

# Transnational Participation of Minorities Conference

21-22 November 2024, Faculty of Social Sciences, ELTE

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW AND ABSTRACTS

Minority groups struggle for recognition across Europe not only in formal terms but for the recognition of their (political) interests and considering them in the decision-making process. These struggles or political movements can take place on very different levels of the European political arena.

Minorities' claims, interests, opinions or social perspectives can be represented successfully if they can participate in the European project, and if they can influence the outcome of the decision-making process. European integration has impacted on minority politics. First, it helped states adopt minimum standards when it comes to providing political opportunities for minorities. Second, it provides the opportunity for transnational advocacy of minorities as evidenced with the establishment of institutions such as the European Citizens' Initiative or with the participation of minorities in the work of the European Parliament or with the participation of minority NGOs in the work of different IGO's. The prospects for transnational mobilization, advocacy and minority participation within European organizations have not yet been fully explored.

The peacebuilding context is particularly important for minorities in post-conflict societies, where the restoration of trust and inclusion in political processes is essential for long-term stability. European institutions provide platforms for such minority groups to advocate for their rights, contribute to reconciliation efforts, and ensure their voices are heard in the rebuilding of democratic institutions.

The conference explores the diverse opportunities of transnational minority representation and political mobilization in Europe and in European institutions. We strive to see how transnational minority representation can be conceptualized in a time of growing nationalism and security concerns in European institutions. The conference is intended to cover cases related to political mobilization in European institutions.

Panels focusing specifically on the Roma minority will also serve as a launch event for the recently established Roma Research Group of ELTE's Faculty of Social Sciences.



ELTE

FACULTY OF  
SOCIAL SCIENCES

## Program overview

### Thursday, 21 November 2024, 7<sup>th</sup> floor Conference Room

09:45

#### **OPENING SPEECHES**

Zoltán Gábor Szűcs as Vice Dean for International Affairs and Deputy Director of Institute of Political and International Studies  
Andrew Ryder as Coordinator of the ELTE Roma Research Group and Director of Institute of Political and International Studies

10:00

#### **KEYNOTE PRESENTATION**

Kristin Henrard: Nation building and Minority (language) Rights before the ECtHR: Three steps forward, one leap back

Coffee break

10:45-12:15

#### **Citizenship and Transnational Politics**

Mihai Alexandrescu: European Union Citizenship and Its Avatars

Chair:

Karolina

Paul Popa: Stateless persons and third-country nationals shaping EU's citizenship policies

Lendák-Kabók

Alíz Nagy: Transnational representation of non-resident voters  
János Fiala: A human right to citizenship as a source of conflict and forger of new alliances: the case study of the Slovak law on citizenship

Lunch break

13:30-15:00

#### **European Framework for National Roma Policies**

Tamás Lönghárt: Ethnic Minorities Confronted with the Collective Guilt related post-WWII legislation: Political Representation, Politics of Memory and Reconciliation

Chair: Péter

Kállai

Balázs Vizi: Social integration and/or minority rights – how does the FCNM Advisory Committee identify Roma issues?

Anneli Weiste: Community-based participatory research method in Finnish Roma Health and Wellbeing Study

Balázs Majtényi: Where is the European protection of Roma rights headed?

Coffee break

15:15-16:45

#### **Non-territorial Autonomy**

Jelena Lončar: Rethinking substantive representation of ethnic minorities

Chair: Alíz

Nagy

Balázs Kiss: Between Scylla and Charybdis: Lessons from the 2024 Elections of National Minority Self-Governments in Hungary  
Katinka Beretka: Participation of National Minorities in Serbia, with Special Regard to the Implementation of the Lund Recommendations  
Balázs Dobos: Territoriality and political participation. Cultural autonomies and minority parliamentary representation in Central and South Eastern Europe

Friday, 22 November 2024, Zsuzsa Ferge Conference Hall, 0.100C

09:45

**KEYNOTE PRESENTATION**

Iulius Rostas: Decolonizing Minority Rights – A Critical Examination from the Roma Minority Perspective

