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Abstract (English)

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have been adopted in 2015 by the Member States. The purpose of these 17 goals is to ensure that no one is left behind, and the first Goal aims to end poverty in all its forms until 2030. The most vulnerable group among people living in poverty are children. This study aims to highlight the perspective of children in Hungary and to explore the dimensions of child poverty through the SDGs and in particular tries to analyse the perception of children about poverty with reference to their own well-being or ill-being; identify the consequences of poverty in the lives of children; and explore the methods to alleviate child poverty. The research was carried out by interviewing five children living in segregated areas and three experts from NGOs in Hungary. The findings highlight that though sustainability has a certain importance in Hungary, SDGs have no priority over the national sustainability concept formulated in the National Framework Strategy on Sustainable Development. Further it highlights the importance of enhancing the legal empowerment of children including the poor and marginalized groups, as active participation of targeted people is a *sine qua non* for realizing the SDGs. While there are several methods and good practices to alleviate child poverty in Hungary, these methods are not consciously aligned with the SDGs in order to end poverty until 2030.

Abstract (Deutsch)

Die Ziele für Nachhaltige Entwicklung (SDGs) wurden 2015 von den Mitgliedstaaten verabschiedet. Mit diesen 17 Zielen soll sichergestellt werden, dass niemand zurückgelassen wird. Das erste Ziel zielt darauf ab, die Armut in all ihren Formen bis 2030 zu beenden. Die am stärksten gefährdete Gruppe unter den in Armut lebenden Menschen sind Kinder. Diese Studie soll die Perspektive von Kindern in Ungarn hervorheben. Die Studie zielt darauf ab, die Dimensionen der Kinderarmut anhand der SDGs zu untersuchen und insbesondere die Wahrnehmung von Kindern in Bezug auf Armut im Hinblick auf ihr eigenes Wohlbefinden oder ihr Unwohlsein zu analysieren; der Folgen der Armut im Leben von Kindern zu ermitteln und die Methoden zur Linderung der Kinderarmut zu erforschen. Die Untersuchung wurde durchgeführt, indem fünf in getrennten Gebieten lebende Kinder und drei Experten von NGOs in Ungarn befragt wurden. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass Nachhaltigkeit in Ungarn zwar eine gewisse Bedeutung hat, SDGs jedoch keine Priorität vor dem in der Nationalen Rahmenstrategie für Nachhaltige Entwicklung formulierten nationalen Nachhaltigkeitskonzept haben. Darüber hinaus wird hervorgehoben, wie wichtig es ist, die rechtliche Befugnis von Kindern, einschließlich armer und marginalisierter Gruppen, zu verbessern, da die aktive Teilnahme von Zielgruppen eine unabdingbare Voraussetzung für die Verwirklichung der SDGs ist. Zwar gibt es in Ungarn viele Methoden und bewährte Verfahren zur Bekämpfung der Kinderarmut, doch sind diese Methoden nicht bewusst an den SDGs ausgerichtet, um die Armut bis 2030 zu beenden.

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I would like to thank the children involved in the research for their trust and openness what they showed towards me, for their balanced responses, which proved their ability to face the difficulties of life, and also testified that nothing hinders them from living their childhood in happiness.

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Acronyms

AROPE	Overall Risk of Poverty or Social Exclusion
CRC	Convention of the Rights of the Child
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
ECHO	European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
ECHR	European Convention on Human Rights
ESC	European Social Charter
ESCR	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
EU	European Union
FRA	European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
HBSC	Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children
HDI	Human Development Index
HRD-OP	Human Resources Development Operational Programme
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
LOIPR	List of Issues Prior to Reporting
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MODA	Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis
NCSD	National Council for Sustainable Development
NFSSD	National Framework Strategy on Sustainable Development
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VNR	Voluntary National Review

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Chapter One: Introduction

(1) Introduction

Some subjects that I chose to study at the Department of International Development were (obviously) related to development strategies. During these courses, I realised that among alternative development strategies the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR) have explicit human rights aspect. Several literatures suggest that poverty is the roots of the violation of ESCR and human rights.¹ In this sense until human rights is considered to be an important tool in order to realise a more justiciable world, poverty must be considered a crucial issue. This is underpinned in the objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) formulated by the United Nations. The first goal of the SDGs aims to end poverty until 2030. Poverty means vulnerability, and if vulnerability may be exaggerated, it is the case of younger people, the children. Child poverty is especially dangerous, as being poor in childhood may influence the trajectory of life and opportunities of the later adult. I am Hungarian and having seen poverty in different sections of this society, I decided to choose Hungary to examine child poverty in the era of post-2015 Development Agenda.²

This study aims to bring closer the perspective of children in terms of child poverty. It is important to understand how children perceive the concepts of well-being and to examine how is the well-being transferred in the lives of children. Literature has often highlighted the potential of children to become an adult capable to lead a good and valuable life and that they have the capability to develop in themselves a certain creativity to overcome future problems and challenges. Child poverty is especially dangerous as it deteriorates the future potentials of children. Being poor, especially in the childhood is not a question of choice, but it is a given circumstance, against which children as minors can do almost nothing. In the case of child poverty even parents are weak or are in vulnerable positions. In this regard, the State which takes effective measures against poverty is crucial. However, in most cases, these effective measures against poverty is over politicized, and does little to serve the interests of children.

