INTEGRATION OF THE ROMA IN HUNGARY IN THE 2010S

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The main economic and social indicators show a basically favourable environment emerging in Hungary over the past few years, with persistently low unemployment, growing GDP, rising real income and very low (or even zero) inflation during most of the decade in focus (Kopint-TÁRKI, 2018). The share of those living in poverty or exclusion has decreased, and all three components of this indicator (the share of those living in households with income poverty, severe material deprivation and low work intensity) has also shrunk (Bernát and Gábos, 2018). But does this progress, which describes general trends in society, also affect the traditionally most disadvantaged Hungarian social group – the Roma?

The issue of how to overcome the disadvantages faced by Eastern European Roma (among them Hungarian Roma) has been discussed for over a century; over that time, the process may be seen as a series of forward and backward steps (Dupcsik, 2009). However, over the past decade, the process has rather resembled a roller-coaster, as described in the monitoring study by Bernát and Gábos (2018), on which this chapter is based.[1] Most of the data used were collected by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (HCSO): the Hungarian waves of such large-scale European surveys as the EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) and the Labour Force Survey (LFS), which since 2013–14 have also provided information on ethnic back-

[1] The monitoring report, entitled 'Social processes in Hungary during the first half of the period of the Hungarian Social Inclusion Strategy, 2009–2017', was commissioned by the State Secretariat for Social Affairs and Social Inclusion, Ministry of Human Capacities (Hungary) and elaborated in the first half of 2018. The following experts contributed to the explanation of the results: Ágnes Hárs (employment), György Molnár (employment, public work scheme), Dániel Horn (education) and József Vitray (health). Unless stated otherwise, the results and statements in this study originate from the monitoring report and data of the HCSO (EU-SILC and LFS) used in the report.

ground.[2] These ethnic identity questions supplement the general EU-SILC and LFS surveys in Hungary (i.e. they are not part of the general European EU-SILC and LFS datasets) and make a Roma versus non-Roma comparison possible within a large-sample, representative survey. Moreover, thanks to the *Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey* (EU-MIDIS II) conducted by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), it is also possible to place the situation of Hungarian Roma within a European context.

This study presents the process of Roma integration during the 2010s through those social policy indicators that link to the areas of interventions by the European and Hungarian Roma Strategies.[3] The Hungarian National Social Integration Strategy (hereafter: 'the Strategy'; see NTFS, 2011; MNTFS II, 2014) lists the social policy aims in order of importance: first of all, reducing the share of those living in poverty and exclusion, with a special focus on the Roma population; followed by preventing the reproduction of poverty and social exclusion, improving equal access to socio-economic goods and strengthening social cohesion. This chapter presents the progress made in achieving these aims, as reflected in the rate of those living in poverty or social exclusion and the main employment and education indicators.

1. Poverty and social exclusion

In 2011, the Strategy aimed at reducing the number of people living in poverty or social exclusion by 450,000, and the poverty and social exclusion rate itself by 5 percentage points between 2008 and 2020. This aim would result in a fall in the number of people in the most disadvantaged social group from 2.83 million to 2.38 million, and a decline in their population share from 28 per cent to 23 per cent (NTFS, 2011: 61; MNTFS II, 2014: 72). This is also the Hungarian target figure for the fight against poverty and social exclusion linked to the Europe 2020 Strategy.[4] The EU2020 Strategy measures the fight against poverty and social exclusion using three base indicators, taking the

[2] The HCSO surveys consider 'Roma' to be those respondents who chose the Roma/Gypsy identity in at least one of the double identity questions.

[3] The Hungarian National Social Integration Strategy covers not only the Roma, but vulnerable social groups in general. The first version was released in 2011 (NTFS, 2011); the second version, which is currently the valid version, was published in 2014 (MNTFS II, 2014).

[4] For more on the EU2020 Strategy 'for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth', see European Commission (2010), while for the main indicators see European Commission (2017).

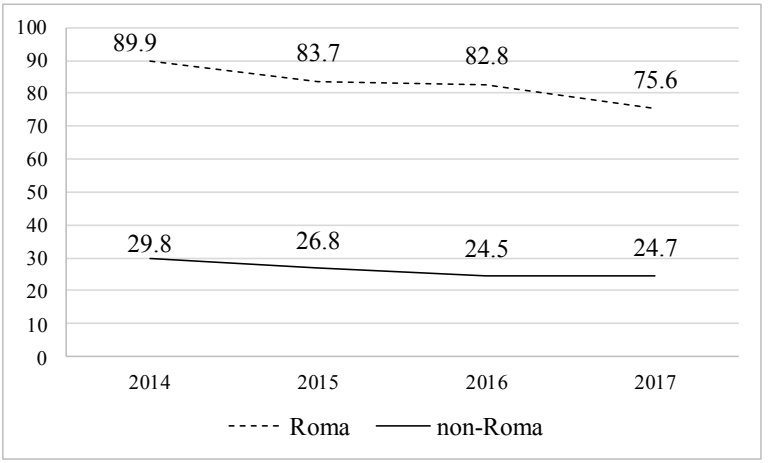
sum of persons who are: at risk of poverty [5] or severely materially deprived[6] or living in households with very low work intensity; [7] these three sub-indicators make up the composite indicator on poverty and social exclusion.[8]

According to the composite indicator described above, 3 out of 10 Hungarians lived in poverty or social exclusion in 2009 (29.6 per cent); that figure increased in subsequent years, peaking at 34.8 per cent in 2013, before declining to 25.6 per cent by 2017. Nevertheless, Roma people are more ex-posed to poverty, since it affects them three times more often than non-Roma: in 2017, three quarters of Roma were living in poverty or social exclusion (75.6 per cent) versus one quarter of non-Roma (24.7 per cent); both rates are the lowest since 2014 (see *Figure 1* and *Table 1*).