Coffee break

10:30-11:45

**Peacebuilding in Post-conflict Societies**

Karolina Lendák-Kabók: Ethnic Identity and Inter-marriage in Post-Yugoslav Spaces: The Impact of Nationalism and Education  
Hanna Vasilevich: Language Policy and Peacebuilding: Navigating Minority Rights in Post-Conflict Ukraine

Chair: Laura  
Kromják

Lunch break

13:00-14:00

**Comparison of identities and strategies of Roma and Indigenous Canadians (roundtable)**

Frank Thomas Zsigó, Körtvélyesi Zsolt, Andrew Ryder

Coffee break

14:15-15:15

**George Soros and the Roma (roundtable)**

Andrew Ryder, Frank Thomas Zsigó, Lilla Farkas

Coffee break

15:30-16:30

**Roma Representation in the Nation States**

Dezső Máté: The Genesis of the “Gypsy”

Chair: Balázs  
Majtényi

Péter Kállai: Roma representation in Hungarian Parliament 2014-2024  
Lilla Farkas: The significance of Roma leadership: the ERRC's framing of the 'Roma issue' before and after 2015  
Zsolt Körtvélyesi: The Balkan Chalk Circle? Competing Jurisdictions and Minority Rights

**Evening: wine reception and final networking at Bura Galéria**

**1085 Budapest, Kőfaragó street 5.**

## Abstracts

**KRISTIN HENRARD**

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

*Prof. Dr. Kristin Henrard is Professor (hoogleraar) of International Law and Programme Director of the BA in International and European Law programme at the Brussels School of Governance. She co-directs the Fundamental Rights Centre at the VUB.*

### **Nation building and Minority (language) Rights before the ECtHR: Three steps forward, one leap back**

A lot has been written about the extent to which the ECHR as interpreted by the ECtHR actually protects the fundamental rights of minorities. The fact that international (human rights) courts do provide protection to minorities' fundamental rights is to be welcomed, as confirming that minority rights are human rights. At the same time, what is equally visible is that states strongly contest the scope of minority rights that concern matters that deviate from what is considered to be crucial to the national identity; and that international courts in these matters prefer to take a step back, out of concern for their political legitimacy, by granting a broad margin of appreciation, and/or – more radically – limit the scope of application of particular fundamental rights. A recent judgement, *Valiullina et al v Latvia*, deserves a close analysis as it throws new light on this issue.

In several respects, *Valiullina* develops very promising lines of reasoning, inter alia concerning the position of previously dominant groups that are now minorities, the recognition of the relevance of being taught in one's mother tongue or not and the related indirect discrimination on grounds of language, and the recognition of the legitimacy of 'reasonable' nation-building policies. In some respects, the judgement in *Valiullina* represents a standstill, more particularly concerning the focus on the wide margin of discretion the FCNM leaves. However, the Court takes a huge leap back in its interpretation of art 2, Prot. 1 sentence 2 by rewriting the *Catan's* judgement acceptance that linguistic preferences of parents amount to philosophical convictions that need to be respected by the authorities. Instead, the Court underscores the focus of its preceding jurisprudence on limiting the first sentence to a right to education in (one of) the national languages. The Court's proportionality reasoning in terms of the discrimination complaint shows how it could have easily found for a proportionate limitation of the right, thus similarly concluding that no violation took place. Put differently, the Court's complete exclusion of any linguistic dimension of the right to education under the ECHR can be considered an 'overkill' that exemplifies the fragile position of minorities' rights, when international courts are faced by a determined nation-building exercise.

**IULIUS ROSTAS**

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

*Coordinator of ELTE Roma Research Group. Former chair of Romani Studies Central European University and Director of Roma Initiatives at Open Society*

### **Decolonizing Minority Rights: A Critical Examination from the Roma Minority Perspective**

The discourse surrounding minority rights has historically been entrenched in colonial paradigms, often perpetuating systems of oppression and marginalization rather than addressing the needs and aspirations of marginalized communities. Within this framework, the Roma minority, Europe's largest and most marginalized ethnic group, provides a compelling lens through which to examine the imperative of decolonizing minority rights. Drawing on critical race theory, postcolonial theory, and intersectional perspectives, this paper offers a nuanced analysis of the complexities inherent in decolonizing minority rights, particularly from the Roma perspective.

