



## Hungary

### **Statement by the Delegation of Hungary at the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting Warsaw, 03 October 2013**

*Working Session 16: Humanitarian issues and other commitments II – Roma and Sinti issues, including: Implementation of the OSCE Action Plan on improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti*

Hungary fully aligns itself with the statement made earlier on behalf of the European Union.

Hungary considers that the integration of the Roma people is one of the most important and most complex social challenges in Europe today. The Hungarian government pays special attention to this issue, and we also deem it extremely important that it is kept high on the agenda of the international organizations, so that we have numerous opportunities – like this one today – to discuss this question with our partners.

Our responsibility in and commitment to improving the situation of the Roma communities entail two “lines of action” that are equally important: on the one hand, combating all forms of discrimination and racism starting from the negative stereotypes to the hate crimes, and on the other hand, promoting social inclusion.

The OSCE Action plan offers a very useful toolbox in this regard. Earlier this year Hungary presented a most comprehensive answer to the ODIHR questionnaire on their implementation during the period 2008-2013. Bearing in mind the limited time frame, let me highlight just some of the main points of this report:

- The implementation of the National Social Inclusion (and Roma) Strategy is on-going, with ambitious, still realistic targets to be reached in the field of Roma unemployment, general and vocational education, preventive health care and housing.
- Most of the local self governments have prepared their so-called *local equal opportunity programmes* aiming at a complex approach to the problems of those living in socially precarious situation.
- Elimination of social inequalities are facilitated through early childhood development, in the framework of an Integrated Pedagogical System, which is applied by 25% of the schools, involving more than 100,000 children of disadvantaged background.
- Particular emphasis is put on the improvement of the situation of Roma women, with a view to protecting them from abuse, decreasing their drop-out from education, and promoting their employment, with a special regard to their increased presence in public institutions.

As for the fight against racism and xenophobia a most relevant recent development took place on the 6<sup>th</sup> of August, when the Budapest District Court condemned – at first instance – three perpetrators of racially motivated murders of six Roma people between 2008 and 2009 to life imprisonment without parole. At the same time, the Government took the decision on paying damages to the relatives of the victims.

In general terms, the Hungarian Government pays special attention to combat all phenomena of anti-gypsyism. Besides the very comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation, prohibiting both direct and indirect forms of discrimination, the Government deems it equally important that politicians and other opinion-makers lead by example in promptly and strictly condemning any manifestation of racist or discriminative character. This spirit is reflected in the ministerial statement reacting to the above mentioned verdict, which underlines the following:

*“No perpetrators of racist crimes can escape the law in Hungary, and especially savage murderers pay a worthy penalty for their deeds. [...] As a result everyone will finally understand: we must always stand by the victims. And this is not a question of minority or majority: this is a question of human dignity.”*

Let me conclude by underlining, that, the Hungarian Government considers the civil society and the NGO-s as prominent partners in all its above mentioned endeavors to promote Roma integration. We think that this partnership should be further strengthened and we are looking forward to an even more intensive cooperation with the civil sector in a constructive spirit.