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**Some Social and Regional Lessons
of a Complex Roma Integration Programme
(Case Study from a Hungarian Rural Area)**

Abstract

The overall purpose of this study is to find out how to facilitate the integration of Roma people into society with the help of settlement and regional development. This is examined in the context of a specific project during which the site has been liquidated. The question arises as to what extent the implementation of the programme reached its target. The essay examines the implications of the programme for further development on the settlement concerned. The programme illustrates the importance of a complex approach, and the importance of interacting factors during the convergence of disadvantaged groups. This synergetic interaction is evaluated because it is extremely important with regard to the long-term sustainability and success of the programme. However, with the change of housing conditions, the immediate environment is also changing and one has to adapt to the new environment, which in many cases can lead to conflicts as well.

Keywords: disadvantage, labour market, living conditions, Roma population, social integration, segregation

Introduction

In Hungary, three million people live below the poverty line, of which more than a million live in extreme poverty. The Roma population is the most disadvantaged of all ethnic groups, comprising about 500–600

thousand of the people affected by this problem. We can pinpoint the low level of education leading to low-level jobs as a major cause of poverty. According to calculations the employment rate of the Roma population is only around 20%, with the employment of Roma women being only half of this. High unemployment leads to poor health and poor social and housing conditions; these being potential reasons for conflict. 60% of the Roma population live in a rural environment, mostly concentrated on the segregated peripheries of settlements where their already disadvantaged position is worsened by negative factors, leading to decreased motivation. As a result, the ethnic group has been marginalized, thus their integration into society has become a difficult task for the Republic of Hungary (Balog 2012). Solving the problem is not only in the interest of the group but also of the entire Hungarian society, because lack of integration affects its stability. The lack of social cohesion only strengthens the disintegration processes and becomes a hindering factor in the vital development of the economy.

The relevance of this issue is also emphasized by a similar strategy adopted by the European Union. The European Commission and Committee for the social and economic integration of the Roma started a comprehensive strategy in 2005 entitled Decade of Roma Inclusion. Its priority was to accelerate the social and economic integration of the Roma population and to transform their negative image into a more positive one.

The complex settlement programme was advertised by “the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs on behalf of the ESF Social Service Non-profit Limited Liability Company (ESF Office), the Minister of Social Affairs and Labour 7/2009. Basis (III. 18.), Ministry of Social Affairs Regulation” between 2009 and 2010 (www.esza.hu). The programme was designed to put an end to segregated residential areas in a way that would allow the economic and social situation of the people who live there to improve, creating suitable living conditions for them, thus drastically improving their quality of life. An additional goal of the programme was that by changing the housing conditions of the target group, they will become reintegrated, providing an opportunity for them to show up on the labour market and for the improvement of their social situation to be addressed. Their success on the labour market would be aided by increased access to health, educational and social services. The first complex site programmes wanted to solve the problems by the cessation of segregated areas and by ensuring

new residential areas. However, the ESF Office today is advertising site programmes that do not aim to liquidate the segregated areas, but instead wish to transform them in a way that creates adequate living conditions for the population living in slum-like environments.

The liquidation of Roma segregation in Hosszúhetény, evaluated in this study, and the subsequent assistance programmes, may serve as an example for additional settlements battling with the same issue. The vast majority of the village's population has a Swabian¹ identity, being part of the Hungarian middle class in the social hierarchy. Since they prefer to have an orderly, neat environment, this could be mentioned as an additional reason why the right living conditions for Beas Gypsies living under inhumane conditions at the border of the village have to be provided. The instance of Hosszúhetény might be appropriate for examining the impacts of complex site programmes and also can give an insight into their experiences by asking the people affected, thus providing an accurate picture of the programme's effectiveness.

Research Background

International literature is largely unaffected by the Hungarian Roma sociology, labour market status and social integration. In the 1990s, EU evaluations, recommendations and directives focused mostly on the protection and equal treatment of national minorities irrespective of race or ethnicity. Since the eastward expansion of the European Union, primarily the social and labour market situation of the Gypsies has been analysed in the expanded Europe (European Commission 2004; European Parliament 2010). Beyond the EU, international organizations have also highlighted the poverty, health, independence and rights of the Roma (UNICEF 2011; United Nations 2002; The World Bank 2002).

The first large-scale empirical sociological writings about the Hungarian Roma were born in the 1980s and 1990s. These papers applied the perspectives of social anthropology, examining the historical origins, economy and travelling patterns as well (Okely 1983; Stewart 1997). After

¹ Ethnic German people who are native to or have ancestral roots in the cultural and linguistic region of Swabia, which is now mostly divided between the modern states of Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria, in south-west Germany.

the turn of the millennium, larger-scale works, in addition to explaining the age-old predicament of Gypsies and their relationship to the region's states and societies, comparatively examined the Gypsies' socio-economic and political marginality and the policies toward them through seven centuries and in seven Eastern European states. Barany, Z. (2002) outlines the reasons why the Roma have always occupied the bottom of social, economic, and political hierarchies regardless of historical period or geographic location. After the turn of the millennium, research started focusing mainly on Roma education, educational integration and socialization of Roma pupils (Greenberg 2010; Kosko 2012; O'Nions 2010; Rawlings 2005; Schvey, Flaherty, Higgins 2005; Stoilescu, Carapanait 2011).