Central to the discussion is the recognition of the Roma as a distinct ethno-cultural group with a rich history and heritage that predates the colonial encounters that have shaped their contemporary experiences. Yet, despite their unique cultural identity, Roma communities have been subjected to centuries of systemic discrimination, marginalization, and forced assimilation. This paper argues that efforts to address Roma rights within the framework of existing minority rights paradigms often fail to account for the root causes of Roma oppression, which are deeply embedded in colonial legacies of racism, dispossession, and cultural erasure.

## Citizenship and Transnational Politics

21 November Thursday, 10:45-12:15. Chair: Karolina Lendák-Kabók

### **Mihai Alexandrescu: European Union Citizenship and Its Avatars**

As a supranational construct, European citizenship needed a period of conceptual adaptation and practical consolidation. This study explores how citizenship of the European Union has been approached from a political, legal, theoretical and social point of view during its three decades of existence. From a theoretical point of view, the post-national and neo-functional approach provides the conceptual tools necessary for a deeper understanding of both the role that the EU Court of Justice played in the consolidation of European citizenship, as well as the way in which the member states have readjusted their relationship with citizens. This study explains why citizenship is a gain of European integration. However, the European integration project remains reversible without a permanent strengthening of the relationship between the EU and European citizens.

### **Paul Popa: Stateless persons and third-country nationals shaping EU's citizenship policies**

European citizenship is a dynamic concept, to which political contexts determine new interpretations regarding the applicability of regulations of EU. Over time, it was noticed that an important role in defining the dimension of European citizenship is that of stateless persons and third-country nationals, who through the judicial mechanisms, especially of the European Court of Justice (ECJ), bring new interpretations and changes regarding European citizenship.

The importance of these mechanisms is worth noting, as they accept major changes that greatly complete the definition given by the Maastricht Treaty to European citizenship. A main concern must be how the role that stateless and third-country nationals play in the EU citizenship discourse is defined and how the EU might address the challenges it faces in accessing citizenship. Eventually, their role should be to change the perspectives on how we understand and grant European citizenship. The national perspectives could become obsolete, since EU is a place for all of those who contribute to its development.

### **Alíz Nagy: Transnational representation of non-resident voters**

Debates surrounding non-resident voting rights often center around whether emigrants should be allowed to participate in elections in their country of origin. However, in Central Eastern Europe, non-resident voters are quite often not emigrants, but members of a kin-minority community. Thus, their claims towards non-resident participation are closely tied to their status as minorities.

Recently, the representation of kin-minorities has been discussed extensively in terms of internationalization (where international institutions are to protect their democratic rights) and externalization (where claim-making occurs beyond the institutions of nation states). In

this research, while accepting the claims relying on internationalization and externalization, I discuss a political strategy that is transnational.

Transnational representation is rooted in the institutions of the nation-state, yet it adapts to a structure of democratic representation that moves beyond the boundaries of the state.

Drawing on case studies of emigrant and kin-minority non-resident voting, the research explores whether transnational representation could foster a just and equal structure of non-resident participation.

### **János Fiala: A human right to citizenship as a source of conflict and forger of new alliances: the case study of the Slovak law on citizenship**

The Slovak government's prohibition of double citizenship in 2010 was an openly hostile act directed against Hungary. The same two prime ministers are in power currently, and have become close allies. Despite their new friendship, they could not resolve the issue. Human rights litigation challenging Slovakia's citizenship law has brought unexpected realignment of political alliances: the Hungarian minority in Slovakia finds itself in opposition to its formally most important supporter, the Hungarian government, and in close cooperation with both governments' target, the LGBT+ community. This presentation explains how human rights law played a role in this realignment.