The high poverty and exclusion rates of the Roma is largely due to the cumulative disadvantages of certain social characteristics. This form of poverty mostly affects the low educated, children and young people (aged under 18), and those living in smaller settlements and in large families. The older the respondent, the lower the share of poor people – partly because of the high rates (above 50 per cent) of child poverty, which is also clearly reflected in the extremely high poverty rates of families with at least three children. The same is true of single parents, and this group remained in this dire situation throughout the period under examination – unlike large families, whose poverty rates have declined (36.1 per cent in 2017), most probably due to the tax allowances available for employees raising at least three children.

[5] Persons with an equivalized disposable income below the risk-of-poverty threshold, which is set at 60 per cent of the national median equivalized disposable income (after social transfers).
[6] Material deprivation covers indicators relating to economic strain and durables. Severely materially deprived persons have living conditions severely constrained by a lack of resources and experience at least four out of the following nine deprivation items: they cannot afford i) to pay rent or utility bills, ii) to keep the home adequately warm, iii) to face unexpected expenses, iv) to eat meat, fish or a protein equivalent every second day, v) to take a week's holiday away from home, vi) to run a car, vii) to own a washing machine, viii) to have a colour TV, and ix) to possess a telephone.
[7] People living in households with very low work intensity are those aged 0–59 living in households where the adults (18–59) worked for 20 per cent or less of their total work potential during the previous year.
[8] Persons are only counted once, even if they are present in several sub-indicators.

Figure 1 *Share of Roma and non-Roma living in poverty or social exclusion, 2014–17 (per cent)*



Source: NTFS Monitoring database 2018, based on KSH HKÉF (HCSO EU-SILC) survey.

One of the most important factors behind social status is educational attainment, which has a particularly strong effect on the risk of poverty. Four out of ten Hungarians in general with at most primary education (41.0 per cent) were living in poverty in 2017 – between three and four times the figure for those with tertiary education (12.0 per cent). Poverty is also a rural phenomenon in Hungary: the lower the status of the settlement, the higher the share of people living in poverty or exclusion, even though the rates have fallen by 8–10 percentage points since 2013 (Bernát and Gábos, 2018).

Throughout the 2010s, up until 2017, poverty or social exclusion rates declined in all major social groups (except for people with tertiary education and elderly two-person households, where the rates have not changed significantly). The risk of poverty has decreased since 2013 (the year when the highest rates were recorded) most intensively among those living in house-holds with two or three children; people with secondary education; residents of the capital city Budapest and of smaller towns, as well as those living in the regions of Central Hungary, Central Transdanubia and the Northern Great Plain (Bernát and Gábos, 2018).

The three components of the above composite indicator are also worth studying, i.e. how the trends have developed over the 2010s with regard to the

share of those living in households with income poverty, severe material deprivation and low work intensity.

The share of people living in relative income poverty[9] grew slightly (1 percentage point) between 2009 and 2017: from 12.4 per cent to 13.4 per cent (*Table 1*).

Table 1 *Poverty, exclusion and its components among the Roma and non-Roma, 2009–17 (per cent)*

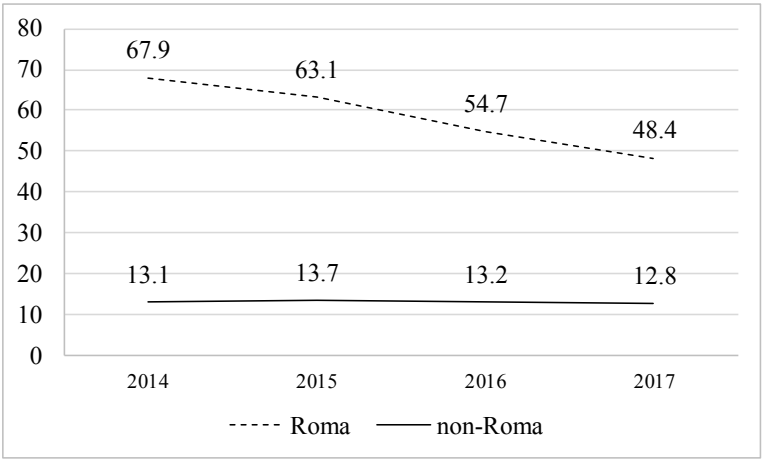
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2017/ 2014
Share of people living in poverty or social exclusion										
Country average	29.6	29.9	31.5	33.5	34.8	31.8	28.2	26.3	25.6	0.80
Roma	..	..	..	..	..	89.9	83.7	82.8	75.6	0.84
non-Roma	..	..	..	..	..	29.8	26.8	24.5	24.7	0.83
Share of people living in relative income poverty										
Country average	12.4	12.3	14.1	14.3	15.0	15.0	14.9	14.5	13.4	0.89
Roma	..	..	..	..	..	67.9	63.1	54.7	48.4	0.71
non-Roma	..	..	..	..	..	13.1	13.7	13.2	12.8	0.98
Share of people living in severe material deprivation										
Country average	20.3	21.6	23.4	26.3	27.8	24.0	19.4	16.2	14.5	0.60
Roma	..	..	..	..	..	78.1	67.8	63.9	55.5	0.71
non-Roma	..	..	..	..	..	22.1	18.1	14.7	13.8	0.62
Share of people living in low work-intensity households										
Country average (aged 0–59)	11.3	11.9	12.8	13.5	13.6	12.8	9.4	7.9	6.3	0.49
Roma	..	..	..	..	..	45.3	26.7	35.9	25.2	0.56
non-Roma	..	..	..	..	..	8.4	6.6	5.2	4.5	0.54