The purpose of this study is to raise children's voice living in poverty, to show how do they think about their own situation, about their talent, about their future. The study further examines child rights in relation to poverty, measures taken by the State both in terms of implementing SDGs and the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC).

(2) Background

As a result of their special socio-legal status and age, children are in need of particular protection and support, which has to be provided by their caretakers, and by the state. Today the CRC recognizes the existence and protection of the rights of the child, but the convention is an adult-designed result: the children were the least involved directly and actively in it.³ This point is quite critical in the international children's rights studies, and the need to create a new theoretical

¹ Center for Economic and Social Rights (2009). Human Rights and Poverty: Is poverty a violation of human rights? (2009). Human Rights Insight 1, pp. 1–13. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from [https://www.cesr.org/sites/default/files/CESR_Briefing - Human Rights and Poverty - Draft December 2009.pdf](https://www.cesr.org/sites/default/files/CESR_Briefing_-_Human_Rights_and_Poverty_-_Draft_December_2009.pdf)

² United Nations Economic and Social Council. (2020, April 5). Millennium Development Goals and post-2015 Development Agenda: Overview. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/about/mdg.shtml>

³ Lux, Á. (2018). *A gyermekjogi mozgalom fejlődése és az európai független gyermekjogi intézmények összehasonlító perspektívában (The development of the child right's movement and the European independent child right's institutions in a comparative perspective)*. (pp. 1-265). (Doctoral dissertation, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary). (pp. 20). Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <http://hdl.handle.net/10831/40205/> DOI: 10.15476 / ELTE.2018.060.

framework emerged, replacing this top-down approach with a child rights from below attitude. Child rights is a relatively young area and does not exist as a separate branch of law, but it is becoming a quite complex and far-reaching agenda. Among the most concerning issues arisen regarding child rights – besides child labor, global violence against children, the situation of children living with disabilities or with special needs in care, the problems of juvenile delinquency – is the phenomena of child poverty, which needs a multidisciplinary approach to evaluate at theoretical and practical level.⁴

(i) The relation between SDGs, poverty and human rights

This study focuses that violation of child rights is one of the problems of child poverty. It is undeniable that poverty is regarded as a violation of human rights. Those who consider poverty a human rights violation argue that this paradigm has the potential to galvanise an effective strategy for ending poverty through an international human rights framework. This approach may also endorse the parity and inter-connection of basic social and economic rights with fundamental civil and political rights.⁵

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted by the United Nations Member States in 2015 after the end of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The SDGs are much more interrelated with human rights than MDGs were before. The 17 goals and 169 targets of the SDGs cover the International Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) content not only in the areas of hunger, education, and access to clean water, but also include the topic of decent work, social protection or mental health.⁶ Establishing the goal for equal access to justice for all, the provision of legal identity for all and public access to information, SDGs also coincide with some provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).⁷

The first goal of the SDGs aims to “*end poverty in all its forms everywhere*” until 2030. SDGs also aim to achieve food security, improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. Poverty is not just a question of supply-side issues provided by the government, it is also dependent on people’s characteristics which enable or exclude them to access different opportunities. SDGs in both of these cases promise radical changes and empowerment. SDGs do not consider only developing countries, but also tackle the development problems in developed countries. So, the goals and targets are committed to attaining universal provision.⁸ SDGs aim to improve the lives of children and young people through a number of goals and targets like poverty eradication (Goal 1), health

⁴ Lux, Á. (2018). *A gyermekjogi mozgalom fejlődése és az európai független gyermekjogi intézmények összehasonlító perspektívában (The development of the child right's movement and the European independent child right's institutions in a comparative perspective)*. (pp. 1-265). (Doctoral dissertation, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary). Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <http://hdl.handle.net/10831/40205/> DOI: [10.15476 / ELTE.2018.060](https://doi.org/10.15476/ELTE.2018.060). pp. 19.