## European Framework for National Roma Policies

21 November Thursday, 13:30-15:00. Chair: Péter Kállai

### **Tamás Lönhárt: Ethnic Minorities Confronted with the Collective Guilt related post-WWII legislation: Political Representation, Politics of Memory and Reconciliation**

This presentation addresses the complicated phenomena of contemporary political usage of “collective guilt”, analyzed in the context of the political transitions in Central and Eastern Europe, and the enduring impact of these realities on present day state – national minorities’ relations in our region. At the referential level we addressed the historical realities of national minority communities’ experiences, which were influenced by the usage of “collective guilt” and “collective punishment” in the immediate post-WWII era, and which structured state – national minorities relations, and referred by the contending political elites in Central and South-Eastern Europe. Then, on a symbolic level, we aimed to answer the following questions: “how those realities are integrated as part of the collective memory and identity narratives of the communities involved?”; “how are those realities integrated as part of the politics of memory discourses and reproduced by current political elites, by state organized memorial events, educational materials and manuals, media, etc.?” We are to address also the impact of these realities on post-1989 transitional justice and reconciliation process. We argue for the need to re-interpret the relevance of discursive construction of a political community by integrating also the national minorities’ perspective of the frequently traumatic common experiences of the 20th century in Central and Eastern Europe, a process that have to benefit of active political will for a process which is to result a reconciliation between all parts, and a real “Healing of Memory”.

### **Balázs Vizi: Social integration and/or minority rights – how does the FCNM Advisory Committee identify Roma issues?**

There are many Council of Europe, European Union and OSCE documents that specifically deal with the situation of Roma. International documents by-and-large regard the Roma as a „transnational people” and the majority perceptions (mainly their way of living, social conditions or their physical resemblance) on them influence also the way how Roma appear in these documents. But numerous questions concerning the Roma in Europe have remained unanswered: e.g. are the government efforts for the social inclusion a form of assimilation? Are international minority rights instruments useful for the Roma? While international documents specifically addressing the problems of Roma put a strong emphasis on the need to combat discrimination against them, the social integration of Roma seems to overshadow the problems of the preservation of their specific minority identity and culture. Under the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities Roma are seen as a national minority, however this dual approach is also present in the FCNM Advisory Committee monitoring procedure. Different State Parties of the FCNM offer different approaches to the special problems of the Roma, but mainly focus their policies on their social integration and on combating by legal and political means discrimination. State reports submitted under the FCNM monitoring procedure offer an overview of the different



definitions and categorizations. This paper is aimed at giving an analysis on whether the FCNM Advisory Committee opinions show a coherent approach to the definition of Roma and whether the Roma minority is seen as a transnational minority? How is the problem of social integration vs. assimilation understood under the FCNM monitoring? And is the preservation of their identity seen as a priority?

### **Anneli Weiste: Community-based participatory research method in Finnish Roma Health and Wellbeing Study**

This study examines the intersectional impacts of Finnish Roma policies, particularly focusing on education, employment, health, and housing across different age groups within the Roma community, including children, youth, working-age adults, and the elderly. The research aims to identify the most vulnerable subgroups within the Roma population and assess the effectiveness of targeted interventions.

The study employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative data from the 2018 Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare's (THL) Roma Wellbeing Study (Roosa) with qualitative insights from ethnographic fieldwork. The research is autoethnographic, leveraging the author's extensive 13-year experience in Roma-related policy implementation and evaluation, including a tenure as the Secretary General of the Advisory Board on Romani Affairs at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

Key areas of investigation include the barriers to service access for Roma individuals experiencing domestic violence, substance abuse, mental health issues, and internal community discrimination. The study also explores the role of community cohesion in enhancing or undermining wellbeing. Additionally, the research addresses ethical considerations in Roma studies, institutional power dynamics, workplace bullying, digital violence, and hate speech within the field of Roma work.

The findings aim to provide actionable insights for improving service delivery and ensuring equitable access to resources for the most vulnerable Roma groups. The study highlights successful mainstreaming practices from other EU countries, such as Spain, and offers recommendations for enhancing inclusivity and participation within the Roma community. The ultimate goal is to inform policymakers and service providers on how to better support the wellbeing of Roma individuals, particularly those in precarious situations, and to combat antigypsyism and structural racism effectively.

This research contributes to the broader discourse on intersectionality, social determinants of health, and the importance of culturally sensitive approaches in policy and service provision for marginalized communities.

