Human Rights Council

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Joint Stakeholders' submission on:

Human Rights in Hungary

Submitted by:

Marist International Solidarity Foundation (FMSI)

NGO with special consultative status with ECOSOC

and

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Határtalan Szív Alapítvány

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. This report is a submission of the above-mentioned organizations. The report highlights key concerns related to **children's rights** in Hungary, particularly **the economic situation and survival needs; public safety, drug abuse, and child protection; education and social justice; public health and mental health; and discrimination against the Roma community**. Each section conveys recommendations to the Hungarian Government.

2. **Marist International Solidarity Foundation (FMSI)**[1] is an international organization promoted by the Marist Brothers, present in 80 countries. FMSI has more than 15 years of experience working in the field of international solidarity, advocating for children's rights especially in the field of education. It works at the international level, participating in the UN human rights mechanisms in collaboration with other organizations with similar interests. It has been accredited by ECOSOC since 2011.

3. **Mária Iskolatestvérek Szerzeteserend** (Institute of the Marist Brothers) operates educational institutions and charitable initiatives across Hungary. The congregation serves as the principal organizer and holder of several socio-educational projects aimed at supporting children and young people living in marginalized conditions, with a particular focus on Roma communities. These initiatives are especially active in Budapest, Esztergom, and Karcag, where the Brothers promote inclusion, personal development, and access to quality education. Their work reflects a strong commitment to social justice, human dignity, and the holistic development of individuals, while remaining faithful to their Christian values and educational tradition. They are part of the Province of L'Hermitage, an administrative unite of the Marist Brothers Institute.[2]

4. **Határtalan Szív Alapítvány** (Boundless Heart Foundation) is a Hungarian non-profit organization dedicated to supporting children and young people living in marginalized conditions through educational and social development programs. Based in Esztergom, the Foundation focuses particularly on assisting those from marginalized backgrounds, including Roma communities, by promoting equal opportunities and long-term social inclusion. The foundation's mission centers on providing comprehensive support that combines education, personal development, and community-building.

5. The data and information obtained for this submission came from various sources and includes information from children, youth, teachers and educators living and working in Hungary.

[1] Cf. https://fmsi.ngo/en/
[2] Cf. https://champagnat.org/en/marist-institute/our-presence/

II. GENERAL REMARKS AND COOPERATION WITH THE UPR MECHANISM

6. Hungary was reviewed in November 2021 at the 39th Session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review. The submitting stakeholders welcome the constructive participation of Hungary in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). On this occasion, Hungary received 398 recommendations and supported 267 recommendations while noting 131 recommendations[3]. The present submission represents the follow-up to the UPR recommendations accepted by the State in 2021.

7. The implementation of recommendations is critical to ensure a true advancement of human rights in the State under review. Therefore, Hungary must pay particular attention to effectively follow-up those recommendations in consultation with Civil Society both those that were accepted and those of which they took note.

8. We would like to express our gratitude to the government of Hungary for its adherence to the measures proposed by the United Nations for the participation of civil society, which has allowed us to submit this report. We would also like to express our gratitude to the Hungarian government for its commitment to safeguarding human rights, as demonstrated by its dedication to implementing the numerous recommendations adopted during the previous UPR, particularly those concerning the education and non-discrimination of Roma children[4].

9. We also welcome the adoption of many recommendations that are connected to the Sustainable Development Goals[5] such as: 4: Quality Education (7%); 5: Gender Equality (12%); 8: Decent work and economic growth (4%); 10: Reduced inequalities (22%); 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions (47%).

10. At the same time, we are aware of the need to elaborate further on the previous recommendations and to address new ones that may arise in the next session by providing the necessary measures and funding to ensure the fulfilment and improvement of rights across the population, particularly among those in the most vulnerable conditions.

[3] Cf. "Matrix Recommendations Hungary" available at https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/upr/hu-index

[4] For example: 128.168 Step up efforts to address discrimination and social exclusion faced by Roma with particular emphasis on integrated schooling (Austria); 128.229 Strengthen measures to eliminate discrimination against Roma children (Senegal); 128.239 Continue to combat discrimination against the Roma community, particularly women and children, and promote their full social integration into the community (Brazil); 128.228 Continue to strengthen the protection of the family and further protect the rights of women and children (China); 128.154 Ensure that education is provided to all children on a non-discriminatory basis (Eswatini); 128.160 Take further measures to improve access to education of Roma children (Japan).

