

**Decade of Roma Inclusion
Hungarian presidency program
(July 1st, 2007-June 30th, 2008)**

1. Decade of Roma Inclusion

The idea of the Decade of Roma Inclusion emerged in 2003 at a high-level regional conference titled “Roma in an Expanding Europe Challenges for the Future”, which was held in Budapest. After that, Prime Ministers of the involved countries signed the Declaration of the Decade in Sofia, on 2nd February and they assigned the period of 2005-2015 as the Decade of Roma Inclusion. The Decade is an international initiative and its goals are to bring together governments, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations as well as Roma civil society to accelerate progress toward improving the welfare of Roma and to review such progress in a transparent and quantifiable way.

At present, the following nine countries participate in the Decade: Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Slovakia. Beside these countries several international organizations take part in the Decade, namely the World Bank, the Open Society Institute, the United Nations Development Program, the Council of Europe, the Council of Europe Development Bank, the Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the European Roma Information Office, the European Roma and Travelers Forum, the European Roma Rights Centre and the Roma Education Fund.

The Decade focuses to four priority areas as education, employment, health and housing. Furthermore three horizontal aspects were agreed, namely gender equality, reduce of the poverty and antidiscrimination. Each of the involved countries has to create its National Action Plan that specifies that goals and indicators in these areas according to the common approved framework.

The Decade is guided by an International Steering Committee (ISC) made up of the representatives of governments, Roma organizations, international donors, and other international organizations.

Each country assumes the Presidency of the Decade for a period of a year in turn, in accordance with a pre-established rota. Since 1st of July 2007 Hungary has taken the presidency tasks for a year (till 30th of June 2008).

As in the Decade the National Coordinator of Hungary is Ms Monika Lamperth, the minister of social affairs and labour, she is responsible for the implementation of the presidency tasks.

2. Program of the Hungarian presidency

For the period of the Hungarian presidency we are planning to improve and to enhance the inter-governmental cooperation as well as to give new impetus to the process.

In this light, we assigned the following priorities

- We invite new countries to join and to participate in the Decade as a member state. The invited countries are Bosnia-Herzegovina, Moldova, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain.

- Considering the fact that most of the Decade-countries are also member states/candidate countries of the EU, Hungary initiate that the Decade of Roma Inclusion could be placed on the EU Institutions' agenda.
- Concerning the monitoring of the National Action Plans prepared by the countries – using the results of the Bulgarian presidency – Hungary sets up an Indicator Working Group. Its goals are to create common indicators used in the monitoring system.
- Organising two workshops regarding housing and antidiscrimination issues are also planned during presidency year.
- As one of the Decade's goals is the raising awareness Hungary will organize communication campaigns on national and international levels to increase the known of the Decade and to improve the sensitiveness of public opinion as well as decision-makers.
- New topics are going to be debated under the Hungarian presidency. These are corporates' social responsibility (CSR), creating a European Roma Policy, anti-segregation policy in the field of education and housing.

Schedule:

Event	Time	Organizers
International Steering Committee Meeting (ISC)	October 1-2 2007	Hungarian Government (World Bank, OSI)
Housing workshop	November 2007	Hungarian Government (other governments)
International Steering Committee Meeting (ISC)	January 2008	Hungarian Government (World Bank, OSI)
Anti-discrimination workshop	March 2008	Hungarian Government (World Bank, OSI)
International Steering Committee Meeting (ISC)	April 2008	Hungarian Government
International Steering Committee Meeting (ISC)	June 2008	Hungarian Government (World Bank, OSI)

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Melinda Horvath
 Department of Roma Integration
 Ministry of Social Affairs and
 Labour of Hungary