Source: NTFS Monitoring database 2018, based on KSH HKÉF (HCSO EU-SILC) survey.

[9] Income poverty covers those people who live below the poverty threshold. The standardized calculation of poverty threshold is 60 per cent of the median of the net (equivalent) disposable household income. Unlike the calculation based on the income of household members on average, equivalized household income takes the different household consumption needs of differently aged household members into account by using equivalence scales. For this indicator, the modified OECD equivalence scale was calculated, in which the weight of the household head is 1, each additional adult is 0.5, and children are 0.3 each.

In the middle of the period under examination (between 2013 and 2015) the figure was even higher, at 15 per cent (before falling back to 13.4 per cent in 2017). This means that Hungary's poverty rate is below the EU-28 average of 17.3 per cent (Eurostat, 2018). Ethnic background plays a role again, as it has the strongest impact on income poverty. Among those who live in a household with a Roma head, four times as many people (48.4 per cent) are below the income poverty threshold as when a non-Roma is head of the household (12.8 per cent). While this remains an enormous disparity, the figure for those living in a household with a Roma head has dropped rapidly and significantly over just a few years – from 67.9 per cent in 2014 to 48.4 per cent in 2017 (*Figure 2*). The socio-economic factors that affect income poverty are sharpest along those dimensions that are significant with regard to the indicator on poverty or social exclusion and which affect Roma dis-proportionately; this also means that the cumulation of social disadvantages leads to high rates of relative income poverty among Roma.

Figure 2 *Share of relative income poverty among Roma and non-Roma, 2014–17 (per cent)*



Source: NTFS Monitoring database 2018, based on KSH HKÉF (HCSO EU-SILC) survey.

The EU-MIDIS II survey by the FRA revealed even higher relative income poverty rates: 75 per cent for Hungarian Roma in 2014,[10] which is still the third-lowest rate (after the Czech Republic at 59 per cent and Romania at 70 per cent) among the eight countries surveyed. The extremely high rates point to the severe and deep poverty that affects Southern and Eastern European Roma, and which ranges from 86 to 98 per cent in Bulgaria, Slovakia, Greece and Spain (FRA, 2016).

Another standard indicator measuring income or material status is the share of those living in a household with severe material deprivation. According to this indicator, the severely deprived are defined as those who cannot afford at least four out of nine deprivations items (see the list of items in footnote 6). The share of the severely deprived population grew between 2009 and 2013 (from 20.3 per cent to 27.8 per cent), before decreasing gradually to reach 14.3 per cent by 2017 (*Table 1*). According to Eurostat data, in 2013 only in Bulgaria and Romania was severe material deprivation more widespread than in Hungary; later, in 2016, Greece joined those two Member States, pushing Hungary into 4th place; that year the EU average was 8.1 per cent (Eurostat, 2018). The disadvantages facing Roma are still enormous, despite the declining trend across society (including the Roma). Though still significant, the improvement between 2014 and 2017 affected Roma less than non-Roma: among Roma, the share of those living in severe material deprivation decreased from 78.1 per cent to 55.5 per cent (i.e. by a third), whereas among non-Roma the figure declined from 22.1 per cent to 13.8 per cent (i.e. 40 per cent).

The third component of the indicator on poverty and exclusion is the share of those living in a low work-intensity household;[11] this figure has practically halved over the period under examination. In 2009, 11.3 per cent of Hungarians below the age of 60 lived in work-poor households, compared to 6.3 per cent in 2017. The pace of decrease is the same for Roma and non-Roma: it nearly halved in both groups between 2014 and 2017 (with a drop from 45 per

[10] The difference between the poverty rates of Hungarian Roma measured by the Hungarian wave of EU-SILC and by the FRA EU-MIDIS II survey (which provides data only for 2014) is due to methodology, primarily the sampling design applied in the surveys.

[11] The calculation of the work-intensity indicator covers all household members of active age (18–59), except for students aged 18–24. The value of the indicator is 1 if all active-age household members worked full time during the whole year, and 0 if no one worked at all during the reference year. Low work-intensity households are those where the value is at most 0.2 (i.e. 20 per cent of the possible work potential is utilized).

cent to 25 per cent among Roma, and from 8.4 per cent to 4.5 per cent among non-Roma) (*Table 1*).