⁵ Stuart, E., Bhatkal, T., & Samman, E. (2015, September 25). Re: The SDGs could change the way we think about poverty [Comment]. *Overseas Development Institute*. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.odi.org/comment/9903-sdgs-change-way-think-poverty-bottom-billion>

⁶ Sengupta, M. (2016, January 18). The Sustainable Development Goals: An Assessment of Ambition. *E-International Relations*. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.e-ir.info/2016/01/18/the-sustainable-development-goals-an-assessment-of-ambition/>

⁷ Sengupta, M. (2016, January 18). The Sustainable Development Goals: An Assessment of Ambition. *E-International Relations*. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.e-ir.info/2016/01/18/the-sustainable-development-goals-an-assessment-of-ambition/>

⁸ United Nations Children's Fund. (2018). *Progress for Every Child in the SDG Era*. NY, New York: Division of Data, Research and Policy, UNICEF. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://www.unicef.org/media/48066/file/Progress_for_Every_Child_in_the_SDG_Era.pdf

(Goal 3), education (Goal 4), gender equality (Goal 5), violence against children (Goal 16.2), and other areas that impact children's lives. In adopting the SDGs governments committed to ending poverty in all its forms everywhere, including for children, by 2030. The SDGs aim to halve by 2030 the multidimensional child poverty (a measure of poverty that goes beyond income) and obliges countries to track indicators that capture both monetary and non-financial aspects of poverty, in order to build a world in which all children have what they need to fulfil their potential.⁹

(ii) Poverty in Hungary

Hungarian society falls into the poorer half of European society. *“No more than roughly one-third of Hungarians can compete with their European peers in terms of living standards, educational attainment level, lifestyle, open-mindedness, tolerance and foreign language skills”*. Altogether 44 per cent of the Hungarian population cannot afford basic resources, compared with an EU average of 19.5 per cent. Income and wealth inequality are at a modest level, there is a narrow and weak middle class and a large deprived segment of the society, altogether the average living standard is at a low level in the country.¹⁰ The share of the severely deprived population grew between 2009 and 2013 from 20.3 per cent to 27.8 per cent, before decreasing gradually to reach 14.3 per cent by 2017. According to Eurostat data, in 2013 only in Bulgaria and Romania was severe material deprivation more widespread than in Hungary, later in 2016, Greece joined those two Member States, pushing Hungary into 4th place.¹¹

According to Eurostat data from 2017 almost a quarter (25.6 per cent) of Hungarians were still threatened by poverty or social exclusion. This was the European Union's (EU) eighth highest percentage. Women were more threatened by poverty than men and there was a 31.6 per cent of child poverty. In 2017 only 16.8 per cent of 65-year-old and older people were poor, these favourable figures compared to the others were due to the fact that many poor people do not live for long.¹² While the numbers of Eurostat data from 2018 show that the percentage of people living in severe material deprivation in Hungary is the most favourable, yet Hungary still has one of the highest poverty rates in the EU. The measurement of material deprivation is key for determining the living conditions in EU member states, and Eurostat has been recording data since 2007. According to these statistics, Hungary is one of three countries that managed to majorly reduce their poverty levels. Hungary has decreased its indicator from a record of 27.8 per cent to just 10.1 per cent. Bulgaria and Greece were the only states able to achieve a similar result. While the Hungarian results are promising, the numbers still fall behind the EU average (6.2 per cent). Out of the 28 EU countries, Luxembourg had the most beneficial indicator with only 1.2 per cent living in severe material deprivation. In 2017 according to the statistics the welfare of Hungarian households only reached 62 per cent of the EU average. Hungary was the fourth poorest country in 2015. The country's poverty rate is still below the EU-28 average of 17.3 per cent and the

⁹ United Nations Children's Fund. (2020). *Child poverty. Children are more likely to live in poverty than adults. They're also more vulnerable to its effects*. NY, New York: UNICEF. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.unicef.org/social-policy/child-poverty>

¹⁰ Benyik, M. (2017). *Implementation of the Agenda 2030: Are “partners” delivering?* Budapest, Hungary: Social Watch Hungary National Reports. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <http://www.socialwatch.org/sites/default/files/2017-SR-HUNGARY-eng.pdf>

¹¹ Bernát, A. (2019). *Integration of the Roma in Hungary in the 2010s*. In *Hungarian Social Report 2019* (pp. 195–214). Budapest, Hungary: Társki. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.tarki.hu/eng/tarsadalmi-riport>