[5] Cf. Infographic https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-06/Infography-hungary.pdf

III. METHODOLOGY FOR DATA COLLECTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE TOPIC

Methodology:

11. An important part of this report has been carried out by listening to the direct voices of children, adolescents and young people, as well as adults directly involved in the lives of children and young people, involving several groups of students, aged between 8 and 18, from educational and social establishments. The total number of students involved was 72. Consultations were conducted in multiple regions of Hungary, including Budapest and rural areas. In many of the themes, we highlight the coincidence in the opinions expressed by children and the adults who accompanied them. The main issues highlighted in this fieldwork are reflected in this report, although there were other concerns beyond those mentioned here.

Overview:

12. **Economic situation and survival needs**: Children and young people expressed deep concern about their economic circumstances, including the cost of food and medicine, insufficient family income, inadequate housing conditions, and limited job opportunities for their parents.

13. **Public safety, drug abuse, and child protection:** young people reported feeling unsafe in their communities and expressed strong concern about drug trafficking, child abuse including pedophilia, and inadequate child protection systems. Security — or the lack thereof — was one of the most frequently raised issues in all consultations.

14. **Education and social justice:** children raised concerns about the quality of education, inequalities in the school system, bullying, and the persistent discrimination and segregation faced by Roma children and young people in educational settings.

15. **Public health and mental health:** young people expressed concerns about the quality and accessibility of healthcare, the cost of medicines, and the lack of sufficient mental health support services, including a shortage of school psychologists.

16. **Discrimination against the Roma community:** this issue was raised systematically across all consultations, particularly — but not exclusively — by Roma children and young people. It reflects a deeply entrenched pattern of exclusion and inequality that affects every aspect of life.

17. In addition, Hungarian children and young people are increasingly concerned about other issues that directly affect them and their families. Many aspects of human rights are interconnected so that when one fails, other rights are also threatened. Therefore, other concerns can be heard in the voices of children and young people that are less developed in this report.

18. Hungary protects with laws and public policies the human rights. We are aware that some of the challenges facing the government are not easy to work on, so we appreciate the efforts to improve them, now and in the future.

IV. ECONOMIC SITUATION AND SURVIVAL NEEDS

19. The submitting stakeholders welcome the efforts of the Hungarian government to improve the economic situation of its population. Hungary has made notable progress in reducing poverty over the past decade. According to Eurostat, the at-risk-of-poverty rate for children under 18 stood at 17.4% in 2024[6], and the country recorded one of the largest decreases in child poverty or social exclusion in the EU in 2024, a reduction of 3.3 percentage points compared to the previous year.[7]

20. However, significant challenges persist, particularly for families living in the most vulnerable conditions. The 2024 OECD Economic Survey of Hungary highlighted that intergenerational income mobility is limited, with children in the lowest income decile requiring an average of seven generations to reach median income levels.[8] Social transfers, while effective at reducing monetary poverty, are not optimally targeted toward those most in need, as those in the upper income quintile receive a disproportionately larger share of transfers. According to the Hungarian Central Statistical Office, the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion stagnated in 2024, with approximately 1.8 million people in the affected group, and the income of the richest grew faster than that of the poorest during the same period.[9]

21. Research conducted in some of Hungary's most disadvantaged micro-regions, particularly in eastern Hungary, illustrates the real impact of poverty on children's daily lives[10]. In these areas, children face significant barriers to adequate nutrition, education, and healthcare, and are exposed to higher rates of drug use and other risk behaviors. The voices of children and young people consulted for this report clearly reflect these realities.

22. Children and young people directly expressed their needs in this area during our consultations, including calls for reductions in food prices, increases in family allowances, more job opportunities for parents, and access to basic household utilities such as electricity and heating.

