

BORBÁLA TÓTH

Minorities in the Hungarian media

*Campaigns, projects and programmes
for integration*

CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT JOURNALISM

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MINORITIES IN THE HUNGARIAN MEDIA

Campaigns, projects and programmes for integration

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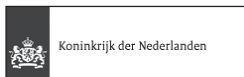
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PREFACE

This study is a part of the international project *Multicultural Europe in Media*. The Center for Independent Journalism, Budapest and its project partner organisations – Mira Media (Utrecht), Multicultural Institute (Prague), Peace Institute (Ljubljana), Center for Independent Journalism (Bucharest), Media Development Center (Sofia), Association of Ukrainians in Poland (Warsaw), Sollentuna Föreningsråd (Sollentuna, Sweden), Society of Goodwill (Kosice, Slovakia). Media Watch (Frederiksberg, Denmark) – began working together in January 2010. One of our main goals was to encourage direct dialogue between journalists and civil society organisations about changes in increasingly multicultural European societies and their portrayal by media. Representatives of civil society organisations and journalists took an active part in the international conference *Tuning into Diversity 2010* which was followed-up by national workshops and round table discussions in all the ten countries. Based on this joint work, we hoped to foster co-operation among the participants in order to work on solutions to the problems of divided societies.

As a part of the project, the *Diversity Toolkit* guidebook for journalists was published in ten languages and a manual for civil organisations to initiate intercultural dialogue with the media.

In this study author Borbála Tóth sums up the present legal framework of the media regarding ethnic and national minorities and migrants, basic data and research. Based on an ad hoc survey, she also describes programming and ethical guidelines of media organizations. The study provides a brief overview of the civil initiatives of the past few years which aimed at shaping the portrayal of migrants and ethnic minorities in the media in Hungary. The publication of the study was supported by the Royal Netherlands Embassy and the European Commission's *Fundamental rights and citizenship programme*.

On behalf of the Center for Independent Journalism I express my gratitude for the support and thank all civil organisations and journalists who have helped our work through their active participation, advice and remarks.

Budapest, 14 February, 2011

*Ilona Móricz director,
Center for Independent Journalism*

INTRODUCTION

Advocates of the ritual model of communication affirm that the media do not only extend ‘messages in space’ but also maintain ‘society in time’. As James W. Carey observes, the media create fora for “the creation, representation, and celebration of shared even if illusory beliefs” by a “sacred ceremony that draws persons together in fellowship and commonality” (1992 [1989], 43). The media might confirm the values that audiences share, and enhance social cohesion. Hence the media can be seen as a tool potentially capable of fostering intra-group cohesion on the one hand, and facilitating inter-group cohesion on the other.

The media may foster the integration of immigrants, asylum seekers, ethnic and national minorities. It might be able to provide cohesion for a minority group, and to integrate and organise the whole of society into one community. The media might have the potential to foster these processes in several ways. The formation and maintenance of group cohesion might be encouraged through the outlets of a particular minority, while social integration could be promoted through the majority media, minority contents, and targeted campaigns.

This paper provides some basic statistical data on national and ethnic minorities, immigrants and asylum seekers in Hungary, and sketches the majority’s attitudes toward minorities.¹ It overviews the legal and self-regulatory frameworks for the coverage of minorities living in Hungary, and briefly presents some qualitative research data on how minorities are portrayed in the media. Finally, this paper presents media campaigns, projects and programmes aiming to foster the integration of asylum seekers, immigrants, national and ethnic minorities in the period 2004–2010 (i.e. from Hungary’s accession to the European Union to the present day). It concludes with an overview and interpretation of the findings of a survey conducted among editors on their minority policies. This study focuses on the Roma, Hungary’s largest minority. This paper was completed in January 2011.

1 This paper calls asylum seekers, immigrants, national and ethnic minorities ‘minorities’ unless otherwise stated.

BACKGROUND

According to data from the 2001 census, Hungary had a population of 10,198,315. The numbers of legally recognised minorities in Hungary are indicated in Table 1.² In the census, 189,984 persons identified themselves as Roma (Romany, Gipsy, or Bea), constituting the largest minority group in the country (HCSO 2001).³ These data are based on self-confession. However, researchers estimate the number of the Roma in Hungary at 600,000 (Kemény and Janky 2003, 73; Bernát 2006, 119).⁴

Table 1
Legally recognised national–ethnic minorities in Hungary, 2001

National–ethnic minority	Persons
Armenian	620
Bulgarian	1,358
Croatian	15,597
German	62,105
Greek	2,509
Roma	189,984
Polish	2,962
Romanian	7,995
Ruthene	1,098
Serbian	3,816
Slovakian	17,693
Slovenian/Wendish	3,025
Ukrainian	5,070

Source: HCSO 2001

-
- 2 Legally recognised minorities based on Act LXXVII of 1993 on the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities.
 - 3 According to the data provided by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (HCSO) in January 2010, Hungary had a population of 10,041,324 (HCSO 2010a). The next census will be held in 2011.
 - 4 One explanation for the difference is that in Hungary, the information on ethnic origin is a special kind of data, and as such – according to the prevailing law – cannot be revealed without the written consent of the citizen. See Act LXIII of 1992 on the Protection of Personal Data and Disclosure of Data of Public Interest.

Árpád Mészáros and János Fóti have studied the assimilation process of the recognised national and ethnic groups. They suggest that the assimilation of minority groups has been partly influenced by marriage customs and in particular by “ethnically mixed or homogenous groups”. According to their findings, nationally mixed marriages (i.e. marriages between members of the majority and those of a minority) are quite common among most minorities except for the Roma community where nearly 90 percent of marriages are ethnically homogenous. Among the Roma, ethnically homogenous families are more common, which means that the children keep the nationality or native language of the parents. The successive generations in some other minority groups do not necessarily follow the nationality or native language of their minority group, thus minority households are becoming less homogenous (Mészáros and Fóti 1995).

Since joining the European Union, the number of foreigners living in the country has been growing steadily; in July 2010 there were 197,819 foreign citizens in Hungary.⁵ In 2010, more than one third of resident foreigners had a Romanian citizenship (72,720). There were Germans (18,691), Slovaks (6,424), Serbs (17,197) and Ukrainians (17,241) as well (HCSO 2010b). The explanation for such a high number of citizens from the neighbouring countries is that many Hungarian nationals live in Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and the Ukraine,⁶ and research has found that an overwhelming majority of immigrants from these countries are Hungarian nationals (Gödri 2010). The Hungarian nationals in neighbouring countries have a Hungarian identity, which is based on such cultural factors as the native language (Gereben 1999). Nearly half of foreigners of Asian origin come from China (11,173), and most residents of American origin come from the United States of America (3,088) (HCSO 2010b).

5 In 2004 there were 130,109 immigrants; in 2005 142,153; in 2006 154,430; in 2007 166,030; in 2008 174,697; and in 2009 184,358 (HCSO 2010b). The data include those foreign citizens who had a residence permit, an immigration card or a registration card. The definition determines who is regarded an immigrant. In this paper, we interpret only those data provided by HCSO, but a different definition would generate different data. See the study by Ágnes Hárs (2009).

6 Based on different census carried out in neighbouring countries (year of census indicated after the data) 1,447,544 Romanian Hungarians (2002); 520,528 Slovak Hungarians (2001); 580,414 Serb Hungarians (2002); 16,596 Croatian Hungarians (2001); and 7,713 Slovene Hungarians (2002) were living in these countries (Prime Minister's Office 2008). The number of Ukrainian Hungarians is estimated at 150–200,000, while the number of those with Hungarian origin is estimated at 90,000 in Austria (Prime Minister's Office 2008). The census methods and the estimations may vary.