¹² Kolba, G. (2018, October 20). *How poor Hungarian people are*. *Daily News Hungary*. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://dailynewshungary.com/how-poor-hungarian-people-are-comparing-to-others/>

improvements witnessed do not primarily concern the most vulnerable groups.¹³

There are some important factors which influence poverty in Hungary. Educational attainment has a strong effect on the risk of poverty. Four out of ten Hungarians with at most primary education lived in poverty in 2017, between three and four times the figure for those with tertiary education. The Hungarian educational system should do more to ensure better-quality education and training for Roma youth. This would be a key factor in overcoming their multi-generational disadvantages and in achieving successful integration.¹⁴ Poverty has also a rural character in Hungary. Even though the rates have fallen by 8 – 10 per cent, since 2013, almost 9 per cent of the rural population is still financially significantly deprived. In Hungary almost half of the total population (46.85 per cent) is living in rural areas, in this sense the country is one of the top rural EU-member countries. The active, well-educated and trained population leaves the rural settlements, and migrates to predominantly urban regions and big cities in Hungary as well as in other countries. Consequently, the rural population is becoming older and the natural population increase is falling, which causes the process of massive depopulation of rural settlements in Hungary. One of the greatest socio-economic problems is the lack of economically active population in rural areas as well as the growing number of inactive and unemployed people.¹⁵

In 2017, four Hungarian regions were listed among the 20 regions with the lowest GDP per capita: The Northern Great Plain (43 per cent), Northern Hungary (45 per cent), Southern Transdanubia (45 per cent), and the Southern Great Plain (48 per cent). Central Hungary, where Budapest is located being the most developed region of Hungary produced 105 per cent of the EU average in 2017.¹⁶ Nowadays in the most impoverished regions and towns of Hungary, the income is 2.5 per cent less than the average. The net value of the average Hungarian income was approximately 240,000 HUF (716 EUR) between January and March in 2019, 60 – 70 per cent of Hungarian citizens' income was still less than 1,044 EUR, but the gap between the incomes was not as deep as the gap between the country's geographical factors. In the poorest regions the residents are 'vegetating' to earn a living, they are usually single parents, children, teenagers, and Romas. The unemployment rate in these regions is 10 per cent but in some areas even 15 per cent while in the wealthiest regions of Hungary around 3 per cent. The top three most critical regions in the country are Csenger region (Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County) where the net income of a person in a year is 620,360 HUF (1,850 EUR), Kunhegyesi region (Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County) where the net income of a person in a year is 628,700 HUF (1,870 EUR), Fehérgyarmat region where the net income of a person in a year is 637,000 HUF (1,900 EUR).¹⁷

Bartlett highlights that people perceive urban children as being better off than rural children. But the research proves that for growing numbers, the so-called urban advantage is a myth. Though figures show that three quarters of poverty is concentrated in rural areas, and average figures, like

¹³ Péter, D. (2018, December 17). Eurostat: Hungarians are the second poorest in the European Union. *Daily News Hungary*. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://dailynewshungary.com/eurostat-hungarians-are-the-second-poorest-in-the-european-union/>

¹⁴ Branyiczki, R., Gábos, A., Szívós, P. (2019). Poverty and Social Exclusion in Hungary and the EU. In Hungarian Social Report 2019. Budapest, Hungary: Társi. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://tarki.hu/sites/default/files/2019-02/046_065_branyiczki-gabos_szivos.pdf

¹⁵ Dimeski, B., & Tosheva, E. (2018) Examining Rural Regions in Hungary after EU Accession: Public Management of Some Key Performances (2004-2014). *Balkan Social Science Review*, 12(12), 7-25.

¹⁶ Vass, E. (2017, April 6). 4 Hungarian regions among the poorest in the EU. *Daily News Hungary*. Retrieved April 1, 2020, from <https://dailynewshungary.com/4-hungarian-regions-among-poorest-eu/>

¹⁷ Kolba, G. (2019, July 17). Devastating! These are the poorest regions in Hungary. *Daily News Hungary*. Retrieved April 1, 2020, from <https://dailynewshungary.com/devastating-these-are-the-poorest-regions-in-hungary/>

income, malnutrition or school attendance are better in urban areas, urban children can also live in poor-quality housing conditions, in settlements without proper infrastructure, can be heavily exposed to toxics and pollutants, living in areas contaminated by industrial waste or close to heavy traffic.¹⁸

Ethnic background plays a significant role as well. Among those who live in a household with a Roma head, four times as many people are below the income poverty threshold as when a non-Roma is head of the household. The figure for those living in a household with a Roma head has dropped over a few years, from 67.9 per cent in 2014 to 48.4 per cent in 2017. But the disadvantages facing Roma are still enormous, despite the declining trend across society.¹⁹ The reason why Hungarian society still falls into the poorer half of European society may consist in the reorganization of the society after the revolutionary changes in 1989. After the transition to a market economy the catching up to the West has not been realized. Social benefits were decreased, while extreme poverty increased. Only one third of the population were winners from the system change, while another third fell into extreme poverty. The majority of Hungarian governments over the last two decades have not had a clear social policy and did not know how to respond to the basic needs of the people and to reduce social inequalities.²⁰ The current Hungarian government assigns more tasks and sources to the churches in the field of social and educational services and a significant part of EU funds serves the operation of public institutions, or these institutions are implementing the EU programmes. The government upholds that its policy follows an alternative way, the society has a rather conservative image under these rules and the civil actors have less significant role.²¹