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[6] Eurostat, At Risk of Poverty Rate: Less than 18 years (Hungary), 2024. Available at: https://tradingeconomics.com/hungary/at-risk-of-poverty-rate-less-than-18-years-eurostat-data.html

[7] Eurostat, "Children at risk of poverty or social exclusion," Statistics Explained, May 2025. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-

[8] OECD, Economic Survey of Hungary 2024. Available at: https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/oecd-economic-surveys-hungary-2024_e9ffe2e2-en.html

[9] Hungarian Central Statistical Office (KSH), Living Conditions, 2024. Available at: https://www.ksh.hu/living-conditions

[10] Previous UPR cycle identified the need to address poverty and inequality:
128.146 Take concrete measures to end poverty (Sierra Leone); 128.237 Strengthen policies to end poverty, especially for minorities (Malaysia); 128.148 Take further measures to ensure that all citizens, including migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, elderly, children and marginalized women, benefit from adequate health, education and other basic needs services (Timor-Leste).

23. **To improve the economic situation of children and families, the submitting stakeholders recommend that the Government of Hungary:**

    a. **Improve the targeting of social transfers and family support programs to ensure they reach families with the greatest need, prioritizing children and households in severe material deprivation.**

    b. **Strengthen and expand social housing and housing assistance programs for families in vulnerable conditions, ensuring that children have access to safe and dignified living conditions.**

    c. **Ensure adequate provision of food, school supplies, and hygiene products for children from families in the most vulnerable conditions, removing financial barriers to school participation.**

    d. **Develop targeted programs to reduce intergenerational poverty, particularly in the most disadvantaged micro-regions, with special attention to Roma and other communities living in marginalized conditions.**

V. PUBLIC SAFETY, DRUG ABUSE, AND CHILD PROTECTION

24. Public safety and protection from drug abuse emerged as the most frequently and urgently expressed concerns in all the consultations conducted with children and young people for this report. The tone of their responses was one of fear and insecurity, reflecting that many young people do not feel adequately protected in their own communities and schools.

25. On the issue of drug abuse, the data from the 2024 European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD) presents a deeply alarming picture[11]. Among students aged 15 to 16 across Europe[12], Hungarian teenagers rank first in smoking, e-cigarette use, alcohol consumption, and in the use of amphetamines and MDMA. The daily dual consumption of cigarettes and e-cigarettes among Hungarian students (25%) is nearly double the European average (14%). These figures place Hungary at the top of the rankings for adolescent substance use in Europe, despite 15 years of strict prohibition policies.[13]

26. Furthermore, the 2024 ESPAD survey found that only 47% of Hungarian students report having good mental well-being — the third lowest rate in Europe, above only Ukraine and Czechia. This is particularly concerning as low well-being has been linked to increased vulnerability to substance use and other risk behaviours.[14]

27. The distribution of designer drugs through online channels is described as a growing problem in Hungary, particularly among socially marginalized youth and in underprivileged rural

[11] ESPAD Group (2025), ESPAD Report 2024: Results from the European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs, EUDA Joint Publications, Luxembourg. Available at: https://www.espad.org/espad-report-2024

[12] Hungary recorded the highest lifetime prevalence of alcohol consumption in Europe (91%), the highest current cigarette use (32%), and the highest rates of synthetic cathinone use (3.7%).

[13] EUDA/ESPAD, "Key findings from the 2024 ESPAD Survey," May 2025. Available at: https://www.euda.europa.eu/publications/data-factsheets/espad-2024-key-findings_en; see also: https://wrdnews.org/european-youth-substance-use-comprehensive-analysis-of-espad-2024-data/

[14] ESPAD 2024, op. cit. Ukraine 43%, Czechia 46%, Hungary 47%

communities. The National Drug Strategy expired in 2020 and has not been renewed, leaving a significant policy vacuum. Several harm reduction services have been closed or defunded in recent years.[15]

28. Children and young people also expressed strong concern about protection from sexual abuse and paedophilia, child trafficking and kidnapping, online harassment, and violence in public spaces. They called for stronger laws and their effective enforcement, as well as increased police presence and more surveillance systems in unsafe areas.[16]

29. **To improve public safety and child protection, the submitting stakeholders recommend that the Government of Hungary:**

    a. **Renew and adopt a comprehensive National Drug Strategy with adequate funding, prioritizing evidence-based prevention, treatment, and harm reduction programmes, particularly those targeted at young people and marginalized communities.**

    b. **Develop and implement a multi-stakeholder national strategy to prevent and address all forms of violence against children, including sexual abuse, trafficking, domestic violence, and online exploitation.**

    c. **Establish a specialized, adequately resourced framework for identifying and assisting child victims of trafficking and abuse**[17]

    d. **Invest in effective drug prevention education programmes in schools that go beyond awareness-raising to develop life skills and resilience, drawing on evidence-based methodologies.**

    e. **Strengthen child protection services and ensure adequate funding for organizations providing support to children at risk, including those experiencing abuse, homelessness, and family breakdown.**

VI. EDUCATION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

30. Education is among the areas most urgently in need of improvement according to the children and young people consulted. While Hungary provides free primary and secondary education, significant challenges persist in the quality, equity, and inclusiveness of the system.