The improvement is clearly reflected in expanding employment, which has its roots in the expanding public work scheme (see below). According to Eurostat, in 2012 the share of those living in low work-intensity households in Hungary (13.5 per cent) was above the EU average (10.6 per cent), but by 2016 the Hungarian figure (7.9 per cent) was below the EU average (10.5 per cent) (Eurostat, 2018). According to the FRA EU-MIDIS II survey, 27 per cent of the Hungarian Roma below the age of 60 were living in work-poor households (in contrast to 35.6 per cent measured by the LFS; the difference between the two results is probably due to methodology). The share of Hungarian Roma living in low work-intensity households is the second lowest (after Greece); thus the situation of Hungarian Roma seems to be somewhat better than among Roma living in the other Eastern and Southern European countries surveyed (Slovakia, Czech Republic, Romania, Bulgaria, Spain, Portugal) (FRA, 2016).

2. Employment and unemployment

2.1 Employment

In the framework of the Europe 2020 Strategy, Hungary undertook to raise the employment rate of people aged 20–64 to 75 per cent by 2020.[12] Between 2009 and 2017, the employment rate increased from 54.9 per cent to 68.2 per cent (on average by 1.9 percentage points annually). However, up until 2013 the increase was significantly lower than this annual average; thereafter it was above the average. Beyond the average growth, there are significant differences according to ethnic background, age and education (*Table A1*).

The growth in employment among the Roma has been faster than in any of the other social groups listed in *Table A1*. In 2013, 26 per cent of Roma were employed, in contrast to 45 per cent in 2017 (*Table A1*). An important source of the growth is public works, which accounted for 9 per cent of the 26 per cent employment rate among the Roma in 2013, and for 16 per cent of the 45 per cent employment rate in 2017.

[12] The definition of the employment rate is according to the International Labour Organization and expresses the number of persons who are employed as a percentage of the total working-age population (15–64). http://www.ksh.hu/docs/szolgaltatasok/hun/euinfo/honap_temaja/foglalkoztatottsag.pdf (in Hungarian).

Nevertheless, the improvement in the labour market attachment of Roma is not necessarily followed by an equivalent improvement in their income, since the public works scheme provides a low income: only 77 per cent of the minimum income in 2013, dropping to 64 per cent in 2017 (and 58 per cent in 2018). On the other hand, the gap between the employment rates of Roma (45.0 per cent in 2017) and non-Roma (68.9 cent in 2017) has narrowed to 1.5 times (from 2.3 times in 2013).

Taking all relevant social characteristics into consideration, the lowest employment rate is among less-educated people (with primary school as the highest educational level attained); however, this rate increased by 11.6 percentage points between 2013 (26.9 per cent) and 2017 (38.5 per cent). This is not exceptional: there has been a growth in employment for all educational levels. In 2017, the employment rate of those people with the lowest level of education was still less than half the rate of those with the highest level of education (38.5 per cent vs. 84.3 per cent). The improvement among the low educated originates from public works – clearly reflected in the fact that while 8 per cent of the low educated were employed in public works in 2010, by 2017 the figure had more than doubled, to 20 per cent.

Among Roma, the employment rate is only 1.5 times greater in the age group with the highest employment rate than in the age group with the lowest; meanwhile, among non-Roma the difference is 2.5 times (thus age has less of an impact on the likelihood of employment among the Roma). A similar pattern can be observed if we look at education: among Roma, the employment rate in the education group with the highest employment rate is only 1.7 times the rate for the group with the lowest employment rate; among the non-Roma, that difference is more than double. Albeit to a lesser extent, the pattern is reversed when we look at employment by county and type of settlement: the differences in the employment rate are less pronounced among non-Roma (Bernát and Gábos, 2018). These patterns can be explained only by taking into consideration the very strong composition effect among the factors: ethnic differences in the employment rate can largely be traced back to differences in education and residence.

However, the employment rate of Hungarian Roma is among the best in Southern and Eastern Europe, according to the FRA EU-MIDIS II survey. The results of EU-MIDIS II show a 36 per cent employment rate, which is significantly lower than the 44.5 per cent in the Hungarian wave of LFS (presented above), and which can most probably be explained by methodological differences in the surveys; but even with this lower rate, Hungary lies second behind Greece in terms of the employment rate of Roma in 2016 (FRA, 2016).

2.2 Unemployment and inactivity

Another important labour market indicator is how the share of unemployed people (i.e. those of active age who are jobless but are seeking work) has been shaped. The share of the unemployed[13] has decreased significantly in the active-age population (15–74) – by almost two thirds between 2010 and 2017 (or 7 percentage points, from 11.2 per cent to 4.2 per cent). However, there are significant differences by ethnicity, age and educational level, even though the improvement has reached even the most vulnerable (*Table A2*). The unemployment rate has halved among Roma – from 39.5 per cent to 18.5 per cent – but this still represents the highest level of unemployment among the socio-demographic groups examined. The share of unemployment has decreased even more among non-Roma – by 60 per cent (from 9.1 per cent to 3.8 per cent); thus the gap between Roma and non-Roma has actually widened – from a difference of 4.3 times in 2013 to 4.9 times in 2017. The relative difference has increased despite the fact that between 2013 and 2017 the situation of Roma seems to have improved much more than that of non-Roma in absolute terms, as the unemployment rate of the Roma dropped by 21 percentage points (5.3 percentage points on average annually), compared to 5.3 percentage points (annually 1.3 percentage points on average) among the non-Roma.