(iii) Child poverty in Hungary

Several studies (mentioned below) highlight that children experience poverty very differently than adults do. For them poverty means not having enough food or not being able to go to school, while adults experience poverty mainly as a lack of income. Benyik states that child poverty is unjust as soon as it interferes with either well-being or well-becoming of children. Under the assumption that health, education and social inclusion are relevant for justice, child poverty is unjust. Not every child living in poverty experiences it in the same way, but nearly all children affected by poverty suffer from negative effects. Though the proportion of children living in relative income poverty decreased since 2015, data communicated in official documents are received with careful consideration by professionals as child protection in Hungary struggles with children falling out of the system and from statistics, leaving the vulnerable situation of children in small settlements

¹⁸ Bartlett, S. (2012). Children in Urban Poverty: Can They Get More than Small Change? In Ortiz, I., Daniels, L. M., & Engilbertsdottir, S. (2012). *Child Poverty and Inequality: New Perspectives* (pp. 139–149). NY, New York: Division of Policy and Practice, United Nations Children’s Fund. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://www.unicef.org/spanish/socialpolicy/files/October2011_ChildPovertyInsights_EN_Final.pdf

¹⁹ Bernát, A. (2019). Integration of the Roma in Hungary in the 2010s. In *Hungarian Social Report 2019* (pp. 195–214). Budapest, Hungary: Társi. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.tarki.hu/eng/tarsadalmi-riport>

²⁰ Benyik, M. (2017). Implementation of the Agenda 2030: Are “partners” delivering? Budapest, Hungary: Social Watch Hungary National Reports. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <http://www.socialwatch.org/sites/default/files/2017-SR-HUNGARY-eng.pdf>

²¹ Lukács, Gy. (2017). *Addressing Extreme Poverty in Hungary – How the Development Sector is working with, and for, Communities*. Budapest, Hungary: The Badur Foundation. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://www.badurfoundation.org/images/badur/reports/Third_sector_mapping_EN_WEB_FINAL.pdf

unnoticed.²²

Children “are risk factors” of poverty. In 2018 there was a 31.6 per cent of child poverty and 27.9 per cent of the households with children lived in unfortunate circumstances.²³ Child poverty is determined by their parent’s poverty, in this sense the main causes of adult poverty must be in focus as well. Regarding the structure of households in 2016 the deprivation ratio for families raising 3 or more children and single parent families was especially high, in both cases more than 30 per cent.²⁴ Those living in extreme poverty have been unemployed for at least three years, or during this period were public workers, their highest education level is 10th grade, they belong to the working age population (18-60 years) and in many cases they raise more than two children.²⁵

The situation of Hungarian Roma seems to be better than the living conditions of Roma from other Eastern and Southern European countries. The causes of social and economic marginalisation of Romas living in Hungary are low educational attainment, low-paid employment, poor housing conditions, and poor health. Romas are more exposed to poverty, since it affects them three times more often than non-Roma.²⁶

The government’s prefers business development in the period of 2014-2020 to increase employment and market competitiveness.²⁷ However it has been emphasized that child poverty reduction has been a fast process in recent years. There was a decrease in child poverty from 38.7 per cent to 33.6 per cent between 2010 and 2016 but was not sufficient to reach the EU-average of 26.4 per cent in 2016. Anyhow the government launched new programmes – like the ‘Safe Start Houses’ programme, the increase in the number of schools specializing on handicapped children, free textbooks for pupils and free meals in the first nine years of the school – aimed to reduce child poverty. Compulsory kindergarten was introduced for small children above 3 years and the prices of utilities (gas, water, sewage etc.) became state-regulated. The government considers all these measures as means of child poverty reduction.²⁸

The civil society actors, working on poverty alleviation and for the equal opportunities of Roma, apply mainly for Human Resources Development Operational Programme (HRDOP, in Hungarian EFOP) sources, however more and more of these programmes are implemented by public institutions meaning that the role of the state is increasingly significant.²⁹ Another national

²² Benyik, M. (2017). Implementation of the Agenda 2030: Are “partners” delivering? Budapest, Hungary: Social Watch Hungary National Reports. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <http://www.socialwatch.org/sites/default/files/2017-SR-HUNGARY-eng.pdf>

²³ Kolba, G. (2018, October 20). How poor Hungarian people are. *Daily News Hungary*. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://dailynewshungary.com/how-poor-hungarian-people-are-comparing-to-others/>

²⁴ Hintalovon Child Rights Foundation, (2017). Child Rights Report Hungary 2016. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://hintalovon.hu/sites/default/files/hintalovon_child_rights_report_2016_0.pdf

²⁵ Lukács, Gy. (2017). *Addressing Extreme Poverty in Hungary – How the Development Sector is working with, and for, Communities*. Budapest, Hungary: The Badur Foundation. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://www.badurfoundation.org/images/badur/reports/Third_sector_mapping_EN_WEB_FINAL.pdf

²⁶ Bernát, A. (2019). Integration of the Roma in Hungary in the 2010s. In *Hungarian Social Report 2019* (pp. 195–214). Budapest, Hungary: Tárki. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.tarki.hu/eng/tarsadalmi-riport>.