[15] European Roma Rights Centre, ERRC Submission to OSCE/ODIHR on Hungary, December 2025. Available at: https://www.errc.org/uploads/upload_en/file/5747_file1_hungary-submission-to-osce-office-for-democratic-institutions-and-human-rights-15-december-2025.pdf

[16] The previous UPR cycle included recommendations addressing these issues:

128.139 Create a specialized framework for identifying and assisting child victims of human trafficking (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland); 128.222 Engage in a multi-stakeholder consultation to develop a comprehensive and robust national strategy to prevent and address all forms of violence against children (Malaysia).

[17] In line with recommendation 128.139 from the previous UPR cycle.

31. Hungary is facing a severe and worsening teacher shortage. According to data from the EU's 2025 Education and Training Monitor[18], 40% of Hungary's schools report a lack of appropriately qualified staff[19]. Half of all teachers in the 2024/2025 academic year were aged 50 or older, while only 7.2% were under 30. This ageing workforce, combined with the low relative salaries of teachers — 34% below the earnings of other tertiary-educated workers, compared to an EU average gap of 17% — has resulted in 60% of new teachers resigning within their first three to four years of service. In some underfunded state schools, the situation is so severe that non-teaching staff are reportedly filling in as supervisors for classes. Teacher shortages are greatest in rural areas, with the proportion of unqualified teachers in disadvantaged schools two to three times higher than in non-disadvantaged schools.[20]

32. According to the OECD's Education at a Glance 2025, the actual salaries of primary teachers in Hungary are 34% lower than those of tertiary-educated workers, compared to an average gap of 17% across OECD countries.[21] While a major salary reform co-financed by EUR 1.8 billion in EU funds was launched in 2024 to raise teachers' salaries to 80% of average graduate earnings by January 2025,[22] the structural deficit remains deep, as 60% of new teachers reportedly resign within their first three to four years of service due to poor pay and conditions.[23]

33. The UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, Farida Shaheed, following her official visit to Hungary from 10 to 21 March 2025, warned of a "hollowing out" of the public education system, with growing inequalities between under-resourced state schools and better-funded church-run institutions, which now account for approximately 20% of all schools, with over 33% of secondary schools under church control.[24] The Special Rapporteur highlighted the rigid, memorisation-based curriculum, which leaves little room for critical thinking or student-centred learning, and expressed concern about high levels of student anxiety and limited access to school psychologists.[25]

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[18] European Commission, Education and Training Monitor 2025 — Hungary Country Report. Available at: https://op.europa.eu/webpub/eac/education-and-training-monitor/en/country-reports/hungary.html

[19] Balkan Insight, "UN Expert on Right to Education Criticises 'Desperate Conditions' in Hungary's Schools," 21 March 2025. Available at: https://balkaninsight.com/2025/03/21/un-expert-on-right-to-education-criticises-desperate-conditions-in-hungarys-schools/

[20] Education and Training Monitor 2025 — Hungary, op. cit. Based on KSH 2025 data.

[21] OECD, Education at a Glance 2025: Hungary. Available at: https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/education-at-a-glance-2025_1a3543e2-en/hungary_9b7c3dd1-en.html

[22] European Social Fund Plus, "Hungary raises teachers' wages with EU support," 2024. Available at: https://european-social-fund-plus.ec.europa.eu/en/projects/hungary-raises-teachers-wages-eu-support

[23] Balkan Insight, op. cit., 21 March 2025.