In order to understand the significant decrease in the number of the un-employed, it is important to note that a major part of the formerly unemployed appear as employed, but are actually employed in public works, rather than the primary labour market. The number of people employed in public works grew by 119,000 between 2010 and 2017; this has been followed by an increase in the share of public workers in the economically active population (in 2010, 1.8 per cent of the active population were in the public works scheme, compared to 4.2 per cent in 2017).

The improvement in the unemployment statistics among Roma and non-Roma can be analysed only cautiously, due to the relatively small number of responses (which limits statistical analysis); but the differentiating effect of age is weaker among Roma than among non-Roma – a trend which mirrors that observed in terms of employment. In 2013, the difference was similar in terms of the share of Roma and non-Roma unemployed in the youngest and middle-aged (25–54) cohorts; but by 2017 a shift could be detected: in the

[13] According to the ILO definition: http://www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/modsz/modsz21.html (in Hugarian).

youngest cohort, the difference in the unemployment rate between Roma and non-Roma had shrunk to 7.8 percentage points, whereas in the older cohort the difference remained larger (15 percentage points).

Due to sample size limitations, we can compare only the low educated (a maximum of primary education attained) and those with lower-secondary education. Among non-Roma with just primary education, the unemployment rate was double the rate of the better-educated group throughout the period examined. Among Roma, this was true only of the last year: generally speaking, among them the difference between the two educational levels was much smaller, and the unemployment rate was very high, at above 40 per cent in both groups in 2013, gradually decreasing by 2017 thanks to public works. Matters improved most among the lower-secondary educated, as the unemployment rate dropped by 30 percentage points in this group, whereas it fell by 20 percentage points among those with at most primary education. Finally, by 2017 there were twice as many unemployed Roma with at most primary education as there were unemployed Roma with lower-secondary education (21.5 per cent and 11 per cent) (*Table A2*).

The long-term unemployment rate[14] also dropped significantly, from 5.6 per cent to 1.7 per cent between 2010 and 2017 (*Table A3*), which again might be connected to the rapid growth in public works employment in the second half of the period. The declining trend reached all relevant social groups: in some, the share of the long-term unemployed halved; in others it fell by four fifths. As with other labour market and poverty indicators, ethnic background is the most influential factor determining the chances of becoming long-term unemployed. In 2017, the long-term unemployment rate among Roma (7.0 per cent) was four times the rate among non-Roma (1.6 per cent); the pace of the decrease was the same in the two groups between 2013 and 2017. In terms of educational background, the long-term unemployment rate is highest by far among the lowest-educated people: twice as high as among those with lower-secondary education; three times as high as among those with upper-secondary education; and seven times as high as among those with tertiary education; these differences are stable throughout the period examined (*Table A3*).

Inactivity has also decreased significantly in general in the broader active-age generation (15–74). The trend was more intensive among Roma (from 54.1 per cent in 2013 to 47.5 per cent in 2017) than non-Roma (from 42.2 per cent to 37.9 per cent). But there is still a difference of 10 percentage points

[14] According to the ILO definition, the long-term unemployment rate is the share of the active-age population (15–74) that has been unemployed for at least 12 months

between the groups – unsurprisingly, to the detriment of the Roma. The age pattern of inactivity differs between the Roma and non-Roma in those cohorts that are especially relevant to employment. The difference is larger among Roma in the most active cohorts (32.0 per cent of 25–54-year-old Roma and 60.7 per cent of 55–64-year-old Roma) than among non-Roma (12.5 per cent and 46.2 per cent, respectively). Nevertheless, in both groups the young and old cohorts show similar patterns in 2017: two thirds of youngsters (15–24) are inactive, and almost 100 per cent of the elderly (65–74), irrespectively of ethnicity. Similarities can be found in terms of education: the least educated have the highest inactivity rates; meanwhile among both Roma and non-Roma, those with lower-secondary education are less inactive than those with upper-secondary education. However, the difference between the two groups of the secondary educated is wider among Roma than among non-Roma.

Depending on whether they live in the capital city or in a rural settlement, the difference in rates of inactivity among Roma is also wider than among non-Roma: 33 per cent of Roma who live in Budapest and 45–50 per cent of those who live in a rural settlement are inactive, compared to 34 per cent and 38–39 per cent, respectively, for non-Roma (T*able A4*).

3. Education

The key factor in the integration of the Roma is participation in education, with a special focus on the length and quality of education.

As in previous decades, the share of Roma with at most primary education is extremely high (indeed four times the level for non-Roma). Some 8 out of 10 Roma (80.2 per cent) have an educational level no higher than primary, whereas in 2017 the rate was 2 out of 10 for non-Roma (20.4 per cent). It is also important to note that while the share of low-educated Roma did not change between 2013 and 2017, a significant (12 per cent) decrease was observed among non-Roma (*Table 2*). This also suggests that the education-al gap between Roma and non-Roma has widened at this low level.