²⁷ Lukács, Gy. (2017). *Addressing Extreme Poverty in Hungary – How the Development Sector is working with, and for, Communities*. Budapest, Hungary: The Badur Foundation. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://www.badurfoundation.org/images/badur/reports/Third_sector_mapping_EN_WEB_FINAL.pdf

²⁸ Moldicz, Cs. (2017). Hungary Social Briefing: Aging Population, Good Schooling and Poverty. *China-CEE Institute Weekly Briefing*, 3(1), 1–6. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://china-cee.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/3%EF%BC%881%EF%BC%89Hungary.pdf>

²⁹ Lukács, Gy. (2017). *Addressing Extreme Poverty in Hungary – How the Development Sector is working with, and for, Communities*. Budapest, Hungary: The Badur Foundation. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from

document, the National Program against Child Poverty (2007-2032) also called ‘Legyen jobb a gyerekeknek’, adopted by the Hungarian Government between 2007 and 2013, is important in support of the less developed rural areas in the country. The present and future rural efforts in Hungary are represented mainly by the Hungarian Rural Development Programme (2014-2020) adopted in 2015 by the European Commission. The share of persons living in poverty or social exclusion is a central element of the EU 2020 Strategy as well,³⁰ which set the target of lifting at least 20 million people out of the risk of poverty or social exclusion by 2020. To align with the goals of the EU 2020 Strategy, Hungary set the target of reducing the number of people at risk of poverty by 450.000 persons relative to the base year 2008, in its National Social Inclusion Strategy adopted in 2011.³¹

But Hungary has other international obligations as well. In 2019 the government submitted a report for the United Nations about children’s actual situation. When Hungary ratified the CRC in 1991, took the obligation of reporting after every five year for the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, so in 2019 was actual again to answer the questions of CRC based on the Committee’s last advices and on the report of the Civil Coalition of Child Rights handed in 2018. Besides the government, Hungarian civil organizations and even the children submitted their own reports, which will be followed by a conversation with the representatives of the reporting organizations, and in 2020 the Committee will deliver its own report regarding the subject. The Concluding Observations will be released in 2020. In 2019, for the first time the Committee formulated a List of Issues Prior to Reporting (LOIPR) which is a simplified questionnaire in order to answer the questions in which the Committee is mainly interested.³² The list of issues includes several topics and questions which are referring to child poverty in Hungary. Among these the Committee asks to provide community-based prevention and early intervention services to families in need to avoid separation due to poverty, particularly regarding Roma children.³³

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child still mentions several problematic issues connected to child poverty in Hungary in its List of Issues Prior to Reporting. Civil organizations like Hintalovon Foundation are far not contented with the fulfilment of child rights in Hungary, as it becomes obvious year by year from their annually released reports. Though SDGs and especially the first goal: end poverty in all its forms everywhere, provide a strong frame to combat poverty, the process is still not accelerated enough.

Poverty is not just economic as literature suggests it also includes a multidimensional aspect. Multidimensional measures can get closer to children’s felt experiences of poverty: whether they go to school, whether they are nourished or have access to healthcare. While each indicator can be used in a particular sector, a multidimensional child poverty tool go beyond individual areas and provide insight on the holistic situation of children. Monetary measures, on the other hand, can

https://www.badurfoundation.org/images/badur/reports/Third_sector_mapping_EN_WEB_FINAL.pdf

³⁰ Dimeski, B., & Tosheva, E. (2018) Examining Rural Regions in Hungary after EU Accession: Public Management of Some Key Performances (2004-2014). *Balkan Social Science Review*, 12(12), 7-25.