### **Balázs Majtényi: Where is the European protection of Roma rights headed?**

The presentation critically examines the role of international organisations in protecting Roma rights. Over the past three decades, the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and the European Union have been involved in reporting on Roma rights violations, calling on states to address these violations, adopting comprehensive strategies to facilitate social change and to set general standards for member

states. When a minority such as the Roma minority has no nation-state and is a victim of historical oppression, there is a greater need for international organisations to provide them with special protection, while naming and shaming the different forms of oppression. Given the Roma-specific activities of the three international organisations, this chapter explores potential overlaps, gaps and synergies, knowledge sharing and cooperation, as well as the problems that may arise from their fragmentation and their diverse toolkits. The presentation seeks to answer the following questions: What is the specific role of IOs in this area? Is policymaking really their job? Are they not pushing the boundaries of human rights too far to remain practical and effective?

## Non-territorial Autonomy

21 November Thursday, 15:15-16:45. Chair: Alíz Nagy

### Jelena Lončar: Rethinking substantive representation of ethnic minorities

This presentation aims to redefine minority substantive representation in the light of the claim-making framework. Much of the previous literature on minority representation focuses on political representation in national representative institutions (i.e., national parliaments), defining it as responsiveness to the constituencies' pre-defined interests. This presentation will challenge this approach in two ways. First, I will argue that representation may be performed at different stages (both national and transnational, elected and non-elected) and discuss their importance, similarities and differences. Second, the presentation will challenge the operationalization of minority representation. The more constructivist understanding offered in this presentation will define substantive representation as claims to act upon minority interests, which involves a creative process that consists of: 1) the construction of minority groups and their interests as bearing a natural or necessary relation; 2) the construction of a representative as the one who can know the minority's true or vital interests; 3) and the construction of the array of actions that count as, and should be recognized as counting as, legitimate *actions upon* minority interests.

### Balázs Kiss: Between Scylla and Charybdis: Lessons from the 2024 Elections of National Minority Self-Governments in Hungary

Since the change of regime, Hungary has allowed national minorities to set up self-governments at local and national level. The conditions for calling municipal national minority self-government elections have changed fundamentally after 2010. Since then, the law has made the calling of elections conditional on the provision of aggregated data by national minority in the most recent census on questions relating to national minority. The legal regulation on the number of people required to call an election has not been settled since then, and is characterised not by stability but rather by constant change. The last amendment to the relevant legislation was made in the summer of 2023.

The elections of national minority self-governments are also fundamentally affected by which national minority organisations qualify as nominating organisations. In this respect, although the previous legislation has remained unchanged, the practice of electoral bodies and courts has become more restrictive in the post-2010 period, which in some cases prevents organisations that have been active as nominating organisations for decades from participating in the electoral competition.

The objective of the presentation is to highlight the contradictions arising from the current regulation and the case law, and to propose possible solutions based on the experience and results of the 2024 national minority elections.

## **Katinka Beretka: Participation of National Minorities in Serbia, with Special Regard to the Implementation of the Lund Recommendations**

The paper starts from the fact that Serbian legislation ensures more or less all levels/forms of participation rights to national minorities, which are covered by the Lund Recommendations on the Effective Participation of National Minorities in Public Life (1999). Parliamentary representation at the central level is guaranteed as a constitutional category. Ethnic parties enjoy preferential treatment during central, regional, and local elections. Special attention must be paid to the share of national minorities in the public authorities, according to laws. National minorities may elect their national minority councils that are the embodiment of non-territorial minority self-government. Furthermore, the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina may regulate additional rights for national minorities living in its territory. Although the territorial autonomy of the province is not an instrument of minority self-government, in Vojvodina multi-ethnicity and multilingualism have been nurtured and managed as basic values for decades. There is no doubt, therefore, that the recommendations, regardless of their soft law nature, had a positive impact on Serbian legislation in terms of the widest possible regulation of the participation rights of national minorities. However, practice shows that in Serbia the participation and representation of national minorities is not as effective as it would be expected. Because the laws primarily facilitate, rather than guarantee participation in public life only well-organized, larger communities gain seats in the National Assembly; most ethnic parties are almost invisible in political life; international monitoring reports constantly highlight the underrepresentation of persons belonging to national minorities in public sector: despite the elected national minority councils, some national minorities are completely passive in the management of institutions and can only be heard about during the elections campaigns; in the Assembly of Vojvodina, no acts regulating the additional rights of national minorities have been passed in recent years.