Between 2004 and 2009, a total of 16,535 asylum seekers arrived in Hungary,⁷ and the state rejected the asylum application from 6,554 of them (HCSO 2010c). Since 2004, most asylum seekers have been of Serb-Montenegrin origin, but in 2009 an outstanding number of Afghan citizens arrived in the country (HCSO 2010d). Hungary is mainly a transit country for asylum seekers (Koppány 2010). In 2010, the United Nation's Human Rights Committee criticised Hungary for a number of dubious phenomena related to asylum seekers and the Roma (UNOG 2010).⁸ Meanwhile, the Hungarian Government is now drafting a bill on migration, which envisions tighter restrictions for asylum seekers, and has been heavily criticised by Hungarian human rights NGOs (see Hungarian Helsinki Committee 2010).⁹

Immigrants and asylum seekers constitute a small minority in Hungary – their ratio within the population barely reaching two percent. Nevertheless, the Hungarian population is not warm towards non-Hungarian national immigrants and asylum seekers. According to a survey conducted in 2007, 25 percent of Hungarians believe that no asylum seeker should be accepted, and a further 64 percent are 'hesitant': they think that some should be admitted, some should not. Further data indicated that those revealed as 'hesitant' are rather xenophobic. The research offers further evidence of Hungarian society's rejection of asylum seekers: the majority of the 'hesitant' also rejected the admission of asylum seekers from the imaginary ethnic group 'Piréz' (Dencső and Sík 2007). A recent opinion poll shows that only 16–19 percent of Hungarians would give a residence permit to an Arabic, African, Ukrainian, Chinese or Serbian immigrant who already had a job and a clean criminal record; the majority of Hungarians (72 percent) would give a residence permit to a member of the Hungarian national minority from the neighbouring countries with the same conditions (Lengyel and Göncz 2009). A public opinion survey conducted in 2009 found that 71 percent of respondent Hungarians subscribed to the view that "immigrants take the

7 In 2004 1,600, in 2005 1,609, in 2006 2,117, in 2007 3,419, in 2008 3,118 and in 2009 4,672 persons arrived to the country as asylum seekers, either legally or illegally (HCSO 2010c).

8 The experts of the committee asked a representative of the Hungarian Government questions about the detention of asylum seekers and the circumstances of the detention, and about breaches to the rights of Roma (UNOG 2010).

9 The Hungarian Helsinki Committee claims that the draft on migration would introduce restrictions, which would constrain the fundamental rights of asylum seekers. The draft would enable the detention of minors and the prolongation of administrative detention; the "right to seek legal remedies" would be limited (Hungarian Helsinki Committee 2010).

jobs of those born in Hungary”; more than 57 percent thought that “criminality was increasing because of the immigrants”. As part of the same research project, a poll was conducted among immigrants as well, finding that they suffered higher level of discrimination at places where immigrants were not personally known (on the street, in offices, at immigration offices); where they were known, the level of experienced discrimination was lower (in the workplace, schools, the neighbourhood) (Kováts 2010).

Hungarians are even more negative towards the largest minority in Hungary. The Roma encounter discrimination on a daily basis in all areas of life, including the educational and the health-care systems, employment, and living conditions.¹⁰ According to an opinion poll conducted in 2005, 62 percent of respondents agreed with the statement that “criminality is in the blood of the Roma” (Tárki 2005). Another survey found that the majority of the Hungarian population believed that “Roma should be forced to live like Hungarians do” (81 percent), and that the problems of the Roma would be solved if “they at last started to work” (82 percent) (Publicus Research 2009). Another indicator of anti-Roma sentiments is the rise and growing popularity of the extreme-right party Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik). This openly anti-Roma party has delegated three members to the European Parliament (of a total of 22 Hungarian MPs), winning 47 of the 386 seats in the Hungarian national assembly during the 2010 legislative elections.

In addition to discrimination and racism, the Hungarian Roma minority also faces physical aggression. Between January 2008 and August 2009, the Roma living in the countryside were targets of a series of Molotov cocktails attacks and shootings. Six people died (Amnesty International 2010). The police arrested the suspects in August 2009 (Thorpe 2009).

10 On the everyday life of Roma, see Kemény and Janky 2003 and AnBlok Nr. 4, 2010. The Decade of Roma Inclusion aims at fighting against these phenomena. More information about the Decade at: <http://www.romadecade.org/> (last accessed September 6, 2010).

MINORITIES IN THE HUNGARIAN MEDIA – LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Act LXXVII of 1993 on the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities stipulates that “public service television channels and radio stations – as provided for in a separate Act – will ensure that national and ethnic minority programmes are produced and broadcast on a regular basis” (Art. 18, 1). The Act recognises 13 ethnic groups in Hungary: the Armenians, Bulgarians, Croatians, Germans, Greeks, Roma, Poles, Romanians, Ruthenians, Serbs, Slovaks, Slovenes, and Ukrainians (Act LXXVII of 1993, Art. 61, 1). The Act stipulates that the state supports the publishing of books and periodicals designed for minorities (Act LXXVII of 1993, Arts. 50, 2b).¹¹

According to the prevailing constitution, “the Republic of Hungary recognises and protects the freedom and diversity of the press” (Act XX of 1949, Art. 61, 2). The base law stipulates that the public service media provider participates in the preservation and enrichment of the national and the European identity, of the Hungarian and the minority languages and cultures; and in the “confirmation of national belonging and the satisfaction of the claims of national, ethnic, family and religious communities” (Act XX of 1949, Art. 61, 4).¹²

Until the end of 2010, the Hungarian media were regulated by two major pieces of legislation: Act II of 1986 on the Press and Act I of 1996 on Radio and Television. The electoral victory of the national-conservative Fidesz (Young Democrats Association) and KDNP (Christian Democratic People’s Party) party coalition in April 2010 gave Prime Minister Viktor Orbán’s second cabinet a two-thirds majority in the national parliament, which enabled the government to adopt and to execute legal changes in a variety of areas, including the media whose regulation requires a two-thirds majority of votes.

11 Until December 27, 2010, state support was granted through the Public Foundation for National and Ethnic Minorities of Hungary. Government decision 1316/2010 (XII. 27.) published in *Magyar Közlöny*, the Hungarian Official Journal, on December 27, 2010 (Nr. 198), abolished this and many other public foundations.

12 Fidesz is drafting a new constitution, which the government plans to pass in spring 2011. The opposition parties decided not to participate in the work of the parliamentary *ad hoc* committee set up for the constitutional process (Politics.hu 2011).

In 2010, the new parliament passed 43 new laws and amended 107 acts (MTI 2010). During this process, it thoroughly modified media regulation by way of a series of new laws pertaining to the media. The two most important acts in the new regulation – the new media act (Act CLXXXV of 2010 on Media Services and Mass Media) and the so-called ‘media constitution’ (Act CIV of 2010 on the Freedom of the Press and the Fundamental Rules on Media Content) – cover the whole media market, including radio, television, newspapers, and websites.

As the programmes described in this study were broadcast under the former media regulation, hereafter we will present both the old regulation valid until the end of 2010 and the new one replacing it. The Act II of 1986 on the Press, valid until December 31, 2010, stipulated that the views published in the press could not harm the constitutional order of the country. The Act provided that, when practicing press freedom, one could not commit a crime or call upon a crime; nor could one harm public morals or other people’s personal rights (Act II of 1986, Art. 3, 1).

Act I of 1996 on Radio and Television was valid in full length until the very end of 2010. It stipulated that “programme providers shall respect the constitutional order of the Republic of Hungary, their activities may not violate human rights and may not incite hatred against individuals, sexes, peoples, nations, national, ethnic, linguistic and other minorities, churches or religious groups” (Act I of 1996, Art. 3, 2). Additionally, “programme provision may neither overtly nor covertly insult any minority or majority group of society, or depict any view of them, discriminating or otherwise, on the basis of racial considerations” (Act I of 1996, Art. 3, 3).

