the previous two groups were. Still, entrepreneurs in the group did share some important features, such as their desire to avoid factory work, to earn lots of money, and to live well, as well as a belief that they had seen enough poverty in childhood. They had no wish to continue the desperate grind of their parents. Nevertheless, they interpreted and exploited the opportunities in different ways. For instance, some of them were involved in organized crime or were active alongside it, trading in vehicles and apartments.

I come from Ózd; my grandfather was an adobe-maker and my grandmother stayed at home to look after the kids. They couldn't even speak Hungarian, because ours is a Vlach Roma family. My father, who was a die-hard communist, spent his whole working life in the metal works, but was thrown out of work without warning after the political changes. He had wanted me to work there too, and when I left school he took me with him to work there. Even then I didn't like the work—you slaved night and day for a few pennies. When they closed our part of the plant, I knew I'd have to do something that would not leave me at the mercy of the changes. I came up to Budapest. Of course, I came to the Eighth District, because I knew some people there from back home. At first, I wanted to do something serious, but with just a shirt on your back and no

money, you can't do anything. I wanted to become a market trader, but I would have needed a car and lots of goods. Then I wanted to be a greengrocer, but the old dynasties are in control in Budapest, and you have no chance of kicking the ball alongside them. So for quite a long time, I made a living out of a whole series of casual jobs. I managed to collect together enough money to buy a council flat for myself, and I started to furnish it. But then a friend came to visit me and advised me not to spend my money on furnishing the flat. He told me not to spend my money on kitchen cupboards and beds, but to renovate the flat a bit and then to sell it to someone else. And he was right. There's always been a demand for flats, especially if they're not run down, but look reasonable and are not too expensive. I started to do the work on my own, removing the plaster from the walls, putting up tiles and painting where I had to. I had bought the flat, in a rather run-down condition, from the local council for 200,000 Forints. After the renovation, I managed to sell it to a Roma family from the countryside for 1 million Forints. Then I realized that I wouldn't have to do without in the future. I bought the next flat, and, having renovated it, I sold it for several times the price. Later on, once I'd made some profits, I bought several flats and hired some unemployed craftsmen to work for me. Of course, I did so without paying their taxes, but that was good for everyone: there were several flats being renovated at the same time, and I no longer had to work. (Man trading in real estate and motor-cars)

Another person we spoke to was a florist—operating without a permit—who had risen, in a systematic manner, from unskilled factory worker to entrepreneur. Although he had advanced a long way in terms of livelihood, he still could not be considered a classical entrepreneur.

Selling goods is not the main activity of my business. There are many peasants, who I've known for years, who produce a lot of agricultural products under plastic foil. They bring the goods up to the market hall in Budapest, and the wholesalers buy the produce from them at very low prices. I pay them more, but I can still sell the produce at a small profit to traders with shops. Or, by arrangement, I go down to the rural areas with my little van and get the produce there. The main point is that I always have good produce, and the shopkeepers know this. But I say again, it's a very little business, you can't earn much doing it. A few Forints of profit on a flower. (Flower trader)

One of the respondents was an entrepreneur in the catering industry, who differed from the bar and restaurant owners mentioned above in that he had become involved in the trade by his own devices and without any family connections. His financial position, however, was about the same as theirs. We now turn to a big entrepreneur:

After military service, I too came back to work as a stonemason. Then came the political changes. I had the choice of becoming unemployed or starting my own business. Thank God, I gave it a try as an entrepreneur.

He had started out as a stonemason, but by 1998 he was known and respected throughout the country as a construction entrepreneur: he built housing estates, higher education institutions, and luxury villas as a sub-contractor. He had 200 permanent employees and an enormous stock of machines; his car alone was worth about 5 million Forints. His wife ran her own bar and a large grocery store. He was a typical nouveau riche, who had risen a long way. Although he tried to cover it up as best he could, he was aware of his own limits, especially his lack of cultivation. He believed that, at best, his children would receive some real social recognition. His

theories on life were rather social-Darwinistic and typical of a first-generation self-made businessman: you can only achieve something if you do it yourself; if you wait for outside help, you'll die of starvation. At the same time, he was quite critical of other Roma entrepreneurs:

I know a great many Roma entrepreneurs. (...) They have a rather bad characteristic: sometimes they don't even know what business is. (...) How to present themselves for a job, what to wear, how to enter a place even. How to go to a competitive bidding. As I see it, many of them don't even seem like entrepreneurs (...) apart from the fact that they've got a car under their bums. (...) And I didn't go in order to wear rings on my fingers. No, I went there in order to buy some machines, to buy this machine or that machine.

All of the entrepreneurs in this group were very well off; indeed their standard of living was clearly rising. Many of them were young, hard-working people, who were not afraid of difficulties. They knew their professional limits; where necessary, they hired advisors. They are not likely to slip down the social ladder in the future. By ensuring a good education for their children, their families should become a part of the propertied middle class.

Entrepreneurs who Exploit their Political Capital

So I went in. I'd never spoken in front of a large group of people before. And I had some inhibitions. And, my goodness, then what happened—because they must have known already—the county chairman of the People's Front stood up, and so did the colleague who planned it. And the chairman said that he was proposing Comrade K.T., a member of the Workers' Guard and a party member with political qualifications, for the post of chairman of the county Roma council. Well, now, nobody

would have guessed it, and there was a Roma teacher there too, there was a Roma lawyer, Roma businessmen, Roma with secondary education. And they chose me...

We also met a businessman who was able to draw economic benefits from contacts made during the era of the party state. Based on our observations, he is not a typical example of Roma who have become entrepreneurs. The simple factory worker received a political post because he was considered to be politically reliable. During the years leading up to Hungary's political changes, he managed to exploit the political mood—which changed almost weekly—and the opportunities arising. By 1989, he found himself among the top leaders of the Patriotic People's Front. In the 1990s, he was unable to continue his political career, although he would have like to do so. Nevertheless, he was able to benefit from his previous contacts. Having overcome his annoyance at being sidelined politically, he returned to his original occupation in the construction industry. But this time, he was an entrepreneur rather than an employee. Over time he became a successful businessman. In 1998, his company was responsible for the construction and renovation of complete housing estates. He maintained a proper office, and his business provided work and a livelihood to family members and many other staff, including engineers and lawyers. It is worth examining the political contacts that helped him to launch his business:

You see, 99 per cent of the Roma entrepreneurs whose interests I was in charge of safeguarding, were operating in the construction industry. The construction engineer that I had taken on at the association provided them with technical advice. We compiled budgets for them, free of charge. We prepared surveys, legal surveys. So we drew up deals and signed contracts in lieu of them. At the time, we were in charge of the technical supervision of Roma entrepreneurs,

and we maintained technical relations for the duration of the contract. I could sell the Roma. A professional builder, a pensioner, who was a qualified architect and structural engineer, and my mates from college met at the clients. He wasn't a Roma, but a technical man. My mates were sitting there, as chief engineers or in some other post. They received me differently. It wasn't my job to talk about the occupation. My task was to undertake the work for X amount of money and to provide Y number of people. (Male construction entrepreneur)

We were unable to find out how this man, who was a skilled worker and had originally come to Budapest from a provincial area, succeeded in providing sufficient capital for such large investments. We only heard him hint at some murky political contacts. Nevertheless, it is quite certain that he was the richest person in our sample. He had arranged private tutorship for his children, but his son had failed to get a place at university, so he had sent him to a private institution. Meanwhile he was supporting his daughter's school financially. He was consciously planning their futures, in the light of the need for experts to secure the family business and its assets. In the popular view, the family's current standard of living was simply unattainable for Roma, so the people around them no longer regarded them as Roma.

In all likelihood, the number of Roma benefiting economically from contacts made under the former political system is actually smaller than the number of Roma who have set up businesses as political actors in Roma public life in post-communist Hungary. Further research is necessary to clarify whether the main groups of Roma politicians are capable of using their political influence and contacts to achieve better economic positions.

Factors Determining Success or Failure

On the Margins of Legality

It is not just in the case of Roma entrepreneurs that success in business is determined by whether or not somebody adheres to the law or exploits loopholes in the law: Virtually all respondents in our sample began their business activities in possession of the necessary permits. But when they realized the full extent of the costs they faced, most of them stood back in horror. The bolder ones handed back their trade permits and tried to make a go of it outside the law. Of course, by doing so, they risked limiting their opportunities.

Most of the entrepreneurs, however, remained more or less within the boundaries of the law, while attempting to find useful loopholes in the law. Those with workers typically did not bother to register them. We met one big entrepreneur who had just 30–50 officially registered staff (reported to be on the minimum wage) out of 200 permanent staff. But delayed payment of public dues was another widespread method.

Capital and the Lack of It

There was a special grant which unemployed Roma could apply for. It amounted to 50,000 Forints. But you can't start up a business, especially one in the construction industry, with such a small sum. (...) A Roma bank is needed, where Roma would be given the opportunity to employ local jobless people. (Small businessman in the construction industry)

Entrepreneurs in the catering and construction industries in particular need to make large investments. For the caterers, this means modern facilities and qualified staff, while businessmen in the construction sector need appropriate machinery, administrative

back-up, and reliable managers. In 1998, however, loans were granted (to Roma too) only against considerable security and at commercial interest rates.

With or without Company Employees

Many entrepreneurs have faced this dilemma, but in fact only entrepreneurs in the construction and catering industries were able to employ "outside workers," that is, non-family members. Of course, they really had no choice. The retailers were able to fulfill the tasks of the business by means of family assistance; moreover, few of them had sufficient revenue to employ additional staff.

Profitability and Business Assets

Respondents in the survey had very different levels of income. The necessity entrepreneurs, who formed the largest group, did not earn much more than the amount needed for daily subsistence. Their net monthly income in 1998 was between 30,000 and 100,000 *Forints*, and they often needed to sustain a family of four or five on this income. They had no chance of accumulating savings; a decline in their living standards, which were currently at a reasonable level, was a constant threat. The specter of unemployment haunts them.

We did not live badly in the 1980s. But we didn't keep any money in reserves. Whereas a factory worker had to wait years for a voucher to spend a holiday by the Balaton, we went as a family several times a year. And we didn't dine in the canteen. We didn't wait ten years for a Trabant to be assigned to us; you could buy one in no time, it was just a question of money. We didn't put any money in reserve, but we lived well. But that's all the past. Now you always have to be thinking about the coming week. (Market trader)

Entrepreneurs preserving family traditions were in a slightly better situation. They had already accumulated above-average assets, which, however, were difficult to capitalize in light of falling profits under the new circumstances. Moreover, the amount of capital was constantly diminishing. As far as such entrepreneurs were concerned, the status symbol of the home preserved their former glory. Revenues among competitive entrepreneurs in the catering industry were occasionally as high as 2–3 million *Forints* per month, but in 1998 we found few such examples. Instead, assets were slowly being eaten away in most cases. Among the florists, this process had essentially been concluded.

Few of the entrepreneurs were able to accumulate wealth, alongside the stagnation of day-to-day subsistence. Those entrepreneurs who had “feathered their nests” in the aftermath of the political changes of 1989–90 were planning their careers in an conscious manner, benefiting from circumstances and contacts thanks to their rational decisions. We are unable to estimate their monthly incomes. But, in contrast with other groups, it was apparent that they were spending large amounts on their children’s education, in addition to their spending on consumption and status-symbol capital investments. The structure of their businesses was basically dynastic. In their aspirations, they were not just motivated by a desire to provide the best prospects for their children. The education of their children was also considered a vital factor for the future of the business.

Roma and a Big Entrepreneur

The respondents were agreed that their Roma identity had never prevented them from being active in business.

In the old days at my place of work, only those who didn't want to work were called “lazy Roma.” The others were not discriminated against. I don't think it's right that people spend so

much time on this issue. If you ask me, Roma who are involved in politics see some business in it. Those Roma, as well as those who are complaining all the time that they are oppressed and need help, don't deserve anything. I too was thrown out of work from one day to the next, but I didn't start whining. Instead I pulled myself up. If I hadn't done so, then the whole family would be homeless and I would have died of starvation by now. People don't need to politicize or to whine; they need to work and to use their brains a bit. (Romungro greengrocer)

In their view, since they are working and doing their utmost for their own prosperity, they are not even regarded as Roma. None of them denied their ancestry, although they didn't consider it to be particularly important and protested against any type of discrimination. Concerning their own prosperity, the important thing for them was to become middle class (forced assimilation). Most respondents—who are convinced of their own success—have deluded themselves into thinking that hostility towards Roma is generated by a few people in the Roma population, whom they too find unattractive on account of their lifestyle, poverty and crime or their constantly begging for assistance. They believe that if they succeed in persuading the rest of society that “they are not like that,” they will not be subjected to the same hostility. Overall, they show no solidarity with Roma who live in a different way or who are worse off than they are.

Owing to the business, I have become acquainted with many different people, and my impression is that some Roma are very slovenly. They tell their children not to study at school, because they think their children will be able to live as they do. But they're wrong. Nowadays, even cleaners have high school diplomas; otherwise, they won't be taken on. These people don't see that they're doomed. The state won't help people who can't or won't help themselves. This is the mentality that the

Roma have to get rid of first. And then it will be possible to change the way prejudiced society thinks about them. The worst thing is that people identify all the other hard-working and educated Roma with this group. (Romungro fashion retailer)

Their antipathy towards poorer Roma is exceeded only by their antipathy towards Roma politicians. They don't even consider it necessary to politicize on an ethnic basis, for in their opinion this simply serves to increase the distance between Roma and the rest of society. But if there's no alternative, then they dream about new community leaders who would really fight for Roma interests, equal opportunities, and an economic upturn that would serve to create jobs. In their view, Roma politics and Roma politicians have just one legitimate purpose: to bring to conclusion the "Roma question."

Antagonism between Romungro and Vlach Roma

Those Roma that have achieved the average subsistence level of Hungarian society have developed a strong protective reflex against poverty. They identify poverty with their past, their old culture and their language. In most cases, these cultural elements have been lost, but Vlach Roma, who have tended to preserve their traditions, do still foster them.

Most respondents were Hungarian-speaking Roma (Romungro) and just a few were Vlach Roma. The antagonism between the two groups, which goes back centuries, still exists even today but it has taken on a different form. Romungro have become a part of modern society. They regard themselves as people who respect social norms and who have been accepted by society at large. They tend to associate Roma culture, language and lifestyle with backwardness, poverty and idleness.

Society thinks that all Roma are like that: shirkers, vagabonds and criminals. Yet such people are just a minority within the minority. As someone who has worked his whole life, educated his children, established a middle-class way of life, I've had enough of being lumped together with them. People think gypsy music is when Vlach Roma start rattling a can and a spoon. I've never even spoken to such people. When my father was alive, a man could be proud to be a Roma—that is, if he was a real Roma and a musician. My father didn't even acknowledge the greeting of one of these "adhesive Roma," but in fact none of them would have dared say a word to him. He played music for dukes, and my mother told me that he would even tear his white shirt apart when it wasn't ironed properly. For decades, my neighbor was a legal counsel, he had even been a deputy minister, and this man helped me bring my suitcases in from the car; he often sat here in the kitchen and whenever my wife offered him some stuffed cabbage, he would kiss her hand. Our children grew up together. After all this, does someone seriously want to tell me that I should learn Romani? What do I have in common with these people?
(Entrepreneur of Romungro descent)

Vlach Roma in contrast regard themselves as the only "real" Roma. In their judgment, the Romungro are people full of self-hate, opportunists who are ashamed of their Roma ancestry and willing to do anything to please the authorities.

Nevertheless, it is worth noting, given its unprecedented nature, a comment made by one of the most successful Romungro entrepreneurs, expressing his admiration for the mentality of Vlach Roma (above all the *romani butyi*). He wants to learn more about their values.

I had contact with them, because I, for one, have always considered Vlach Roma to be smarter than Hungarian Roma. While Hungarian Roma were working with their hands making adobe, the Vlach Roma were trading. They had that little bit of wiliness in them; they used their brains and were bolder than Hungarian Roma. They collected feathers, and they collected iron and rags. They were still working, not in the same manner as the Hungarian Roma, but with more brains and a little intelligence. (Construction entrepreneur of Romungro ancestry)

Notes

1. The research was carried out under the supervision of István Kemény in the Minority Research Workshop of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.
2. István Kemény, "A magyarországi roma népességről" [On the Roma Population in Hungary], *Magyar Tudomány*, 1997/6, p. 655.

LÓVE TE KEREN

ROMA ANTIQUE DEALERS

Most Roma antique dealers in Hungary are Vlach Roma, a group that has tended to preserve its customs and language and that makes up 15 per cent of the country's Roma population. The enterprising spirit and persistence of Roma antique dealers are legendary, but we have no precise data concerning their number. It is difficult even to make an estimate, but it does seem certain that few of the dealers work full-time in the trade.

Csaba Nagyházi, head of the National Art and Antique Dealers' Association of Hungary, is unsure how many antique dealers are working in Budapest. He thinks there may be more than a hundred. The actual number of Roma working in the "antiques business" may be several times higher than Nagyházi's estimate. Many Roma are involved in the antiques trade in some manner or other—from the "touts" in rural areas, to the Budapest market traders, to the managers of antique shops in the heart of the Hungary's capital city. They work in a highly segmented sector and according to a strict hierarchy: some buy items for resale to their commercial partners, while others sell antiques in their own shops or at markets. There are even some traders who stand outside city-center antique shops in the hope of "snatching" customers from the shop owners. Many of the Roma working in the antiques business operate as "touts"—they resell items at a mark-up to other dealers. The more successful antique dealers thus tend to be surrounded by networks of less profitable associates. People in this latter group supplement their incomes by reselling to the dealers whatever items they manage to collect together. Some of the Roma population in rural areas falls in this category. Just a small number of prestigious

Roma families run their own antique shops in the centre of Budapest. Although the antiques trade provides livelihoods mainly to Vlach Roma, nevertheless some of the ordinary traders are Musician Roma: they supplement their incomes by selling Hungarian antiques on their trips abroad. As far as I know, the only Musician Roma family with its own antique shop in the heart of Budapest specializes in the purchase and sale of antique violins.