[24] ERRC, "UN Expert Calls for 'Strict Anti-Segregation Policies' to be Enforced in Hungary," 21 March 2025. Available at: https://www.errc.org/news/un-expert-calls-for-strict-anti-segregation-policies-to-be-enforced-in-hungary

[25] OHCHR, "UN expert warns of hollowing out of Hungarian public education system, deepening inequalities," 21 March 2025. Available at: https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/03/un-expert-warns-hollowing-out-hungarian-public-education-system-deepening

34. The EU's Council Country-Specific Recommendations for Hungary in 2025 specifically called on Hungary to take measures to improve education outcomes and increase the participation of disadvantaged groups, particularly Roma. The children and young people we consulted expressed frustration about the quality of their schools, calling for more and better-paid teachers, improved infrastructure, less homework and pressure, more practical and vocational learning opportunities, and free schooling inclusive of all materials and activities.[26]

35. **To improve the education system for all children and young people, the submitting stakeholders recommend that the Government of Hungary:**

    a. **Sustain and accelerate the teacher salary reform, reaching at minimum 90% of average graduate earnings (the EU average) to address the teacher shortage, and develop programmes to attract young people to the teaching profession.**

    b. **Reform the national curriculum to reduce academic pressure and promote critical thinking, creativity, and student well-being, in line with the recommendations of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education.**

    c. **Ensure equitable funding for all types of schools (state and church-run), and establish transparent resource allocation mechanisms to prevent the concentration of disadvantaged students in underfunded institutions.**

    d. **Involve students, teachers, and parents meaningfully in decisions that affect the education system, providing spaces for young people to express their concerns and contribute to shaping their own learning environments.**

    e. **Expand access to vocational training and secondary education pathways, particularly in rural and disadvantaged areas, and make university education accessible to all regardless of socioeconomic background.**

VII. PUBLIC HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH

36. Access to quality healthcare is a fundamental right, and children and young people in Hungary have expressed serious concerns about their ability to access the medical care they and their families need. Key concerns include long waiting times, the cost of medicines, the shortage of qualified medical staff in certain areas, and the inadequate availability of mental health support for young people.[27]

37. On mental health specifically, the data is deeply concerning. The 2024 ESPAD survey found that Hungary has the third lowest rate of self-reported good mental well-being among students in Europe (47%)[28], behind only Ukraine and Czechia. The WHO notes that 1 in 5

[26] Previous UPR recommendations 128.147 (Viet Nam), 128.153 (Lao PDR), and 128.152 (Philippines) are directly relevant.
[27] The previous UPR cycle included relevant recommendations: 128.171 (Thailand) called for ensuring that Roma can access health care without discrimination; 128.148 (Timor-Leste) urged Hungary to ensure that children benefit from adequate health services.
[28] ESPAD 2024, op. cit.

adolescents in the European region experiences a mental health disorder, and that the burden of conditions such as anxiety and depression has grown significantly over the past 30 years.

38. Hungary currently lacks a comprehensive national programme or strategy specifically to improve the mental health of young people. A Eurochild 2024 report on children's mental health identified that in Hungary, outpatient psychiatric care for children has decreased, with only 7 out of 19 counties providing inpatient psychiatric services. Staff shortages further exacerbate these service gaps, particularly for children living in poverty and in disadvantaged areas. The UN Special Rapporteur on Education also raised concern about high levels of student anxiety and the limited access to school psychologists.

39. A 2024 analysis of Hungary's Child Guarantee National Action Plan also identified that at least 6,500 students do not have access to school psychological services, and that school psychologists in Hungary are responsible for caseloads of over 600 children.[29] The UN Special Rapporteur on Education also raised concern about limited access to school psychologists and high levels of student anxiety during her March 2025 visit.[30]

40. **To improve public health and mental health services for children and young people, the submitting stakeholders recommend that the Government of Hungary:**

    a. **Develop and adopt a comprehensive national mental health strategy for children and young people, with dedicated funding, clear targets, and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation.**

    b. **Increase the availability of school psychologists in all educational institutions, prioritizing schools in disadvantaged and rural areas where needs are greatest.**

    c. **Expand outpatient child and youth psychiatric services across all counties and reduce waiting times for specialized mental health care.**

    d. **Strengthen financial support mechanisms to help families access essential medicines and healthcare, particularly in the most economically disadvantaged communities.**

    e. **Invest in the broader public health infrastructure serving children and young people, including better-equipped hospitals, increased recruitment and retention of specialist doctors, and concrete measures to reduce waiting times for medical care across all regions of the country.**