Act I of 1996 on Radio and Television obliged public service programme providers (and public programme providers) to ensure “the diversity of programmes and views and the viewpoints of minorities” (Art. 23, 3), and stipulated that these programme providers “shall pay special attention to [...] presenting the values of [...] national, ethnic and other minority cultures” (Art. 23, 4). The Act stipulated that public service programme providers must provide information for national and ethnic minorities “in their native languages on a regular basis [...] with subtitles in television programmes where necessary or by multilingual programme provision” (Act I of 1996, Art. 26, 1). The new media law adopted by the second Orbán government has basically preserved only those paragraphs of the old law that required radio stations and television channels to provide news.

The new media regulation has provisions with regard to minorities which are highly similar to the old one. Act CIV of 2010 prescribes that “the media

content provider shall [...] respect human dignity” (Art 14, 1), and “the constitutional order of the Republic of Hungary and its operations may not violate human rights” (Art. 16). Furthermore, “media content may not incite hatred against persons, nations, communities, national, ethnic, linguistic and other minorities or any majority”, and media content may not “offend, or call, either openly or covertly, for the exclusion” of these groups (Act CIV of 2010, Art. 17, 1,2). With regard to the “rights of the audience”, the ‘media constitution’ stipulates that “in the Republic of Hungary, the public service media operates in order to [...] foster national, family, ethnic and religious communities, as well as to promote and enrich national and minority languages and culture and to meet the citizens’ informational and cultural needs” (Act CIV of 2010, Art. 11).

Under the new media law (i.e. Act CLXXXV of 2010 on Media Services and Mass Media), “public service broadcasters” must, among other things, satisfy the “media-related needs of national and ethnic minorities, religious communities, present their culture, foster the mother tongues of national and ethnic minorities” (Art. 83, 1e) and “present Hungary and Hungarian culture to Europe and to the world, as well as the culture of national and ethnic minorities living in Hungary” (Art. 83, 1l). The media act of 2010 stipulates that all recognised national and ethnic minorities “are entitled to foster their culture and mother tongue and to be regularly informed in their mother tongue by way of specific programmes aired by the public service media” (Act CLXXXV of 2010, Art. 99, 1). The public service broadcaster must execute this mission on both the national and the local levels – depending on the geographical situation of the national or the ethnic minority – using subtitles or multilingual broadcasting if needed (Act CLXXXV of 2010, Art. 99, 2). The national self-governing entities of the national and ethnic minorities – or if there are no such bodies, their national organs – individually determine the principles of the use of their airtime provided by the public service broadcaster (Act CLXXXV of 2010, Art. 99, 3). One of the tasks of MTI, the Hungarian News Agency – the organisation that will produce news programmes for the public service broadcasters¹³ (Act CLXXXV of 2010, Art. 101, 4) – is to “regularly and objectively report on the life of national and ethnic minorities living in Hungary” (Act CLXXXV of 2010, Art. 101, 1g).

13 The public service broadcasters are Hungarian Radio, Hungarian Television, and Duna Television.

MINORITIES IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE AND THE COMMERCIAL MEDIA

As over 75 percent of all household can receive the transmissions of public service broadcasters – except for Duna II Autonómia – (ORTT 2010, 568–9), their programmes may reach masses and thereby effectively foster the integration of minorities.¹⁴ In Hungary, public service broadcasters include the seven national radio stations of Hungarian Radio (Magyar Rádió, MR): MR1 Radio Kossuth; MR2 Radio Petőfi; MR3 Radio Bartók; MR4 National Programmes; MR5 Parliamentary Programmes; MR6 Regional Radio; MR7 Songs and Melodies of Hungarian Radio; the television channels M1 and M2 of Hungarian Television (Magyar Televízió, MTV); and the television channels Duna TV and Duna II Autonómia (Duna II Autonomy) of Duna Television (Duna Televízió, Duna TV). The organisational and operational rules of these public service broadcasters have provisions on minority programming.¹⁵

Hungarian Radio broadcasts programmes for the national and ethnic minorities on both the national and the regional levels; the programmes are produced either in the mother tongues of the minorities or in Hungarian (Organisational and operational rules of the Hungarian Radio Corporation). MR4 National Programmes broadcasts nationally on AM frequencies from four areas in the country (Marcali, Szolnok, Lakihegy, Pécs) in the languages of national and ethnic minorities. This station broadcasts two-hour programmes on a daily basis in Croatian, German, Romanian, Serbian, and Slovak; and 30-minute programmes on a weekly basis in Armenian, Bulgarian, Greek, Polish, Ruthene, Slovenian, and Ukrainian (MR4). A 57-minute long

14 In Hungary, the new media act modified the final date for the digital switchover for audiovisual broadcasting, which is now scheduled for December 31, 2014 (Act LXXIV of 2007, Art. 38, 1). There is no final date for the switchover of radio broadcasting (Act LXXIV of 2007, Art. 38, 2).

15 Act CLXXXV of 2010 delegated the “production, ordering and purchasing of their programmes, also their information provision and other activities” of the public service broadcasters to the Media Service Funding and Asset Management Fund (hereafter Fund) (Art. 108, 1). For public service broadcasters, the Public Service Code will serve as a guideline (Act CLXXXV of 2010, Art. 95). As programme production will be delegated to the Fund, there might be some changes in the future as to the structure of the programmes presented in this section.

programme for the Roma is broadcast every weekday from noon on MR4. Archived and live programmes are also accessible at the MR4 website. MR1 Radio Kossuth broadcasts the programmes *Presence – Roma cultural magazine* and *Presence – Roma and public life* twice a week providing news on Roma cultural events and public life; it relies on the Roma media as an information resource.

The Minority Programme Editorial Board of Hungarian Television Ltd. produces television programmes for all 13 of the national and ethnic minorities in Hungary as well as for the majority society in accordance with the operational rules of the broadcaster. The programmes *Domovina* (Slovak), *Ecranul Nostru* (Romanian), *Hrvatska Kronika* (Croatian), *Roma Magazin*, *Srpski Ekran* (Serb) and *Unser Bildschirm* (German) are broadcast on a weekly basis on MTV. The programmes *Együtt*, *Roma Fórum*, *Rondó* (in Bulgarian, Greek, Polish, Armenian, Ruthene and Ukrainian), and *Slovenski Utrinki* (Slovenian) are broadcast in a varied schedule (every week, every two weeks, every three weeks or once a month). These programmes are generally aired on M1 on weekdays in the early afternoon, and repeated on M2 on weekdays during the morning. In general, a programme is 25–30 minutes long, except for *Rondó*, which is one hour.

In reply to our query, Ms. Judit Klein, head of the Minority Programme Editorial Board, noted that these programmes were to preserve the language and the identity of the national and ethnic minorities; however, the majority society could also enjoy them because they were subtitled.¹⁶ She said that the average share of minority programmes was equal to that of MTV's other broadcast material (around 8–10 percent). Judit Klein asserted that the programmes were created by people who speak both Hungarian and the minority language, and were, where possible, members of the given minority.¹⁷ The average monthly audience share of M1 for the whole day is around eight percent; that of M2 is less than two percent (AGB Nielsen 2010). Duna Television produces programmes mainly for the Hungarian diaspora. According to the operational rules of Duna TV, the mission of the broadcaster includes the provision of cultural and political news from the neighbouring countries, the protection of the identity and native language of the Hungarian minorities, and forming an objective picture of Hungarians both inside and outside Europe. According to Eszter Kántor at Duna TV's Office of International Relations, both the domestic and the foreign studios of the

16 Judit Klein, MTV, personal communication, August 25, 2010.

17 *Ibid.*

broadcaster employ journalists who can speak Romanian, Serb and Slovak.¹⁸ The audience share of Duna TV on an average day is below two percent in Hungary (AGB Nielsen).