Expedient Practices

Most antique dealers try to “make money” (*lőve te keren*) in the grey area between legality and illegality. For this reason, many of them were stubbornly silent when I asked them about the business. In some cases, however, persistence on my part led them to talk—although they all insisted that I should not mention their names. The important thing for an antique dealer is, of course, to buy items at the lowest price and to resell them at the highest price with the greatest possible profit. “In business there is neither brotherly affection nor friendship,” they told me. Indeed, they generally show no hesitation about using methods that outsiders might regard as unethical.

Crucial to a trader’s success is the impression he makes on the person selling the antique. It is not wise to be pushy, because the vendor may realize that the trader is willing to pay any price in order to obtain the item. Exploiting the ignorance of some owners—for instance, that of a young couple who have just inherited some furniture from their grandparents—dealers will attempt to acquire the really valuable pieces, even if the owner has no intention of selling them. There are various methods of acquiring high-value antiques, and these methods are not just practiced by Roma. The basic objective in all such cases is to mislead the vendor.

A popular method is to buy an item for a relatively “large sum of money” and then persuade the unsuspecting vendor into

surrendering a "worthless tiny object" for a small sum or as a way of sealing the transaction. This is all done in such a way that the vendor has no inkling that the "little something" is in fact a valuable antique and that the purpose of the initial deal was simply to obtain the second object. In another trick, the antique dealer arranges for an associate to go ahead of him. This person offers the vendor an unrealistically low price for an item and no deal is made. Then, as if by chance, the second dealer arrives at the scene. Having been "psychologically prepared," the vendor is more likely to accept this second dealer's offer of a slightly higher price and relinquish the item. A third tactic is to offend or annoy the vendor. The dealer says something like: "What are you trying to sell? Do you want to trick someone into buying such an awful item?" The annoyed or dispirited vendor then agrees to a deal that otherwise, in a sober mind, he would have rejected. Another way of misleading someone is to claim that a valuable item is a forgery. This is a favored method in the case of paintings.

Roma dealers rarely buy items at auctions, because of the high prices and their inability to influence price. Nevertheless, they do like to take part in such events as middlemen or observers, as a means of acquiring useful information from their colleagues. At such events, for instance, they may discuss potential vendors and customers. The antique dealers' "muster" is the Győr market and the national Pécs market—both held monthly. Although traveling to the markets costs 30–40,000 *Forints* and the outcome is uncertain, nevertheless Roma antique dealers often participate in the event. They tend not to buy items abroad—due to the high tariffs. However, some of them do go to Romania for smaller items, which they then hide in their cars and import into Hungary without paying customs duties. The established dealers do not risk this.

Market Prospects

From time to time, grave predictions are made about the impending demise of the trade and the irrepressible advance of foreign buyers. So far, however, there has been little perceivable agony, and most traders are optimistic for the future.

Buying and selling antiques is more than just an occupation: for genuine dealers it is a life-style or even a passion. As well as providing a livelihood, the antiques business offers Roma two of the principal traditional values of their community—freedom and independence. They are not bound by place or time and they can thus avoid the limitations and possible humiliations of “normal” jobs. On the other hand, they must be prepared to be constantly on the move, to work hard, to update their knowledge, and to undertake risk.

R.J., a Roma antique dealer living in the Eleventh District of Budapest, thinks that the trade “is carried in his genes:” Vlach Roma—and especially Lovari Vlach Roma, who were originally horse-dealers—have been wheeling and dealing for centuries; the antiques trade is hardly alien to them. In his view, the smaller number of Musician Roma among the antique dealers can be explained by the fact that business has never been one of their traditional areas of work and most of them have been in paid employment. After Hungary’s political changes in the early 1990s, the men who during the Communist era had traded in horses and antiques alongside their official jobs at state companies, became entrepreneurs. They learnt the trade by studying books at public libraries and with the assistance of cultural historians.

R.J. is one of a few dealers who rarely go to areas outside Budapest. He sells his “bounty” in a small shop at Ecseri Market. Usually, he buys items from “touts” based in Budapest or directly from the vendors—paying more than his colleagues do in rural areas. In his view, Hungary’s “nouveaux riche” are competent buyers, who

usually purchase antiques as investments. (L.Z., however, thinks they are far from being competent buyers: he says most of them "pay through the nose" i.e. they pay more for an item than its real value.) R.J. thinks that fair transactions are the key to the success of a business: "If someone has invited me in and I've given him my business card, then I try to make the kind of deal that will allow me to return there in ten years time."

Romani Gógyi or Ex-Communication

Antique dealers generally supplement their basic activities with other commercial ventures such as buying and selling vehicles, dealing in property, and trading in jewelry and clothes. Like non-Roma antique dealers, some of them are receivers of stolen goods. The price of stolen goods is a lot less than their market value—due to the risk of selling such goods. If a Vlach Roma antiques dealer is prosecuted for receiving stolen goods, he cannot reveal his source, because this would be treachery in the eyes of the community, leading to grave consequences. If a Roma court found a dealer guilty of treachery, this would result in his exclusion from the life of the community, his ex-communication. Dealers who are found to have dealt in stolen goods usually manage to think of some "clever excuse," which they can use in their defense during a court case. They may claim to have bought the item from a stranger at Ecseri Market or from a relative who has since passed away.

As the arts magazine *Műértő* reported in April 1999, in the latter half of 1998 various forgeries of paintings by Rippl-Rónai appeared on the market. A Roma antiques dealer living in Kaposvár seemed to be involved. A report in *Napi Gazdaság* published on 5 March 1999 stated that D.F.—the suspect in the case—had sold nine paintings for a total sum of 27 million *Forints*. Having achieved notoriety throughout the country, the Roma antiques dealer applied the tactics of *romani gógyi* (Roma adroitness). He

claimed to have been ignorant of the fact that the paintings—which he had inherited from his father—were forgeries.

The elite commercial trades—dealing in antiques, automobiles or scrap metal—can provide the means for a decent lifestyle. Thus, for a small number of Roma, it is in this area that they have been able to realize their middle-class aspirations since the political changes of 1989–90. Paradoxically, however, Roma antique dealers are just as likely as Vlach Roma living in isolated rural communities to have preserved their traditional lifestyles and Roma value-systems.

Family Business

Like other traditional Roma activities, the antiques trade revolves around the family: knowledge of the trade is passed on from father to son, and the whole family takes part in it. Just as children grow up as natural participants in the family business, so it is also considered quite normal for a son aged 20–22 years to work independently of his father as his own boss. “My father took me along with him from the age of twelve,” said one dealer. “He wanted to teach me the trade, but I also did some of the minor jobs: labeling, wrapping, etc.”

Vlach Roma antique dealers treat their children as young adults from early adolescence. The children quickly learn the community modes of behavior as well as their roles within the family. The girls cook, clean and look after their younger siblings. The boys tend to learn the trades of their fathers, picking up skills in business life. Like other Vlach Roma, the antique dealers regard school merely as a place where young children may acquire the basic skills necessary for everyday life. Thus, rather than encourage or compel their children to do their homework, parents tend instead to prepare them for the practicalities of life in line with the norms of their community.

To increase efficiency, family members typically perform supplementary tasks associated with the business. The women distribute leaflets and advertising material, while the boys assist in transporting items. Only the most successful dealers gain the respect of the community. They can afford to keep some of the more valuable antiques in their homes and are not forced to sell them.

A small number of families (perhaps five in Budapest) make up the elite group of Roma antique dealers. This group includes some individuals who are unable to read or write. Success is based on their strong powers of observation, an irrepressible thirst for knowledge, and an excellent business sense. It is very difficult for outsiders to become a part of this group, since—as one might expect—all the families fight tooth and nail to preserve their positions. According to L.Z. (a 20-year-old trader), a special family connection or marriage are the only means of joining the group. An entrepreneur lacking such connections and capital has almost no chance of surviving in the antiques trade. The following example demonstrates the extent of the hierarchy within the trade. Traders operating at the same level on the hierarchy never sell to each other at inflated prices, but when an unknown dealer approaches one of the more successful dealers, the latter is fully entitled to fleece the stranger and demand five times the real value of the item.

For instance, in the early 1990s, F.E. peddled Italian kitchenware in rural Hungary. For two years during that period, he supplemented his income by buying and selling antiques. Owing to a lack of capital, he acquired antiques by bartering goods. He would supply cutlery in return for cheap pieces of “old-looking” furniture. He then resold the goods, purchased without any knowledge of the trade, to “real” dealers. Most of his customers were non-Roma, because—he claims—he found it difficult to make deals with Roma, as they wanted to pay “peanuts” for the goods. Without capital and without a network of agents or “touts” F.E. found it impossible to open a shop, although he does still occasionally buy or sell

an antique item. The dealers claim that people who are not members of the "clan" are offered just 10 per cent of the real value of items. The trade is, therefore, a difficult one to learn because experienced dealers will not pass on their knowledge to others—unless they are family members. Indeed, their main interest is to stubbornly defend their own market positions.

In comparison with F.E., L.Z. began his career as an antique dealer under far more favorable conditions. As a member of a family of antique dealers in the Zugló district of Budapest, he began learning the trade as a young child. As a young man, he is already a successful businessman. "Most Roma living in Zugló and in Kispest make a living out of the antiques trade," says L.Z.—although this estimate seems somewhat exaggerated. He refuses to divulge his annual turnover, but he does tell me how he once made more than a million *Forints* on the sale of just one item. But this kind of profit is made just once in every one or two years, while his normal weekly earnings amount to between 50 and 200 thousand *Forints*, and sometimes there are periods when he makes just 5–10 thousand *Forints* per week. Although his apartment is furnished with antiques, he's not a collector of valuable pieces.

He advertises his business using leaflets and in the newspapers. Apart from old paintings he also sells porcelain items and sculptures as well as bronze items, chandeliers, lace, and even painted china dolls. If necessary, he travels to areas outside of Budapest in his search for antiques. He then sells them at Ecseri Market, where he has a little shop and a rented market stall. His customers are foreigners and the nouveaux riche, but sometimes he sells items to other traders. Between 15 and 20 per cent of his trips outside Budapest do not yield anything, because the vendor offers sub-standard goods or demands too much money. If another trader has preceded him and has decided not to buy the item, then he too refrains from buying. In general, a vendor's real intent can be ascertained in the course of a short telephone conversation.

He considers fair play to be the most important principle for a "good trader." It is vital that a trader be honest with colleagues. Loans must be repaid on time, and if a dealer fails to do so, people soon find out and none of the Roma will be willing to do business with him or even talk to him in the future. The rules of ethics are less strict when it comes to customers. The young trader said that people often refuse to let them in. At such times, confidence and aptitude may help.

Time Is Money

Several Roma antique dealers told me they had been attacked by "vendors" who hoped they might be carrying large sums of money. For this reason, most of them now travel the country with some kind of self-defense weapon. Sometimes people think they are burglars or other intruders. Distrust is greater in the case of Roma antique dealers. Some people even back out of the deal when they see the trader is Roma.

József Sztojka, who lives in Felsőpakony in Pest County, has been making a living from antiques for more than 30 years. He learnt the trade from his father. He has no shop, but sells antiques at the second-hand goods market on Nagykörösi Street. Most of his customers are antique dealers or collectors. Since he has little capital, he's forced to sell items quickly at little profit, so that he can then buy further items. "We don't have any bright shops, because this would need time, and we cannot work with a 2-3 per cent profit margin like the dealers," he claims. Sztojka will travel anywhere in the country for goods, but rarely buys from Roma because other traders usually get to them first. Roma living outside Budapest tend to sell the items they have collected together to non-Roma traders in the hope of getting a better deal. Another reason not to do business with Roma is that "they're just as cunning as I am." Customers are most easy to find in the following areas: silverware,

Biedermeier furniture, and old decorative watches. But surprisingly he also deals in contemporary art.

The biggest profit Sztojka has ever made was on a clock. He made the sale some time in the 1980s and it earned him 150 thousand *Forints*. His annual turnover is confidential, but he thinks he is in the lower-income category. In his view, without a good circle of customers, antique dealers have little chance. It's certainly worth building relationships in the business sector or among the *nouveaux riches*.

Roma traders tend to be particularly experienced in peddling and in bargaining. In this area they're more effective than are their non-Roma fellows. The traders with the best future, in his view, are those that "do antiques" on a large scale: they have lots of money and go to auctions with internationally recognized foreign businessmen. "At the same time, however, Roma are never going to be traders at that level," says Sztojka.

At the Top of the Ladder

Like all other Roma groups, the antique traders place themselves at the top of the internal community hierarchy. A fundamental value is material wealth. To become rich, a person needs to be both lucky and clever. If a Roma lives by the work of his two hands rather than by "being clever," this means, to other Roma, that he lacks basic attributes (such as resourcefulness). And such attributes are indispensable for gaining their respect. Most Roma antique dealers look down upon Vlach Roma who have given up their freedom and work for "*gadzo*" employers. In their view, such Roma cannot live in the true Roma manner.

Weddings costing several millions of *Forints* are organized mainly by the Vlach Roma commercial elite who deal in antiques or scrap metal. An extravagant wedding celebration—a golden wreath is placed on the head of the bride and men throw wads of

ten-thousand *Forint* notes onto the bride as they dance around her—is just as much a status symbol as a western car or jewelry with precious stones. A desire to impress may also explain why almost all the antique dealers have “girlfriends” in addition to their wives. Having a Vlach Roma lover, or “*romnyi*,” at his side, enhances a man’s status within the community. At the same time, it’s also true to say that Roma men give priority to their wives and families. A “girlfriend” will never be more than of secondary importance. But wives are expected to conform to a very strict morality, for a husband’s standing within the community will suffer if his wife is unfaithful. Moreover a Roma man who forgives his wife under such circumstances will lose the respect of the community. Thus, under Roma law, a husband may punish his unfaithful wife by cutting off her hair or by disfiguring her face.

Among Themselves

Both Vlach Roma and Hungarian Roma tend to marry within their own communities. According to surveys the ratio of marriages between Roma and non-Roma is higher than the ratio of marriages between the various sub-groups of Roma. Marriage customs are firmly fixed among all groups of Roma. And even among the larger groups it is difficult to break down the barriers existing between the various subgroups. The groups in question are still divided up according to trade or occupation and on the basis of material wealth and ethnic systems. For instance, members of the Lovari community will rarely marry Churar, even though both groups are Vlach Roma. Most Vlach Roma hold in contempt a “*romnyi*” (Vlach Roma woman) or a “*romesz*” (Vlach Roma man) who chooses a Hungarian Roma as spouse. In the community there is greater acceptance of marriage with a non-Roma. It is also difficult to imagine that a Musician Roma would marry a Vlach Roma girl. Most of the Roma antique dealers’ children choose their spouse

from among the Roma commercial elite. Since marriages are usually sealed based on financial wealth, it is rare for a son of an antique dealer to marry a Roma girl from a poor family.

Parents often decide whom their offspring shall marry while they are still children. The success of a marriage, it is thought, can be ensured if children "become used to one another" while they are still young. The period of courting is short, and a fundamental rule is that the two young people should never be left on their own. Arranging for the couple to be accompanied by a younger brother or sister whenever they go to the cinema or candy store can prevent elopement. Girls are expected to marry young. In a sense, this is a cultural requirement for a girl must be a virgin in order to marry, and she is more likely to be so, the younger she is. As a deterrent, stories are told concerning the fate of girls who are "impure" on marriage. An impure bride who stands before the altar (wearing a myrtle wreath symbolizing virginity) will be unlucky for the rest of her life. A sign of this could be that the wreath falls off the head of the bride or she falls ill during the service. If it transpires that a girl was not a virgin on her marriage to her husband, the boy's parents may ask for a refund of the costs of the wedding celebration. If the two sets of parents are unable to come to an agreement, they may ask for the convening of the *romani kris* (Roma court).

Among some antique dealer families, young girls are offered for sale. Roma believe that "a girl will be a virgin just once, and that she'll be worth less as soon as she loses her virginity." Thus, grief money is payable to a girl's family prior to her marriage. The amount ranges from several hundred thousand *Forints* to several million *Forints*. The wedding feast of a purchased girl will be smaller than that of a virgin girl. Vlach Roma think that if a husband is not required to pay anything for a girl, he will not value her, because "if something comes easily, it will go easily too." Interestingly, although Roma parents generally insist on a church wedding even if their daughter is less than 14

years old, nevertheless even the most enlightened of families living in Budapest are unlikely to attach any importance to an official civil ceremony. (Evidently, in many cases this is because the bride is still a minor.) Divorced women are less likely than young girls to be asked to marry. Sometimes, however, they will be sought by divorced fathers with several children. A pretty divorced woman or one that "can earn her own living" will be quicker to find a partner.