VIII. DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THE ROMA COMMUNITY

41. Discrimination against the Roma community is one of the most critical and persistent human rights concerns in Hungary. The Roma, constituting between 6% and 9% of Hungary's population, face deeply entrenched prejudices and systemic discrimination in education, employment, housing, health, and access to public services. This issue was raised in every

[29] Eurochild, "The Hungarian Child Guarantee National Action Plan: concerns raised," January 2024. Available at: https://eurochild.org/uploads/2024/01/The-Hungarian-Child-Guarantee-National-Action-Plan.pdf

[30] OHCHR, press release, 21 March 2025, op. cit.

single group consultation conducted for this report, including — and emphatically — by Roma children and young people themselves.

42. In the area of education, the situation is particularly alarming. Despite numerous court rulings and EU infringement proceedings, school segregation remains a persistent and well-documented reality. Research published in 2024 by the European Roma Rights Centre conclusively demonstrates that the education system in Hungary continues to fail many of its Romani children[31]. An estimated 35-45% of Roma students attend schools or classes that are majority Roma, separated from their non-Roma peers. Complaints about segregation accounted for 69% of those received by the Hungarian Ombudsman for Fundamental Rights in 2023.[32]

43. A particular and systemic problem is the over-diagnosis and misdiagnosis of Roma children with learning disabilities, leading to their placement in special education without proper justification. The European Court of Human Rights ruled against Hungary on this matter in 2013 (Horváth and Kiss v. Hungary)[33], finding that such practices constituted ethnic discrimination. More than a decade later, the Committee of Ministers has been unable to close the case, as Hungary has not been able to convincingly demonstrate that discriminatory practices have been eliminated.[34]

44. The UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, following her visit to Hungary in March 2025, expressed "serious concerns about widening inequalities, curriculum rigidity, the marginalisation of Roma students and the erosion of academic freedom." She called for strict anti-segregation policies to be enforced and for the systematic collection of ethnically disaggregated data to track segregation patterns. She warned that the state-sponsored expansion of the church school network is deepening segregation, as non-Roma families increasingly opt for church schools that have greater admissions discretion.[35]

45. The FRA Roma Survey 2024, covering Hungary among 10 EU Member States, found that across the countries surveyed approximately 80% of Roma live below their country's at-risk-of-poverty threshold, one in three Roma children live in a household where someone went to bed hungry, and 50% of Roma aged 6 to 24 do not attend school. These figures, reflective of broader European trends, underline the severity of structural exclusion that Roma face.

46. The previous UPR cycle included a significant number of recommendations directly addressing discrimination against Roma in Hungary, all of which were supported by the Hungarian government. These include recommendation 128.161 (Ghana), calling for further steps to eliminate discrimination in education, health, and employment; recommendation 128.163 (Finland), calling to guarantee equal access to education for Roma children and end

[31] ERRC, "Hungary: new research reveals the stubborn persistence of segregation of Romani pupils," 2024. Available at: https://www.errc.org/news/hungary-new-research-reveals-the-stubborn-persistence-of-segregation-of-romani-pupils

[32] ERRC, "UN Expert Calls for Strict Anti-Segregation Policies," op. cit.

[33] ECtHR, Horváth and Kiss v. Hungary (Application no. 11146/11), 29 January 2013. Available at: https://www.errc.org/cikk.php?cikk=4089

[34] ERRC, "Segregation in Hungary: The Long Road to Infringement." Available at: https://www.errc.org/news/segregation-in-hungary-the-long-road-to-infringement

[35] Balkan Insight, op. cit., 21 March 2025.

their segregation in schools; recommendation 128.168 (Austria), urging particular emphasis on integrated schooling; recommendations 128.229 (Senegal) and 128.239 (Brazil) calling for strengthened measures to eliminate discrimination against Roma children and promote their full social integration; and recommendation 128.171 (Thailand), calling for Roma to access social services, including health care, education and employment, without discrimination.

47. Given the persistence and scale of this problem, and in light of the evidence gathered both from the direct voices of children and from authoritative international sources, the submitting stakeholders join the calls made by the UN Special Rapporteur on Education, the EU Council, the European Roma Rights Centre, and many other bodies to take decisive and urgent action.

