

Roma community development project in Hungary

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Who are the Roma in Europe?

- Germany: Sinti/Zigeuner
- Bulgaria, Romania: Tsigan
- Italy: Zingari
- Hungary: Cigány
- Spain: Gitano
- France: Manoush/Bohemian
- Britain: Tinker/Tinkler
- World Romani Congress: Roma (1971)
- Largest minority population (~6-12 million)
- Sizeable groups in Spain, France, & CEE
- Major problems: socio-economic & health disadvantages, discrimination

Who are the Roma in Hungary?

- ~ 5-6.5% of the population
- Educational level & literacy lower than average
- High unemployment, low income
- Many live in unfavorable conditions in segregated settlements (colonies)
- Life expectancy lower, infant mortality higher than Hungarian average

Difficulties of data collection on Roma / minorities

- Identification by mother tongue
- Self-reporting
 - Internal identity
 - Expressed identity
- Observer reporting
 - External identity
- Invisible groups: w/o documentation, illegal immigrants

Roma people in Hungary according to census and research projects

Ethnic identification	Census ¹		CSO ²	NAS ³
	by mother tongue	by self	by interviewer (non-Gypsy)	by interviewer (non-Gypsy)
1949	21 387	37 598		
1960	25 633	56 121		
1970 ⁴	34 957	-		
1980	27 915	6 404		
1990	48 072	142 684	394 000 - 470 000	455 000 ⁵
2001	48 685	190 046	-	520 000-650 000 ⁶

[1] Central Statistical Office, 2002. [2] Central Statistical Office. [3] National Academy of Sciences, Institute of Sociology
 [4] Roma (Gypsy) was not among the options for ethnic identity in the census in this year. [5] Data for 1993. [6] Data for 2003

Studies on Roma health and related topics at the Faculty of Public Health

1. Environmental health survey of settlements (colonies): 2000-2006
2. Health and health behaviour of Roma people: 2006-
 - Health behaviour survey of colony dwellers
 - Mortality and location of colonies
 - Health impact assessment
3. Community development projects 2003-

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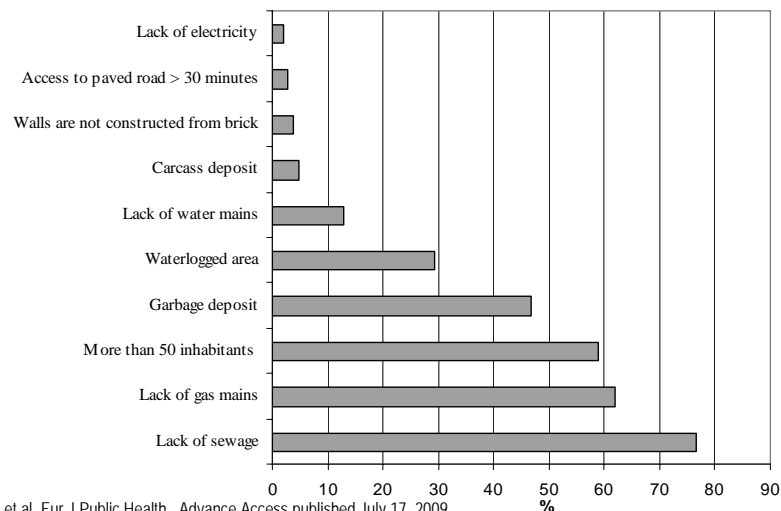
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Proportion of Roma among colony dwellers by county

- 758 colonies in 19 counties
- 133-134,000 persons
- 20-26% of Hungarian Roma population



Most frequent environmental problems in colonies



Kósa K. et al. Eur J Public Health, Advance Access published July 17, 2009

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Health of the inhabitants of Roma settlements in Hungary – a comparative health survey

- **Self-reported health & functional limitation:** ~ 2x higher in 18-44 year-old Roma settlement dwellers

→ Fully explained by socio-economic status

- **Heavy smoking:** 2.1-4.9 x higher in settlement dwellers
- **Fruit & vegetable consumption:** 1.5-3 x lower in settlement dwellers

→ Only partially explained by socio-economic status

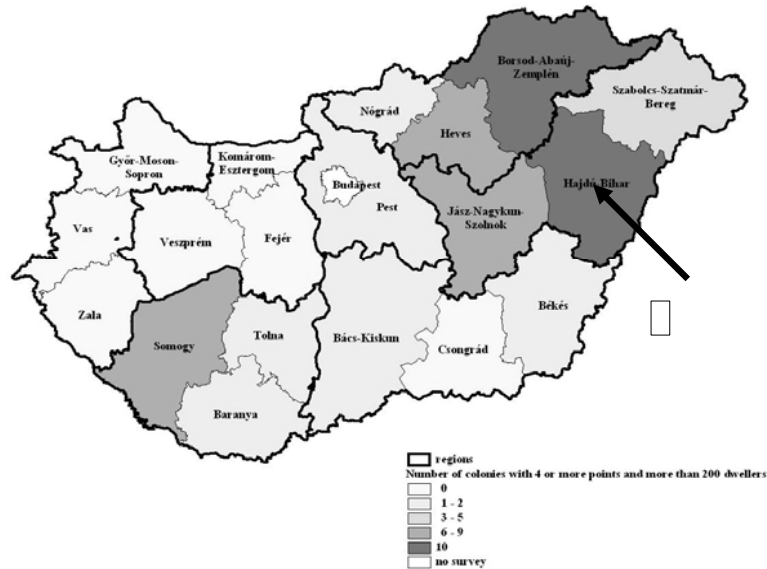
- **Health care:** discrimination, lower access to care
- **Social exclusion** → health status
- **Complex health needs** → imaginative solutions