Based on what they wear and on their appearance, Roma antique dealers only partially adhere to the unwritten rules of the traditional outlook on life: even older members of the community tend to dress in elegant western clothes. The Budapest Roma businessman is well-groomed, makes regular visits to the sauna and the manicurist, wears little jewelry, and dresses in fashionable clothes. He will rarely wear a hat—unlike his Vlach Roma fellows living outside the city. The womenfolk, on the other hand, wear their hair long and dress in garments reaching to their ankles. In rural areas, Vlach Roma women are forbidden from dying their hair or putting on make-up, yet many of the women in Budapest dye their hair red and wear thick make-up. (They do so even though a majority of Vlach Roma think that women who dye their hair red are trying to look like non-Roma—and this is regarded as the custom of Hungarian Roma.) Roma businessmen living in rural areas have better preserved traditions of clothing, and the women tend to wear scarves with flowery patterns and colorful skirts. All of them (even those in Budapest) speak the Lovari dialect of Romani.

It is widely known that traditional Roma communities are reluctant to reveal the internal workings of their communities to outsiders. This is especially true if the inquisitive outsider is non-Roma. In rare instances, a "*gadzo*"—i.e. a non-Roma—has been accepted into a Roma community. For instance, József Újvári, a non-Roma merchant living in the Fourteenth District of Budapest, became acquainted with Roma antique dealers by way of a childhood friend—who had been placed in the same children's home—

and his wife. Making good use of the new contacts, Ujvári has become a self-taught antique dealer. His business, which is now seven years old, specializes in collecting artworks. "The Roma accepted me in, because I know and respect their traditions. Cohesion within these families—and indeed within the whole community—is still strong. People help each other out; and it is this type of mentality that is dying out among Hungarians."

Kris and Pativ

Order is maintained within Vlach Roma communities—and among the antique dealers—by the Roma court, or *romani kris*. The communities tend to resolve their internal conflicts on their own and seek to avoid decisions being made by the public judicial system. Strict rules govern the peculiar judicial process—which Roma consider to be a court. Comprising male community elders, the body is convened at the request of a damaged party. Women, as well as those with a grudge to bear—but not relatives, are excluded from the body. The purpose of the court is the peaceful resolution of conflicts. It usually examines matters associated with women or business disputes. Judgments usually comprise fines payable by offenders in the form of damages. Once both parties have made statements to the *kris*, the court arranges for the taking of oaths in a church. The parties are made to swear that unless they tell the truth they will be placed under the greatest possible curse. If the ceremony takes place in a private apartment, an image of the Virgin Mary is placed on the floor. The person taking an oath has a black shawl placed on his shoulder. With his most beloved child in his lap, he kneels down in front of the image. Then, placing his index and middle fingers on to the picture while pointing them at the text of the oath, he says simply: Amen. Judgments of the *kris* cannot be appealed, and members of the community who fail to adhere to them are ostracized.

A Roma court body in Ujpalota recently deliberated in the case of a business dispute between two Roma antique dealers. József Abházi, a member of the local council and also head of the organization Rom Som, said the following about the "court case": two antique dealers were working together and "did deals" together. On one of their journeys, they tried to purchase a valuable painting, but no deal was made. One of the antique dealers left his visiting card with the owner of the painting. He told the potential vendor to phone him if he should change his mind. Several months later, the second antique dealer found out by chance that his partner had subsequently bought the painting without his knowledge. As an aggrieved party, he demanded half of the profit from the subsequent sale of the painting in line with the rules of the community based on *pativ* (honesty). His argument was that, on their business journeys, the two men did everything together—from the initial bargaining to the final sale. This was the way they covered their costs, and any profits were divided into two parts. By circumventing him during the purchase of the painting, his partner had acted dishonestly. Under the rules of the system, the Roma court ordered the dealer who had caused the damages to state under oath the sum of the profits stemming from the sale of the painting. Oaths are considered sacred. A basic rule is that a person making an oath must be believed even if he is clearly lying. A false oath would imply that the person taking the oath considered his reputation before the court to be more important than the fate of his children and brothers. Roma believe that curses placed on a person making a false oath will be fulfilled at some time in the future. A sad consequence of this belief is that innocent people are forced to suffer for the transgressions of others.

LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS RELATING TO THE ROMA POPULATION IN HUNGARY SINCE THE POLITICAL CHANGES OF 1989–90

After the political changes of 1989–90, the minority issue, which had been neglected in Hungary for decades, became a pressing challenge for the country's first democratically elected parliament and government. There was a particular need for prompt action to address the many unresolved problems of the Roma minority. As far as such action is concerned, the past decade and a half may be divided into two main periods. Between 1990 and 1995, legislation was passed with a view to transforming and restructuring the legal and institutional framework. Then, after 1995, the first government programs were introduced with the aim of improving the living circumstances of the Roma population. Given that Hungary's democratic transition was accompanied by declining living standards throughout society, there was no denying the need for state intervention. The disillusioned masses and growing numbers of jobless were increasingly intolerant of others and indifferent to their problems. As frustrations reached boiling point, policy-makers recognized the urgent need for special government measures promoting the social integration of Roma. They acknowledged that, of Hungary's two million poor people, Roma (accounting for 5% of the country's population of 10 million) had suffered the most from rapid modernization and radical changes in the economy.

Nevertheless, for a proper understanding of the development of legislation in Hungary after 1990, we need also to examine the effect of international requirements. The influence of such factors was particularly strong since European integration was the primary objective of the Hungarian political elite. This overriding aim

placed legal requirements on the country and represented a critical challenge in the field of minority legislation.

The Background to Hungarian Legislation

For many years it was generally believed that in modern civil societies human rights protection fell under the exclusive domestic jurisdiction of states. It was only after the First World War that such protection began to be regulated by international law. Until the end of the Second World War, minority protection was based on international treaties offering collective security to racial, linguistic or religious minorities with the aim of preserving their identity. By preventing the oppression of minorities (dis)placed beyond the borders of their "mother-country" [kin state], such treaties served also to establish and maintain the stability of the new, post-1918 national boundaries. The effectiveness of this collective system of minority protection was, however, questionable. The system, for instance, offered no protection whatsoever to Roma, who were not recognized as a national minority and were without a kin state willing to protect their rights. The weaknesses of the system led to demands, after the Second World War, for international mechanisms protecting human and minority rights.

The matter was initially addressed in the Charter of the United Nations, which, for the first time in international law, listed under its purposes and principles the right to freedom from racial discrimination as a basic individual human right:

To achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.¹

The UN General Assembly may initiate studies and make recommendations to promote these goals (Article 13(1)(b)) while the Economic and Social Council may make recommendations for the purpose of promoting the observance of such rights (Article 62(2)). This latter body later established the Commission on Human Rights. Despite this encouraging start, settlement of the issue nevertheless took longer than expected. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948 (as merely a non-binding resolution), made no reference to the protection of racial and national minorities. Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (*"In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language."*²), while declaring the protection of minorities, fails to define the term minority or specify requirements with regard to the promotion of rights. The implication is that states merely have to refrain from intervening to the detriment of minorities. Nevertheless, in its commentary on Article 27, the Commission on Human Rights stated that *"there is a need for states to take positive measures to protect the identity of minorities and the rights of their members...."*³ Moreover, in 1992, the UN General Assembly adopted the non-binding Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious or Linguistic Minorities, which underlined the responsibility of states to protect the identity of minorities. Still, these provisions refer only to the conduct of states as regards minorities as a group. Indeed, none of the existing international agreements define the rights of minorities in an adequate manner. Few of the provisions contain obligatory requirements, and while several documents state that minority rights are to be exercised both individually and collectively, this does not amount to recognition of minority groups as collective legal entities. One analyst has interpreted the ambiguity of the provisions as follows:

The international community of states refuses to offer definitive guarantees of the rights of national or ethnic minorities; and by refusing to do so, it protects the interests of the dominant national or ethnic groups of various countries.⁴

Minority rights and anti-discrimination measures have received greater attention in European Community law. A ban on discrimination is mentioned several times in the Treaty of Rome, which established the European Economic Community. The purpose of this treaty was Europe's economic integration, and no specific mention is made of the minority issue. Nevertheless, the treaty does contain a prohibition on discrimination with respect to the rights of citizens.⁵ It also places a ban on discrimination in employment, remuneration, and other conditions of work, or on the basis of gender.⁶ Initially, all these provisions were mere appendages to the economic issues governed by the treaty. Still, a degree of dynamism in the defining of principles has been shown by the case-law of the European Court of Justice (ECJ). Indeed, in its judgments the Court has established the following principles and definitions:

The principle of equality:

The Court has consistently held that the general principle of equality, which is one of the fundamental principles of Community law, requires that similar situations not be treated differently unless differentiation is objectively justified.⁷

A definition of discrimination:

... discrimination can arise only through the application of different rules to comparable situations or the application of the same rule to different situations.⁸

A definition of indirect discrimination:

According to settled case-law, Article 4(1) of the Directive precludes the application of a national measure which, although

formulated in neutral terms, works to the disadvantage of far more women than men, unless that measure is based on objective factors unrelated to any discrimination on grounds of sex.⁹

It is the consistent development of case-law over time that has transformed the economic grouping of earlier decades into the European Union of today. The Union is now founded upon a community of interests governed by real democratic principles and values. This legal progression was reflected in the Treaty of Amsterdam, which amended the Treaty on European Union. One of the amendments was the addition of Article 13(1), authorizing the Council *to combat discrimination*:

Without prejudice to the other provisions of this Treaty and within the limits of the powers conferred by it upon the Community, the Council, acting unanimously on a proposal from the Commission and after consulting the European Parliament, may take appropriate action to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

To some observers, progress was rather modest (the measure has no immediate effect, and a unanimous decision is required in the Council before action can be taken). Nevertheless, in our view, this general legal formula may, over time, become an integral part of minority provisions. Certainly, its influence can already be felt. The Treaty of Amsterdam restructured the European Union's third pillar: the Commission began to combat racism and xenophobia; it provided funding for a series of anti-discrimination programs in Member States; the year 1997 was declared the European Year against Racism; and in 1998 the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia was established in Vienna.

Despite these developments, the European Union continues to lack, within its own legal framework, compulsory legal norms aimed at defeating racism and discrimination. Nonetheless,

European institutions do devote more and more attention to the issue. Each year, new regulations are passed, providing additional legal remedies for cases of discrimination. A key instrument is doubtless the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, adopted under the auspices of the Council of Europe. The Convention contains *a general prohibition on discrimination*:

The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, color, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.¹⁰

A peculiar feature of the prohibition is the manner in which it refers back to other provisions of the Convention. Thus, under legal practice, the provision can be applied only if it relates to a violation of a right protected by another article of the Convention. That is to say, a violation of Article 14 is not possible in and of itself. If a violation of Article 14 is established, this automatically acknowledges a violation of the parallel article. With reference to a violation of any other part of the Convention, any applicant may thus request a ruling on a violation of Article 14. The area is problematic because the Convention fails to mention the exceptional cases in which discrimination may be justified. Consequently, the only possible guidance in this area is the legal practice of the European bodies, according to which discrimination does not violate Article 14 if:

- a) it is based on objective and sensible reasons,
 - aa) with special regard for the aims and effects of the measure
 - ab) and the general principles governing democratic societies, and
- b) the measure applied is proportional to its intended objective.¹¹

Where an applicant manages to prove a case of discrimination, the state in question must verify that the principles of necessity and proportionality have been applied. In recent years, however, no state has been reprimanded by the Court for discriminating against Roma—although the Court has in fact received no petitions.

In addition to the conventions and treaties, several other particularly relevant and characteristically European practices should also be mentioned. One such practice is the drafting of “country reports”. Compiled by the Commission, these reports were designed to demonstrate the extent to which countries seeking accession to the European Union comply with membership requirements. The objective criteria for doing so were elaborated at the Copenhagen European Council in 1993 and thus they became known as the “Copenhagen Criteria”. In addition to the rule of law and stable democratic institutions, emphasis was also laid on respect for human rights and minority rights. A prerequisite for requesting accession to the European Union is respect for the following principles:¹²

The Union is founded on the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law, principles which are common to the Member States.¹³

The reports on Hungary provide insights into the opinions of outsiders—in this case the European Commission—on the situation of Roma in Hungary and on the anti-discrimination measures introduced by the Hungarian state.

The first such report was the Agenda 2000, which arose as an evaluation of the membership application and was published by the Commission at the start of negotiations on accession.¹⁴ The report spoke positively of both the situation of minorities and the implementation of minority rights, but it also identified shortcomings, such as Hungary’s failure to provide parliamentary representation

to its minorities.¹⁵ Citing a government report, the report claimed that Roma regularly suffer discrimination and that Hungary's present legal system fails to prevent ethnic conflicts involving Roma. The Commission's appraisal referred also to inequalities of opportunity between Roma and non-Roma, particularly in the fields of education and employment. The following year's report (1998) also stated that, while Hungary was complying with the Copenhagen Criteria, it should pay attention to improving the living conditions of Roma. The Commission's report in 1999 noted the lack of any significant changes in the situation of Roma. The Commission was of the view that in many areas Roma fared worse than other Hungarians, owing to prejudice and discrimination in everyday life.

In addition to the annual country reports, in early 2001 the Commission also published an overview¹⁶ of the situation of Roma in Hungary and other accession countries. The section relating to Hungary formulated some of the criticisms noted above. It mentioned the racist attacks on Roma, which, it said, the state authorities refused to acknowledge, or even acquiesced to. It then cited the racist public discourse, which occasionally can be heard even in the Parliament. Alongside other criticisms, the report argued that the anti-discrimination rules were poorly applied in practice. Once again it called for anti-discrimination legislation.

In addition to the above, the Vienna Declaration adopted in 1993 established the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) under the auspices of the Council of Europe. An important part of the ECRI's work is to examine the anti-discrimination guarantees of the Convention. This has led it to propose supplementary amendments to the text of Article 14. It has also made general policy recommendations to the member states of the Council of Europe. General Policy Recommendation No. 3 addresses the Roma issue.¹⁷ In addition, the ECRI also draws up so-called "country-by-country reports". Its second report on Hungary, published in the summer of 1999,¹⁸ discussed the

situation of Roma in a section entitled "Issues of particular concern". According to the ECRI, Hungary was failing to provide equal access to education, and Roma also faced substantial discrimination in the field of employment. It recommended the more effective implementation of existing legislation. If this proved ineffective, Hungary should adopt anti-discrimination legislation.

Reform of Hungarian Legal Regulations and Institutions

After the political changes of 1989-90, the Hungarian political elite was in effect compelled to act by requirements in the international field. In order to achieve EU membership, the country had no choice but to rapidly reform its legal system and institutions. As far as minority policy was concerned, the first step forward was the "rewriting" of the Hungarian Constitution. As we have already noted, over the years fundamental human rights have become an integral part of international law. As inviolable and inalienable rights, they may be found in the basic laws or constitutions of all democratic countries. We cite the following sections of the Hungarian Constitution relating to the national and ethnic minorities (including Roma):

- Article 8 (1) The Republic of Hungary recognizes the inviolable and inalienable fundamental human rights; to respect and to protect thereof shall be a primary duty of the State.
- (2) In the Republic of Hungary, the rules respecting fundamental rights and obligations shall be determined by law which, however, shall not limit the substantial contents of any fundamental right."¹⁹

This general declaration fully complies with the international requirements and satisfies the need for constitutional rules. Two particularly important sections of the Constitution should be underlined:

- Article 68 (1) National and ethnic minorities living in the Republic of Hungary shall share in the power of the people: they shall be components of the state.
- (2) The Republic of Hungary shall protect national and ethnic minorities. It shall ensure their collective participation in public life, foster their culture, the use of their mother language, school instruction conducted in their language, and the right to use their names in their own language.
- (3) The Laws of the Republic of Hungary shall provide for the representation of the national and ethnic minorities living within the territory of the country.
- Article 70/A (1) The Republic of Hungary shall ensure human and civil rights for everyone within its territory without discrimination of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, creed, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.
- (2) Any prejudicial discrimination of people as described in paragraph 1 shall be punished severely by law.
- (3) The Republic of Hungary shall promote the attainment of the equality of rights also by measures aimed at eliminating inequalities of opportunity.”²⁰

Under minority protection, the State is required to achieve two goals: first, it must ensure that individuals belonging to the minority should not be discriminated against in the exercise of their fundamental rights; secondly, it may guarantee to minority communities and to individuals belonging to a minority additional rights that help to alleviate disadvantages stemming from their minority status and that ultimately prevent their assimilation into majority society.²¹

These conclusions are mirrored in the articles of the Constitution cited above. Thus even if a person belongs to a national or ethnic minority group, he or she is still a component (constituent element) of the state—with full and equal rights, just like members of the ethnic majority. Members of minorities may not be discriminated against as they seek to foster and preserve their identity, culture and language. Moreover, special rights help to preserve their minority identity. This is why they are offered parliamentary representation²² and self-governing bodies for administering community affairs. Act LXXVII of 1993 (the Minorities Act) formulates these rights.

Reviewing the contents of the second cited constitutional article, we come to the issue of positive discrimination—now at the constitutional level. The protection offered by minority rights must entail the concurrent protection of individual and community rights (which we may refer to as anti-discrimination) as well as special guarantees for the minority rights of minorities and citizens belonging to such minorities (which we may refer to as positive discrimination). In our view, anti-discrimination is of a procedural legal nature; it does not offer additional rights and relates to the practice of existing rights. This seems to be indicated by Article 70/A (1) of the Constitution, according to which the legal system shall offer protection to minority communities or to individuals belonging to a minority if they have been discriminated against due to their minority status. Positive discrimination, on the other hand, rather than offer special privileges to certain groups, acts to ensure the implementation of existing rights by providing extra guarantees. This entails the provision of additional rights and thus positive discrimination is of a material legal nature. It seems to be offered by Article 70/A (3), which foresees the adoption of measures aimed at removing inequalities of opportunity.²³

The above demonstrates that the Hungarian Constitution, which has been completely transformed since the original version

of 1949, seeks to ensure the fulfillment of international requirements by applying the principles of democracy and the rule of law. As a result, Roma in Hungary are provided with a framework enabling them to live under proper conditions. The presence of shortcomings in Hungary's legal regulations (at levels beneath the constitutional)—and particularly in the operation and application of such regulations – does not automatically imply deficiencies at the constitutional level.