The goal of the paper is to present the participation rights of national minorities in Serbia along the Lund Recommendations, paying special attention to practical shortcomings, difficulties, anomalies, and setbacks of the system. As a conclusion, the author makes suggestions for improving the system, respecting the constitutional framework and the relevant court practice.

## **Balázs Dobos: Territoriality and political participation. Cultural autonomies and minority parliamentary representation in Central and South Eastern Europe**

The institutionalized, legally entrenched and fully elected forms of minority cultural autonomies (minority councils/self-governments) are specific, yet understudied mechanisms of ethnic voting and ethnicity-based representation in which individuals are required to identify themselves with the recognised communities. One of the main theoretical challenges, but also has serious practical implications that this non-territorial model needs to face is how it relates to territory, and, in this context, how it can achieve sufficient social embeddedness. To what extent and with what precision it can follow the personal principle, whether it is combined with territorial elements, numerical and electoral thresholds, whether it can reach

and cover those belonging to the community to represent it as a whole more effectively, especially in those issues affecting them. While potential group members often live territorially scattered in the four relevant countries of Central and South Eastern Europe (Croatia, Hungary, Serbia, and Slovenia) with elected minority councils and self-governments. However, relatively little is known about the extent to which they are able not only to reach and but to mobilize group members. In order to grasp and measure the levels of electoral participation of the minorities in question, a comparison could be made with the results of the parliamentary elections, where the above countries also follow an accommodationist strategy through various measures (reserved/guaranteed seats, lower thresholds, parliamentary spokespersons) to foster minority representation at the national level. Since some countries could be defined increasingly as electoral autocracies (Hungary, Serbia), this leads further to investigate how these regimes built and used these channels of minority representation, whether they represent effective participation in public life, as envisaged by the international standards of minority protection. Overall, to what extent one could observe the broad or rather limited participation and representation of minorities in the countries in question. The major aim of the paper is, therefore, to present and analyze the levels of electoral mobilization in the elections of minority councils/self-governments, the national variants of non-territorial cultural autonomies, comparing them with the results of another key institutional channel of participation, the past two or three parliamentary elections in the four countries.

## Peacebuilding in Post-conflict Societies

22 November Friday 10:15-11:45. Chair: Laura Kromják

### **Karolina Lendák-Kabók: Ethnic Identity and Inter-marriage in Post-Yugoslav Spaces: The Impact of Nationalism and Education**

Inter-marriages in the Western Balkans offer a unique perspective on the region's cultural and political complexities. Historically symbols of coexistence, these unions have been shaped by socio-political shifts, particularly the rise of ethno-nationalism leading to the Yugoslav Wars. This paper examines the decline of mixed marriages in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the persistent tensions in Kosovo, and contrasts these with Vojvodina's openness and Montenegro's unique dynamics. While inter-marriages challenge ethnic divides, they alone cannot resolve regional tensions, requiring broader, integrative approaches. The study also focuses on the lived experiences of Serb-Hungarian millennials in Vojvodina during the 1990s, exploring how the choice of language of instruction shaped their identities and group-belonging. Through interviews, the findings show that those educated in minority languages faced more ethnicity-based incidents, reflecting the deep scars of nationalism. This empirical data underscores the lasting impact of family decisions and social environments on identity formation during this tumultuous period.