³¹ Branyiczki, R., Gábos, A., Szívós, P. (2019). Poverty and Social Exclusion in Hungary and the EU. In Hungarian Social Report 2019. Budapest, Hungary: Táarki. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://tarki.hu/sites/default/files/2019-02/046_065_branyiczki-gabos_szivos.pdf

³² Hintalovon Child Rights Foundation. Mit tett Magyarország 2014 óta a gyerekekért? (What has Hungary done for children since 2014?) Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://hintalovon.hu/en/node/298>

³³ United Nations Human Rights Committee (HRC). (2018, May 9). *Concluding Observations of the Human Rights Committee: Hungary*, CCPR/C/HUN/CO/6, Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CCPR/C/HUN/CO/6&Lang=En

give important information about the financial barriers that children and families face. It is often children living in monetary poverty who are denied the right to food and nutrition, safe shelter, medical services or protection from child labour. Both monetary and multidimensional measures can be calculated and analysed to give a fuller picture of the poverty children experience and is what is pointed to in the SDG targets and indicators. This standard of measuring and analysing both monetary and multidimensional child poverty may be hard to reach quickly, particularly for countries starting from scratch, and the best way of moving in this direction would vary enormously. While this can be time well spent, it may be combined with quickly getting child poverty influencing policy agendas through disaggregating national monetary poverty measures for children.³⁴

In the rich, developed countries, absolute poverty no longer affects more than a very small percentage of the population, whereas relative poverty and relative social status affect the vast majority. Anyhow almost 25 million children are still at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU.³⁵

(iv) Role of UNICEF in Hungary

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has a National Committee in Hungary instead of an office, which means that the organization does not lead any local humanitarian program. The UNICEF in Hungary is also part of the UN-family, but in developed countries there are just National Committees, which are independent local civic organizations and have formal relationship with UNICEF based on a cooperation agreement. UNICEF has 34 National Committees worldwide, the UNICEF Hungarian Committee Foundation (UNICEF Magyar Bizottság Alapítvány) is one of these. In 1946, United Nations General Assembly resolution 57 established UNICEF as a relief organization for European child refugees from the Second World War. Subsequently, General Assembly expanded UNICEF's mandate beyond Europe to include all children. In 1953 the General Assembly elected to extend UNICEF's mandate indefinitely and accordingly changed the organization's full name to UNICEF. The broadened UNICEF mandate includes advocacy for the protection of children's rights; assistance with meeting children's basic needs, such as health and education; and expansion of opportunities for children to reach their full potential.³⁶

UNICEF leads programmes mainly in those countries where child mortality is high, and the level of gross domestic income is low.³⁷ This means that UNICEF provides help in those countries where the government of the country and the citizens cannot help children living in deprivation. Children

³⁴ United Nations Children's Fund and the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty. (2017). *A World free from Child Poverty: A Guide to the Tasks to Achieve the Vision*. NY, New York: UNICEF. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2434Child_Poverty_SDG_GuideCompleteMarch_2017.pdf

³⁵ Ortiz, I., & Cummins, M. (2012). Beyond the Bottom Billion - A Rapid Review of Income Distribution in 141 Countries. In Ortiz, I., Daniels, L. M., & Engilbertsdottir, S. (2012). *Child Poverty and Inequality: New Perspectives* (pp. 149–205). NY, New York: Division of Policy and Practice, United Nations Children's Fund. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/Child_Poverty_Inequality_FINAL_web.pdf

³⁶ Edwards, A. and Venegas, J. M., (2019). *United Nations Children's Fund: Background Guide 2019*. NY, New York: National Model United Nations. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.nmun.org/assets/documents/conference-archives/new-york/2019/ny19-bgg-unicef.pdf> p. 4.

³⁷ United Nations Children's Fund. (2020). Data of Public Interest. Budapest, Hungary: UNICEF. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://unicef.hu/igy-segitunk/gyermekeknek-az-unicef-nemzetkozi-szervezetrol/kozerdeku-adatok/eves-jelentesek/>

are most at risk of living in extreme poverty in countries that have experienced conflict and where there is an inadequate national economic management, a lack of policies to combat inequity and a weak civil society.³⁸ UNICEF places increased attention on working alongside Member States that face humanitarian crises, it has been cooperating with the Directorate-General for the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) and providing emergency education to more than 2.5 million refugees and displaced children between Greece and Turkey. UNICEF has implemented 'Educate a Child', a program of the Education Above All foundation, which aims to guarantee access to quality learning for out-of-school children of primary school age. UNICEF has also been supporting specific programs for facilitating the inclusion of children affected by disabilities, such as through the New Autism Action Strategy in Oman.³⁹

UNICEF support programmes that take monetary and non-monetary approaches and they also assist governments and other partners to reform healthcare, education and social systems. UNICEF calls on governments to ensure that child poverty is measured and addressed at the national level and improving the well-being of their poorest citizens. *"Make deliberate policy decisions that will ensure a country's economic growth benefits all of its citizens, including making sure children are fully considered in poverty reduction plans. Strengthen child sensitive social protection systems, including cash transfer programs that give direct payments to families to help lift children out of poverty and protect them from its impacts. Prioritise investments in education, health, nutrition, clean water, sanitation and infrastructure that benefit the poorest children and that prevent people falling back into poverty after setbacks like droughts, disease or economic instability"*.⁴⁰

Anyhow there are some programmes lead by the UNICEF Hungarian Committee which help the better integration of children. The Gazebo Experiential Program (Kilátó élményprogram) aims to strengthen children living in deprivation by involving them in different cultural and sport events. The Wake-up call classes (Ébresztő-óra) are designed for children attending primary school and high school and are led by teachers trained by the UNICEF. The main themes of these classes are child rights, violation against children. The program called Generation Unlimited (Egy generáció korlátok nélkül) starts in the autumn of 2019. This initiative is based on a broad international cooperation between governments, multilateral institutions and civil organizations and aims to provide adequate education for children in order to find their place in the field of work.