The Minorities Act

As various analysts have pointed out,²⁴ two practical considerations guided the Hungarian political elite as they drafted the minority legislation. On the one hand, they wished to show Hungary in a favorable light as the newly democratic country sought membership of the European institutions. Faced with grave economic problems, Hungary could not afford to forfeit the chance of assistance by failing to pass legislation on human and minority rights. There was also an awareness of the unresolved problems of Hungarians living outside Hungary and a desire to “show an example” to other countries—particularly since in Hungary, given the dispersion of the country's various ethnic groups, there was no risk of demands for territorial autonomy. The purpose of the Minorities Act²⁵ was to formulate the detailed rules governing the application of the principles that had been declared by the Constitution. This is illustrated in the preamble of the Act, which recognizes that *the harmonious co-existence of the national and ethnic minorities with the majority nation is a part of international security* and that *“the right to national and ethnic self-identity is one of the universal human rights.”* It is important to note that the minorities were not given special privileges:

All these rights are neither a gift from the majority nor a privilege of the minority, and their source is not the relative

numerical strength of the national and ethnic minorities but the right of difference based on respect for individual freedom and societal peace.

The Act contains the principles and values it wishes to protect and foster:

The language, material and spiritual culture, and historical traditions of national and ethnic minorities of Hungarian citizenship living within the territory of the Republic of Hungary, as well as other features associated with their minority status, are part of their individual and community self-identity.

A further point of emphasis is the declaration of the right to self-government:

The self-governments constitute the foundation of the democratic system; the establishment and operation of minority self-governments, as well as the cultural autonomy they provide, are considered by the Parliament to be a main prerequisite for the particular application of the rights of minorities.

This leads us to assert one of the most important features of the Act: it not only recognizes, protects and supports individual rights, but also contains community (collective) rights. The system of minority self-government is the most evident manifestation of this. Developed legal systems in other parts of Europe have tended in the past to avoid any such definitive declaration. For this reason, Hungary's legislation was regarded for many years as exceptional and novel.

Defining the personal scope of the Act was one of the most difficult tasks facing the drafters of the legislation, since the minorities were vocal in their opposition to any form of registration. Consequently, the rights contained in the Act may be exercised by anybody who professes to belong to a national or ethnic

minority. This is founded upon the free choice of identity or, to express it slightly differently, the free acknowledgement of identity.²⁶ Any person may decide, based on their descent, to belong to a minority group. Furthermore, the Act does not preclude the expression and recognition of multiple ethnic ties. Acknowledgement of one's belonging to a minority constitutes a piece of personal data and is therefore subject to strict protection. It may only appear in records if strict rules are kept. The basic provisions of the Act contain a general ban on negative discrimination, as well as specific cases of such, but they do not provide a definition of discrimination.

The Act not only lists the national and ethnic minorities that are to be the recipients of rights but also defines the criteria for "becoming a minority." Thus, a national or ethnic minority

is any group that has been living within the territory of Hungary for at least 100 years, which constitutes a numerical minority of the population, whose members are Hungarian citizens and differ from the rest of the population in terms of their own mother tongue, cultures and traditions, and whose sense of belonging (national or ethnic cohesion) aims at preserving all these and at safeguarding the interests of the respective historically developed community.

The closing provisions of the Act contain a list of the thirteen groups qualifying as national or ethnic minorities: "*Under the terms of this Act, the indigenous groups in Hungary are as follows: Bulgarian, Roma, Greek, Croatian, Polish, German, Armenian, Romanian, Ruthenian, Serbian, Slovak, Slovene, and Ukrainian.*"²⁷

Several further issues require clarification in respect of the personal scope of the Act. First, the scope of the Act does not extend to refugees, immigrants, and permanent foreign residents or to stateless people of whatever nationality. Second, as several authors have pointed out,²⁸ various additional problems have arisen. Apart from the minorities listed in the Act, there are officially no other

persons who might belong to other ethnic groups. Another point of dispute is the requirement that a minority should have lived in Hungary "for 100 years"—a criterion some of the officially recognized groups fail to meet. One could argue that there was never a unified "*cigány*" group in Hungary, and that this was just an "invention" of the government in power as it sought to simplify political relations in the country. Roma themselves differentiate between several groups among their own population. Moreover these groups have different languages, customs, and cultural traditions.

Regarding the substance of the Act, one of the aims of legislators was to establish the institutional foundations that were deemed necessary for minority life, including contacts with kin state and nations, and also to alleviate or eliminate the disadvantages stemming from minority existence. These goals necessitated the establishment of a democratic system of institutions, as well as the possibility of cultural autonomy. Chapter II of the Act deals firstly with individual minority rights and then, in subsequent sections, addresses them in greater detail. Under the provisions, persons professing an ethnic identity have the right to foster their traditions and to hold church services in their native language. They have the right to choose their own names and given names, as well as those of their children, to register their names in accordance with the rules of their native language, and to have them displayed as such in official documents. Persons belonging to minorities have the right to become acquainted with, foster, develop and pass on their native language, history, culture and traditions. They also are entitled to participate in education and culture in their native language and to have their personal data concerning their minority status kept secret. Chapter III of the Act relates to community rights. Under the Act, community rights of the minorities include, the right to preserve, foster, strengthen and pass on minority self-identity, to foster and develop their traditions, culture and language, to foster and

develop their material and spiritual culture, to use their symbols, and to attend to their memorials and places of memorial. They may establish civil society organizations, local and national self-governments, and a national educational and scientific network. They have a right to education and culture in the native language. The Act then mentions the right to produce programs in the public media, the right of minorities to parliamentary representation, and even the appointment of a parliamentary commissioner (ombudsman) for national and ethnic minority rights.

The primary area for the application of minority rights is the system of minority self-governments.

In villages, towns and districts of Budapest, the various minorities may, under the provisions of this Act, establish minority settlement self-governments or, by direct or indirect means, local minority self-governments; they may also establish national (country) minority self-governments. In Budapest, local minority self-governments may be established by direct or indirect means.²⁹

Thus personal cultural autonomy may be regarded as a primary goal of the Minorities Act and the system of minority self-governments as the organizational manifestation of this objective. At present, the system consists of two levels: local and national. There are three different means of establishing a local minority self-government. A minority self-government may be formed—in the case of Roma this has happened sporadically—if more than half of the representatives obtaining seats in the course of a local government election are elected as representatives of a given minority: the elected body may then transform itself into a minority settlement self-government. In such cases, the elected body fulfills the tasks that normally fall within the scope of a local (settlement) self-government—such as official legal functions, public services. A second possibility—also rare in practice—arises when 30 per cent of the

representatives of the local (settlement) self-government are elected as the representatives of a given minority: in such cases, the minority representatives can establish, indirectly, a local minority self-government. A third possibility—this covers the majority of cases—is the directly established local minority self-government. In this instance, a person can register as a minority candidate on the basis of just five nominations. Given the manner in which a person may profess (acknowledge) his/her identity—the drawbacks of which we have already mentioned—candidates are not required to declare their minority status, either before or after an election. They are merely required to undertake representation of a given minority. Local (settlement) and minority self-government elections are held at the same time, and there are no records on ethnic background, which means that all Hungarian citizens have the active and passive right to vote in minority self-government elections.³⁰ Under current rules, the elections take place as follows: the local electoral committee must announce the holding of a local minority self-government election if at least five citizens of voting age, who profess to belong to the same minority and are permanent residents in the settlement in question, request an election by filling out the form appearing in the annex to the Minorities Act. Anybody that is entitled to vote for the local self-government representatives may also vote in the local minority self-government elections. The names of voters for both bodies are recorded in a common local register. The two elections take place on the same day and at the same voting stations. Voters receive the voting slip for the minority self-government election irrespective of whether they are members of the minority community. The minority self-governments are elected according to the rules of the so-called “small-list system.” The number of candidates that voters may vote for may not exceed the number of members of the body. The names of candidates appear on the voting slip in alphabetical order. Under the provisions of the Act, there may be three or five minority self-government

representatives, depending on the population of the given settlement. A voter may only vote for the candidates of one minority—otherwise his/her voting slip will be considered invalid. Candidates receiving the greatest number of votes are elected as representatives. An election is valid if at least 50 voters—or 100 voters in settlements with more than 10,000 inhabitants and in the districts of Budapest—cast valid votes.

Local minority self-governments established in this manner are bodies of public law; they perform their tasks in co-operation with the local (settlement) self-governments. With the exception of minority settlement self-governments—which “run” whole settlements—the other two models have the same tasks and competencies under a complex system of rules. On the one hand, minority self-governments have their own sphere of competencies—use of own assets, economic management, defining organizational and operational rules, choice of name, deciding upon festivals of local minority, making scholarships and awards, setting up institutions, etc. On the other hand, a local (settlement) self-government may delegate competencies to a minority self-government—although it is under no obligation to do so. Further, a minority self-government may have competencies that it exercises in conjunction with the local (settlement) self-government. In such instances, it has rights of consent or regulation or the right to express an opinion. Legal oversight is the task of the local Office of Public Administration, while the State Audit Office may undertake audits of minority self-governments.

The local (settlement) self-governments must provide the infrastructure necessary for the operation of minority self-governments. This includes accommodation and the necessary technical equipment. Funding of operations is provided by the normative sums determined in the annual budgetary legislation. But there are several channels of funding. The state normative payment may be supplemented by the local (settlement) self-government. In

addition, there are opportunities for minority self-governments to win grants from abroad, to obtain donations, or to benefit from business ventures. All such funds, however, must be managed in accordance with the rules of budgetary management. The budget of a local minority self-government must be fully integrated into the budget of the local (settlement) local government. Still, the local (settlement) self-government has no rights of decision concerning such funds. Nevertheless economic management of the minority self-government can only be performed by the office of the self-government. The notary of the local (settlement) self-government is entitled to undertake financial commitments, make remittances, and to endorse transactions. The right of endorsement pertains to the existence of funds and the legality of the expenditure.

Separate mention should be made of the national self-governments, because the Minorities Act also provides for the integration of the local minority self-governments at national level, enabling each of the minorities to establish a national self-government. The national self-governments are elected by means of a system of minority electors. All local minority representatives or spokesmen—regardless of the method of their original election—are classified as minority electors.³¹ If a settlement has no such persons, three citizens residing in the settlement and professing to belong to the minority may initiate the election of an elector. If, during the national elections, at least 50 per cent of electors are present throughout the election procedure,³² then the assembly will be considered to be quorum. The representatives of the national self-government are then elected by the group of electors in accordance with the rules of a small-list vote. National minority self-governments may have between 13 and 53 members. One of their basic tasks is to represent the interests of local minority self-governments at national and county level. Nevertheless, there is no hierarchical relationship between the national and local levels, and they are not required to report to each other. In terms of their tasks and

competencies, the national self-governments have almost the same rights as the local bodies. Thus, they may establish institutions to promote the cultural autonomy of minorities and then co-ordinate their work. A national self-government may decide on the establishment of its institutions; on the organizational and operation rules of such institutions, their maintenance and operation; on the operation of a theatre; on the establishment and maintenance of a museum or a public collection with national scope; on the maintenance of a minority library; on founding and operating an artistic and academic institute and publishers; on maintaining secondary and higher educational institutions of national scope; on establishing and operating legal aid services; and on providing for other tasks placed among its competencies by the law. It expresses an opinion on draft legislation affecting the minority it represents, including the decrees of the county assemblies and the Budapest assembly; it may ask for information about public administrative bodies in issues affecting minority groups and may make proposals on their behalf or request measures in matters falling within their competence; it co-operates with the competent state bodies in the professional monitoring—for the minority it represents—of minority classes in primary, secondary and higher education. The national minority self-governments have the right of consent with regard to the compilation of basic teaching material for minority education, with the exception of higher education. A national self-government may issue calls for tender in its field of operation and may establish scholarships. An important difference is that although the State Audit Office may audit a national minority self-government, no state body is responsible for its legal oversight—a fact that has been pointed out by the minority ombudsman on several occasions.

We should briefly note that the regulations outlined above are sometimes difficult to implement. This has led some to question the effectiveness of the provisions of the Act. Particularly contentious are the anomalies surrounding the election of the

minority self-governments, including the fact that all Hungarians of voting age have an active and passive right to vote in the elections to the minority bodies. In practice, therefore, mostly non-Roma people elect the Roma minority self-governments; and this contradicts the basic principle of self-governance. In extreme cases, non-Roma people elect other non-Roma as Roma minority self-government representatives. Another acute problem is that—unlike in the case of the other minorities—cultural autonomy, as formulated in the Act, is an insufficient means of resolving the grave challenges facing Roma. The primary needs of the Roma population are job creation, solutions to their dire social situation, and less ostracizing by society. These are the things they expect from their elected minority representatives. The latter, however, are unable to satisfy such expectations, as they lack the necessary legal authorization and financial resources. In this way, the provisions of the Act—which function relatively well in the case of the other minorities—come into conflict with the expectations of Roma people. Since the minority bodies are unable to respond to these challenges, many in the community question their necessity, and this diminishes their legitimacy. The principle of self-governance is undermined.

The most important piece of minority legislation to be adopted after the political changes of 1989–90 was the Minorities Act of 1993. Adopted with a parliamentary majority of 96 per cent, the Act established the institutional framework and served as a foundation for further progress. It was an important step forward, because, for the first time in Hungary, Roma were legally recognized as a minority in line with international requirements.

Additional important legislation affecting the situation of Roma in Hungary was subsequently adopted. For instance, several amendments were made to the Minorities Act. In such amendments, the national and local minority self-governments received information about opportunities relating to the foundation and maintenance of public educational institutions. Later on, sections of the anti-discrimination legislation were included in the Act.

A particularly important piece of legislation for Roma was Act LIX of 1993 on a Parliamentary Commissioner for National and Ethnic Minority Rights. The task of the minority ombudsman as laid down in the Constitution is to investigate, or have investigated, any irregularities concerning constitutional rights which come to his attention, and to initiate general or individual measures in order to remedy them. Of similar significance is the 1996 amendment to the Criminal Code (Act IV of 1978), which introduced the crime of "violence against a member of a national, ethnic, racial or religious group" (Section 174/B). Also to be noted is the—frequently amended—regulation concerning "incitement against the community" (Section 269).

Government Decree No. 1121/1995 (XII.7.) established the Public Foundation for Roma in Hungary, with the aim of reducing inequalities.

A particularly noteworthy event was the adoption of Act CXXV of 2003 on Equal Treatment and the Promotion of Equal Opportunities. Various parties, including the European Union, had been calling for such anti-discrimination legislation. In 2001, the Minister of Justice established the Interdepartmental Committee on Anti-Discrimination with the task of reviewing the whole body of Hungarian law. A professional strategy for a bill on equal treatment and equal opportunities was completed in late 2002 after the change of government. The strategy included the following major elements:

- Distinctions made on the basis of race, color of skin, language, disability, religion, opinion, gender, sexual orientation, age, descent and financial situation, as well as harassment, would qualify as discrimination, in both direct and indirect cases.
- The alleged perpetrator would have to prove that correct procedures had been followed; in other words, the burden of proof would be reversed.

- The scope of the legislation would not cover private legal relationships, but it would extend not just to public and self-government bodies but also to “public private legal relationships”—when public registration would establish legal capacity.
- Appropriate damages would serve as a sanction against discrimination and in cases where a person suffered detriment because s/he requested legal redress.
- In order to implement the ban on discrimination, a five-person “equal treatment committee” would be established. The head of state would appoint members, and the committee would be entitled to initiate inquiries and legal actions.

The much-awaited legislation came into force at the beginning of 2004; it was constructed around the principles outlined above. The office foreseen by the Act as the body responsible for investigating violations of the law and for conducting the necessary procedures, was not established immediately established. Since this institution began its work only in early 2005, we are unable to report on its findings concerning the implementation of the legislation.

The Establishment and Restructuring of Institutions Events in Government and in Society

A new institution with national scope was established as early as 1990: the Office for National and Ethnic Minorities (ONEM). Its primary task was to prepare the minority policy decisions of the government in power and to lay the theoretical foundation for a coordinated minority policy. A further task was the on-going monitoring of the situation of the minorities, to draw up analyses, and to maintain contact with representatives of the minorities. From the mid-1990s, it played a major role in the elaboration of short- and

medium-term programs addressing the Roma population. A universally welcomed development was the appointment, in 1998, of a deputy chairman responsible for coordinating Roma affairs within the Office. From 1998, supervision of the work of ONEM was transferred from the Prime Minister's Office to the Ministry of Justice. Although everyone considered its overall activities necessary, ONEM's potential was severely limited between 1998 and 2002 by its position within the governmental structure and public administration. Following the change of government in 2002, Roma affairs were placed once again under the direct supervision of the Prime Minister's Office. A political state secretariat and associated Office for Roma Affairs were established. However, the set-up did not last long: first, Roma affairs were placed under the direction of the Minister without Portfolio for Equal Opportunities and then, somewhat later, a department was established within the new Ministry for Youth, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities.