After the Hungarian system change, sociological literature dealing with the Roma situation in particular raised questions mostly in connection with their demographic, territorial, educational, social and labour market situation. However, these questions are not only relevant in the sociological sense, but also because they can affect the development of a certain area or settlement, since human factors provide the basis for socio-economic development (Csipka 1992; Kádár 1993; Kertesi 1995; Albert, Leveleki 1998).

Since the turn of the millennium, studies have been focusing on transforming the Roma in Hungary. The research revealed that the Gypsies not only have to face discrimination because of their backgrounds, but also because of their position in the social hierarchy. This brought forth the question of whether Hungarian society wants to decrease the segregation of the Roma and if so, by what means. It became apparent that an increase in the level of tolerance of the majority of the population would reduce discrimination against the Roma; however, some success stories can also be used to better the negative image of the Roma and to fight stereotyping (Székelyi, Örkény, Csepeli 2001).

Research of the new millennium no longer focuses only on the educational and labour market situation of the Roma but also on the causes of their social exclusion, inclusion and integration opportunities. Results of the research showed that some of the Roma in post-socialist countries feel that although they were poor under socialism, with the expansion of the market economy their standard of living has decreased compared to the previous period (Ladányi, Szelényi 2001).

At the turn of the century a representative survey was able to take place, the results of which became comparable with the ones of the 1990s. One of the main questions became how much the labour market situation of the Roma could be stabilized following the system change, and whether there was a significant change in the ten years in between the two studies or not. In the study, it turned out that unfortunately the low level of education of the Roma compared to mainstream society remained, and from an employment point of view the chances of non-Roma getting a job was three times higher than that of the Roma people (Kertesi 2005). These studies highlight the specific programmes that aim to improve the employment chances of the Roma but also express criticism (Szóke 2010). In connection with employment discrimination, empirical research has also examined how entrepreneurs relate to disadvantaged groups (Babusik 2008). A study based on the accounts of the disadvantaged group examined mainly how the Gypsy people can accept their negative social image (Pálos 2010).

While examining the living conditions of the Roma, the connections helpful in the sustainment of Roma and non-Roma living under the same conditions were prioritized just like the material and non-material means by which assistance to those in need can be provided. The research found that the non-Roma people have better-developed social networks than the Roma, thus the Roma support rate is much lower (Messing 2006). Research was also conducted on a broader segment of living conditions. The situation of the Roma living in segregation was assessed by centring on small village areas, because the formation of ghettos happens due to social changes through a kind of population exchange. One of the main questions became: what kind of transition are the settlements with ghettos inhabited by the Roma going through in post-communist countries, and what kind of reaction will be induced from the people living in the settlement if the region's economy starts to improve again (Virág 2008)?

In recent years, research has continued with the exploration of the problems arising in the employment of the Roma and of the present and future possibilities of their labour market situation. In many cases the authors dealt with the current state of Roma education and training opportunities as well as with the appearance of attitudes against the ethnic group from the non-Roma point of view. Some tests approached Roma employment from the companies' point of view to seek answers for questions such as: what kind of jobs the target group typically fills in, how corporations relate

to them, whether discrimination concerns them, and also what chances they start off with when entering the labour market (Mészáros, Várhalmi 2011). Association tests conducted with university students were used to supplement the research into attitudes to the Roma population with the aim of finding out how the future generation of intellectuals relate to them (Szánthó 2012). Research conducted in recent years has investigated the school mobility and integration possibilities of the Roma. By interviewing individuals with a successful life path embracing their Roma origins, the answers to the question as to how much social capital influences social mobility was targeted. In regard to the latter, research has shown that in addition to personal relationships, school is one of the most important factors. The question arose, however, of whether the social ties gained in school can overcome the patterns seen in the family. Conclusively, integration can be facilitated by appropriate secondary socialization providing the opportunity of social mobility (Elekes 2011). However, so far neither international nor Hungarian literature has examined any complex social or political intervention that could terminate segregated environments in a way that allows the inhabitants to improve their economic and social situation by creating suitable living conditions.