The commercial media cover topics related to national and ethnic minorities on a regular basis. How they proceed is important: their coverage may either enhance or impede the integration of minorities. The selection of topics, word choice, and background presentation are the tools which determine whether or not the media promote the integration of society as a whole. Media outlets must observe the general provisions of the prevailing media regulation, and may also follow the provisions of their own self-regulatory mechanisms, if there are any.

Most media outlets have developed their own codes of ethics.¹⁹ The code of the market-leading national commercial television channel addresses the issue of how (not) to use the expression 'Gypsy crime':

"... avoid the trap of generalisation. Because generalisation is a form of appearance of prejudices. The best example of this is the visualisation of the Roma in news programmes. There are Gypsies or Romas, but there are no Gypsy/Roma criminals (just as there are no White or Hungarian criminals, only criminals). We deal with the ethnic, religious belonging of the person in the news only when it is a relevant part of the news item." (RTL Klub code of ethics, italics from original)

In addition to majority media, minority media may also reach out to the majority society and foster integration. There are some media outlets for the Roma, many of which are edited by the Roma, including the magazines *Amaro Drom*, *Glinda*, *Lungo Drom* and *Világunk*; *Radio C* a local service; the websites *Romnet.hu* and *Sosinet.hu*; the Roma Press Centre and the news agency *C-Press*.²⁰ Generally, these outlets are funded by the state, foundations, or through advertising. When financial sources do not arrive as expected, operations may suffer. This was the case with *Radio C*, which has only been broadcasting music and news since September 2010 (Black Joe 2010) and *Amaro Drom*, which has not been published since June 2010.²¹ Besides this,

18 Eszter Kántor, Duna TV, email, September 16, 2010.

19 On self-regulation and codes of ethics, see Bajomi-Lázár and Kertész (2007); Bajomi-Lázár and Tóth (2007).

20 On the history of the Roma press, see Tivadar Fátyol (2004).

21 Kata E. Fris, *Amaro Drom*, personal communication (February 2, 2011).

national minorities and some immigrant groups have established media outlets of their own. Some periodicals from national and ethnic minority groups have so far received regular financial support from the state.²²

Apart from the code of ethics of a particular media outlet, journalists – if members – may also observe the provisions of a journalists association. The four Hungarian journalists associations have created a joint code of ethics.²³ It is stipulated that journalists must protect democratic values and work against incitement to hatred, whether it be based on race, religion, culture, nationality, gender, sexuality or age. Journalists must “dissolve tension, [and] encourage trust and patience when it comes to conflicts in society.” Journalists must protect the Hungarian language as well as the “beauty and inviolability of the native languages” of minorities living in Hungary (Common Code of Ethics 2003).

The Association of Hungarian Journalists has a code of ethics of its own. The principles listed therein are also concerned with the protection of human dignity and the four principles of “ethical journalistic behaviour”, including “respect, independence, reliability, and sensitivity” (MÚOSZ n.a.). If a reader has a complaint, it can be submitted to the Ethics Committee of the Association of Hungarian Journalists. If the creator of the piece in question is a member of the Association, the Committee may impose sanctions; otherwise the body can only issue a non-binding verdict (Bajomi-Lázár and Kertész 2007).

The Hungarian Association of Content Providers (MTE), which unifies the market-leading news portals, also has a code of ethics. In the event it is breached, the organisation might impose a sanction on a member (MTE 2001). The code of ethics stipulates the following.

“The demand of impartiality is one of the cornerstones of conscientious information provision. The Content Provider must render itself to the service of the public and the public sphere as a whole, and never just a part of it, irrespective of age, gender, religion, race, sexual orientation, or one’s position in society. The content must reflect social diversity.” (MTE 2001)

22 In January 2010, the Board of the Public Foundation for National and Ethnic Minorities of Hungary decided to grant 269 billion forints to support 19 minority media outlets in 2010 (mnekk.hu, last accessed January 4, 2011).

23 Association of Hungarian Journalists (Magyar Újságírók Országos Szövetsége, MÚOSZ); Community of Hungarian Journalists (Magyar Újságírók Közössége); Hungarian Catholic Association of the Press (Magyar Katolikus Újságírók Szövetsége), Press Union (Sajtószakszervezet).

Under the old media law, the broadcasters' audience could file a complaint with the National Radio and Television Board (ORTT). After the authority had examined the complaint, and if it was found to be valid, the media outlet could have been penalised, or even obliged to suspend broadcasting. Under the new media law, if a media consumer finds a published article or a broadcast programme harmful, a complaint may be submitted to the National Media and Telecommunications Authority (NMHH); but the Commissioner for Media and Communications may also "take measures *ex officio* when becoming aware of any harm to interests" (Act CLXXXV of 2010, Art. 140). When investigating the case, the Commissioner might request the media outlet to submit the relevant data, and start a conciliation process.²⁴

Under both the old and the new media laws, media consumers could and can submit a complaint to the court, or cases may be handled by the ORTT or the NMHH.

In recent years, there have been efforts in Hungary to create a self-regulatory media system,²⁵ aiming to strengthen ethical journalism, to handle consumer complaints related to ethics, and to avoid excessive state regulation. These attempts have not resulted in anything for several reasons. After the new media regulation, new talks have started among the dominant actors of the media, with the coordination of the Center for Independent Journalism, to create such a self-regulatory system.

24 If the media outlet does not provide sufficient data or does not meet deadlines, the Authority may impose fines ranging from 50,000 to 50,000,000 forints (Act CLXXV of 2010, Art. 175, 8).

25 In 1997 and 1998 the Visegrad Protocol, and in 2000 the Visegrad Principles codes of conduct were elaborated by broadcasters on a voluntary basis. In 2007, the Center for Independent Journalism initiated the creation of a media self-regulatory body covering the whole sector. The only self-regulatory organisation in operation in the online sector since 2001 is the Hungarian Association of Content Providers.

MINORITIES IN THE HUNGARIAN MEDIA – AN OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH DATA

In addition to everyday discrimination, and in spite of legal provisions and codes of ethics, the Roma are negatively depicted in the media. Gábor Bernáth and Vera Messing conducted a content analysis of selected products of the Hungarian media and came to the conclusion that the Roma issue could be described as “dominated by conflicts and problems” and the opinions of Roma actors were hardly ever voiced in the news. The media describes the Roma as a homogenous group, and the news is “ethnically categorised”. The authors suggested, among other things, that professional–ethical codes should be developed, and minority journalists should be trained and employed, which would make the depiction of Roma more rounded (Bernáth and Messing 1998).

In 2001, Bernáth and Messing conducted research on the media consumption patterns of the Roma. The findings showed that the vast majority of Roma thought that they were being depicted negatively on television, as being problematic, and half of Roma found the way they were depicted to be harmful. The researchers suggested that Roma programming from public service broadcasters did not accomplish the tasks stipulated in the law, as Roma comprised a small share of the audience. In the authors’ words, Roma media “are the only islands of those media presentations where the Roma can be proud of themselves” (Bernáth and Messing 2001).

The Green Book on *The Media Representation of the Roma* published by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour in 2006 emphasised that when depicting the Roma, the “sensitivity and care of the journalist” cannot be overestimated. The document provides several recommendations for journalists on covering topics related to the Roma, and it highlights the importance of educating Roma journalists and of positive discrimination towards Roma trainees in the public service media (Green Book 2006).