The Medium-Term Program

Since 1995 the most important elements of government policy have constituted so-called "medium-term programs." Government Decree No. 1120/1995 (XII.7.) was the first major government measure to seek specifically to resolve the growing problems of Roma. The first step in the process was the establishment of the Coordination Council for Roma Affairs, whose task was to coordinate the work of the ministries and national bodies with a view to addressing the problems of Roma and promoting their social integration. Its declared tasks included the elaboration of a medium- and long-term program and the need to reduce inequalities. Related measures were formulated in Government Resolution No. 1125/1995 (XII.12.), which addressed the most urgent tasks relating to the situation of Roma. Recognizing the urgency of

governmental measures, the Resolution stipulated that the ministries should elaborate action programs in certain areas.

The first medium-term program [Government Resolution No. 1093/1997 (VII.29.)] was based upon the resolutions of 1995. The program attempted to assess and define, in a comprehensive manner, the tasks necessary for the social integration of Roma. The first part of the program contained the measures to be implemented in 1997 and 1998. In the *field of education and culture*, the program identified the need to develop further and rationalize the school fee system and child welfare system, to prevent segregation in education, to develop regional programs for talented children (e.g. Gandhi Grammar School and Students' Hostel), to expand the network, and to establish students' hostels for talented children. In the *field of employment*, the program's stated aim was to eradicate isolated or segregated Roma settlements, to develop employment programs and further develop existing programs, to integrate Roma students in the vocational training system, and to implement agricultural and stock-breeding programs. In the *social field*, the program prescribed the establishment of a force-majeur crisis management fund. In the *field of regional programs*, it proposed the realization of complex crisis management programs in settlements with relatively high percentages of multiply disadvantaged groups, including Roma. As regards the *anti-discrimination programs*, the program recommended an evaluation of the possible necessity of additional legislation and it underlined the importance of integrating knowledge of Roma into police training programs. In the *field of communication*, the program identified the necessity of PR work in connection with the development of the living circumstances of Roma. In the second part of the package of measures, the Resolution set out guidelines for tasks to be undertaken later on. Thus, it mentions the promotion of higher education among Roma students, the necessity of cultural institutions, the role of minority self-governments in defeating unemployment, an extension of the network of clinics as a means of improving the health of Roma,

support for legal aid services as a means of managing conflicts, and the need to develop a realistic image of Roma in the public media.

In 1998, the new government considered it necessary to redraft the medium-term program. The contents of Government Resolution No. 1047/1999 (V.5.) adhere in principle to the goals formulated in 1997, but prioritize tasks in the field of education and culture. Thus, in the *field of education*, the stated aim was to develop the content of education at primary school level (regular pre-school attendance and a reduction in truancy) and to reduce the dropout rate in secondary and higher education (by establishing students' hostels and awarding scholarships). Concerning *cultural aspects*, the aim was to develop the system of cultural institutions linked with group formation, to offer further training to professionals, to produce professional material. Meanwhile in the *field of employment*, the objective was to assist the long-term and young unemployed, to organize public works and public benefit programs, and to elaborate a social land program. Concerning the *anti-discrimination programs*, the requirement was to ensure the application of the laws in force, while the *communication strategy* sought to explain to majority society why programs for Roma were needed.

In order to implement the medium-term program successfully, the new government also considered it necessary to alter the management body. Thus, in Government Resolution No. 1048/1999 (V.5.), the Co-ordination Council for Roma Affairs was abolished and replaced by the Interdepartmental Committee on Roma Affairs. Positive changes were as follows: the new forum could establish sub-committees; Roma civil society organizations were to be invited to take part—with the right of consultation—in committee meetings (to be held at least four times a year); both the Parliamentary Commissioner for National and Ethnic Minority Rights and the chairs of the Public Foundation for Roma in Hungary and the Gandhi Public Foundation would be entitled to attend committee meetings.

In recent years a long-term Roma strategy was also elaborated. However, it is difficult to know whether it still exists and whether or not a government body or NGO is working on it. It is still mentioned occasionally—for instance, most recently as part of the “Roma Decade” program initiated by György Soros and supported by the World Bank. At the time of writing, however, little is known of this latter program. Moreover, the strategy appears subject to constant change and is therefore difficult to define.

Government Activities in Practice

Few of the fine objectives have actually been accomplished—in a manner perceptible to the public. Nevertheless, there is no denying that the latter part of the government term between 1998 and 2002 saw the construction of the Gandhi Grammar School in Pécs, a minority institution belonging to Roma in Hungary. Under a framework agreement signed with the Gandhi Public Foundation in December 2000, the Gandhi Grammar School investment was funded by the central budget. The project was concluded on schedule and was inaugurated in April 2002. This was a particularly significant event, since the school was—and remains—the only Roma minority grammar school in Europe.

Other areas of emphasis during the government term were scholarships for Roma students and financial support for action against discrimination. There were reports of substantial sums in both areas. A brief review of the ONEM data reveals the following:

In the academic year 2001–2002, scholarships were awarded to 12,777 Roma students (7027 upper primary students, 4505 secondary students, and 1217 college and university students, as well as 28 persons studying abroad).

Financial support awarded in the first half-year of the academic year 2002–2003 amounted to HUF 499,190,000. This enabled scholarships to be awarded to 18,911 Roma students (9996 primary

school students, 7103 secondary students, 1748 students in higher education, and 64 persons studying abroad).

Nevertheless, the census data of 2001 indicate 81,099 Roma primary students, 13,035 Roma secondary students, and 188 Roma college and university students. It is thought that just 0.3 per cent of Roma are in the process of obtaining, or have already obtained, a college or university degree. The contradiction in the figures is certainly worth noting; it would seem that the system of scholarships has failed to achieve the desired effect. There are three possible explanations for this: non-Roma students have been awarded the grants; Roma studying at college or university inevitably lose their identity; or some other explanation.

On 15 October 2004 the Ministry of Justice, in conjunction with the National Roma Self-Government and the Office for National and Ethnic Minorities, established the Anti-Discrimination Roma Customer Service Network. The Ministry of Justice uses its own budgetary appropriation to fund the operation of the Network and to pay for the further training of lawyers working for the Network. Legal aid services were commenced within the Network at 24 sites and with the participation of 22 lawyers. The aim of the Network is to develop legal aid services specifically for cases in which clients suffer legal grievances owing to their Roma descent. The lawyers cooperating in the Network have been asked to provide legal advice to clients, to initiate lawsuits in anti-discrimination matters, and to represent clients at courts of law. The services are offered free of charge.

In addition to its immediate governmental role, the Office for National and Ethnic Minorities has also supported, in conjunction with the Public Foundation for Roma in Hungary, the work of the civil legal aid offices and the activities of organizations and institutions involved in conflict prevention and conflict management. In both 2001 and 2002, the Office provided sums of HUF 20 million for the support of civil institutions engaged in such work. Based on

the applications received, grants were awarded to 21 offices in 2001 and 29 offices in 2002. This included a grant of HUF 1 million to the interactive legal aid services of Radio C, a Budapest radio station broadcasting a weekly legal advice show, with the assistance of a specially chosen lawyer.

In connection with the medium-term program, the Public Foundation for Roma in Hungary announced a special allocation of HUF 25 million annually for the operation of the Roma Legal Aid Offices. Given the large number of subsequent applications, the amount available was increased in both years. In 2002, out of 74 applicants, 30 organizations received support worth in total HUF 37.4 million. The sum of available funds was further increased by the second sub-project of the Phare Roma Integration Program initiated by the Office for National and Ethnic Minorities. The sub-project consisted of two main parts. The aim of the first part was to develop the Roma legal aid offices, while the second part comprised support for anti-discrimination training sessions that were planned for Hungary's seven regions. A call for tenders relating to the development of the legal aid offices was announced in July 2001. Support was then granted to eleven existing and four new offices. Office development projects worth HUF 53 million were begun under the program. In 2002, HUF 3 million was awarded to existing offices while the new offices received office equipment support worth HUF 5 million.

Prior to the elections, a co-operation agreement was signed between Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and Flórián Farkas, chairman of Lungo Drom and of the National Roma Self-Government. The two men foresaw the establishment of a Roma Integration Office, whose work would have been assessed every six months at a cabinet meeting. The change of government meant that this plan never came to fruition.

The year 2002 saw significant changes in Roma politics and in the general political situation. The spring election campaign

included some debate about the Roma issue. Politicians on both sides of the political divide claimed Roma descent. Owing to how they were placed on the parties' candidate lists, there were four certain winners at the elections. Thus, Roma were once again elected as members of parliament—as representative of the major national parties. The increasing vitality of Roma political life is demonstrated by the fact that in the autumn of 2002, Roma minority self-governments were elected in 998 municipalities. Roma mayors were elected in four villages, and there were 545 Roma local (settlement) government representatives. These figures compare favorable with the 1998 data, when about 3000 Roma representatives were elected to serve in 740 Roma minority self-governments.

In the light of these developments, a shift in Roma policy at government level was to be expected. An important factor in this was the appointment by the Prime Minister of an advisor of Roma descent to assist him in his work. On entering office in the summer of 2002, the government thus defined as a priority task the promotion of equal opportunities for Roma within society. A separate subchapter of the government's program (rather oddly placed under "Social Policy") was devoted to measures assisting the Roma—after a short appraisal of the situation faced by the country:³³

C. Tasks associated with the social and political integration of Roma in Hungary

1. We consider the social deprivation of our fellow Roma citizens to be the result of a wide-ranging and dramatic social process rather than an ethnic problem. An improvement in the situation of Roma and integrating them into society as fully as possible will benefit all of us. For this reason, we are initiating a wide-ranging anti-poverty program in order to prevent a further deterioration in their social situation and to improve equal opportunities.
2. The government is to restore the governmental co-ordination status of Roma policy. It will provide budgetary

resources and forms of co-operation offering the broadest possible coalition of social forces, with a view to accomplishing the tasks of the program with the active involvement of those affected.

3. We shall submit and adopt anti-discrimination legislation. We shall place punitive measures on the discrimination causing and accelerating the social exclusion of Roma by introducing special sanctions. We shall examine which means are the most effective in combating incitement to hatred.
4. We shall restore or, indeed, establish equality in communication between majority society and Roma. We shall give emphasis to the quality training of mediators and we shall support an increase in the number of Roma professionals by offering scholarships and by other means.
6. We shall draft a long-term program for eradicating isolated and segregated Roma settlements, for establishing humane living conditions, and for strengthening residential mobility.
7. Using budgetary resources, we shall support human rights organizations that seek to combat discrimination, we shall assist the development of Roma civil legal aid organization as well as their work. We seek to increase the role of civil initiatives in preventing and managing local conflicts and in developing and implementing programs promoting integration.
8. Preserving the ethnic and cultural identity of Roma is a task to be realized in conjunction with the process of social integration. In order to protect the language and culture of Roma, we shall provide the same guarantees to Roma that are currently enjoyed by the other minorities.
9. The government's comprehensive anti-poverty program is based on developing education and training and on improving the equal opportunities of children. We wish to reduce

the disadvantages of poverty from pre-school education onwards. We shall enable the employment of assistant Roma staff and kindergarten teachers and the development of relationships of trust between Roma families and kindergartens. We shall take measures to ensure that a larger percentage of disadvantaged children receive pre-school education for a longer period of time—if necessary within the framework of special programs.

10. The government shall give special attention in schools to the situation of Roma children, to their inclusion in schools, and to ending segregation. We shall review the system of transferring schoolchildren and prevent Roma children's registration as private [home] students from leading to their exclusion from the school system.
11. We regard the right of Roma to independent education towards strengthening their culture as a constitutional right. We shall encourage and support classes teaching Roma culture and the operation of such schools, but this may not become grounds for segregation in education.
12. Based on cooperation between teachers and family assistance services, we shall enhance the value Roma families attach to school qualifications. We shall give special attention to the vocational training of children of poorer families and to improving their participation rates in higher education. We shall launch scholarship and apprenticeship programs for talented Roma young people, drawn up in cooperation with civil organizations and businesses offering sponsorships.
13. We shall launch programs specifically targeting Roma in adult education and adult training. Our goal is to improve the education and training of Roma and to improve their chances of finding employment. We shall launch development programs that also take into account regional

differences. In doing so, we shall also make use of the existing educational and cultural infrastructure.

14. We shall give special attention to assisting unemployed Roma to return to work. We shall prescribe the appointment of special employment organizers for Roma in labor centers.
15. We shall support the traditional employment sectors of Roma where these are efficient in economic and environmental terms. We shall assist local governments in their initiatives promoting the leasing of land and agricultural production. We shall give special attention to ensuring that Roma have access to jobs in services, tourism and social services, rather than merely low prestige jobs.

An extract from the chapter on education should also be noted:
4.8. Education is one of the keys to improving the situation of the Roma population and to reducing prejudice against Roma. For this reason:

- we shall ensure a place at kindergarten for each Roma child;
- we wish to offer targeted support, professional assistance and a supplementary teachers' allowance to those schools and teachers that are effective in implementing the integrated education of Roma students. At the same time, we shall also support schools for Roma children established by means of civil initiatives;
- we shall create a scholarship fund in order to maximize the number of teachers with Roma identity (or a commitment to the community) trained at the teacher training colleges, and also in order to ensure that teachers at all levels are trained for the special tasks of educating Roma children.

As a first step in realizing the goals formulated in the government program, significant organizational changes were made.

Thus, Roma affairs were placed once again under the immediate direction of the Prime Minister's Office. A political state secretariat and an associated Office for Roma Affairs were set up. For the first time in Hungarian political life, persons of Roma descent were appointed as political state secretary and as head of office. Roma policy issues of strategic importance were placed under their supervision and management, having been removed from the Office for National and Ethnic Minorities. Also linked with the government's announced program was the launching of a plan to appoint Roma civil servants in each of the government ministries—who would then be responsible for managing Roma policy matters in the individual ministries. Several ministries have appointed such members of staff; they are working as desk officers and ministerial commissioners. A particularly important appointment was the ministerial commissioner at the Ministry of Education. He and his colleagues regard the eradication of segregation in schools as their main task. Legislation introducing an "integration normative payment" was recently passed, and the long-term aim is to end the practice of segregation in schools.

As of 2002 the main areas of activity were returned to the Prime Minister's Office. The State Secretariat for Roma Policy and the Office for Roma Affairs—both established in 2002—began work in the following areas:

- In Government Resolution No. 1186/2002 (XI.5), the government defined the new institutional framework for the social integration of Roma, as well as the guidelines enabling the practical fulfillment of the goals outlined in the government program.
- Assisting in drawing up proposals for Roma involvement in the National Development Plan (associated with Hungary's accession to the European Union) and its operative programs.
- The Council for Roma Affairs was established under the direction of the Prime Minister. The Council is an independent

consultative body comprising distinguished experts of both Roma and non-Roma descent. The purpose of the body is to express opinions on strategic issues and to formulate guidelines.

- The State Secretariat for Roma Policy began a complete revision of the attitudes and professional approach embodied in Government Resolution No. 1047/1999 (V.5.). In the course of this work, a new government program began to take shape with a view to realizing the goals formulated in the election manifesto. Targeting Roma but not excluding others, this package of measures was the first element of the Government's effort to establish equal opportunities for all socially marginalized groups. Plans foresaw a detailed, project-based government program, including an action plan. The program would have been structured around the following main priorities:

Legal equality—this area included the elaboration of anti-discrimination legislation, a revision of the Minorities Act, modernization of the electoral system and procedures, further training for civil servants in line with EU standards, and establishing a legal framework for more effective action against racially motivated crimes.

Improving the quality of life—this area included the realization of model programs serving as examples for the on-going reintegration of marginalized regions, the strengthening of health and social services and new approaches to their operation, the eradication of slums, and assistance for businesses providing people with livelihoods.

Education—this area included measures to overcome the disadvantages stemming from the education system—from pre-school to university graduation. Measures such as greater access to pre-school education, providing the background conditions for educational study, multicultural education,

reintegration of students who prematurely drop out of the education system, and ending the practice of segregation in schools.

Employment—this area included job creation in those skilled trades that have marketing potential in the long term, and providing temporary employment to those who have dropped out of the labor market.

Identity—this area included the establishment of a Roma cultural fund, support for community halls, extending international cultural relations.

Social communication—this area included efforts to raise the tolerance level of majority society, support for television and radio shows on Roma themes, and underlining the importance of IT skills.

Insofar as these plans have been made public, an integral part of this government program would have been an independent and multisectoral monitoring system, designed to monitor and evaluate the use of funds and the professional realization of the program. In addition, the monitoring system would have made proposals concerning any necessary changes.

The initial momentum, however, was soon lost. Since late 2003 the lack of any real strategy or political will has resulted in stagnation and “walking on the same spot.” Ambitious plans to improve the living conditions of Roma were also formulated by the government program while, in 2002, the Office for Roma Affairs promised fundamental changes in approach. But such illusions were quickly dispelled. For the first time, four Roma representatives were present in Parliament, and it was thought that they would finally draw attention to the difficult and desperate situation of Roma. People even believed that they would dispense with party interests and take a united stand in politics for the sake of Roma. But this is not what happened.

László Teleki was given the opportunity, as a member of the government, to improve the living conditions of Roma. His powers as state secretary were always somewhat uncertain, since his task was to develop and to define the government's Roma policy by directing and influencing the ministerial commissioners and Roma desk officers in the various ministries. It soon became apparent that in practice this was a difficult assignment. The process of appointments slowed down considerably and when appointments were made, the ministerial commissioners and desk officers were appointed as civil servants within the various ministries. As a result, they were subject to the management of those ministries. The state secretary thus had no right to interfere in supervising their work or in determining their powers. Despite their best intentions, the young Roma appointed to these posts proved mostly incapable of the tasks. They had little experience in public administration and, as beginners, found themselves at the bottom of the apparatus. Without the necessary powers, they became mere passive observers rather than active formulators of Roma programs in the various ministries. An exception was Viktória Bernáthné Mohácsi, who was appointed by the lesser coalition partner as ministerial commissioner at the Ministry of Education. She became the "focus" of Roma policy ideas of the Alliance of Free Democrats. Indeed, Bernáthné Mohácsi received the party's support to implement a program of integrated education. It is too early to speak of the results of what were, without doubt, positive intentions, but there has already been some controversy among analysts and other interested parties concerning the underlying principles and practical implementation of the program.