Kósa Zs. et al. Am J Public Health 2007
Vokó Z. et al. J Epidemiol Community Health 2009

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Colony in Domokos Márton Kert, Debrecen – the site of the community project

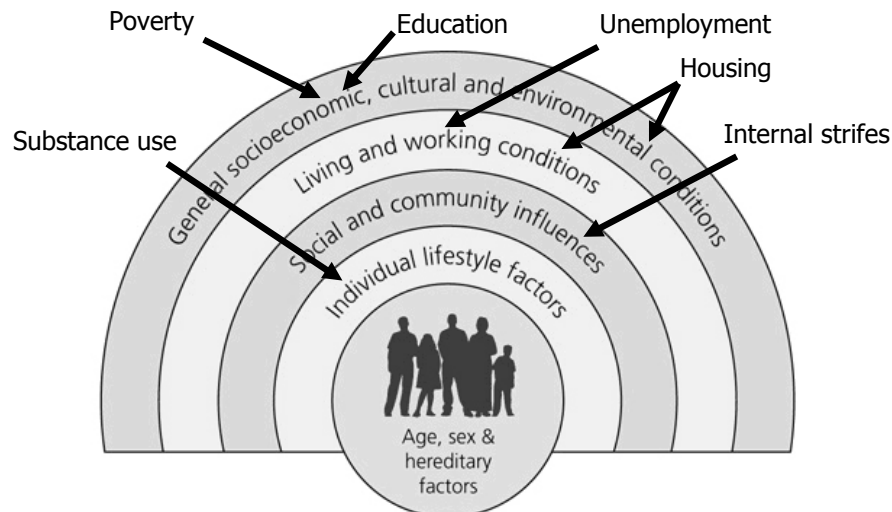


What are the greatest needs?

- Housing
 - Unemployment
 - Poverty
 - Education
 - Substance use
 - Strifes within the community
- ↓
- Health problems

Determinants of health

(Dahlgren and Whitehead, 1991)



How have the needs been tackled?

- **Strifes within the community:** regular community meetings, weekend retreats – skills development, summer camps
- **Education, unemployment, poverty:** literacy & training courses
- **Health problems:** Organized visits & referrals to health care specialists
- **Substance use:** community development
- **Housing:** Health impact assessment, visit of housing program (Kiskunhalas), lobbying for support w/ community members, writing grants, media campaign, , creating an NGO, creating a consortium

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Health impact assessment: evacuation vs housing project

	Impact of eviction	Impact of housing project
HELPING ORGANIZATIONS		
Local Public Health Service	Community project comes to end, environmental health danger eliminated	Continued work with community, environmental health danger eliminated
Local primary school	50% of children will leave school	Children stay in school
Local kindergarten	100% of children will leave kindergarten	Children stay in kindergarten
Family help service	Community leaves, other families will be taken up for care	Will continue service
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DECISION-MAKERS		
NATIONAL GOVERNMENT		
Services	None	None
Benefits	None	None
Shortcomings	None	None
Direct expenses	65,000 USD per year (calculated by using expenses of social care and social benefit for 13 children in social care)	Overhead support payment (4,200 USD per year to 15 families)
Indirect expenses	40% of children do not finish primary school, half of them will have children, will be living on benefits	10% of children do not finish primary school, half of them will have children, will require benefits
MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT		
Services	Service & benefits must be provided to persons in worse mental and physical condition probably by other municipal governments at other locations	Service provision & benefits must be maintained
Benefits	Eviction, loss of territory, possible sale to developers	Project can be used for evaluating effectiveness; can provide model for other communities
Shortcomings	Hostility from the evacuated community; loss of children and financing in local school and kindergarten	Project can serve as precedent for other communities; request for social housing from other disadvantaged groups
Direct expenses	Costs of evacuation (cca. 300 USD)	Social benefit to 15 families (31,800 USD / year) Overhead support payment to 15 families (500 USD / year)

Visit of the Kiskunhalas Housing Project

- Initiated in 1998 by the Albert Schweitzer Family Help Foundation
- 10 Roma families & 10 non-Roma families selected from over 90 applications
- 20 new homes were built
- Families were involved in the building process: worked together to make adobe bricks used
- 2010: 8 roma and 9 Non-roma families still live in these homes