The *Annual Report of 2009* submitted by the National Radio and Television Commission to the Hungarian Parliament includes a qualitative analysis of the media representation of the Roma, based on two case studies. The researchers of the Commission analysed the depiction of the Roma in the coverage of the Cozma murder and the assassination at Tatárszentgyörgy in

the main national television news.²⁶ Their findings suggest that the programmes “mostly showed a negative picture of the Roma, and occasionally confirmed the existing anti-Roma prejudices of the majority society” (ORTT 2010, 338–339). The authors identified several possible reasons for this, including a lack of understanding regarding the minority issue, the uncertainty that this causes, and the lack of time caused by a competitive news environment. The report nevertheless remarked that out of the seven television news bulletins analysed, Echo TV and Hír TV²⁷ were calculatedly promoting a “Gypsy crime” context²⁸ and were “ethnicing the crimes” (ORTT 2010, 339). The media outlets judge their own work quite differently. The findings of interviews conducted with lawyers of four daily newspapers and one online content provider suggest that the journalists of these media outlets cover the news related to the ethnic groups “properly”, “fairly”, and “in a cultured manner” (Balogh 2009, 88).

In another study, sociologist György Ligeti interprets the findings of an international research project which compared the media representation of minorities in some central European countries. Having analysed television programmes, print press and websites for a month, the authors of the Hungarian section found that the majority of the articles on minorities dealt with the Roma minority, while national minorities or immigrant groups were rarely covered. Ligeti asserts the media, when covering the Roma, reports primarily on conflicts, social problems, and discrimination (Ligeti 2007). It is typical that the media focus on similar issues when it comes to covering asylum seekers – though the media tend to cover bad news in general.²⁹ Sociologist Lilla Vicsek and her colleagues conducted a content analysis of two national daily newspapers in an attempt to explore the image of asylum seekers in 2005 and 2006. They observed that few articles dealt with asylum seekers in the period studied, and the majority approached the issue from either a political/legal perspective, or from the perspective of crime and illegal activities. Articles on asylum seekers focused on problems and conflict, and most did not give voice to the asylum seekers themselves (Vicsek *et al.* 2008).

26 Handball player Marian Cozma was killed in a bar in February 2009. The media assumed that the suspects were of Roma origin. Tatárszentgyörgy is one of the venues of the attacks against the Roma: a father and his child were murdered in February 2009.

27 The two cable channels are known to belong to right-wing political forces.

28 On the spread of the expression ‘Gypsy crime’, see the analysis by Attila Juhász (2010).

29 The sociology of the news provides well-known explanations for this phenomenon. See the study by Péter Tóth (2005).

CAMPAIGNS, PROJECTS, PROGRAMMES

In recent years, a number of projects have been launched in Hungary in an attempt to alleviate the aforementioned prejudices and to foster integration via the media. The forthcoming sections present initiatives specifically aimed at promoting the integration of asylum seekers, immigrants, and ethnic minorities. The projects are ranked into sections. Firstly, we present the civil initiatives seeking to promote the integration of immigrants and asylum seekers, including two major programmes with state participation, and some other ongoing projects fostering Roma integration. Then we describe the programmes and other initiatives of the public service broadcasters launched since Hungary's accession to the EU. Lastly, we reveal the findings of a survey that we conducted among editors of the commercial media in order to disclose their policies on the coverage of minority issues. Some projects might not be included in any of these sections, as we have focused on major projects and initiatives related specifically to the media.

CIVIL INITIATIVES

In 2008 and 2009, calls were launched in order to finance campaigns that aim to “enhance intercultural dialogue” and to execute “campaigns aiming at negative discrimination of immigrants and to prevent xenophobia” by the European Integration Fund (EIF).³⁰ We will summarise the EIF-financed programmes that might have helped the social integration of immigrants and ethnic minorities in Hungary.

Campfilm Production produced three documentaries under the title *3 Weddings*, which was presented at film festivals. The aim of the project was to fight distrust, prejudice and the discrimination of immigrants. *3 Weddings* documented the preparation of weddings of three immigrant couples, and the viewers could learn about the traditions of their communities.³¹ The three documentaries were broadcast on the four public-service television channels as well as the commercial television channel Zone Club between

30 This presentation of programmes financed by the European Integration Fund is based on the response of the Ministry of Interior, Department of European Cooperation via email on August 24, 2010.

31 For more information see <http://www.campfilm.eu/produkciok.php?kat=dokumentumfilm&pid=15> (last accessed September 23, 2010).

December 2009 and May 2010. In this period, the documentaries had more than 350,000 viewers and an additional 47,000 downloads were registered on the project's website. The documentaries were released on DVD and sent to nearly all the secondary schools in Budapest.³²

Kastner&Partners Ltd. launched a campaign entitled *They are like us*, from funds granted in 2009. The campaign was comprised of several parts, including the elaboration of a creative campaign, the production and distribution of two short movies, and an evaluation of the project. The aim of the short films was to facilitate the social integration of immigrants.³³

In 2008, **LP Média Ltd.** organised a project which run under the title *Age of Immigration* and used media as a means to achieve its goals. The aim of the film series was to present third-country nationals, to inform the Hungarian population of the reasons behind immigration, and to stress the importance of immigrants' integration. LP Média Ltd. has received further EIF funding for a follow-up programme. Project manager Lilla Mészáros informed us that the first eight episodes of the project, entitled *Why Hungary?*, was broadcast on the cable channel Magyar ATV in autumn 2009, and each programme had an estimated 400,000 viewers.³⁴ The next series of 12 programmes was broadcast on the satellite television channels Duna TV and Duna II Autonómia from April, 2010, with an estimated audience of 400,000 viewers.³⁵

In 2009, **Menedék – the Hungarian Association for Migrants** organised a project under the title *Immigrant Budapest*, which covered four cultural events in Budapest and presented four typical immigrant communities. The project aspired to draw the public's attention to the presence of immigrant communities in Budapest. In addition to a number of cultural events, the project relied on a media campaign (namely articles published in magazines and in the online media), and photo essays were created about immigrant communities, supplemented with pieces written by famous Hungarian writers.³⁶ Menedék received further EIF funding for the next year, thus the

32 Marcell Gerő, Campfilm Production, email, January 19, 2011.

33 The short movies can be accessed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KkD-PwvAGV4> and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8-2VOq24PE0> (last accessed January 10, 2011).

34 For a brief description of the programme visit <http://lpmedia.hu/mi%C3%A9rt-%C3%A9ppen-magyarorsz%C3%A1g-1> (last accessed September 6, 2010).

35 Lilla Mészáros, LP Média, email, September 27, 2010.

36 For more information about the project visit <http://www.kultours.hu/> (last accessed September 23, 2010), the publication can be accessed at http://www.kultours.hu/images/stories/galeriak/web_book/bevandoarlo_bp_web2.pdf (last accessed September 23, 2010).

project will be expanded to reach the national level. Cultural events will take place in four cities in Hungary, including a photo exhibition to be displayed in major cities in a programme entitled *Cul-tour*. The organisation has announced a tender agreed with Indavideo to create videos related to the themes of immigration and immigrants.³⁷

The **Palántir Film Visual Anthropological Foundation** has made a collection of European documentary movies about migration under the title *Strangers in my garden*.³⁸ The documentaries are aimed at effectively decreasing prejudice and discrimination against third-country nationals. The documentaries were played in cinemas in 2010 and are freely available.³⁹ The foundation is able to continue its work with the help of additional EIF funding; there will also be a methodological handbook connected to the documentary collection. Organisations dealing with education, migration and the equality of opportunities may use this handbook.