The intentions that led to the establishment of the Council for Roma Affairs suffered a similar fate. Comprising distinguished Roma and non-Roma experts, the Council was originally intended to be a consultative body. Its members, however, would have dearly liked to take part in the elaboration of Roma policy. Thus the

Council gradually became a mere formality, and today it is impossible to know whether it still exists.

The greatest hopes rested on the Office for Roma Affairs. However, the administration and management of the body, whose original purpose was strategic planning, were placed on shaky foundations. It was a part of the Prime Minister's Office led by Elemér Kiss, but its direct management was the responsibility of Judit Berki in her position as deputy state secretary. And László Teleki was somehow involved, too. There was never any clarification of these relationships. As a result, there were frequent debacles.

A typical example was the redrafting of the medium-term program. Following a political decision mediated by the state secretary, staff and experts of the Office reviewed the issue and concluded that a program based on a completely new approach was needed. As noted above, in the course of strategic planning, a program based on a new approach had been developed whose implementation promised qualitative improvements in the lives of Roma. Nevertheless, during the negotiations between the various ministries, it became clear that the program could not be implemented. In order to fulfill such comprehensive programs, there was a need for a complete concentration of tasks and resources—for which the political will was clearly lacking. Meanwhile, the ministries wished to continue the earlier practice of deciding for themselves which programs to realize for Roma and how much of their budgets to spend on such programs. This simple practice, whose lack of efficiency has been demonstrated for a decade now by researchers and others, continued to receive political support. Nobody had the will to bring about real changes in the living circumstances of Roma by pressing for concerted and targeted measures. Indeed, the increasingly dominant view was that Roma no longer constituted an issue. Such political attitudes, increasingly accepted at the level of government, in effect condemned any institution or program specifically targeting Roma, because such were considered to be a form of

segregation. Such programs were replaced by the policy of equal opportunities, which has no special Roma programs, but considers them to be an issue in need of a solution. This political reversal led to the complete collapse of the Office for Roma Affairs. It was unable to realize its strategic programs, the public administration "made mincemeat of it," and most of its staff members began spending their time on somewhat irrelevant issues, such as giving opinions on changes in the highway code and on an animal rights bill.

In the subsequent period, high-visibility issues having little practical effect on the lives of most Roma began to dominate the government's Roma policy. Eradicating slums popped up as an issue, although this had been going nowhere ever since the political changes of 1989–90. Committees were formed and then disbanded. As during the previous government's term, the real successes were made by distributing resources from the intervention fund and other lesser funds and by offering scholarships—always a popular measure.

The situation gradually became even worse, owing to the constant changes and the resulting gridlock. Péter Kiss replaced Elemér Kiss as head of the Prime Minister's Office. In mid-year, Katalin Lévai was appointed as Minister without Portfolio for Equal Opportunities. Each time people were anxious to find out the strategy of the new boss and to know whether or not the existing programs could be implemented or needed revision. The biggest change followed Lévai's appointment. Her policies represented the final victory of a strategy that denies the existence of the Roma question. According to the political ideas underlying the strategy, programs for Roma merely add to their isolation and segregation. Social issues are the primary concern—and these issues need to be addressed as part of general social policy. What "remains" can be "managed" by a policy of equal opportunities that targets women, people with disabilities, and Roma. Many people consider such ideas to be fundamentally mistaken. They mould a "community"

out of diverse groups of people with different problems requiring different solutions. The policy was doomed to failure. Moreover, its effect was to create divisions among the various groups, who were already severely disadvantaged. When it came to allocating the budget, they were hostile to each other.

A new concept for the Minorities Act also fared badly. Legislators had been encouraged to accelerate reform by the debacles in the minority elections and in the work of the minority self-governments. However, the minority register and the issue of active and passive voting rights opened a whole series of long debates. New legislation was drafted, but the Parliament failed to adopt it. Even so, the tenth anniversary of the somewhat discredited Minorities Act—the cause of so many debacles—was still celebrated by the various factions.

By the end of 2003 the fate of the Office for Roma Affairs, the focus of so many hopes, had been sealed. After the appointment of Katalin Lévai, people had waited anxiously to hear whether the Office for Roma Affairs would remain a part of the Prime Minister's Office or whether it would be detached from it and merged with other areas already under Lévai's direction—thereby establishing a ministry in all but name. This latter solution was the one eventually chosen. Thus, the Government Office for Equal Opportunities came into being, while Roma affairs were relegated to the level of a directorate within this new body. Subsequent events prove that this action was an error similar in magnitude to the previous government's mistaken decision to place Roma affairs under the supervision of the Ministry of Justice. Still, it did fit in marvelously with the strategy of denying the existence of "a Roma question." In terms of public law, Teleki was left in an even greater vacuum. Meanwhile, Berki, not wishing to assist in the general demise, resigned from her post. Roma affairs, which had begun with such confidence after the change of government, were left without a voice.

In the most recent development, following the departure of Katalin Lévai and a further restructuring of the government, Roma affairs became a department of the newly established Ministry of Youth, Family and Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. It is to be feared that as time passes, Roma affairs will become merely an area of social policy. While many Roma do live in difficult financial circumstances, it is nevertheless a mistake to reduce the issue to this one area.

The Intrigues

Surrounding the National Roma Self-Government Epitomize the Many Years of Political Paralysis

One of the first political events of January 2003 was the electors' assembly of the National Roma Self-Government, which ended in scandal. But it was not a Roma scandal—as many people had hoped—but the result of the explosive situation caused by the legal regulations governing the minority self-governments and the electoral system. The fact that these problems surfaced for the first time since the introduction of the system was due to the existence of a real political contest. The election of the members of the National Roma Self-Government signaled the arrival of a political force capable of replacing the leaders who had been in power for two terms. Quite naturally, those who had been the “rulers” were rather unhappy about this. This would have been of minor significance if the legal provisions had been clear and transparent. For in accordance with the rules, those entitled to vote—more than 4000 people!—were assembled in one place and an attempt was made to keep them there until the conclusion of the elections—almost one whole day. Most of the electors were from outside Budapest and had set out for the meeting at dawn. After a while they became rather tired, and the bandying of words soon fell to the level of the national elections of 2002. And when the ruling coalition realized

that victory was impossible, its members left the election hall. A vote was held nevertheless, and the National Election Committee announced the victory of the members of the Democratic Roma Coalition. The Lungo Drom coalition, headed by Flórián Farkas, submitted an official complaint. There seemed to be little likelihood of its acceptance, given that the procedures employed—based on customary law rather than any legal statute—were the same as those applied during two previous elections. Nevertheless, the Supreme Court sustained the objection and ordered a repeat election. Their main reasoning was that at the time of final vote there had been no quorum, since fewer than 50 per cent of electors were present. However, according to the legal provisions, the 50 per cent attendance rate applies merely to the beginning of the election assembly rather than to the final vote. At least, this had been the previous interpretation of both the National Election Committee and the Supreme Court. The reinterpretation of the regulations—which meant, in effect, that the election of the two previous bodies had also been illegal—necessitated a repeat election at the beginning of March. It seemed that the deficient regulations, coupled with changing legal interpretations, were an extremely strong weapon in the hands of the losing side: by walking out of the assembly, they could invalidate an election. People feared that the formation of the National Roma Self-Government would thus be prevented. The fact that the interested parties approached various fora and requested the delegation of the ministerial commissioner or government commissioner as well as the presence of international observers, serves to demonstrate the perceived lack of legal security. In the end, members of the Democratic Roma Coalition won the repeat election with surprising ease and a large majority. Just two of the “ruling” members of Lungo Drom were re-elected to the national body.

The long series of scandals resulting from the lack of legal security were far from over. The topic remained in the focus of

public interest for most of the year, thus relegating other Roma issues into the background. The "clash" continued—this time between members of the elected coalition—from the inaugural session of the National Roma Self-Government onwards. Since many of the representatives aspired to the post of chairman, the candidates constantly questioned each other's actions. This is because the Minorities Act fails to clearly define by whom and when the National Roma Self-Government may be convened. At the inaugural session—which was still held despite the events of the previous months—delegates came to blows in front of the cameras. They then elected Aladár Horváth, the radical Roma politician, as chairman of the self-government. One group within the coalition then staged a walkout. The election of Horváth both surprised delegates and caused some consternation, for he had earlier denounced the system of minority self-governments as being detrimental, a form of "institutionalized segregation," and therefore something that should be abolished. But there was no time to find out whether Horváth really would take things in this direction. After three months in office, during which Horváth seemed to focus on evaluating and consolidating the situation of the National Roma Self-Government, he was defeated in a vote of no confidence initiated by a dissatisfied deputy-chairman and representatives of the organizations that had walked out of the inaugural session. Orbán Kolompár replaced Horváth. Instead of real progress, the following months saw a whole series of legal actions and legal interpretations, followed by Kolompár's efforts at consolidation.

Recent events at the National Roma Self-Government could be summarized as part of a natural process. What happened was simply that the old leadership was defeated, then the new leader Aladár Horváth, supported by Roma and non-Roma intellectuals in Budapest, was forced to give way to the successful businessman from the provinces, Orbán Kolompár, who enjoyed the support of Roma politicians and leaders in rural Hungary. The real loss is that

all of this took place as part of a whole series of scandals that were damaging to both Roma policy-making and the prestige of the Roma community in Hungary. Moreover, in our view, the deficiencies of Hungary's Minorities Act are the fundamental cause of the problems, a fact that has been evident for some time now. Changes in the minority self-government system and the reintegration of Roma into Hungarian society can only be achieved at the level of "high politics" through the joint effort of Hungary's national political actors. In this respect, the "achievements" of the past 15 years do not bode well for the future.

Notes

1. Article 1(3) of the Charter of the United Nations. Proclaimed in Law-Decree No. 18 of 1974.
2. Law-Decree No. 9 of 1976 on the proclamation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 16 December 1966.
3. Cited in Hanna Bokorné Szegő, *Nemzetközi Jog* [International Law] (Budapest, 1997), p. 225.
4. András Sajó, "Néhány jogvédelmi kérdés a cigányság diszkriminációjával kapcsolatban" [Several Issues of Legal Protection Relating to the Discrimination of Roma], in Imre Vajda, ed., *Periférián. Roma szociológiai tanulmányok. Kérdések és válaszok* [At the Periphery. Sociological Studies on the Roma. Questions and Answers] (Budapest, 1997), p. 489.
5. "Within the scope of application of this Treaty, and without prejudice to any special provisions contained therein, any discrimination on grounds of nationality shall be prohibited." Article 7 of the Treaty of Rome establishing the European Economic Community.
6. For instance, Article 48(2) and Article 119.
7. Generis, C-368/96, 3 December 1998, paragraph 61. Cited in Rita Petró and Zsófia Újszászy, "A romák elleni diszkrimináció elleni küzdelem az Európa Tanács és az Európai Unió keretei között" [The Fight against Anti-Roma Discrimination within the Council of Europe and European Union Framework], in *Tanulmányok "A cigányság társadalmi helyzetének javítását célzó hosszú távú stratégia alapkérdéseiről"* [Studies on "The Fundamental Questions of the Long-Distance Strategy to Improvement the Social Status of the Roma], Material of a conference organized by the Office for National and Ethnic Minorities and the Council of Europe, 11 December 1998, p. 128.
8. Hill, C-243/95, 17 June 1998, paragraph 22.
9. Hill, C-243/95, 17 June 1998, paragraph 24.
10. Article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

11. András Grád, *Kézikönyv a strasbourgi emberi jogi ítélekezésről* [Manual on Strasbourg's Human Rights Judgments], (Budapest, 1998), p. 329.
12. The second prerequisite for accession was ratification of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. Hungary fulfilled this condition by means of Parliamentary Resolution No. 81/1995 (VII. 6.) and through the subsequent adoption of Act XXXIV of 1999 (on the Proclamation of the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, Strasbourg, 1 February 1995).
13. Article F(1) of the Treaty of Rome establishing the European Economic Community.
14. Commission Opinion on Hungary's Application for Membership of the European Union (Agenda 2000), 1997.
15. This was declared unconstitutional by the Constitutional Court as early as 1991.
16. European Commission Directorate-General Enlargement: The Situation of the Roma Minority in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia: An Overview. PL D(2001), Brussels, 28 February 2001.
17. For more details, see Petró and Újszászy, "A romák elleni diszkrimináció elleni küzdelem...", p. 136.
18. See European Commission against Racism and Intolerance: Second Report on Hungary. CRI (2000) 5, Strasbourg, 21 March 2000.
19. Constitution of the Republic of Hungary, Act XX of 1949.
20. *Ibid.*
21. Sándor Palásti, "A diszkrimináció természete. A kisebbségek jogainak védelme a magyar jogrendszerben" [The Nature of Discrimination. Protection of the Rights of Minorities under Hungarian Law], in *Társadalmi Szemle*, 1998 vol. 5, p. 67. I made use of Sándor Palásti's logical insights in the analysis that follows.
22. This is once again a problem of the application of rights, as detailed legislation governing the parliamentary representation of minorities is still lacking, and the Constitutional Court has already, on two occasions, established a constitutional violation by default. Since the political parties continue to negotiate on this matter, it increasingly seems that parliamentary representation of the minorities is something to be granted by the majority rather than a fundamental right enshrined in the Constitution.

23. For further details, see Palásti, "A diszkrimináció természete...", p. 67.
24. Cf. Ferenc Eiler, *A kisebbségi önkormányzati rendszer és tapasztalatai. Eredmények kérdőjelekkel* [The System and Functioning of the Minority Self-Governments. Achievements and Question-Marks]. Manuscript; Júlia Szalai, "Az elismerés politikája és a cigánykérdés" [The Policy of Recognition and the Roma Issue], in Ágota Horváth, Edit Landau and Júlia Szalai, eds., *Cigánynak születni. Tanulmányok, dokumentumok* [Born to Be Roma. Studies, Documents] (Budapest, 2000), pp. 531–572, etc.
25. Act LXXVII of 1993.
26. This issue gave rise to a major controversy, because some argued that freedom of choice of identity permitted people to select their identity at will—a right that could be abused. But choice is regarded as a one-time act, which cannot be changed without violating the law. Still, recognition of dual identity, or even of multiple identities, may further complicate the issue. It seems that imprecise legal provisions are bound to cause uncertainty.
27. Section 61(1) of the Minorities Act.
28. Cf. Balázs Majtényi, "A magyarországi kisebbségi önkormányzati rendszer elvei és működése" [Principles and Operation of Hungary's Minority Self-Government System], in *Fundamentum* (2001) 3: 34–42.
29. Section 21(1) of the Minorities Act.
30. Several analysts and the minority ombudsman consider this to be unconstitutional.
31. The minority spokesman—an institutional post that has not been covered in detail here—undertakes the representation and protection of a minority where there is no minority self-government.
32. Thus, since January 2003, a 50 percent attendance rate has been required throughout the electors' assembly, including the final vote.
33. "Cselekedni, most és mindenkiért! A nemzeti közép, a demokratikus koalíció kormányának programja. Magyarország 2002–2006" [Taking Action, Now and for Everyone! The Programme of the Government of the National Center and Democratic Coalition. Hungary 2002–2006], (Parliamentary Bill No. H19, 25 May 2002).

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BIOGRAPHIES OF KEY PERSONALITIES

Achim, Viorel (b. 1961)

Senior Researcher at the Romanian Academy of Sciences, Bucharest. A historian, his main field of interest is the medieval period.

Bakó, Ferenc (b. 1917)

Ethnographer, Head of the Museums Directorate of Heves County. Doctor of History (1974).

Bakyth (Bakics), Pál (?–1537)

Border-fortress captain. Serbian family background, arrived in Hungary in 1522. For his bravery, Lajos II made him a noble. After the Battle of Mohács, he joined the forces of Ferdinand I. He was killed in battle during the Osijek (Eszék) campaign. His amputated head was sent as a trophy to Istanbul.

Bari, Károly (b. 1953)

Roma poet, literary translator, and artist. A collector of Roma folktales in the lyrical and epical genres. Awarded the József Attila Prize in 1984. In 1992, he received the Life-Work Award from the Soros Foundation.

Báthory (Báthori), István, of Ecsed (?–1493)

Military commander, Prince of Transylvania from 1779 until 1493. After Matyás's death (1490), he supported Ulászló II. His violence led Ulászló to remove him from power in 1493. Upset about his demise, he withdrew from public life and died shortly afterwards.

Báthory (Báthori), Zsigmond (1572–1613)

Prince of Transylvania whose unpopular anti-Ottoman policy led to civil war. He became increasingly active in the Counter-Reformation, to the dismay of the leading Transylvanian

nationalists, most of whom were Protestant. He gave up his throne, but later tried to reclaim it and was driven out. He died in obscurity.

Bătrân, Mircea cel (?–1418)

“Mircea the Elder” was one of Wallachia’s most important rulers. He strengthened the power of the state and organized the different high offices, promoted economic development, increased the state’s revenue, and minted silver money that enjoyed wide circulation in the neighbouring countries. He also proved to be a great supporter of the Eastern Orthodox Church. He maintained close relations with Sigismund, king of Hungary, relying on their shared interest in halting Ottoman expansionism. Towards the end of his rule, he signed a treaty with the Ottoman Empire which recognized the freedom of Wallachia in return for an annual tribute of 3000 gold pieces.