Research Objectives

The general purpose of this study is, with the tool system of settlement and regional development, to find an answer to how problems discussed in the introduction can be solved and how the integration of the Roma into the society can be achieved. This paper examines the extent to which the implementation of the programme reached its designated target in the context of a specific project where the liquidation of the Roma site occurred. Does integration happen more effectively with a change in the living conditions of the Roma? What might happen when a group of a specific culture is placed into a foreign environment? Does the change in living conditions help marginalized individuals escape extreme poverty? How does the majority of society relate to these changes? How does this change contribute to the development of the specific settlement and the local economy? What kind of advantages and disadvantages derive from the implementation of the complex site liquidation programme?

These general objectives are implemented through the following sub-objectives. The study aims to reveal the location and ratio of the Roma population in settlements within the involved sub-region (of Komló) through statistical data. The area is mapped according to important factors relating to the purposes of the research, analysing data related to educational, employment, unemployment and living conditions (housing and housing data). Another objective is the analysis of the site programme completed in Hosszúhetény with the help of the project-cycle theory. Gathering experience-related information from both the target group and other affected individuals living in the settlement was deemed extremely important, just like the evaluation of sub-projects implemented during the main project. Another key objective of this paper is the examination of the programme's effect on the further development of the concerned settlement.

In order to ensure that the research topic is not restricted to only one village, previous research is analysed in Chapters 4 and 5 through secondary literature.

Research Methods

For the analysis of secondary data the most important information was the census data of the Central Bureau of Statistics. Data related to the resident population, its national affiliation, level of education, economic activity, households, as well as information on the homes' comfort level have been analysed through evaluation. In the processing and collation of data the ArcGIS geographic information programme proved to be helpful. Later, with the help of raster and graphics software, significant regional inequalities were made visible. The necessary information for the evaluation analysis of the complex slum liquidation project was provided by the municipality of Hosszúhetény. The analysis of the design and implementation phases was carried out with the help of the project-cycle theory. Interviews were conducted with the involved mayor, the project leader, the representative of the Roma Minority Council, the residents of Hosszúhetény (30 local majority and 15 segregated people), and with the non-profit organizations helping the disadvantaged with labour market programmes.

Results

Socio-spatial characteristics of the broader environment of the studied settlement

The statistical data certainly manifests the multiply disadvantaged position of settlements where the Roma are present in large numbers, due to a higher number of job seekers, lower education level, poorer housing conditions and higher number of people per household. Compared with the other settlements of the sub-region, Hosszúhetény has the highest number of Roma people living under rural conditions. However, the number of inhabitants is high, therefore the proportion of the Roma is lower in comparison with the non-Roma. This fact is significant from the complex programme's point of view since it certainly has an impact on the success of integration.

The county of Baranya has relatively high unemployment rates within the country, being less able to offer jobs to those wishing to start working. This results in the migration of the working-age population from the region as well. Therefore, the decrease in population in small settlements of the sub-region of Komló is not only caused by natural population decline but also by the migration of young people in the hope of a better living in the more developed regions, or in the capital city or its surrounding areas. However, the demographic processes of Hosszúhetény do not follow this trend since from 1990 onwards its population has been growing. Among the settlements of the sub-region we can find some characterized by higher rates of job searchers, which is probably justifiable by the number of inhabitants, the population density and the peripheral and unfavourable geographical location. When assessing the extent of the unemployment rate in the settlements of the region, we should not only take the ratio of the Roma into account but also other differentiating factors (e.g. distance from cities, geographical location). The situation is similar when examining the increase in comfort of homes, since in every settlement the number of homes with all amenities and comfort has greatly improved over the past 20 years. However, in other settlements in the unfavourable geographical location of the region, the aging population greatly affects poverty resulting from unemployment. It can be observed, however, that the number of households with a greater number of inhabitants (4–5 residents and 6 or

more residents) is decreasing, while the number of one-person households has been growing in the settlements of the Komló sub-region since the fall of Communism. Undeniably, the reasons for this might be that the majority of the population are elderly people living alone and also postponed family formation many for young people who also maintain a household on their own; moreover, a significant number of young couples do not have children at all or only have one child.

The evaluated statistical data confirms that Hosszúhetény is different and partly stands out from the rest of the sub-region's settlements. Its unemployment rate is one percentage point lower than the sub-region's average; however, it is still considered high compared to the national average. In terms of educational attainment data the municipality is in a relatively favourable position, because since 1990 a greater number of people with diplomas or higher education have lived there and the number of eight-graders or people with lower education levels is not extremely high. Half of the residents over the age of seven have a secondary, vocational or grammar school certificate. In the change of homes' comfort level the effects of the slum liquidation project that ended in 2011 can be observed. During the census of 2001, there were 54 temporary accommodations in the settlement, while during the 2011 census, there were only five. Thus, three-quarters of the homes are considered as having all amenities and more than 90% of them are comfort homes. Regarding the households, the number with six or more residents is higher than the average; however, the proportion of one-person households is lower than in the rest of the settlements of the sub-region.