Between 2010 and 2017, less than half of all young people aged 15–24 participated in secondary education, and there was a 3 percentage point fall during the period (from 44 per cent to 41 per cent). The most important deterioration affected the Roma, as the rate of Roma students in secondary education dropped 30 per cent (10 percentage points, from 34.0 per cent to 24.2 per cent) between 2013 and 2017, while the share of non-Roma students remained almost unchanged (42.7 per cent in 2013 and 41.6 per cent in 2017). The educational disadvantage of Roma is highlighted by the fact that 7.7 per cent of

Roma in this cohort were still in primary education, in contrast to 2.6 per cent of non-Roma. By far the largest ethnic gap in education is in tertiary education in the same age cohort: 19.3 per cent of young non-Roma study at university, compared to 0.8 per cent of Roma (*Table 2*).

Table 2 *Educational indicators in the total, Roma and non-Roma population, 2010–17 (per cent)*

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Share of population with a maximum of primary education								
Country average	28.5	27.8	26.6	25.5	24.4	23.8	23.2	22.1
Roma	..	..	..	81.5	81.2	78.4	80.4	80.2
non-Roma	..	..	..	23.2	22.9	21.8	21.3	20.4
Share of people aged 15 to 24 participating in primary education								
Country average	3.1	3.2	1.7	2.1	1.9	2.0	2.3	2.6
Roma	..	..	..	5.0	5.6	6.2	7.5	7.7
non-Roma	..	..	..	1.3	1.4	1.7	2.0	2.2
Share of people aged 15 to 24 participating in secondary education								
Country average	43.7	44.2	44.2	41.9	40.8	40.6	40.7	40.7
Roma	..	..	..	34.0	37.2	29.4	28.4	24.2
non-Roma	..	..	..	42.7	43.0	41.2	41.5	41.6
Share of people aged 15 to 24 participating in tertiary education								
Country average	23.1	22.0	21.8	20.9	20.5	20.6	19.3	18.3
Roma	..	..	..	0.7	0.4	1.7	0.9	0.8
non-Roma	..	..	..	22.7	20.9	21.8	20.4	19.3
Share of early school leavers[*]								
Country average	10.8	11.4	11.8	11.9	11.4	11.6	12.4	12.5
Roma	..	..	..	64.2	57.0	59.9	61.8	65.3
non-Roma	..	..	..	8.7	10.3	8.9	9.6	9.4
NEET rate among 15–24-year-olds[**]								
Country average	12.6	13.2	14.8	15.5	13.6	11.6	11.0	11.0
Roma	..	..	..	47.0	38.2	40.9	37.6	38.2
non-Roma	..	..	..	13.6	12.7	9.8	9.5	9.4

[*]Early school leavers: share of those people aged 18–24 with at most primary education among all 18–24-year-olds who had not participated in any education or training (either within or outside the educational system) for at least four weeks prior to the fieldwork.
[**]NEET rate: share of 15–24-year-olds who had not been in employment, education or training (either within or outside the educational system) for at least four weeks prior to the fieldwork.
Note: Low number of respondents marked with grey cells.
Source: NTFS Monitoring database 2018, based on KSH MEF (HCSO LFS) survey; the indicators have been defined and calculated by the KSH (HSCO).

The drop-out rate – and thus the long-term disadvantaged situation of Roma students – can be measured using the indicator on early school leavers.[15] This increased by 15 per cent (10.8 per cent to 12.5 per cent) between 2010 and 2017. This trend is most probably not independent of the numerous changes in the educational system over the period, especially the reduction in the compulsory school leaving age from 18 to 16 years; however, the share of early school leavers had started to increase even before the lower age was introduced. Across the population as a whole, the trend toward early school leaving is increasing slightly; but among the Roma between 2013 and 2017 there is considerable up-and-down movement. Ultimately, the same drop-out rate is observed in the last year of the period as in the first: in both years, Roma students were seven times more likely than non-Roma students to drop out – 65.3 per cent versus 9.4 per cent in 2017, and 64.2 per cent versus 8.7 per cent in 2013 (*Table 2*).

The NEET (not in employment, education or training) rate[16] summarizes the short-term consequences of early school leaving. More than 1 in 10 of those aged 15–24 do not work or study (although the rate dropped slightly between 2010 and 2017 – from 12.6 per cent to 11.0 per cent). This type of inactivity is especially prevalent among Roma youth: four times more young Roma are affected (38.2 per cent) than non-Roma (9.4 per cent). The general decrease has touched both groups, but the trend has been more intensive among non-Roma, and thus the gap has widened along ethnic lines (Table 2).

According to the FRA, more than half of young Roma are NEET (51 per cent); but even with this higher rate, Hungarian Roma have among the lowest rates of the nine European countries surveyed, along with Czech and Portuguese Roma. However, the gender disparities are significant: among 16–24-year-olds almost two thirds (63 per cent) of young Roma women in Hungary do not study or work, in contrast to 38 per cent of young Roma men (FRA, 2016).

[15] Early school leavers: share of those people aged 18–24 with at most primary education among all 18–24-year-olds who had not participated in any education or training (either within or outside the educational system) for at least four weeks prior to the fieldwork.

[16] NEET rate: share of all 15–24-year-olds who had not been in employment, education or training (either within or outside the educational system) for at least four weeks prior to the fieldwork.

4. Summary

The most important macroeconomic indicators show a clear positive trend over recent years. This has had a positive impact on some social processes and has contributed to a growth in employment and income and a decline in poverty. This study seeks to answer the question: to what extent has the most vulnerable social group – the Roma – benefited from the general rising living standards?

