

Violence Against Children in HUNGARY

Relevant extracts from an NGO alternative report presented to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child

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Human Rights Watch – English

www.crin.org/docs/resources/treaties/crc.18/Hungary_NGO_Report.pdf

[...]The most immediate and dramatic threat to Roma comes from attacks and harassment by racist hate groups. In the meantime, less visible patterns of endemic discrimination and increasing social marginalization pose an equally serious danger for Hungary's largest minority.

Roma (Gypsy) children in Hungary suffer from unremitting discrimination in schools and in the general

community. Barely half of all Roma finish primary school; a large percentage of those have received most of their education in segregated "remedial" classes and schools in which very few Hungarian children are placed. Roma children are already at a disadvantage when they enter school because of their poverty, their parents' lack of education, and direct prejudice. Most Hungarian teachers do not expect Roma children to perform well and shunt them off to special schools that provide them with inferior education. Only a handful of Roma students graduate from, or even attend, academic high schools.

Most urban Roma children live in ghettoized slums, or in the worst housing projects; in the countryside, they live on "Gypsy rows," or increasingly, in separate, all-Roma villages. Many public establishments exclude Roma, often quite openly. Moreover, Roma in Hungary are often the targets of violence carried out by "skinheads" and other extremist groups. Many have been the victims of serious attacks, often with the acquiescence of police and sometimes with their active involvement.

[...]

Roma are frequently victims of community violence: many are routinely subjected to harassment and intimidation by skinheads and other extremist elements of society; many have been subjected to physical attack, or to the threat of physical attack. After peaking in 1991, skinhead attacks on Roma and other minorities declined; in the spring of 1995, however, local human rights monitoring groups reported a sudden jump in the number of attacks, perhaps signaling a renewed campaign of anti-Roma violence. Many of the attacks in recent years have involved not only the acquiescence of local police, but even their active involvement. The national government has consistently denied the existence of racial violence in the country.

[...]

"Educate them? We ought to shoot them." - *Hungarian man from Nagykanizsa, giving his opinion on plans to open a private high school for Roma students.*

Lack of access to education continues to be one the greatest barriers separating Roma from the larger Hungarian society. Almost no Roma complete high school or university; more than half effectively drop

out of the school system before completing eighth grade. Throughout the country, Roma leaders and parents interviewed by Human Rights Watch/Helsinki cited improvement in the educational possibilities for Roma youth as one of their most pressing concerns.

Where Roma do attend school, they do not receive the same educational opportunities as Hungarians. Roma children are frequently isolated in segregated classes; in the larger cities, schools are increasingly divided into "Gypsified" and "Gypsy-free schools", and the system of "remedial" schools is used as a means of warehousing Roma students.

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