

Human Rights Council: FORM for Submitting an NGO written statements

NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC (General, Special or Roster status) may submit written statements to the Human Rights Council (HRC).

The written statement is formatted and issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting NGO. English, Spanish and French versions can be published at this time.

In order for your statement to be published before the session, the deadline for submission is exactly two weeks prior to the start of a session. See the deadline on the web site. All submissions are final.

Please fill out **this** FORM and CHECKLIST to submit your statement and send it to the address indicated below. Your information goes after each arrow.

1. Please indicate the contact information for representative submitting written statement (i.e. name, mobile, email) here: ➡ **Ulrich Delius, 0049-16095671403, asien@gfbv.de**
2. Indicate the Standing Agenda item number (1-10) of statement here: ➡ **Item 9 –Segment: ID with SR on racism**
- 3.a) If this is an individual statement, indicate here your organization's name as in the ECOSOC NGO database and indicate its consultative status in brackets (i.e. General, Special, or Roster).
➡ **Society for Threatened Peoples (Special Consultative Status)**
- or,
- 3.b) If this is a joint statement, list here the co-sponsoring ECOSOC NGO as they appear in the ECOSOC database and status (in brackets): Group all General NGOs first, group the Special second and group the Roster third. ➡
4. Indicate here any non-ECOSOC NGO(s) supporting this statement (they will appear as a footnote to the statement title): ➡
5. Indicate the exact TITLE for this statement here: ➡ **Situation of Roma in Hungary**

Please make sure that:

- This statement is in MS WORD document format (Font Times New Roman 10; no bold; no underline; no italics).
- Check word count: (Go to Tools, Word count, # of words) Indicate the length of text (including footnotes/endnotes) here: ➡ **732**
 - NGOs in general consultative status are allowed 2,000 words
 - NGOs in special consultative status and on the roster are allowed 1,500 words
- Please use the Spell/grammar check on your text. (Go to Tools, Spelling & Grammar)
- Different language versions of one statement should be sent in the same email, but using **a separate form** for each.
- Email this document to: **hrcngo@ohchr.org**

PLEASE PASTE THE FINAL TEXT BELOW: 

Roma in Hungary are still facing discrimination in all fields of life including employment, education, housing, health care and access to public services. Major policy documents adopted by the Hungarian Government to improve the situation of Roma have not yet resulted in substantive improvements.

Continuing violence against Roma

Since 2006 paramilitary groups have been marching and organizing demonstrations. In 2011 Roma in the village Gyöngyöspata were harassed and terrorized by patrolling groups. The government justifies such actions by characterizing them as an 'exercise of freedom of assembly'. However, in recent years cases of attacks against Roma-people or against their property have been dramatically increasing. Repeated racist actions often include the usage of Molotov cocktails or hand grenades.

Between 2008 and 2012 the attacks took a total of nine lives, including two minors. The assaults left dozens of people injured, some of them in an extremely critical condition.

Acts of violence are still continuing in 2013. The Society of Threatened Peoples is particularly concerned about the recent reintroduction of the Swastika-symbols (in May 2013), which could exacerbate the already critical situation.

Currently, no systematic monitoring of racist violence is provided and there are still no directions, protocols or guidelines developed for the police to investigate and prosecute hate crimes. There is an increasing tendency towards hatred against Roma, which is being either ignored by policy makers and the general media, or actually supported by them. One of the latest examples was the publication of an article in the Hungarian daily "Magyar Hírlap" in January 2013 by a leading journalist, Zsolt Bayer, calling Roma "animals" that "need to be eliminated" – "right now by any means". The journalist was initially criticized by the Deputy Prime Minister Tibor Navracsics, who later defended him saying that he could not imagine that Bayer seriously thought what he said.

Neither Prime Minister Orbán nor the Minister responsible for Roma issues, Zoltán Balog reacted to the statements.

Segregation in Schools is still a problem

In January 2013 the European Court of Human Rights declared that Hungary had violated Article 2 of Protocol No. 1 (right to education) of the European Convention on Human Rights in conjunction with Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination). The case dealt with the complaints of two young Roma men, who had wrongly been placed in schools for mentally disabled and whose education there had led to further social discrimination.

The Court underlined the long history of wrongful placement of Roma children in such special schools in Hungary and other European countries. A report on Hungary published by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) in 2009 found that the vast majority of children with mild learning disabilities could easily be integrated into mainstream schools, but instead it is being often misdiagnosed because of cultural differences. Once misplaced, those children are rather unlikely to break out of the system of inferior education.

Roma women as an extremely vulnerable group

Roma women often lack access to medical services due to direct discrimination and degrading treatment at the hospital. A disadvantaged position within their families often makes it difficult for them to address the particular situation of women. Strategies for the empowerment of women often fail because a lack of knowledge about their circumstances and needs.

In 2009, after the Committee on Elimination of Discrimination of women intervened, the government of Hungary finally provided a Roma woman a financial compensation for having been sterilized during emergency obstetrical services without her informed consent. From 2006 to 2009 no domestic court had ever acknowledged that her rights had been violated. The Hungarian Public Health Act still mandates the procedure on the basis of a medical indication and still does not guarantee to fully inform the patient about the permanent consequences of sterilization.

In this context, Society for Threatened Peoples calls on the Human Rights Council to urge the government of Hungary to:

- Seriously investigate and prosecute hate crimes against Roma and other minorities,
- Integrate Roma children into mainstream schools and ensure that they are not segregated or disadvantaged,
- Seriously investigate and prosecute hate crimes against Roma and other minorities,
- Implement an adequate monitoring system for racist violence,
- Closely observe the implementation of national strategies for the integration of Roma-people,
- Ensure that special needs of women are addressed to improve parlous family situations.
- Take serious action against the discrimination of Roma in the country.