The regional relevance of implementation

Hosszúhetény can be considered favourable in terms of its geographical location as it is close to three urban-level municipalities and a major transport route. The village's population grows year on year, unlike the sub-regional trend. A nursery, a primary school and a secondary school are present in the settlement in addition to a post office, a GP clinic, a pharmacy and a police station, thus considering its size it has a good set of institutions. Hosszúhetény has two Roma sites, one of which is located in the lumberyard and the other of which is in Hármáshegy Street. According to the terms of the project the local government of Hosszúhetény can only

claim support for the liquidation of the lumberyard because the claim can only be submitted for the liquidation of sites with a populace of more than 25 residents.

The area the project was concerned with is located on the periphery of Hosszúhetény, two kilometres away from the village centre and 800 metres away from the nearest populated house within the village. The site consisted of a house situated on recultivated land, originally serving as a staging building, and then a temporary resting place for miners during the subsequent recultivation which was finished more than one and a half decades ago. 36 people lived in this unused, government-owned eight-room house which was considered to be life-threatening. Due to the incomplete and inadequate windows and insulation, the building was mouldy and could not be heated. Due to the property's location it only possessed power lines – other utilities were not available – and neither running water nor adequate heating was provided for the residents. Because of the lack of running water, basic hygienic conditions were not met either. The site's segregation was increased by the fact that it had no paved roads and no public lighting either. The condition of the road was so bad that the site could not be reached at all times of the year by a normal car, so in case of an emergency the ambulance and fire brigade had to use specialized vehicles or could only approach the place on foot. The lack of public lighting, especially in the winter period, made approaching the site dangerous; children could not get to school or home safely.

The municipality is situated near the county capital, mainly determining its position on the labour market because the majority of Hosszúhetény residents commute daily to Pécs and Komló. Apart from the wood-processing plant, there are no significant employment opportunities; however, family businesses are to be found in the settlement, mainly linked to tourism. Out of the 52 families living in the village, 8 families were affected within the framework of the programme. Apart from housing problems, the multiply disadvantaged position is further enhanced by the fact that people of working age are unemployed, unskilled and undereducated; consequently they only live on temporary or seasonal work, or in worse cases they seek employment on the black labour market. Their employment opportunities are further complicated by the fact that most of them have changed working abilities. For the children living on the site it is not only the housing conditions that make it difficult to break out from poverty but also the

fact that their parents cannot provide the support to give them equal opportunities to others.

The site had suffered serious social problems. The relationships between residents were unclear. Their interdependence was increased by the site's physical distance from the main settlement, which evidently reduced the formation of any kinds of relations with the residents of Hosszúhetény. The typical behavioural patterns of people living on the site are unacceptable for the majority of the population but for the people formerly living on the site these are difficult to change. Children had the greatest chance for improvement in school; however, due to a high number of absences this did not occur in practice. Because of their isolation, the Roma's knowledge of people varied within narrow limits; they relied on incomplete and unsubstantiated information, which in many cases caused unrealistic fears in the families originating from major lacks of competence (illiteracy, functional illiteracy, lack of awareness, low level of communication skills). The narrow social circle hindered the development of their verbal skills – with each other they could easily make themselves understood – and because of their lifestyle without consistent rules, according to accounts, they used socially unaccepted affective elements in achieving their goals.

The development of the community and culture in the project was done by the president of the local Roma minority self-government, who worked for 12 years in his profession, possessing quite a lot of experience and contacts. A characteristic of the Beas Roma's social interaction is that communication only spread within this small community, thus unique devices and methods of contact have emerged. These methods of communication cannot be interpreted in other communities, not even by the also disadvantaged and low-status population of other settlements. The Roma of the site did not only neglect to make contact with the residents of Hosszúhetény but also with the Roma living in the village. The segregated environment strengthened their total exclusion from local society and not even the recognition of their cultural history sparked their interest.

The health status of those living on the site had been influenced by their economic status; the families in question all lived in extreme poverty. In addition to the crowded, low-comfort-level homes, the situation was considerably worsened by inadequate sanitary conditions and an unbalanced diet greatly contributing to deteriorating health. The purchase of food caused difficulty for these families; the number of meals a day was

low and the ingredients of the consumed food did not even satisfy their daily energy, vitamin or mineral requirements. They commonly used basic health care for acute illnesses and did not participate in screening tests at all; consequently there was no possibility of screening or caring for their chronic diseases.

Of the people living on the site, 23 had at least primary school education, out of which 4 people had vocational education. The majority of the school-aged children had special educational needs which were catered for in the institutions of Komló. Even though Hosszúhetény has a kindergarden and a primary school, only two of the children living at the lumberyard went to the municipal school.

The above mentioned facts confirmed the need for implementation of the project in the lumberyard of Hosszúhetény, as not only were the housing and living conditions inhumane, but based on the labour market data, people's chances of breaking out of their living situation were also low before the site's liquidation. The elimination of such sites is not only in local interest, as the intervention in poverty and the increase of education levels also appears in national programmes with high priority. Within the frame of the programme, people living in miserable conditions got a chance and hope of a better life through breaking out of poverty and also through the possibility of development.