The **Subjective Values Foundation** organised an artist and media course for young immigrants titled *Talents on new roads* based on funds received from EIF in 2008. The programme is similar to the *Roots and Routes* programme. The young immigrants had the opportunity to appear in festivals and other events; video clips and profiles of the young artists are available online. The Foundation has been able to continue the project under the title *Talents on new roads – contemporary mentoring* with help from an EIF fund granted in 2009.⁴⁰

The Subjective Values Foundation has other programmes apart from the one funded by the EIF. The *Music against Racism* programme involves musicians in anti-racism communication.⁴¹ The foundation is also developing an online database which lists all the organisations fighting racism, providing them with a platform where they can present themselves, their events, and projects.⁴² The website will help both civil organisations and journalists.⁴³ In 2009, **SZIAA-MÉDIA Ltd.** launched a project entitled *I'm Hungarian. I wasn't born one*. Its aim was to draw attention to immigration and to decrease

37 See <http://www.importhepaj.hu/rolunk/> (last accessed February 2, 2011).

38 For more information see <http://strangersinmygarden.hu/introduction> (last accessed September 23, 2010).

39 Zoltán Füredi, Palántir Film Visual Anthropological Foundation, email, October 3, 2010.

40 See www.tehetsegek.hu, www.rootsnroutes.eu (last accessed September 6, 2010).

41 For more information on this programme visit www.zare.hu (last accessed January 19, 2011).

42 The website is accessible at www.antirasszista.hu (last accessed November 2, 2010).

43 Marcell Lőrincz, Subjective Values Foundation, email, October 1, 2010.

negative discrimination and xenophobia, especially among high-school students. The documentary presented a moderated conversation; it was distributed online, and the message was supported by an alternative media campaign.⁴⁴

Apart from those programmes realised with support from the European Integration Fund, there have been several others launched by civil organisations in an attempt to ease the integration of ethnic minorities.

In 2007, **Artemisszió Foundation** and **Menedék – the Hungarian Association for Migrants** jointly organised a two-month nationwide media campaign under the title *Pay attention, it can give to you* with the aim of promoting asylum-seeker integration and diminishing discrimination and alienation. They called attention to diversity provided by migration through the press and a poster campaign.⁴⁵

The **Center for Independent Journalism** (CIJ) has held a *Roma Mainstream Media Internship Program* every year since 1998 in order to train young Romani in becoming journalists and to start careers in the Hungarian news media. The number of graduates has reached 110 since then. Many of the alumni work in newsrooms of the mainstream media (for example MTV, Duna TV, the Hungarian News Agency, RTL Klub, TV2, Radio Klub, Hungarian Radio, Napi Ász), in minority media outlets (Radio C, Roma Press Center), and in other press-related jobs. Over the years, more than 20 alumni have received awards for excellence in journalism. The two-semester program, which combines classroom and on-the-job training, has received international acknowledgment: it was selected as one of the top 30 diversity initiatives in the European media in 2009 (Media4Diversity, 42).

In 2010, CIJ launched *Sosinet.hu*,⁴⁶ a news website whose aim it was to strengthen Roma voices in the society. The site features multimedia stories (text, audio, and video) about Roma communities, produced by Roma journalists and targeting the online Roma and non-Roma communities. The stories on the website are regularly re-published in both mainstream and minority media outlets under the Creative Commons license of (“Share, Do not change, Do not sell”). As a partner, CIJ also participates in the EU project *Colorful but Colorblind: The Roma beyond Stereotypes*. Within this programme,

44 Details on the programme are available at www.bevandorlo.hu (last accessed September 6, 2010).

45 For more information on the project, visit <http://menedek.hu/figyeljra/> (last accessed September 6, 2010).

46 See www.sosinet.hu (last accessed December 6, 2010).

Roma and non-Roma journalists worked together in 2010 to produce a total of 25 video documentaries in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia.⁴⁷ These short movies have been distributed both online and at international public events, and CIJ continues to produce a new series of short video documentaries on the Roma community in Hungary. In 2010, as a part of the EU-funded international *Multicultural Europe in the Media* project, CIJ held workshops for journalists and civil organisations, and published Diversity Toolkits to help the work of these two groups. In 2010 and 2011, CIJ has participated in the international *Migrants in the Spotlight* project, which aims to call attention to the problems of asylum seekers and immigrants through articles and video documentaries, awarding a media prize, employing media trainees and holding workshops for media students.⁴⁸

The **Hungarian Helsinki Committee** published the booklet *Foreigners in Hungary – A Guide for Journalists* in 2009, which aimed at providing journalists with proper terminology and data on immigration.⁴⁹

The **Jövőkerék Foundation** organised a campaign under the title *Strangers?* for the integration of immigrants between August 2009 and January 2010. The means used to foster integration were a video and a website. The video presented integrated immigrants living in Hungary, and was disseminated through art movies, commercial and public-service television channels and the Internet. The project website provides information both on immigrants living in Hungary and Hungarians living abroad.⁵⁰

The **Kurt Lewin Foundation** set up the website *Romapage.hu* in 1997 to feed news on the Roma community. Editorial control was assumed by a Roma organisation in 2009, since which time the site has not been updated. The Kurt Lewin Foundation also announced a video campaign under the title *Volunteering for Roma integration*, with the winners participating in a course. The foundation has also been running a programme titled *Egál* on the regional commercial radio station Radio Café since 2007. The programme covers topics related to minorities on a regular basis. The Kurt Lewin Foundation in addition provides training for teachers under the *Educating on Democracy* scheme in

47 See <http://roma.globalstories.org/> (last accessed December 6, 2010).

48 See www.mits-eu.org (last accessed February 2, 2011).

49 See <http://helsinki.hu/Kiadvanyaink/htmls/632> (last accessed November 2, 2010).

50 The website may be visited at <http://jovokerek.hu/idegenek/> (last accessed September 6, 2010).

which 12 schools have participated so far. Cooperation, communication and organisational development are the focal points of the training.⁵¹

Menedék, Artemisszió and the **Fact Organization** organised a programme entitled *Self-portrait* in 2008, co-financed by the European Union and the Hungarian government. Based on the English example, the immigrants and Roma were able to prepare their own portraits by artistic means with the objective of promoting integration. The workshops took place in Budapest, in student dormitories, Roma settlements, and asylum camps. During the workshops, portraits were created which were later used to promote the project. Viewers could see them on public service television, in art cinemas and online.⁵² The self-portraits were displayed not only in exhibitions but in the Budapest metro, and they can also be accessed on the project website.⁵³ The **UN Refugee Agency of Budapest** has issued the booklet *The Media and the Asylum Seekers*, providing practical hints to journalists on how to conduct interviews with asylum seekers, how to take pictures of them, etc.⁵⁴

Since 2004, there have been several programmes helping Roma integration. Here we would like to highlight two major programmes carried out in co-operation with the state. The *Programme for a Convergent Society* was held between April 2004 and March 2006. The major part of this project was financed by Phare, and the minor part by the Ministry of Youth, Family, Social and Equal Opportunity. Relying on three pillars (research, education, communication), the programme aimed to draw public attention to the discrimination and inequality of opportunities for Roma, and highlighted the importance of a convergent society. A media campaign (posters, video spots) targeting the “so-called neutral attitude of members of Hungarian society” was supplemented with press meetings, a photo tender and journalism training (SZMM 2006).

The *Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015* is being financed by several international organisations, and some parts of the project are supported by the Hungarian state. Though the Decade principally aims at decreasing discrimination against the Roma in their daily lives, it provides a framework for cultural events as well. The events have so far included open-air

51 Márton Illés, Kurt Lewin Foundation, email, September 15, 2010.

52 See <http://menedek.hu/onarckep/index.html> (last accessed September 6, 2010).

53 Attila Mészáros, email, October 6, 2010.

54 The booklet may be accessed at http://www.unhcr-budapest.org/images/stories/news/docs/02_Protecting%20Refugees/2_3_Media%20Ethics%20brochure/UNHCR-Media_and_Refugees-HUN_version-screen.pdf (last accessed September 6, 2010).

exhibitions, art exhibitions, theatre plays, music festivals, conferences, panel discussions, a film festival, etc.⁵⁵ The Decade programme has four more years to run at the time of writing.⁵⁶

There are several other programmes designed as part of the Social Renewal Operation Programme (Társadalmi Megújulás Operatív Program, TÁMOP). According to the website of the National Development Agency, several winners of the tender “in support of anti-discrimination programmes in the media” aim at helping Roma integration.⁵⁷ These programmes were launched in 2010, and will end in 2011. The participants of all of the courses and media content production presented below are unemployed.