Bernáth-Mohácsi, Viktória (b. 1975)

Journalist at the Roma magazine *Amaro Drom* (1993–1994), reporter and presenter of the cultural programme *Múzsza Kulturális Híradó* (1995–1997). Awarded the Roma Civil Rights Prize in 1995. Worked for the European Roma Rights Center (1997–2002). In August 2002, she became Ministerial Commissioner responsible for the integration of Roma and other disadvantaged children. In 2003, the National Roma Self-Government awarded her its Public Life Prize.

Bihari, János (1764–1827)

Roma composer and violinist. Best composer and performer in the early nineteenth century and the greatest exponent of the Verbunko style. With János Lavotta and Antal Csermák, he created the so-called virtuoso triad of Hungarian musical romanticism. Around 1801, he came to Pest, where he established his well-known band, comprising five members (cimbalom and string-players). Beethoven and Ferenc Liszt heard him play on several occasions and admired his work. He was

restless and travelled through much of Hungary. He often performed in Vienna, too. The zenith of his musical career was in the early 1820s. A period of neglect began in 1823. In 1824, he broke his left arm and his career as a musician ended.

Bodgál, Ferenc (1932–1972)

Ethnographer. Worked at the Herman Ottó Museum in Miskolc from 1955 until his death. His special field of interest was folk metalwork, particularly smithery and copper moulding. Additional interests included brigand legends and folk art collections.

Charles V, Habsburg (1500–1558)

He initiated many wars with France during his reign. As Holy Roman Emperor, he called Martin Luther to the Diet of Worms in 1521, promising him safe conduct if he would appear. He later outlawed Luther and his followers in that same year but was tied up with other concerns and unable to try to stamp out Protestantism. He had been fighting with the Ottoman Empire and its sultan, Suleiman the Magnificent, for a number of years. The expeditions of the Ottoman force along the Mediterranean coast posed a threat to Habsburg lands and the peace of Western Europe. In Central Europe, the Turkish advance was halted at Vienna in 1529. Charles later signed a humiliating treaty with the Ottomans, to gain him some respite from the huge expenses of the war. In 1545 began the Counter-Reformation. In 1556, he abdicated his various positions. In the last two years of his life he suffered from gout.

Charles VI, Habsburg (1685–1740)

King of Spain (1706–14), King of Hungary (as Charles III), and Holy Roman Emperor (1711–40). His reign in Hungary began with the Peace of Szatmár (1711). He launched two campaigns against the Ottomans, and his reign saw the establishment of a permanent army and the Vice-Regency Council in Pressburg (Pozsony) in 1723. After the death of his only

son, he arranged for the adoption of a law providing for the royal succession of females in the Habsburg family (the Pragmatic Sanction). Accordingly, his eldest daughter Maria Theresa succeeded him to the throne.

Csalog, Zsolt (1935–1997)

Writer and sociologist. Interested in and responsive to all groups—young people, artists, the poor, and Roma.

Csemer, Géza (b. 1944)

Writer, stage manager and dramatist.

Czeizel, Endre (b. 1935)

Physician and genetics expert. A genetics consultant since 1973. From 1984 he worked for the World Health Organization (WHO). His research has focussed on inherited and genetic diseases, birth traits, and epidemiology. Instrumental role in spreading knowledge of genetics. Editor and presenter of six television series. He received a degree in medicine in 1966 and a higher PhD in 1988. Founder of the Family Planning Centre. Member of many scholarly associations. In 1997, he was accused in a case involving Mariann Gáti and the adoption of Hungarian children by U.S. citizens, and he was fined.

Czinka (Cinka), Panna (1711–1772?)

Roma musician. Taught by János Lányi, a patron of music, in Rozsnyó. In 1730, she married a double bass player. With his two brothers, the married couple established one of the most popular gypsy bands of the era. Sadly, no authentic works have survived.

Dobó, István (c. 1500–1572)

Appointed fortress-captain of Eger in 1549. In 1552, with just 2000 soldiers and a crowd of peasant refugees, he successfully defended the strategically placed fortress of Eger from the Ottomans. The victory was important militarily and provided a moral boost. As a reward, in 1553, Ferdinand I made him

Voivode of Transylvania. In 1566, when Transylvania broke away from the Habsburgs once again, he was imprisoned by Queen Isabella but was soon free. Ferdinand compensated him with large estates and appointed him as Captain of Léva. In 1566, he took part in the defence of Vienna. He was arrested on false charges and was freed just before he died.

Durst, Judit (b. 1967)

Journalist, sociologist, and research fellow at the Department of Sociology and Social Policy of Budapest University of Economics and Public Administration. Her field of research includes poverty, ethnic identity and lifestyle.

Eichmann, Adolf (1906–1962)

German Nazi official. A member of the Austrian Nazi party, he headed the Austrian office for Jewish emigration (1938). His zeal in deporting Jews brought him promotion (1939) to chief of the Gestapo's Jewish section. Eichmann promoted the use of gas chambers for the mass extermination of Jews in concentration camps, and he oversaw the maltreatment, deportation, and murder of millions of Jews in World War II. Arrested by the Allies in 1945, he escaped and settled in Argentina. He was located by Israeli agents in 1960 and abducted to Israel, where he was tried and hanged for crimes against the Jewish people and against humanity.

Erdei, Ferenc (1910–1971)

Agrarian economist and politician. He participated in the March Front. A founder of the National Peasants' Party in 1939, he became its secretary-general. A member of the Interim National Assembly from December 1944; Minister of Interior between 22 December 1944 and 15 October 1945; Secretary of State (1948–1949); Minister of Agriculture (1949–1953); Minister of Justice (1953–1954). Vice-Chairman of the Council of Ministers (1955–1956), and Deputy Prime Minister in Imre Nagy's government. He

worked as a scientist from 1957. Chairman of the Patriotic People's Front between 1964 and 1970.

Erdős, Kamill (1924–1962)

Ethnographer and linguist. Commissioned at the Ludovica Academy, which had been uprooted to the West. Imprisoned by the French, he returned home with tuberculosis. From 1952, he worked as librarian in the medical library of the County Hospital in Gyula. Having learnt both Carpathian and Vlach dialects of Romani, he undertook linguistic and ethnographic research and distinguished the various ethnic groups of Roma in Hungary.

Esterházy, Ferenc, Count (1715–1785)

Chancellor-general, brother of the Archbishop of Eger (János Esterházy). From 1760, he served as Lord Lieutenant of Moson County, and in 1766, he was appointed to head the Hungarian Chancellery. His term saw the regulation of socage and the introduction of educational reforms in Hungary. He served as Ban of Croatia from 1783 until his death. He defended noble and ecclesiastical privileges at the time of Joseph II's reforms. He established a substantial library at his mansion in Cseklész.

Esterházy, Miklós, count (1582–1645)

Land-owning aristocrat, Palatine of Hungary, and the original founder of his family's wealth and power. Although of Protestant noble background, he converted to Catholicism at an early age. As a supporter of the Habsburgs, he increased his wealth by means of royal donations, while acquiring increasingly responsible posts. The Diet of Sopron in 1625 elected him as Palatine. In 1626, Ferdinand II, who gifted him the Castle of Fraknó, made him a count. As Palatine of Hungary, he defended the rights of the estates against Habsburg absolutism; but he also supported the counter-reformation efforts

of the Royal Court. He opposed the independence ambitions of the Transylvanian princes, the struggle of the serfs, and a reduction in their duties.

Ferdinand I, Habsburg (1503–1564)

King of Hungary and Bohemia (1526–64), King of Rome from 1531, Holy Roman Emperor (1556–64). After the death of Lajos II, he was elected king by the Hungarian diet at Pozsony. After a prolonged conflict, he and the other king, János I (Szapolyai), reached agreement in the Peace of Várad (1538), but the terms of the treaty were never implemented. He worked to centralize the Habsburg provinces and founded the Habsburg system of government in Hungary. In 1555, he signed the Peace of Augsburg on the settlement of religious issues.

Fráter, György (György Martinuzzi, original name Utiešenović) (1482–1551)

Hungarian statesman and later cardinal who worked to restore and maintain the national unity of Hungary. He was a skilled diplomat, and later became a close adviser to King János in his struggle against Ferdinand. In 1538, he concluded with Ferdinand the Treaty of Nagyvárad, which left King János with the royal title and most of Hungary, while Ferdinand became successor to the Hungarian crown. King János repudiated the treaty on his deathbed. The Ottomans recognized János Zsigmond (son of King János) as king, but occupied Buda. Martinuzzi, as guardian and regent, managed to retain Transylvania as an independent principality under Turkish suzerainty. He concluded an agreement with Ferdinand in 1551, by which he continued to be governor of Transylvania and became a cardinal. To forestall attack by the Ottomans, he resumed payment of the tribute to the Porte. Ferdinand grew suspicious of the Cardinal and had him killed.

Hieronymi, Károly (1836–1911)

Engineer, government minister, and conservative politician. From 1874, as State Secretary, he addressed such issues as river and floodplain regulation, road and railway construction, etc. In 1882, he was appointed as chairman of Austro-Hungarian Railways. From 1875, he served as a liberal Member of Parliament and as Minister of Interior (1892–1895). He played an instrumental role in the adoption of legislation on ecclesiastical issues, in public administration reform in Budapest (organising district councils) and the establishment of city water works. He served as Minister of Trade (1903–1905, 1910–1911), focussing on the technical development of industry and transport, in particular the construction of a canal between the rivers Danube and Tisza.

Horn, Gyula (b. 1932)

Politician, and Hungary's Prime Minister. In the 1960s, he received diplomatic postings to Sofia and to Belgrade. In 1989, he became Minister of Foreign Affairs. In 1989, he and the Austrian foreign minister cut through the barbed wire separating the two countries, the "Iron Curtain." He then authorized East German refugees to pass over the border. He became a founder member of the Hungarian Socialist Party in 1989 and its chairman in 1990. He has been a Member of Parliament since 1990. Until 1993 he was chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee. Between 1998 and 2000, he served as deputy head of the HSP group. Between 1996 and 2003, he was deputy chairman (for Eastern Europe) of the Socialist International.

Horthy, Miklós (1868–1957)

Navy officer, Regent of Hungary (1921–1944). He put down a rebellion by sailors near Cattaro in 1918. Minister of Defence (1919), Commander of the National Army, co-operated with proponents of "White Terror." He retained the monarchy but prevented the return of Charles V. He took a tough stand

against communists. He relied on landowners and capitalists for support in domestic policy and on the Western powers, and latterly Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, in foreign policy. From early 1943, he put out various diplomatic feelers concerning Hungary's exit from the war. Attempts at a separate peace stalled, and a deal was prevented following a coup by the Arrow Cross. Horthy was taken prisoner by the Germans and then by the Americans. He lived in Portugal until his death.

Isabella, Queen (1519–1559)

Hungarian queen, daughter of Sigismund Jagiello, the King of Poland. Wife of János Szapolyai from 1539. After the death of her husband (1540) she chose as guardian of her son János Zsigmond, together with György Fráter, Péter Petrovics and Bálint Török, governor of Hungary. After the Turkish occupation of Buda (1541), she moved to Gyulafehérvár and tried to secure her reign over Transylvania with Ottoman assistance. In 1551, György Fráter forced her to resign in favour of Ferdinand I. The Transylvanian estates called her back from Poland and she ruled on behalf of her son until her death. At this time, Transylvania and Hungary were ruled separately.

Joseph II (1741–1790)

Holy Roman Emperor (1765–1790), King of Hungary (1780–1790). In order to promote a united empire, he made reforms based on enlightened absolutism. To preserve his independence from the Hungarian estates he did not have himself crowned ("king in a hat"). He took the Hungarian crown to Vienna, and refused to call together a Diet. He discontinued estate self-governments and governed with the help of appointed officials. He planned the taxation of nobles. At the same time, he tried to moderate the poverty of serfs, granting them freedom of movement and choice of trade. His educational and judicial reforms were based on enlightenment ideals. He declared the principle of all being equal before the

law. Such efforts as well as a policy favouring Germans caused considerable concern. The problems were accentuated by his difficulties in foreign policy and the setbacks of a war fought against the Ottomans in an alliance with Russia. He feared the collapse of the Empire. On his deathbed, he had no choice but to rescind his reforms—apart from his tolerance edict and his decree on serfs.

Joseph of Austria, Archduke (1776–1847)

Regent of Hungary (1795) and then its Palatine (1796–1847). During 51 years in the post of Palatine, he ran the affairs of the country in accordance with ideas emanating from Vienna, although he ran into conflict with the court on several occasions. Rather than raw violence, he sought clever agreements and advantageous compromises. During the French wars, he organized and led the Hungarian noble rebellion on several occasions (1797, 1800, and 1809). He was personally involved in efforts to make Pest a more attractive city.

Kiss, Elemér (b. 1944)

Chairman of the Council of Ministers Office (1989–1990), State Secretary at the Ministry of Environment Protection and Regional Development (1990–1991) and at the Prime Minister's Office (1997–1998). No political party membership. Minister in charge of Prime Minister's Office (2002–2003).

Kiss, Péter (b. 1959)

Organized, in 1988–89, of series of debates on reform. Founding chairman of the Leftist Youth Association. Founder member of the Hungarian Socialist Party; member of National Chairmanship from 1992–1996 and again from 2003; acting deputy chairman of National Executive from 1998–2000; deputy leader of Socialist group from 1998–2000. Since 1994, he has been a member of the Parliamentary Committee on Education and Science. Minister of Labour (1995–1998, 2002–2003). He has been Minister in charge of the Prime Minister's Office since 2003.

Lajos II (1506–1526)

King of Hungary and Bohemia from 1516, and last monarch of the Jagiello line. He was the final king to rule all of Hungary before the Ottoman Empire conquered a large portion of it. He was sickly as a child but intelligent. To secure the succession, he was crowned King of Hungary (1508) and Bohemia (1509) and became king after his father's death. He was declared of age to rule in 1521. The Turks attacked Hungary in the summer of 1526, and Lajos, with an inadequate force, advanced against them. He died at the Battle of Mohács. After that defeat, Hungary was divided between the Turks and the Austrian Habsburgs.

Lehoczky, Tivadar (1830–1915)

Archaeologist and historian. He took part in the 1848/49 War of Liberation as an artillery officer. After studying law, he became a court official. He took the judge's examination in 1856 and the attorney's examination in 1861. He became Chief Prosecutor for the Munkács estate in 1865. He established a large collection of artefacts and coins, which later formed a museum. From 1864, he collected Ukrainian and Slovak folk songs and proverbs in the Carpathian region.

Lévai, Katalin (b. 1954)

She received a PhD in Sociology in 1992 and a higher doctorate in 1993. Worked as a researcher at the Institute of Sociology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (1987–1990). From 1989, she founded and became chief editor of the social policy magazine *Esély*. She later served as Head of Department for Equal Opportunities at the Ministry of Labour and as Hungary's representative in the Council of Europe's Committee on Equal Opportunities (1996–1998). She was founder and chairman of the Equal Opportunities Foundation (1999–2002); Ministerial Commissioner for Equal Opportunities (from 2002), and Director of the Equal Opportunities

Department of the Ministry of Employment Policy and Labour. She served as Minister without portfolio responsible for Equal Opportunities (2003–2004).

Liskó, Ilona (b. 1944)

Doctor of Sociology (1992), scientific staff member of Institute of Sociology (1972–81), staff member and then senior staff member of the Institute for Educational Research (2003). Director of the Higher Education Research Institute since 2004.

Maria Theresa (1717–1780)

Queen of Hungary and Bohemia, Archduchess of Austria (from 1740), and Holy Roman Empress (from 1745). Had 16 children by Francis Stephen, Duke of Lorraine. After she assumed the throne, the Bavarian elector, Prussia and Spain failed to accept her succession as a female. During the War of Austrian Succession, she managed to defend her territories. She centralized government, withdrawing most of the privileges of the Austrian, Hungarian and Bohemian estates; she appointed no Hungarians to serve on the State Council. Her efforts in this field were in vain due to the resistance of the Hungarian nobles. Thereafter she did not tamper with the privileges of the Hungarian estates. Her decrees on labour payments prevented the severe exploitation of serfs. Her economic policy was characterized by a customs system that was unfavourable to Hungary as well as measures to restrict industrial development in Hungary and to channel agricultural exports to Austria. In the second half of her reign, her policies were characterized by enlightened absolutism. The *Ratio Educationis* removed the management of education from the church and made it a task of the state.

Matthias (Corvin; Mátyás Hunyadi) (1443–1490)

King of Hungary (1458–90), who attempted to reconstruct the Hungarian state after decades of feudal anarchy, chiefly by

means of financial, military, judiciary, and administrative reforms. After the death of his father (János Hunyadi) and elder brother, Mátyás became heir to a vast landed property and a prestigious name. After the death of László V, a general diet held in Buda and Pest in 1458 elected Mátyás king. After struggles to stabilize his reign against repeated attacks, Mátyás held back Ottoman invaders. He reorganized the Hungarian defensive system, taking the lack of forces into account. He did everything he could to increase state incomes and to improve and modernize his army and its mode of warfare. From childhood, he expressed an interest in learning languages, classic Latin culture, modern humanistic ideas, and ancient books. He supported artistic and scientific development. As a benefactor of all kinds of art, he founded a substantial library, the famous Corvina. His name later became a symbol of strength and independence.