In sum, the study reveals that the positive general trend has partly reached Hungarian Roma as well. Their situation has improved primarily in terms of employment; but this has not carried over into their income situation, as the improvement in their employment situation has taken place in the lower and marginal segments of the labour market, including the public works scheme. Nevertheless, the social and economic situation of the Hungarian Roma is still among the best in Southern and Eastern Europe, despite their multiple disadvantages compared to Hungarian non-Roma. While there has been improvement in some areas, there is still a lot to do. This is especially true of education, as the indicators presented in this chapter emphasize the still huge (and to some extent widening) gap between the education of Roma and non-Roma youth, which has a direct impact on their (imminent) future and possibilities. This suggests that the Hungarian educational system could do much more to ensure better-quality education and training, as well as higher educational levels for Roma youth, so that they end up with better chances and greater future prospects on the labour market. This would be a key factor in overcoming their multi-generational disadvantages and in achieving successful integration in the long run.

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ANNEX

Table A1 *Employment rate among Roma and non-Roma aged 15–64 by various social groups, 2013–17 (per cent)*

	non-Roma					Roma				
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Country average	*60.1*	*62.8*	*64.9*	*67.4*	*68.9*	*25.9*	*33.4*	*39.3*	*44.5*	*45.0*
Gender										
male	65.2	68.6	71.1	73.7	75.9	33.4	42.2	48.8	53.0	54.6
female	55.2	57.1	58.9	61.1	62.1	17.9	25.1	29.7	36.6	35.9
Age group										
15–24	20.3	22.3	25.9	28.2	29.0	13.2	19.2	21.6	26.3	29.1
25–54	78.3	81.1	81.8	83.3	84.5	33.0	43.1	49.1	53.6	55.3
55–64	39.7	42.2	45.8	50.1	52.0	18.6	13.8	26.4	37.7	31.4
Educational level										
primary	27.8	31.0	33.9	36.1	38.4	21.3	27.2	34.3	40.2	39.8
lower secondary	67.4	70.6	72.0	74.4	76.3	40.7	56.8	57.5	60.8	67.3
upper secondary	61.8	65.3	66.7	69.6	70.9	59.0	60.5	50.5	63.7	58.6
tertiary	79.6	80.8	82.1	84.4	84.3	76.1	100.0	78.1	74.7	66.2
Settlement type										
capital city	66.2	68.0	69.5	72.9	74.1	46.3	40.9	51.9	61.8	65.9
country seats	60.6	64.6	66.3	68.2	69.7	24.1	31.5	35.5	46.0	48.9
other towns	60.1	62.5	64.5	66.8	67.7	23.8	30.5	37.7	39.8	46.7
villages	56.7	59.4	62.1	64.5	66.8	25.8	35.0	38.4	43.3	41.7
Region										
Central Hungary	63.9	66.7	67.9	71.1	72.2	32.7	38.0	50.5	56.4	54.1
Central Transdanubia	60.5	65.8	68.6	68.8	70.8	35.6	39.3	45.9	51.9	56.8
Western Transdanubia	61.4	64.7	68.2	69.4	71.3	32.3	59.2	38.3	44.2	51.6
Southern Transdanubia	57.6	60.5	61.4	62.9	64.2	30.1	36.0	35.6	48.1	40.3
Northern Hungary	56.9	57.0	61.6	64.0	65.7	19.9	31.2	36.1	39.8	42.3
Northern Great Plain	56.6	59.7	60.0	63.2	65.4	23.8	28.5	38.1	39.6	41.2
Southern Great Plain	58.1	60.0	63.0	66.3	67.8	26.5	32.2	33.1	40.2	46.8

Note: Low number of respondents marked with grey cells.

Source: NTFS Monitoring data base 2018, based on KSH MEF (HSCO LFS) survey.

Table A2 *Unemployment rate among Roma and non-Roma aged 15–74 by various social groups, 2013–17 (per cent)*