In the Economic Programme created by the local government of Hosszúhetény, for the period between 2007 and 2010, the unsustainability of the situation of the Gypsies appeared as well. A task was formulated during the representative board meeting, namely that their integration into the local society should be assisted; however, in favour of preserving their traditions and ethnic identity, adequate functioning of the CKÖ (Gypsy minority government) had to be ensured in the settlement in order to be able to defend the interests of the affected Roma. Efforts were made to initiate community service and public employment of the lumberyard Roma with the goal to increase their low educational levels, requiring the cooperation of local educational institutions and the CKÖ as well.

Structural Effects of the Programme

Positive experiences

The project evaluated in this paper is certainly effective, not only from the village's point of view in that one of its shameful spots disappeared, but also from the viewpoint of Roma families seeking to adapt to the new environment and integrate into society. A similar positive change is perceptible from the side of the municipality's residents. By now most of the fears had disappeared, and some neighbourhood relations not only were resolved but steered into a good direction. The council has undertaken a very serious risk with the application of the project, because making residents of Hosszúhetény accept the fact that the infamous lumberyard families would be moved into the village was not without conflict. To ensure the smooth progress of the project, the inhabitants of the municipality had to be carefully informed about its importance and had to understand why there was a need to liquidate the site.

During the implementation of the Hosszúhetény programme, there was surprisingly no problem with the migration. Even older generations were expecting the move from the site, which in other similar instances had caused big problems and disruption. The Roma site liquidation project achieved its main goal: the segregated part of the settlement was terminated, assuring comfortable living conditions for those who used to live there, and facilitating the break-out from a disadvantaged position. The eight families were provided with family houses in the village or in neighbouring settlements, which proved to be a better solution than placing these people in small flats because the larger and more comfortable homes better resembled their former way of life. After the renovation and preparation of the properties they became adequate for moving into, thus completing the housing part of the project. The affected Roma participated in job aptitude testing, the furnishing of the new homes was solved through donations, and the replacement of the missing ID cards was done with the help of social workers. Within the frame of the programme the Roma received training and employment counselling, and were provided with access to social care. Looking at the project as a whole, it is a big achievement that some former site inhabitants were involved in the implementation of the project and were active participants in the events. The homes for the families were

bought and equipped from project money and donations collected by the village, providing a great example of social responsibility. The council will further help the Roma from the site both in the maintenance of their new homes (e.g. supplying them with firewood) and in their employment (the Roma from the site work in the local public work programme).

Another development is that the Roma children cited poems in both Hungarian and Beas on Nationality Day, an event which one-third of the newly settled Roma attended. An additional achievement is that 50 people attended the Gypsy² dance house and excursions. According to the project management's evaluation, as a result of the project's community development component, the acceptance of the Roma became better and perceptions about the project also changed in a positive direction. From the settlers' point of view it is positive that despite former series of quarrels three families from the site shared their ideas with each other. These three families were the most active during the project, participating in the most events organized by the community developer for the Roma. During the excursions they had the opportunity to talk with others and the dance house helped in the preservation of their cultural values. Their participation in the organized programmes helped them approach the people of the village; consequently they had the opportunity to increase their acceptance in the settlement.

As a result of the health promotion part of the project, a nurse regularly visits the families living on the site. During the summer 50 people took advantage of the screening tests, as well as closer cooperation having been established between the GP, the nurse and the target group. Medical consultations are still continuously ongoing between the Roma of the project and the professionals. During the programme there were free screening tests several times which the residents of the village could make use of as well. Perhaps more emphasis could have been placed on how to convince the families to lead a healthy lifestyle, for instance calling their attention to the severe effects of smoking on pregnant mothers and their unborn children. Linked to the teaching of the previously mentioned money management techniques, a basic cooking club is also available where

² The three main Roma ethnic groups in Hungary refer to themselves differently. The Romungros (Hungarian Gypsies) and the Vlach Gypsies use "Roma", and the Beas group use "Gypsy".

families can master the preparation of cheap but healthy meals. It would be valuable, however, to link the traditions of Roma gastronomy to this programme, to which interested residents could also be invited.

One of the greatest achievements in the educational part of the project is that even if just a small number of children ask for help in learning it is a mark of progress, and most youngsters prove to be more accepting than at the start of the project. People taking part in adult education were regularly participating in the training, making use of the preparation courses for the exam. The management conducted negotiations about passing the eighth grade for those who managed to pass the sixth grade. The result of this was that one person, with the help of the job centre, passed the eighth grade. 28 children participated in the project, which also counts as a good result.