Visit of the Kiskunhalas Housing Project



All new homes built with the most basic amenities possible for an inhabitation permit:

- Small stove, sink
- Tub, toilet
- Wood stove
- Concrete floors



Lobbying for support

- Member of local government
- City Property Management Company of Debrecen
- Member of parliament
- Mayor of Debrecen
- Minister of Equal Opportunities
- Governmental Commissioner of Roma Affairs
- European Roma Rights Centre
- EU representative of Hungary
- Director of Habitat for Humanity, Hungary
- Hungarian Reformed Church
- Presbyterian Church of the United States of America

Creating an NGO: Opre Roma Association



- Civil organization established in 2006 w/ help from the Faculty of Public Health
- Leaders are Roma
- Seat: University of Debrecen
- Major aim is to improve quality of life of Roma
- Most members are Roma living in a segregated part of Debrecen
- <http://www.opreromadmk.hu/>

Creating a consortium

for the promotion of health of the Roma population in Debrecen

- Faculty of Public Health, University of Debrecen
- Opre Roma Association
- City Government of Debrecen
- Roma Minority Government of Debrecen
- Hungarian Reformed Church
- North Plain Institute of the National Public Health Service
- North Plain Regional Centre of Labour Affairs
- Héra Family Help Service, Debrecen



DETERMINE model project of Opre Roma: Planning healthy and sustainable DETERMINE housing

Planning healthy and sustainable housing for a segregated Roma community in Hungary

Aim of the project

- Familiarize participants as to how public utilities (electricity, water, heating, sewage, garbage collection,) are provided
- Raise awareness of participants about alternative & low-energy housing options
- Increase eco-conscience
- Empower community to improve their living conditions

Associated Hungarian partner of DETERMINE:

- National Institute for Health Development (OEFI)

Implementors of Hungarian project:

- Opre Roma Association, Debrecen
- Faculty of Public Health, University of Debrecen in PPP

Community programs October 2008 – May 2009

1. Community meetings:

- Starting and closing conference



2. Visiting public utilities of Debrecen

- City Waterworks
- Electric Power Station
- Sewage regular and bio-treatment plant
- Nyírerdő Forestry Company
- AKSD Garbage Treatment Plant



Community programs October 2008 – May 2009

3. Visiting bio-villages:

- Galgahévíz
- Agostyán
- Gyúrűfű



Quantitative improvements

Significant:

- Psychological stress
- Satisfaction with life

Non-significant:

- Sense of coherence
- Subjective health
- Control over health

No change:

attitude to saving water & electricity

Qualitative improvements

Participants

- learned new methods of saving energy & water
- learned new, low-cost methods of building
- became familiar with the workings of public utilities
- became aware of the importance of community efforts in improving housing
- showed improved tolerance towards each other at the end of the project

During & after DETERMINE

- Negotiations w/
 - City Property Management Company of Debrecen
 - Department of City Development of the Local Government of Debrecenidentified a social housing complex (city property) for remodeling
- Architectural plans for remodeling were created
- Grant application to Habitat for Humanity for remodeling was submitted October 2009, preliminary assessment positive
- City Property Management Company agreed, Nov 2009
- Chief architect of the city refused support, Feb 2010
- Hungarian Radio is interviewing stakeholders, Oct 2010

Berescu et al: Stepped Social Ascension Model

- Objective improvement of living conditions cannot be completed in one jump
- Principle 1: No steps can be skipped
- Principle 2: Visibility
- Principle 3: Horizontal advancement

Berescu et al: Housing and extreme poverty. The case of Roma communities. Ion Mincu Univ. Press 2006

Berescu et al: Stepped Social Ascension Model

- **Principle 1: No steps can be skipped**
 - improvement step by step
 - each step constituting a small enhancement
- **Principle 2: Visibility**
 - next step should be comprehensible & attainable
- **Principle 3: Horizontal advancement**
 - enhancement should be sustained

Berescu et al: Housing and extreme poverty. The case of Roma communities. Ion Mincu Univ. Press 2006

If you want to start an intervention now...

- Needs assessment :
 - Communities should be directly involved
- Housing:
 - Related social problems (education, employment, income) should also be addressed
 - Read Berescu - Building codes seriously limit social housing
- Intervention:
 - Based on thorough analysis of local situation
 - Community members & representatives should be involved from beginning
 - Sustainability should be key principle
- Participants:
 - Should tolerate very high levels of frustration

Participants

Faculty of Public Health:

- Ádány R.
- Coons B.
- Csukás A.
- Kimmel Zs.
- Kovács D.
- Lénárt B.
- Makara P.
- Molnár Á.
- Nagy P.
- Rényes Zs.
- Vokó Z.

Opre Roma Association:

- I. Aba-Horváth
- Gy. Balogh
- A. Balogh
- H. Conway Morris
- G. Góré
- A. Jónás
- K. Lakatos
- M. Lakatos
- Z. Oláh
- E. Vadász
- M. Vadász
- L. Vadász