Nádasdy, Ferenc, Count (1625?–1671)

Vice-regent. In 1646 he became royal court master and then country judge in 1664, Lord Lieutenant of Zala and Somogy County, internal privy counsellor. Regent (1667–70). He was a highly cultivated aristocrat who was a generous patron of science and the arts. He was a leading member of the Wesselényi conspiracy against the policies of the Court in Vienna. He was sentenced to death in Vienna and beheaded. The treasury confiscated part of his wealth.

Nádasdy, Tamás, Baron (1498?–1562)

Land-owning aristocrat, palatine. He sided with Ferdinand I after the Battle of Mohács. In 1527 he became Captain of Buda Castle. In 1529, he was captured by the Turks and handed over to Szapolyai, who later granted him enormous estates. He became the Ban of Croatia in 1537, country judge in 1540, and Palatine in 1554. In 1553, he was made a baron. He was an enthusiastic supporter of the Reformation.

Orbán, Viktor (b. 1963)

Founder member of the League of Young Democrats (Fidesz) in 1988. On 16 June 1989, he gave a speech at Heroes' Square, Budapest, on the occasion of the reburial of Imre Nagy and other national martyrs. The speech brought him national and political acclaim. He took part in the Opposition Roundtable negotiations (1989). A Member of Parliament since 1990 and leader of Fidesz (1990–1993). Chairman of Fidesz (1993–1996). Vice-Chairman of the Liberal International (1992). Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on European Integration (1994). Prime Minister (1998–2002). In 2002, he became Vice-Chairman of the European People's Party (EPP). He has been Chairman of Fidesz–Hungarian Civic Party since 2003.

Rákóczi, Ferenc II, Prince of Transylvania (1676–1735)

Prince of Transylvania, and prince leading the allied estates in Hungary, leader of the anti-Habsburg Hungarian war of independence from 1703–1711. Son of Ferenc Rákóczi I and Ilona Zrínyi. He was raised in separation from his mother as a Habsburg loyalist. Nevertheless, the arbitrariness of Habsburg rule in newly acquired Hungary and excessive taxation, turned him away from Vienna. After one and a half decades of liberation wars, the war of independence could not succeed on its own. But Rákóczi's attempts to persuade France or Russia to offer assistance were fruitless. Having rejected the Peace of Szatmár, which lacked guarantees, he died in exile in Rodosto (Tekirdag) Turkey.

Rákóczi, György I, Prince of Transylvania (1593–1648)

Prince of Transylvania from 1630–1648. Son of Zsigmond Rákóczi. Intervened in the Thirty Years War to force Ferdinand III to respect the rights of the estates and religious freedom on Habsburg-controlled Hungarian territory. A result

of his successful foreign policy was the Peace of Linz, which compelled the Habsburg emperor to acknowledge Rákóczi's right to rule over six counties in northern Hungary that Gábor Bethlen had previously secured (1645).

Réger, Zita (1944–2001)

Studied French and Latin at Eötvös Lóránd University in Budapest, and began work as a researcher immediately. She initially studied bilingualism among Roma children, using revolutionary methods. Later, as a professor of the Institute of Linguistics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, she attempted to clarify the functions of imitation in conversation and study, based on child language material in Hungarian, and to examine the relationship between social status and linguistic development as well as the linguistic socialization of Roma children raised in traditional communities in Hungary.

Sárosi, Bálint (b. 1925)

Folk music researcher, senior staff member of the Folk Music Research Group of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (from 1958), PhD in Musicology (1966). Teaching diploma and doctorate in Hungarian and Romanian (1948), diploma in musicology and composition at the Academy of Music (1956). His fields of interest include Hungarian folk instruments, instrumental folk music, Roma musicians, and African music. Has published many articles on these topics in Hungarian and foreign journals.

Sigismund, Bishop of Pécs (?–1505)

Zsigmond Ernuszt, Bishop of Pécs from 1473–1505. Also served as Ban of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia from 1494.

Sigismund of Luxembourg (1368–1437)

Holy Roman emperor from 1433, King of Hungary from 1387, King of Germany from 1411, King of Bohemia from 1419, and King of Lombardy from 1431. He married Mária, daughter of Lajos I (the Great) of Hungary. On her father's death in

1382, Mária became queen of Hungary, and Sigismund was finally crowned as king consort in 1387. He pursued an expansionist policy against his half brother, the king of Germany, but made peace with him in 1396. He led an army against the Ottomans but was decisively defeated in that same year. The extent of his complicity in the burning of the Czech reformer Jan Hus (1415), whom he had invited to the royal council to defend his views, has never been determined. On the death of Wenceslas in 1419, Sigismund inherited the Bohemian crown, but a series of wars fought against the Hussites during the 1420s, most of which were military disasters, delayed his coronation.

Skutnabb-Kangas, Tove (b. 1940)

Finnish linguist and educational expert.

Solt, Ottilia (1944–1997)

Sociologist at the Institute of Economic Research and the Institute of Sociology and History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Taught at the Budapest Teacher Training Institute (1974–1981). After his dismissal, he worked as a teacher and librarian. In the 1970s, he began to examine the living circumstances of the poorest people in Hungarian society. Based on this research, in 1979, he founded the Poor Support Fund. In the same period, he began editing the illegal opposition magazine *Beszélő*. In 1988, he became a leader of the Network of Free Initiatives and a founder member of the Alliance of Free Democrats. He served as Member of Parliament (1990–1994) and then, as college lecturer, he trained prospective social workers.

Soros, György (George) (b. 1930)

Hungarian-born American stock trader and philanthropist. He emigrated from Hungary to Great Britain (1947) and studied at the London School of Economics (graduated in 1952). He then moved to the United States (1956). Soros worked as a

financial analyst; he founded his initial offshore hedge funds (Quantum funds) in 1969. The business grew tremendously, partly owing to speculation in foreign currency. In the late 1990s, such speculation helped destabilize Asian and Latin American national economies. As president of the Soros Management Fund, he used his wealth to create a network of foundations which aim to assist former Communist countries in creating an anti-Marxist "open society," to fund health initiatives, and to help immigrants in the United States. He established the Central European University in 1991. In the United States, he has funded political campaigns opposed to President George W. Bush.

Szálasi, Ferenc (1897–1946)

A typical exponent of the right-wing military officers of the Horthy era. In 1930, he joined a secret racist body called the Association of Hungarian Life. In 1935, he formed the Party of National Will, which sympathized with the Nazis. He failed at the elections in 1936. Even Horthy's supporters considered his right-wing views to be dangerous, and he was imprisoned (1937, 1938). With German support, he established the Arrow Cross Party (1939). On 15 October 1944, he took power in a coup and became Hungary's national leader. As the so-called "nation-leader" he gave full economic and military support to the Germans. Many thousands of Jews, deserters, and left-wingers were murdered or deported. At the end of the war, he fled to Germany, where he was captured and imprisoned by U.S. forces. A People's Tribunal sentenced him to death for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Szentgyörgyi, Péter (?–1517?)

Voivode of Transylvania from 1498–1510, country judge from 1500–17. In 1502, he fought alongside János Corvin against the Turks. In 1506 and 1515, he took part in negotiations on Habsburg succession. A member of the governing council in 1516.

Takáts, Sándor (1860–1932)

Historian and Piarist teacher, a correspondent member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (1906) and then full member (1925). He was asked by the Hungarian government to analyse Hungarian material at the Court Chamber Archives in Vienna (1898–1903). From 1903 until his death, he was employed as parliamentary archivist. At first his main interest was the history of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but later he concentrated on the Hungarian Reform Era of the nineteenth century.

Teleki, László (b. 1959)

He trained at college as a Romologist. In 1995 he became chairman of the Roma Minority Self-Government in Nagykanizsa and chairman of the Roma Minority Self-Governments Association of Zala County. He served on an international committee whose task was to construct a Roma Memorial at Auschwitz (1995–2000). A member of the Board of Trustees of the Public Foundation of Hungarian Roma from 1997. Since 1998 he has been a member of Nagykanizsa Council, and vice-chairman of the National Roma Self-Government. Since 2000 he has been chairman of the National Association of Roma Organizations. Member of Parliament, and in 2002 he became Political State Secretary for Roma Affairs of the Prime Minister's Office.

Thaly, Kálmán (1839–1909)

Politician, historian, and poet, correspondent member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (1864) and then full member (1880). Member of Parliament (from 1878), deputy-chairman of the Independence Party. Vice-Chairman of the Hungarian Historical Association (from 1889), first editor of the journal *Századok* (1867–1875). Wrote numerous works on the Rákóczi era. Published many source data, but without any

critical analysis. His resolve meant that he was able to bring home to Hungary the ashes of Ferenc Rákóczi II and his fellow exiles.

Thurzó, György, Palatine (1467?–1521)

Chamber count (*comes camerae*). At a young age, he joined his father's business, Fugger and Thurzó Company, and then headed the company. Consul in Krakow (1511), chamber count of Körmöc (1509–1520). After his marriage, he moved to Augsburg. A year before his death, he suggested to Jakab Fugger that the business be wound up in Hungary.

Ulászló II, King (1456–1516)

King of Bohemia from 1471 and King of Hungary from 1490. Fought against King Matthias at Boroszló and was defeated (1474). Although the Pope recognized him as King of Bohemia (1487), he was unable to unite the country. After Matthias' death, the Hungarian barons elected him, because they considered him to be a weak ruler. In return for their support, they demanded the abolition of the war tax, the restoration of the "ancient rights" of the nobles, and the right of the council to make decisions on important issues. In 1504, he signed a seven-year peace agreement with the Turks, and in 1510 a new agreement was signed for three years. His rule was characterized by a struggle between the barons, János Szapolyai, and the noblemen. Meanwhile the peasants' situation grew worse. After the suppression of the peasant war led by György Dózsa (1514), the peasants were denied all rights in Ulászló II's retributive decree of 1514.

Várnagy, Elemér (b. 1930)

PhD in linguistics (1978). Head of the Romology Department—the first of its kind worldwide—at Zsámbék Catholic Teacher Training College. During his 40 years of teaching, he wrote 80 papers, edited 14 volumes, and gave lectures at conference held at universities throughout Europe. Continues to

work as a consultant and professional expert (UNESCO, Council of Europe).

Wlislocki, Henrik (1856–1907)

Ethnographer and teacher. Studied at Kolozsvár University from 1876, where he received a doctorate. Analysed the lifestyle and language of Roma, and travelled with them, having given up his employment. He also conducted folklore surveys among the Hungarian, Sokac and Armenian ethnic groups and among Transylvania's Romanian and Saxon populations. Suffered a mental breakdown in 1897 and subsequently lived in great poverty.

CONTRIBUTORS

Jánky, Béla (b. 1972)

He was a visiting scholar at Indiana University, Bloomington (1998) and a visiting doctoral student at the Royal University of Groningen (2000). In 1997–1998, and again since 2004, he has been an associate editor of the *Hungarian Sociological Review*. He was an assistant lecturer (2000–2003) and is currently Assistant Professor at the Department of Sociology and Communication, Budapest University of Technology and Economics. Since 2002, he has been Secretary of the Economic Sociology Workshop of the Hungarian Sociological Association. He has received the Pro Scientia Gold Medal for young scholars of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (1997); Bolyai Scholarship of the HAS (2001–2004); Deák Scholarship of the Hungarian Ministry of Education (2003–2004); Excellent Teaching Award of the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences, Budapest University of Technology and Economics (2005). He has been a reviewer for the *Policy Studies Journal* (USA).

Major publications:

István Kemény, Béla Janky and Gabriella Lengyel, *A magyarországi cigányság 1971–2003* [Roma in Hungary, 1971–2003], (Budapest, 2004).

Szolidaritás és jóléti preferenciák [Solidarity and Preferences for welfare], (Budapest, 2005).

Béla Janky, Miklós Králik and László Sipos, eds., *A fogyasztás társadalmi beágyazottsága Szöveggyűjtemény* [The Social Impregnation of the Consumption. Chrestomathy], (Budapest, 2005).

Kállai, Ernő (b. 1969)

He studied history, sociology, political science, and law. He was a founding member of the Minority Studies Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and currently heads the Romology Research Team. His research topics include the Social History of Roma in Hungary, minority self-governments, Roma musicians in the past and present, analysis of political and government programs, etc. He also holds training courses for Roma—the first of their kind in Hungary—at the Apor Vilmos College in Vác.

Major publications:

Ernő Kállai and Erika Törzsök, eds., *A Roma's Life in Hungary*, (Budapest, 2000).

Ernő Kállai, ed., *The Gypsies/Roma in Hungarian Society*, (Budapest, 2002).

Ernő Kállai and Erika Törzsök, eds., *A Roma's Life in Hungary. Report 2002: A Year of Changes, Promises and Expectations*, (Budapest, 2003).

Ernő Kállai and Erika Törzsök, eds., *A Roma's Life in Hungary. Report 2003: Illusory Politics and Standing Still*, (Budapest, 2004).

Helyi cigány kisebbségi önkormányzatok Magyarországon [Local Roma Minority Governments], (Budapest, 2005).

Kemény, István (b. 1925)

He received his high school diploma in the Royal University Catholic High School Budapest in 1943. Imprisoned in December 1944 for his involvement in the resistance movement, he escaped prison in January 1945. In 1947–48, he worked as a researcher at the Teleki Pál Institute, subsequently teaching at a school (1948–49). In 1950, he graduated from ELTE University, Budapest, with a degree in Philosophy, Economics and Education. In September 1950, he was

appointed as assistant lecturer at the Faculty of Humanities, ELTE University, Budapest. In March 1951, he was dismissed from his post for "conduct hostile to people's democracy." From September 1951 until May 1957, he worked as a teacher. He was imprisoned from May 1957 until May 1959, owing to his participation in the 1956 revolution. From 1960 until 1969, he was employed as a librarian by the National Széchényi Library (Hungary's national library). In 1963, he conducted representative research (in co-operation with Zsuzsa Ferge) on social stratification in Hungary. Between 1969 and 1972, he directed representative research on Hungary's poor. In 1969–1970, he directed research on economic managers in Hungary. He directed national research on the Roma population in 1971–1972 and on Hungarian workers in 1972–1973. In January 1977, he settled in France, where he worked as a researcher at *Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales* (1978–1990). In 1990, he was appointed by the Institute of Sociology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, where he served as director from 1992 until 1995. In 1995, he was appointed by the Sociological Research Institute, where he received the position of Senior Retired Fellow in January 2005. From 1990 until 2002, he was Senior Consultant to the Lord Mayor of Budapest. In 1992, he was chairman of the Hungarian Sociological Association. In 1994, he received a doctorate in Sociology from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. He directed national research on the Roma population in 1993–1994 and (with Gábor Havas and Ilona Liskó) on the school segregation of Roma children in 1999–2000. In 2002–2003, he directed national research on the Roma population. He was awarded the Deák Ferenc Prize and the Széchényi Prize in 2003.

Major Publications:

Parasztágunk útja [The Path of Hungary's Peasant Farmers], (Budapest, 1946).

Elméletek a társadalmi rétegződésről [Theories on Social Stratification], (Budapest, 1969).

A Csepel Vas és Fémművek munkásai [Workers at Csepel Steel and Metal Works], (Budapest, 1970).

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Representative Survey on the Gypsy Population in Hungary, (Budapest, 1994).

- István Kemény, ed., *A cigányok Magyarországon* [Gypsies in Hungary], (Budapest, 1999).
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- Gábor Havas, István Kemény and Ilona Liskó, *Cigány gyerekek az általános iskolában* [Roma Children in Primary School Education], (Budapest, 2001).
- István Kemény, Béla Janky and Gabriella Lengyel, *A magyarországi cigányság 1971–2003* [Roma in Hungary, 1971–2003], (Budapest, 2004).
- Gábor Havas, István Kemény and Ilona Liskó, *Cigány gyerekek az általános iskolában* [Roma Children in Primary School Education], (Budapest, 2002).

Lakatos, Elza (b. 1969)

A journalist at the Roma Press Centre since its foundation in December 1995, she graduated from the *Magyar Hírlap*'s School of Journalism. Approximately fifty of her articles have been published in national newspapers, and she has also contributed to the publications of the Roma Press Centre. In 2001, she received second place in a reporters' contest organized by *Élet és Irodalom*. In addition to her work at the Roma Press Centre, she is editor and presenter of a program broadcast in Romani by Radio C.

Major publications:

- Romák/Cigányok és a láthatatlan gazdaság* [Roma/Gypsies and the Invisible Economy], (Budapest, 2000).
- Roma Holocaust—Túlélők emlékeznek* [Roma Holocaust—Survivors Remember] (Published in 2001 by the Roma Press Centre and based on oral history interviews).

Zor-Síla najaripe—Kényszermosdatások a cigánytelepeken [Zor-Síla najaripe—Forced Washing in Roma Settlements] (Published in 2002 by the Roma Press Centre and based on oral history interviews).

Szuhay, Péter (b. 1954)

He received a degree in Ethnography in 1978 from ELTE University, Budapest, and a further degree in Sociology in 1980. Since that time he has worked for the Museum of Ethnography, where he is currently a museologist responsible for the Roma collection. His main field of interest was initially rural contemporary society, economy and lifestyle history. In the late 1980s, his interest turned to an examination of Roma culture in Hungary. In recent years, his two earlier fields of interest have come together in his research on the co-existence of Hungarians and Roma. He has presented his research at major exhibitions, in documentary films and in studies.

Major publications:

Images from the History of Roma in Hungary in the Twentieth Century (an Anthropological Photo-Album), (Budapest, 1993).

A magyarországi cigányság kultúrája: etnikus kultúra vagy a szegénység kultúrája? [The Culture of Roma in Hungary: An Ethnic Culture or the Culture of Poverty?], (Budapest, 1999).

Map 1: Pre-Trianon Hungary



Map 2: Present-day Hungary

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