The preparation of the participants during the training was successful; the computer training and the creative group were also welcomed with great popularity among the students. The programme's success is also shown by the fact that students participated in the study groups and programmes with pleasure after a short time, and they succeeded in carrying out tasks more patiently and in a more concentrated manner. Students' text comprehension and text creation also improved during this short period of time, although additional programmes would be required for the children to achieve the optimal level. The students of Hosszúhetény were given the push and motivation by the fact that through the study hall programme of the Inner Fire Association in Komló they could work together with other disadvantaged Roma children, who have also been involved in the talent development programme for several years. The association, according to its own capabilities, offered additional assistance to the students of Hosszúhetény.

In the programme element the target groups' students could get to know students from other settlements of a similar situation, providing further motivation in learning. This part of the project was important because children are the most susceptible to change. If we manage to develop their skills in childhood to make up for the deficiencies, then they will not only be successful in adulthood, but they can also give a positive example for their children to follow as well.

The Roma also gladly participated in the training and employment part of the project. They liked going to classes, favouring especially the theoretical parts. They learnt masonry and plastering skills which are relatively easy

to learn. They not only completed the training enthusiastically but also successfully. The park caretakers and masons were almost all employed in public work but for those families who did not get a job in the village it was very difficult to obtain an unsupported job.

Hopefully, the integration of the target group's next generation will happen in an easier and faster way. For families with small children it is important to ensure continued support in order to promote the socialization of school-aged and preschool-aged children. Children participating in the programme would relate differently to their peers because they could go to school in an adequate and orderly way. The direct effect of the positive change in living conditions can be observed in the improvement of the children's social relations.

Programme elements recommended for improvement

In addition to the above assessed benefits, the time for the implementation of the project was short; the project may have been too rapid a tool for the solution of a significant social and regional problem. An element that was missed in the follow-up component was the social follow-up, which would have been an important factor regarding inclusion. Although the family support service has taken over the social care and tracking after the completion of the project, not all site Gypsies were given this privilege after the liquidation of the segregated site. In connection with the project conditions it would be helpful if only those local governments could claim the aid that can continuously care for the families after the implementation. It could eliminate concerns that the former conditions could re-emerge and new segregations could be formed.

Out of the conflicts that emerged during the implementation, the occasionally inappropriate communication within the project team can be highlighted, primarily those between the families and social workers, those between the families and also those between the CKÖ and the project management. However, during the progress of the project both the social sensitivity and coordination of the project team greatly improved. There were also problems with the participants during the implementation of the programme as the target group in the first half of the project did not accept the employed social worker and the conflicts arising from this hindered the implementation. There were also problems with the project's

complexity, because it is not enough to change the housing or just turn attention to children's education as a more extensive solution would be required to resolve these issues. The Roma families need to acquire the ability to improve and manage their lifestyle just like their communication skills. At the same time there should be a greater emphasis on eliminating the disadvantaged position of the children in the future, e.g. after-school activities if the parents are not able to provide the appropriate assistance. Another problem is that a proportion of the young members of Roma families – as a result of socio-cultural impacts – struggle with a handicap in learning abilities such as a slower pace, decreased independence, inaccurate understanding of certain tasks, potential inflexibility of thought operations, and frequent mistakes or fatigue.

Among the negative elements, the protest experienced from the inhabitants of the municipality at the start of the programme can also be mentioned. The social acceptance of the site liquidation was quite low as the people of Hosszúhetény felt it was unjust that they had to create adequate living conditions by their own strength, while other people get the same as an aid. Even some of the Gypsies living in the village complained about supporting the Roma living at the lumberyard and the fact that they did not benefit from it. The question arose of who would provide aid for those who live in a generally worse, although compared to the site Roma a better position, in their semi-comforted or no-comfort apartments/houses becoming fully comforted. Handling this problem is not simple, and in some cases may suggest a change in the criteria system. The prejudice of the local residents towards the Roma also led to tension. For in a given settlement it is the responsibility of the majority to successfully integrate the minorities, therefore it is questionable whether the residents have done everything so that the site Roma will not get back into a similarly disadvantaged position. Since the Roma are also inhabitants of the same municipality, the council is responsible for them as well, so problems arising in connection with the project were discussed in public forums and public board meetings.

After the description of the project, further conflicts resulted from the selection of the location of the apartments. The completion of the programme was delayed because one of the families did not accept the real estate that was bought for them. Disputes between the Roma and non-Roma mostly emerged because of the neighbourhood conditions. The main

problem was not necessarily that a Roma family was moved to someone's neighbourhood, but that conflicts occurred because of their different lifestyle. The above mentioned after-care would also be required because of these problems and so that the target group become aware of the need for adjustment to the rules, requirements set by their environment, and ultimately become accepted by the municipality. However, the leaders of the settlement were able to detect the Roma's fear of change. Although they were glad that their living conditions would significantly improve, at the same time they mostly had to adjust only to one another in their former relatively closed world. The programme, which they treated with scepticism, moved them out of their former isolated lives. The Roma received discrimination from some residents of the municipality neutrally as they were aware of their opinions. If conflict occurs, or a problem arises between the villagers and the Roma families, they turn to the CKÖ representative even now. With the progress of the programme the relationships with the neighbours were resolved, as they saw the effort of the Roma locals and became more and more accepting.