48. **To address discrimination against the Roma community, the submitting stakeholders recommend that the Government of Hungary:**

    a. **Enforce strict anti-segregation policies in all educational institutions, ensure the effective implementation of existing legal provisions against segregation, and take concrete measures to desegregate schools and classes where Roma children are separated from their peers.**

    b. **Reform and strengthen the assessment procedures used to identify children with special educational needs, introducing robust safeguards against the culturally biased misdiagnosis of Roma children, and ensuring that placement in special education is based solely on individual educational needs and not on ethnic or socioeconomic factors, in line with the ECtHR ruling in Horváth and Kiss v. Hungary.**

    c. **Collect and publish systematically disaggregated data by ethnicity in education, employment, housing, and health to enable evidence-based policy-making and transparent monitoring of progress toward Roma inclusion.**

    d. **Ensure equitable funding and admissions policies across all school types, including church-run institutions, to prevent selective admissions from deepening segregation, as noted by the UN Special Rapporteur.**

    e. **Take effective measures to prevent and combat hate speech, racial discrimination, and violence against Roma, including public awareness campaigns and the vigorous prosecution of hate crimes.**

    f. **Strengthen efforts to improve Roma access to social services, employment, healthcare, and housing without discrimination, in the framework of the National Social Inclusion Strategy 2030.**

IX. DIRECT VOICES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

49. We strongly believe that listening to and considering the direct voices of young people living in Hungary is the best way to provide appropriate responses to their needs. As explained in the methodology, the participation and protagonism of children and young people is at the core of the work carried out for drafting this report, giving them a direct voice.

50. The thematically grouped sentences presented below in quotation marks are the result of interacting with and listening to children, adolescents and young people who participated in the consultation process across different regions of Hungary.

51. **Economic situation and survival needs:**

- *"Need for basic services such as electricity, heating, and appliances for hygiene."*
- *"More job opportunities for our parents."*
- *"Increase in family allowance."*

52. **Public safety and child protection:**

- *"Elimination / prohibition of drugs"*
- *"Demand for severe penalties against pedophilia and greater oversight of children's rights."*
- *"Concern over international war conflicts impacts their sense of future security."*
- *"More cameras / increasing police staffing levels."*

53. **Education:**

- *"Increasing scholarships / free university education."*
- *"Preventing bullying in schools."*

54. **Public health and mental health:**

- *"Hospital improvements / more doctors"*
- *"Mental resilience / school psychologist"*
- *"We are worried about the high cost of medications for families."*

55. **Discrimination and Roma rights:**

- *"End Racism / Don't Look Down on Roma People"*
- *"Stop the separation of children based on ethnic or social grounds."*

X. CONCLUSION

56. As members of Civil Society, we would like to thank the Government of Hungary for accepting many of the recommendations made during the previous UPR cycle, particularly those concerning the rights of Roma children and the promotion of non-discriminatory education. This report highlights key outstanding issues and encourages the development of policies and concrete measures to ensure their implementation.

57. The concerns raised in this report are not abstract. They are grounded in the real, lived experiences of children and young people who participated in our consultations — from the

children in rural areas who worry about the cost of medicines for their parents, to the Roma young people who describe daily experiences of exclusion and contempt, to the students who feel overwhelmed by an education system that does not listen to them.

58. We sincerely appreciate the efforts made by the government to improve the standard of living and human rights situation across Hungary, and we acknowledge the genuine challenges faced. We particularly welcome the teacher salary reform supported by EU funding, the Catching-up Settlements Programme, the expanded mental health roadshow for young people, and continued efforts on Roma inclusion. These are important steps that reflect commitments made in previous UPR cycles.

59. At the same time, the evidence gathered for this report — from the voices of children themselves and from authoritative international sources — demonstrates that significant and urgent work remains. The persistence of school segregation for Roma children, the highest rates of adolescent substance use in Europe, a critical shortage of teachers and school psychologists, and deep economic hardship in many families require immediate, sustained, and well-resourced action.

60. The submitting stakeholders thank the Hungarian government for continuing to listen to civil society, and particularly to children and young people. We encourage the government to make every effort to improve all human rights in the country, with special attention to those who are most vulnerable and most often left behind.

61. We are also grateful for the opportunity offered by the United Nations to participate through the UPR mechanism. Special thanks for allowing us to amplify the direct voices of the children and young people with whom we have worked, reflected, and drafted this report.