The **Association of Nonprofit Human Services of Hungary**, just like the other winners, organises two projects. The first one is the *Hatyaripe – understanding* project which provides cameraman and editor training for 15 Roma and disabled persons. The five-month course includes both theoretical and practical classes and will be followed by employment. The organisers hope that the graduates will be able to participate in “changing the media picture of the target group.” The documentaries, articles and advertisements to be produced in a second programme entitled *Face in the media* wish to present the members of the discriminated groups. The aims are diversity, punctuality, and to increase the knowledge of the majority society.

The **Minority and Human Rights Foundation** organises a project called *Receptive media – a training programme for the labour market integration of the Roma and the disabled*. This programme provides a two-year media course for 12 Roma and four disabled persons as a part of MÚOSZ’s accredited course. Six graduates will find employment with the commercial television channel Magyar ATV and the regional commercial radio station Radio Klub. The project *ADDED VALUE – Successes, results, good practices in social inclusion* seeks to present disadvantaged people realistically in a national media campaign. The campaign includes advertisements (through television, radio,

55 Past events of the Roma Integration Decade 2005-2015 can be accessed at http://www.romadecade.org/events/page/list/2/10/0/20/1?cal_stop_to=1288216800 (last accessed October 28, 2010).

56 The Roma Initiative of the Open Society Institute prepared a report on the progress of the Decade which may be accessed at http://www.soros.org/initiatives/roma/articles_publications/publications/no-data-no-progress-20100628 (last accessed October 27, 2010).

57 The list of winners may be found on the website of the National Development Agency (<http://www.nfu.hu/content/58>, last accessed November 3, 2010) under the tenders TÁMOP 5.5.4/A-09/1 and TÁMOP 5.5.4/B-09/1. The following paragraphs are based on the information available on the website.

websites, dailies, and posters), articles, reports and a radio magazine programme.

The **Partners for Democratic Change Hungary Foundation** with the Roma Production Foundation and Roma Press Center organises the *!AMENACA (with us) – Roma media programme 2010–2011* project, which seeks to present the Roma realistically in the media in co-operation with majority media outlets. The practice-oriented *!aven (come!) – Roma media traineeship programme* is currently training 12 Roma youths, six of whom will be employed by majority media outlets.

The **South-Transdanubian Regional Resource Centre**, based in the city of Pécs, offers the *Let me closer* project. Here the organisers create documentaries, radio and television spots to be distributed regionally and nationally in order to shape public attitudes toward the Roma. This project will be accompanied by a series of studies on the relationship between the media representation of the Roma and the attitudes of society. The other project, *It is about us*, provides a journalism course for 15 Roma youths.

PUBLIC SERVICE PROGRAMMES

As the media law stipulates, one of the tasks of public service broadcasters is to present the cultures of national and ethnic minorities. Public service broadcasters execute this task mainly through the provision of programmes designed for minorities.

MTV prepares programmes for Hungary's 13 recognised minorities. János Daróczi, the editor of the 18-year-old *Roma Magazine*, said that he and his colleagues were practically the first ones who “could step inside the public broadcaster television as Gypsies.”⁵⁸ Judit Klein and the journalists at *Roma Magazine* created the **Roma Production Foundation** in 2005, which offers a one-year-course for Roma youths at MTV. After the first year, four out of five students stayed at MTV as employees. Since then, there have been 15 further graduates. The training focuses on practice: the students learn reporting, camera, editing, and lighting skills.⁵⁹

Mr. Daróczi believes that in recent years, the image of the Roma has worsened in Hungary, especially because of what happened at Olaszliszka:⁶⁰ since “we,

58 János Daróczi, MTV, personal communication, September 25, 2010.

59 János Daróczi, MTV, personal communication, September 25, 2010.

60 In October 2006, Olaszliszka locals lynched Lajos Szögi after he ran over a Roma girl with his car (Leitner 2009). The media defined the perpetrators as Roma. Three of the eight defendants were sentenced to life imprisonment (Origo 2009).

the Roma, even breathe differently in this country.” He thinks that one of the biggest problems is that the voice of the Roma community cannot be heard. The training session organised in cooperation with the Dutch Mira Media in the Hungarian Television programme *Migrants in the Media* aimed to ameliorate this, with two Roma youth being sent to a session held in Brussels. Apart from this, after a consultation series with Roma civil organisations, there was a consultation with MTV journalists on the media coverage of the Roma.⁶¹

János Daróczi notes that, even though the Hungarian Roma population is estimated at 600,000, the time frame of the *Roma Magazine* is the same as it was 18 years ago when it was launched. In his view it is high time to provide a real picture of the members of the largest Hungarian minority. *Ark*, MTV’s new programme, was launched in September, 2010, and is produced by the employees of the Roma Production Foundation; it might make (albeit a minor) contribution to this picture.⁶² MTV launched new nationality-based programming in the autumn of 2010. *Unison* is broadcast on M1 four times a week and presents the music of the Carpathian basin; *Pillar* is broadcast on Sunday evenings on M2 and deals with minorities in Hungary and Hungarians in the neighbouring countries (MTV Premier 2010).

Mundi Romani, Duna TV’s documentary series, was launched in 2007 in co-operation with the **Romedia Foundation**. The aim of the foundation is “to break the cycle of fear by creating a space for Roma to share their stories and culture, allowing them to present themselves in a balanced way that combats static conceptions of Roma culture” throughout Europe (Romedia n.a.). The documentaries were shot in several European countries and are being aired on a monthly basis. The episodes can be accessed online.⁶³ Some episodes have received awards at international audiovisual festivals (Romedia n.a.).

In the past, Duna TV broadcast a campaign spot called *I am a European Roma woman*, which was to enhance the acceptance of Roma women. The spot endeavoured to highlight the complexity of being a woman and being a Roma.⁶⁴ Female Roma human-rights activists from different European countries told their own stories.⁶⁵

61 János Daróczi, MTV, personal communication, September 25, 2010.

62 János Daróczi, MTV, personal communication, September 25, 2010.

63 See www.mundiromani.com (last accessed January 16, 2011).

64 Eszter Kántor, Duna TV, email, September 16, 2010.

65 The spot can be accessed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y3zhBvPn34o> (last accessed September 6, 2010).

Duna Television broadcasts movies by Tony Gatlif among others, who has a reputation for discussing Roma issues, as well as the above-mentioned *Why Hungary?* series. When asked about the coverage of the Roma, Eszter Kántor explained that the Duna TV programming regularly presents Roma guests as individuals, and not as members of a minority. She highlighted that the programmes did not concentrate on those living in poverty, “because we do not want to evoke pity or regret among viewers towards the minorities.”⁶⁶ Duna Television has also launched a bilingual programme *Closer to China*, which is designed for both Chinese and Hungarian domestic audiences.⁶⁷

COMMERCIAL BROADCASTERS

We have conducted a survey on the self-regulation provision of media outlets on the coverage of minority issues. In emails sent to editorial boards, we asked whether media outlets have in place any kind of recruitment policy on personnel of a minority origin; whether their codes of ethics provide them with any guidelines on how to deal with minorities; and whether they could mention any good practice or practices of their own that they believed could help the integration of minorities.

We sent the surveys in late July 2010, and, after several reminders, once more in early September 2010. We sent the questionnaire to more than 150 email addresses, and professional organisations also helped us distribute them. We received a total of 14 completed surveys. Among the respondents were: two public service broadcasters; two national, one cable and one local commercial television channels; one news agency; two regional and one local commercial radio stations; one weekly publisher; one news site and two major newspaper publishers. For the questionnaire, see the Appendix. Although only 14 questionnaires were answered, we believe that the low number of respondents is a result in itself as it shows that media outlets in Hungary do not place these topics on their agendas. Given the low rate of replies, we have not submitted the data obtained to statistical analysis; instead, we have conducted a qualitative analysis of the responses. The citations below are derived from the forms. We preserve the anonymity of the respondents.