	Non-Roma					Roma				
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Country average	*9.1*	*6.7*	*6.2*	*4.7*	*3.8*	*39.5*	*30.2*	*28.2*	*20.3*	*18.5*
Gender										
male	9.5	6.6	6.0	4.6	3.4	38.4	27.5	25.6	21.3	17.7
female	8.6	6.8	6.4	4.7	4.2	41.6	34.1	32.3	19.0	19.6
Age group										
15–24	26.3	18.9	15.8	12.3	10.2	51.9	39.8	38.4	23.4	18.0
25–54	8.1	5.8	5.4	4.1	3.3	37.2	28.0	26.0	20.6	18.5
55–64	6.6	6.0	5.3	4.3	3.4	31.1	26.3	28.9	12.8	20.2
65–74	2.1	2.0	2.4	1.6	0.4		100.0	6.6	24.4	0.0
Educational level										
primary	21.3	16.2	14.7	11.6	9.5	41.9	35.1	31.1	21.9	21.5
lower secondary	10.5	7.4	7.0	5.3	4.0	41.7	20.9	21.2	18.0	11.0
upper secondary	8.4	6.0	5.5	4.1	3.4	11.5	13.9	24.4	8.7	8.7
tertiary	3.6	2.6	2.4	1.8	1.6	0.0	0.0	13.4	17.0	0.0
Settlement type										
capital city	7.0	5.3	4.6	4.0	2.8	29.7	21.5	26.0	20.1	11.1
country seats	9.9	6.3	5.9	4.8	4.0	54.2	39.8	30.3	18.2	20.0
other towns	9.1	7.2	6.6	4.7	4.0	40.5	36.7	31.3	23.2	16.7
villages	9.9	7.3	6.8	5.0	4.1	36.5	24.4	26.6	19.4	20.1
Region										
Central Hungary	8.2	5.5	5.0	3.6	2.7	45.9	19.0	22.2	18.5	11.2
Central Transdanubia	9.0	5.1	4.0	2.8	2.1	36.1	26.2	22.4	13.9	9.8
Western Transdanubia	7.7	4.1	3.5	2.5	2.3	38.8	22.7	24.8	15.4	11.7
Southern Transdanubia	7.3	5.7	6.8	5.2	5.2	37.8	27.6	39.7	24.1	31.2
Northern Hungary	10.9	8.2	7.4	5.3	4.9	41.9	32.8	24.9	20.3	17.4
Northern Great Plain	11.2	11.0	10.0	8.7	6.9	38.6	39.2	31.0	22.7	20.8
Southern Great Plain	10.1	7.7	7.3	5.3	3.9	26.1	16.9	36.7	21.9	18.3

Note: Low number of respondents marked with grey cells.
Source: NTFS Monitoring database 2018, based on KSH MEF (HCSO LFS) survey.

Table A3 *Long-term unemployment rate and inactivity rate among Roma and non-Roma aged 15–74, 2010–17 (per cent)*

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2017/ 2013
Long-term unemployment rate									
Country average	5.6	5.4	5.1	5.1	3.8	3.2	2.4	1.7	0.33
Roma	..	..	..	24.4	16.3	12.3	7.9	7.0	0.29
Non-Roma	..	..	..	4.9	3.8	2.9	2.3	1.6	0.33
Inactivity rate									
Country average	45.2	44.8	43.7	43.0	41.3	40.1	38.9	38.2	0.88
Roma	..	..	..	58.6	54.1	47.5	46.5	47.5	0.81
Non-Roma	..	..	..	42.2	41.2	39.8	38.7	37.9	0.90

Source: NTFS Monitoring database 2018, based on KSH MEF (HCSO LFS) survey.

Table A4 *Inactivity rate among Roma and non-Roma aged 15–74 by social groups, 2013–17 (per cent)*

	Non-Roma					Roma				
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Country average	*42.2*	*41.2*	*39.8*	*38.7*	*37.9*	*58.6*	*54.1*	*47.5*	*46.5*	*47.5*
Gender										
male	35.5	34.4	32.6	31.3	30.2	47.5	43.7	37.0	35.2	36.6
female	48.5	47.6	46.4	45.5	45.0	70.3	63.9	58.0	56.9	57.9
Age										
15–24	72.5	72.5	69.2	67.8	67.7	72.7	68.1	65.0	65.7	64.6
25–54	14.8	13.9	13.4	13.2	12.5	47.5	40.2	33.6	32.5	32.2
55–64	57.5	55.0	51.6	47.7	46.2	73.0	81.3	62.9	56.8	60.7
65–74	97.5	96.8	96.4	95.8	95.3	100.0	98.4	98.6	99.6	99.8
Educational level										
primary	73.5	71.0	68.7	67.3	65.6	64.5	60.1	52.4	50.9	52.3
lower secondary	30.6	30.9	31.1	31.4	31.1	31.8	29.0	28.7	27.8	26.0
upper secondary	39.2	38.0	37.2	35.8	35.4	35.9	31.3	35.8	30.7	36.5
tertiary	24.8	25.2	23.7	22.5	22.9	23.9	4.8	18.8	27.0	34.0
Settlement type										
capital city	38.2	37.6	36.6	34.1	34.1	35.5	51.3	35.1	27.0	32.8
country seats	43.3	41.8	40.4	40.3	39.3	50.1	51.9	52.5	49.3	50.6
other towns	41.8	40.7	39.9	39.0	38.6	61.6	53.4	47.0	50.4	45.6
villages	44.1	43.3	41.0	39.8	38.5	60.5	55.4	49.4	47.8	49.3
Region										
Central Hungary	39.0	38.4	37.6	35.8	35.6	40.4	55.7	38.9	33.8	42.1
Central Transdanubia	42.4	39.0	37.7	38.4	37.0	47.4	48.9	44.7	44.5	45.5
Western Transdanubia	41.8	41.2	38.5	38.3	36.6	49.9	34.0	51.0	52.3	49.8
Southern Transdanubia	45.9	44.8	43.2	42.7	42.0	54.0	53.2	42.8	39.4	43.7
Northern Hungary	44.9	46.1	42.7	42.1	40.6	67.0	54.8	53.8	51.3	50.6
Northern Great Plain	43.7	40.6	41.1	39.2	38.5	61.8	54.2	46.2	50.5	49.8
Southern Great Plain	43.4	43.5	41.2	39.5	39.2	65.5	63.8	50.1	50.8	45.5

Note: Low number of respondents marked with grey cells.

Source: NTFS Monitoring database 2018, based on KSH MEF (HCSO LFS) survey.