The programme's effects on regional and settlement development

Potential regional impacts of the project as a whole can be analysed from two points of view. One is the territorial changes resulting from the relocation from the site; the other is the effects of further socio-economic utilization. During the purchase of the new properties it had to be ensured that they were separated from each other, because moving those who were living in the site next to each other would create the chance of formation of a new segregation. The integration can most effectively be implemented in the way that families live by relying on themselves, being forced to get to know their environment and to get on in their new surroundings. The social impact of the project is also significant since the number of low-skilled people will decrease and the number of employees will increase in the settlement. From the households' point of view the number of the necessity and constraint apartments is drastically reduced while the number of apartments with all the required comfort increases. After the project the layout of the municipality had not changed since the council invested the money into existing houses and their renovation. The renovations

took place on houses in a condition that was worse than other real estates, improving the overall aesthetic image of the townscape. Regarding the totality of the settlement, the supply of technical infrastructure has also improved with the demolition of the site and with the supplementation of the missing pipelines in the new houses.

The services of the village also became more easily accessible to the former lumberyard residents, such as long-distance bus transport, postal and medical services, and the purchase of food within an available reach. In addition to the availability of basic services the younger age group has the opportunity to use the communications infrastructure in the youth centre. The mentioned changes not only meant a breakthrough and offered opportunities of development for the Roma, but the implementation of the project had a developmental effect on the settlement as well.

With the demolition of the building on the site, the vacant municipal land provided opportunities for the local government, which it succeeded to utilise. They submitted a new application with the title “Generating electricity with solar power system in Hosszúhetény”. They implemented one of the best possible ways of land use on the former Roma site, as the council not only encourages the solution of social problems but also focuses on sustainable energy production. The tender money creates an opportunity for the reconstruction of the poor-quality, unpaved road, consequently improving the settlement’s road network.

The site liquidation programme provides a good example of the fact that solving one problem can in turn resolve further problems and can enable the start of new, innovative projects. The enhancements build on each other; they appear as cause and effect in the history of the settlement’s development. The installation of the solar panels helps in the electricity supply of the municipality and the institutions are provided with an alternative, environmentally friendly method, so the principle of sustainable development can also prevail in a small village. The preservation of the municipality’s clean air and environment, not to mention its beauty, with alternative energy production also positively affects the marketing of the settlement. Therefore, people will not only feel more inclined to take excursions to the area, but also to stay there and maybe even move there.

Evaluation of the results in comparison with previous settlement programmes

With the help of the above results the evolution of site programmes could be already outlined. The settlement programme evaluated in this article might be considered as a halfway solution. Previously, settlement eliminations resulted primarily in the relocation of people and liquidation of the site. As a result, “mini sites” were created and the typical set of conflicts of these colonies reappeared. These did not provide additional assistance to the people living there, and the participants themselves did not become active members in the change. Moreover, the non-segregated population of the settlements was not involved in the implementation, and such a programme can hardly be successful without them. The previous unsuccessful programmes have demonstrated that measures to improve only the living conditions – where the ones affected were only passive observers – have failed.

At the end of the 19th century, more than half of the Roma homes were isolated in Hungary (Kemény 1976). At this time, Gypsies had their own role in the social division of labour; they had professions from which they were able to sustain themselves. After World War I with the onset of industrial mass production their opportunities were narrowed down. This process was further intensified by the more stringent treatment of the authorities making it impossible for the Gypsies to practice their traditional crafts, leading to their complete exclusion from towns. The settlement constructions established between the two World Wars survived in the 1960s and 1970s. Their elimination started in the 1970s. At the time of extensive industrial development there was a massive demand for semi-skilled and unskilled labourers. An integration process started among the poor Gypsies and non-Gypsies, making their employment possible and providing existential security for people with no previous permanent employment (Havas 2012; Kemény 1976; Havas; Kemény 1995).

The Roma were able to move away from the sites on their own, and could buy or build a house in settlements giving work and a better chance to succeed, mainly with the help of a housing loan. For those who did not find a way out of the sites individually, a large-scale government housing programme became available. The condition of participation was at least

10% of own savings and one year of employment. This conditionality resulted in a counter-selection, thus families in the worst situation remained in the sites. The result of the poorly designed site liquidation programmes was the relocation into small towns and inner peripheral parts of the cities. After the economic transition in the 1990s this process was strengthened by the massive loss of jobs. The former settlements of the closed factories, mines and weekend zones have become segregated sites with extreme poverty to where impoverished families unable to sustain urban housing have been moved out. The process of transformation into a ghetto was enhanced by the socio-political measures of that time (Havas 2012).