None of the responding editorial boards have a written policy or quota on the employment of individuals of minority origin, and only one outlet has

66 Eszter Kántor, Duna TV, email, September 16, 2010.

67 Eszter Kántor, Duna TV, email, January 9, 2011.

indicated that they would try to find a journalist of such origin. The other media outlets do not plan to introduce such quota, but some mentioned that they had a colleague of ethnic minority origin. Some added that they did not want to discriminate their employees in any way.

“[The media outlet] does not plan to introduce such a policy, because it does not want to distinguish consciously its colleagues on the basis of ethnicity with an institutional directive.”

“Only talent and suitability matter.”

“There is no specific directive on this because we consider all people as human beings and we take the professional work as a basis [for judgement]. Thus, everyone has to fight for success on equal terms, whether they are Roma or not.

“We would consider any such registration racist.”

The majority of the responding media outlets have a code of ethics, most of which have a general stipulation on the coverage of minorities. Here are some examples.

“The broadcaster – apart from the special programmes serving this aim – presents the lives, cultures, and traditions of the national and ethnic minorities in a versatile and objective manner. The broadcaster must avoid the stereotypes embraced by the public opinion on national and ethnic minorities.”

“... when providing information, one must avoid any kind of wording which might offend the persons, communities belonging to the given national or ethnic minority.”

“We may only mention racial, religious, national belonging, sexual orientation, and marital status if, and only if, it is important in order for the story to be comprehensible.”

Some respondents found it improper when we asked them about whether the given media outlet had any article or a programme that helped to provide “objective information” on minorities.

“The media coverage of minorities is determined by reality. [...] Everyone and everything must be covered objectively.”

“All of our articles on national and ethnic minorities – we have several dozens of them every year – as well as our other articles are always written with the purpose of objectively informing our readers.”

Almost all of the respondents have mentioned programmes or articles that covered topics related to minorities, and some have added that this was part of normal business.

The responding media outlets do have a code of ethics (i.e. they consider it important to have self-regulation). Most of the codes of ethics include provisions on how to depict minorities. Despite the limited sample, we might conclude that they aspire towards depicting the complexity of these issues in the Hungarian media, which might in turn foster the integration of minorities.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The minority question is high on the agenda throughout Europe. But while Western societies are preoccupied with immigration, Eastern ones (including Hungary) focus on domestic ethnic minorities.

The number of foreigners in Hungary (as a proportion of the total population) is a negligible two percent. The majority of immigrants are Hungarian nationals coming from the neighbouring countries. Given to the low number of foreign citizens, the 'man in the street' in Hungary relatively rarely meets an immigrant or asylum seeker. The attitude of Hungarians is nevertheless negative toward foreign citizens who are not Hungarian nationals. The average Hungarian despises the Roma even more. Members of this community encounter widespread discrimination and occasional physical violence.

One of the media's roles might be to foster social cohesion and the integration of minorities. These roles might be enhanced by programming from public service broadcasters, balanced news coverage from commercial media outlets, media content produced by members of the minority, and media campaigns which aim to integrate minorities.

The public service broadcasters satisfy their legal obligations by way of providing programming for and about the national and the ethnic minorities. Though the length of the broadcasts in lower-reach periods is not proportionate to the size of the given national or ethnic minorities as compared to the total population, these programmes constitute the only fora where the average Hungarian can encounter these minorities.

Several commercial media outlets have adopted codes of ethics, and our findings confirm that most of these include provisions on how the minorities should be portrayed. However, various studies on the media representation of minorities find that in the Hungarian media, the voice of the depicted minorities can hardly ever be heard in the news, with coverage generally focusing on problems and conflicts, and the context of events being covered superficially.

Hungary's largest ethnic minority, the Roma, have their own media outlets, including magazines and websites, which provide content produced by Roma journalists. Some of their traditional media outlets have recently seen difficulties for financial reasons, but several online sites still provide regularly

updated content for both the minority and the majority, and offer a more complex view than that of the mainstream media.

The recommendations made in the studies on the media representation of minorities seem to be realised – albeit slowly. Several media outlets have tried to provide a more balanced portrayal of the Roma. There are various journalism training courses organised for the Roma, thus the Roma youth may be employed by mainstream media, which may increase these media outlets' sensitivity of minority issues. Some NGOs have prepared information booklets for journalists in order to provide information on minorities in an attempt to help better understand their problems.

We have, in this paper, listed the major media programmes that aim to promote integration – more than 30 of them. The majority of the projects have been financed from foreign resources, mainly funds granted by the European Union and various international civil organisations. These programmes have relied on a variety of media, including music festivals, documentaries, exhibitions, courses, and websites. Though it is difficult to assess whether any single project has had any effect by itself (i.e. whether it has indeed helped the integration of a minority group), one may assume that the totality of these programmes has kept the issue of minorities on the public agenda, and has therefore facilitated integration.

LEGAL RESOURCES

Act XX of 1949 the Constitution of the Republic of Hungary [1949. évi XX. törvény a Magyar Köztársaság Alkotmánya]

Act II of 1986 on the Press [1986. évi II. törvény a sajtóról]

Act LXIII of 1992 on Protection of Personal Data and Disclosure of Data of Public Interest 1992. évi LXIII. törvény a személyes adatok védelméről és a közérdekű adatok nyilvánosságáról]

Act LXXVII of 1993 on the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities [1993. évi LXXVII. törvény a nemzeti és etnikai kisebbségek jogairól]

Act I of 1996 on Radio and Television Broadcasting [1996. évi I. törvény a rádiózásról és televíziózásról]

Act LXXIV of 2007 on the Rules of Broadcasting and Digital Switchover [2007. évi LXXIV törvény a műsorterjesztés és a digitális átállás szabályairól]

Act CIV of 2010 on the Freedom of the Press and the Fundamental Rules on Media Content [2010. évi CIV. törvény a sajtószabadságról és a médiatartalmak alapvető szabályairól]

Act CLXXXV of 2010 on Media Services and Mass Media [2010. évi CLXXXV. törvény a médiaszolgáltatásokról és a tömegkommunikációról]

Governmental decision 1316/2010 (XII. 27.) on the measures to be taken based on the findings of the review process provided by Governmental decision 1159/2010 (VII. 30.) on the timely measures related to public foundations and foundations founded by the Government [1316/2010 (XII. 27.) Korm. határozata a Kormány által alapított közalapítványokkal és alapítványokkal kapcsolatos időszerű intézkedésekről szóló 1159/2010. (VII. 30.) Korm. határozat által előírt felülvizsgálati eljárás megállapításai alapján szükséges intézkedésekről]

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Do you have policy/regulation/quota on employing a member of an ethnic minority and/or immigrant group in the editorial board?

yes

no

2. If you replied “yes” to the previous question, please tell us since when the policy/regulation/quota has been in effect, and what specifically it contains?
3. If you replied “no” to question 1 please tell us whether the editorial board plans to introduce such a policy/regulation/quota.
4. Do you have statistics about how many employees you have had in a particular role/job who belong to an ethnic minority or immigrant group over the last five years?
5. Does the editorial board/media company have a code of ethics? If so, does it contain specific guidance on media representation of minorities? Please cite the relevant part.
6. Could you mention an example from the practice of the editorial board (for instance articles, programmes, projects), which might have helped/helped the factual information on ethnic minorities and immigrants. If so, briefly present the good practice, as the aim of the survey is to list and present the good practices of Hungary. These examples will be published in an international study.

Thank you for your answers in advance.

Yours sincerely,

*Borbála Tóth,
the leader of the study commissioned
by the Center for Independent Journalism*