### **Hanna Vasilevich: Language Policy and Peacebuilding: Navigating Minority Rights in Post-Conflict Ukraine**

This paper investigates how minority language rights policies in Ukraine have evolved since the 2014 conflict and their impact on peacebuilding and social cohesion. Drawing upon a theoretical framework that emphasizes the interconnectedness of language, identity, and conflict, the study analyzes legislative changes, government strategies, and international reports to reveal the intricate relationship between language policy, national identity, and conflict resolution in Ukraine. The research highlights significant transformations in Ukraine's language policies, particularly regarding the status of Russian and other minority languages. These changes reflect a broader tension between nation-building goals and the protection of minority rights. For instance, the 2019 Law on Ensuring the Functioning of Ukrainian as the State Language, while affirming Ukrainian's status as the sole state language, has sparked debate about its potential impact on minority language use in education, media, and public administration. This law, along with other legislation like the Law on Education, has been criticized for potentially limiting the use of minority languages in education, particularly in regions with significant minority populations. Examining reports from the OSCE and Council of Europe reveals a mixed record of Ukraine's compliance with international minority rights standards. While some legislative efforts, such as the ratification of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, align with European recommendations, implementation remains a challenge, especially in regions affected by conflict. For example, access to education in minority languages remains limited in certain areas, hindering the integration of minority communities.

This paper argues that language policies are a critical factor in Ukraine's peacebuilding process. Restrictive measures risk alienating minority communities, particularly in eastern Ukraine, potentially undermining social cohesion and exacerbating existing tensions. Conversely, more inclusive language policies, which recognize and protect the rights of minority language speakers, could foster reconciliation, integration, and a sense of shared belonging.

Finding a balance between promoting Ukrainian as the state language and protecting minority language rights is crucial for successful peacebuilding in Ukraine. The study recommends a nuanced approach to language policy that acknowledges Ukraine's linguistic diversity while fostering national unity. This approach, grounded in principles of inclusivity and respect for human rights, can significantly contribute to conflict resolution efforts and support Ukraine's aspirations for European integration. This research provides valuable insights for policymakers and international organizations engaged in supporting Ukraine's recovery and democratic development, contributing to a broader understanding of how language rights intersect with peacebuilding in post-conflict societies. By highlighting the complexities and sensitivities surrounding language policy in Ukraine, this study underscores the need for context-specific solutions that prioritize dialogue, understanding, and the equitable treatment of all citizens.



## Comparison of identities and strategies of Roma and Indigenous Canadians

22 November Friday 13:00-14:00.

Roundtable discussion with Frank Thomas Zsigó, Körtvélyesi Zsolt, Andrew Ryder

In 2023 a delegation of Indigenous Canadian researchers from the University of Alberta, Edmonton visited Hungary and a delegation of ELTE researchers and Roma activists visited Edmonton. A series of seminars and field trips were organised to prompt comparative discussion and insights. This was the first major comparative discussion of the Roma/Indigenous people. The panel will allow some of those involved to reflect further on lessons learnt and consider future steps.

## George Soros and the Roma

22 November Friday, 14:15-15:15

Roundtable discussion with Andrew Ryder, Frank Thomas Zsigó, Lilla Farkas

George Soros has the profile of a major global business figure, philanthropist, and influencer, of international renown. In some quarters, most notably from the radical right, Soros has attracted a certain notoriety, being framed as a malevolent political, cultural, and economic force. Likewise, the Roma have been demonized and vilified. Both Soros and the Roma can be considered as outsiders. Few though, outside of the world of Roma advocacy will know that Soros and the Roma are highly interconnected. Although a relatively small part of Soros's philanthropy, Soros has over the last three to four decades made a highly significant contribution to the development of a Roma social movement and policy frameworks that impact this community. This raises a series of important questions about the nature of philanthropy with highly marginalized communities like the Roma. Can philanthropy empower the marginalized or is there a danger of paternalism