According to Havas (2012), while there is a residential segregation enhanced by regional gaps, neither educational integration nor employment policy have a real chance in these settlements or small areas. It requires socio-political intervention to help people living in segregated sites to move to a place where they have a chance to get jobs and live in better conditions. A key issue is that the economy has to offer opportunities for people to acquire the start-up energy to move away from the sites. If the economy and division of labour do not have such effects, the moving programme has no real chance (Havas 2012).

Some of the latest ideas have been directed away from liquidating segregated sites, focusing rather on local intervention of health, social and educational programmes leading to improved living conditions. This implies either the development of local service centres, or even the provision of sanitation services. However, the possibility of in-place support receives a great amount of criticism, especially from the perspective of the future of children for whom the building of social relations may be important. This is not possible even if the segregated settlements are transformed to be more comfortable. People living in these sites are addressed with lots of human services; however, the programme does not promise a change in living conditions, and does not offer a real chance to get out. It can be predicted that the features of ghetto life strongly reduce the efficiency of the proposed human services. In this case, there is a risk that families get back to the same place where they started and their disadvantage continues to increase.

Another concern arises in connection with the size of the settlements, namely that settlements of hundreds of people cannot be eliminated in the short term. Without constant (8–10 hours per day) presence, real results

cannot be achieved at these sites (the name of these programmes refers to this: Presence programmes). It is necessary to know the community and to know exactly what happens and why it happens. In such cases, long-term programmes (with a minimum interval of 8 to 10 years) are needed. However, educational, social or health programmes are almost useless if the housing conditions of the affected people do not improve; these programmes do not lead to appropriate results.

Conclusions

The territorial determination of the present study is not negligible, as the segregates display spatial dimensions of extreme poverty; families usually live on sites, run-down neighbourhoods, ghettos, mostly in settlements of multiple disadvantages. In these local and social seclusions, human services that could increase the chances of a break-out (employment, social services, educational care system, health services) are less available compared to the national average and are of a far lower quality and frequently appear in the wrong combination. Local governments do not have funds for improvements aiming for the elimination of segregation; this is why realistic developmental ideas based on actual local needs that would serve the entire community and improve integration cannot be produced. The solution to these problems can be a complex site programme.

The complex Roma settlement liquidation programme of Hosszúhetény can be considered successful based on the project management evaluation, as well as the results of the present study. Implementation of the programme was necessary because of the inhumane living conditions of the people living there, for this was their only chance to break out. The project is also exemplary in the aspect that it occurred in a settlement of a medium population inhabited by several ethnic groups and the number of people involved was adequate not to put the success of the project at risk. It became clear that the implementation of such a programme should take the time difference into account, although it cannot be blamed on the project management but it hindered the planned scheduling as an external factor. Not all intended steps could be implemented according to the original plan; consequently they had to be modified during the execution.

Even a thorough situation analysis before the onset of the project cannot guarantee a smooth implementation.

The programme properly illustrates the importance of a complex approach and the interaction of significant factors during the convergence of disadvantaged groups. The immediate environment is also changed through the altered housing conditions to which one has to adapt, and that might not be easy. This synergetic interaction was deemed extremely important in the long-term success and sustainability of the programme.

During the liquidation of the site, people who used to live there were given the opportunity to lead a similar life to the other inhabitants of the village. People affected took the opportunity and did everything in their power to change their living conditions and to meet the requirements of other Hosszúhetény residents. Although at first the majority of residents opposed the resettling of the Roma into the village, with the progress of the project the prejudices disappeared and they even provided help with the integration of the new residents. The example of Hosszúhetény manifests the extent to which the liquidation of a segregated area can affect the development of a settlement. In addition to the improvement of the infrastructure in the affected areas, another element follows and the accepting ability of the society increases. The effects of the elimination of the lumberyard would be worthwhile to re-examine ten years from now in order to study how the project affected families' lives, how their way of life has changed, and how motivated the next generation might be towards learning and working. After the liquidation of the site and the establishment of the solar power plant, what positive effects will these have on the community and how much more sustainable will their power supply become?

Looking to the future, the question arises of whether the realisation of such a project in a bigger settlement would result in similar final outcomes. To what extent would the planning and implementation of project differ in case of the liquidation of an urban site? If all segregated sites and settlement parts are liquidated, would social segregation come to an end or would it only take up another shape? Is it possible at all to liquidate all segregated areas, or by terminating one would a new one be created? What kind of impact does the liquidation of a site have on the development of an area or settlement and on the integration of the Roma? Will there be a considerable difference in the motivation level of the Roma minority? If not, what other

possible tools and methods are available to facilitate and sustain a peaceful coexistence? Answering the above questions seems ever more urgent in the 21st century.

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