## Roma Representation in the Nation States

22 November Friday, 15:30-16:30. Chair: Balázs Majtényi

### Dezső Máté: The Genesis of the "Gypsy"

Ken Lee argues that Orientalism extends to the creation of an exotic "Other," while Gypsyism represents this otherness in Europe that historically permeates arts, culture, academic institutions, and religious bodies (Lee, 2000). George Smith's resources indicate that the very first studies on "Gypsies" in the European context appeared in the late 1600s. This academic work arguably laid the foundation for differentiating the Romani "Others". More precisely, they did not consider Romani people to be European, Christian, or "white"; instead, they viewed them as "inferiors" (Smith, 1880). Heinrich Moritz Gottlieb Grellmann, an Enlightenment thinker, introduced the scientific study of the "Dissertation on the Gypsies" in 1783 with "Die Zigeuner," a seminal work that initiated Gypsyism. This work, viewed through an Orientalist lens, not only discussed folkloric, cultural, historical, and linguistic aspects but also contributed to the social, political, and genealogical "Othering" of the "Gypsies" (Mayall 2003). The primary objective of the talk is to provide a comprehensive examination of Gypsyism and its significant influence on the field of social sciences, specifically through examining the development of the Gypsy Lore Society (GLS) from its beginnings in the early Romany Rye period of knowledge production until John Sampson presidency. The research seeks to answer questions such as: How did academic dialogues, strategies, and research influence the GLS's institutional development? How were Roma represented in academic productions? To what extent are these representations consistent with contemporary understandings of history?

### Péter Kállai: Roma representation in Hungarian Parliament 2014-2024

It is not an exaggeration to say that Hungary's preferential representation of nationalities in parliament in its current form is less in the interest of nationalities and more in the interest of the government. On the one hand, it is a reference point to show that the Hungarian state guarantees national representation for the minorities, but on the other hand, the system itself is being exploited by the ruling parties in such a way that it only produces messages that fits into their own agenda. This can be seen not only in the example of the German nationality, or in the circumstances of drawing up the Roma minority list, but also in the work of the advocate/spokesperson in question in parliament, especially when compared with the activities of the Roma representatives elected on party lists in the 2022-2024 half-term. Accordingly, the presentation analyses the speeches made on the plenary sessions in the Hungarian National Assembly of the Roma advocate and the Roma MPs elected in 2022, showing which issues the national Roma representation in parliament has found worthy of representation over the last ten years. The research is an improved version of the chapter on Roma representation in the author's Hungarian monograph titled 'Szószólók' [Advocates], published in 2024.

## **Lilla Farkas: The significance of Roma leadership: the ERRC's framing of the 'Roma issue' before and after 2015**

Since its establishment in 1995 the ERRC has been subject to a legitimacy critique on account of its predominantly white leadership. In 2015-16 the NGO became Roma-led and predominantly staffed by Roma. This has changed its leadership from white Eastern European to predominantly anglo-saxon Western directions. Eastern Roma may speak but do not write about the new directions of interest representation. The anglo-saxons criticise the previous US influence and its legal liberalism but their cultural influence and its basis in CRT and postcolonialism remains unchallenged. Not much has changed in terms of litigation goals though.

## **Zsolt Körtvélyesi: The Balkan Chalk Circle? Competing Jurisdictions and Minority Rights**

Locals complain and activists picked up a claim that primary schools in Mitrovica, Kosovo, segregate Roma children, so they initiate proceedings. What makes this case peculiar is that the controversy revolves not only around the fact of segregation, but also who has jurisdiction to decide over the matter and who can enforce such decision, were they to order desegregation. The specificities of the circumstances mean that the very existence of transnationality in advocacy and the participation of minorities is contested. The lecture presents the segregation case as it unfolded from the initial claim-making to the gathering of evidence and petitioning institutions both in Kosovo and in Serbia, until a partial finding of violation from the Serbian equality body in a quasi-transnational opinion, with recommendations to desegregate. My research conceptualizes this controversy as a case of competing competencies with the decisions of authorities in Kosovo and Serbia on competences play out in a charged political environment. Part of this environment is conditionality pressures, both *vis-à-vis* regimes in Kosovo and Serbia, including the establishment and operation of special bodies, e.g., equal treatment authorities and ombuds-like institutions. While these are meant to protect the vulnerable against violations even if remedies go against majority preferences and political decisions, no institution is free from internal pressure in exactly this direction. European conditionality can exert its influence, if any, in this context. Regimes and authorities seek to gain legitimacy where they might be driven to make minority-friendly concessions, if often only symbolic. We can study the possibility and effects of norms and conditionality that reward minority-friendly measures, akin to Solomon's judgment on who should raise a child in the face of competing claims of motherhood. Drawing lessons from such cases is especially important for European institutions that claim crucial positions in shaping local landscapes where contestations play out; and for times like the current where compromise-based and multilateral agreements lose ground.

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