In 2016, UNICEF's Innocenti Research Center explored inequalities in child well-being in developed countries and found that gaps in educational achievement, health and life satisfaction were higher in wealthy nations that had greater levels of inequality within their societies. The global financial crisis in 2008 has exacerbated these issues.⁴¹ In this sense though Hungary is considered to be a developed country, child poverty and poverty in general remains a crucial issue in the

³⁸ United Nations Children's Fund & World Bank Group. (2016, October 3). *Ending Extreme Poverty: A Focus on Children* (Briefing Note). NY, New York: UNICEF. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://www.unicef.org/publications/files/Ending_Extreme_Poverty_A_Focus_on_Children_Oct_2016.pdf

³⁹ Edwards, A. and Venegas, J. M., (2019). *United Nations Children's Fund: Background Guide 2019*. NY, New York: National Model United Nations. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.nmun.org/assets/documents/conference-archives/new-york/2019/ny19-bgg-unicef.pdf>

⁴⁰ Edwards, A. and Venegas, J. M., (2019). *United Nations Children's Fund: Background Guide 2019*. NY, New York: National Model United Nations. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.nmun.org/assets/documents/conference-archives/new-york/2019/ny19-bgg-unicef.pdf>

⁴¹ United Nations Children's Fund. (2016). *Fairness for Children: A League Table of Inequality in Child Well-being in Rich Countries*. Florence, Italy: Office of Research – Innocenti, UNICEF. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/RC13_eng.pdf

country.

(3) Statement of the problem

The problem area of my research affects mainly children in Hungary living in poverty. Considering the roots of poverty, a wider analysis is needed. The focus of my research is to find out the consequences of poverty in the lives of children and the impact of SDGs in eradicating poverty and child poverty in the country. In this sense different perceptions on the concept of poverty of certain institutions and NGOs was considered, as well as methods to alleviate poverty, including partnerships that are formed to tackle poverty. The study also focuses on how SDGs influence the policy-making of the government, how the State is confronting poverty and what responsibilities does it take. The perception of children about their own well-being and ill-being is considered, which are analysed through Nussbaum's and Sen's capability approach. Child poverty is analysed through the rights enumerated in the CRC. Considering that the first SDG tackles to end poverty in all its forms everywhere and SDGs in general have a strong human rights impact, the argument is that poverty is a violation of child rights in general. Multidimensions of child poverty related to health, education, nutrition, water, sanitation, living conditions, information or protection is also presented. The problem of child poverty appears mainly in the north-eastern part of Hungary and Roma children are more affected due to their disadvantaged and marginalised background. In order to have a closer perception on child poverty visits were made to areas of Nagydobos in Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county and Biharkeresztes in Hajdú-Bihar county. Poverty also exists in the capital (Budapest) and in the agglomeration of the capital, hence visits were also made in the city of Monor located in the county of Pest.

(4) Objectives

Based on the above problem, the overall objective of the study is to explore dimensions of child poverty through the SDGs.

The sub-objectives are as follows:

- To analyse the perception of children about poverty with reference to their own well-being or ill-being;
- To identify the consequences of poverty in the lives of children;
- To explore the methods to alleviate child poverty.

(5) Research methodology

In order to understand the impact of SDG 1: end poverty in all its forms everywhere on Hungarian children living in poverty, a qualitative research design was used. The theoretical background of this study provides the capability approach developed by Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum. The research was carried out by interviewing five children living in poverty in different segregated areas of the country (Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county, Hajdú-Bihar county, Monor in Pest county). The study highlights various aspects of child poverty demonstrating the differences between the different rural parts of Hungary, showing how girls and boys perceive poverty. For a deeper understanding on the issue, three experts on child rights and poverty from the National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD), the Real Pearl Foundation and the Hungarian Charity Service of the Order of Malta were interviewed. The interviews were conducted through open-ended/semi-structured interview guide. Data was analysed through thematic analysis.

(6) Literature review

The thesis focuses on exploring studies on child poverty around the world and in Hungary, studies on social exclusion, especially among the Roma to provide a state-of-the-art and studies about the

perspective of children living in poverty. The review of literature identifies gaps in the existing literature which also paves way to the present study. Though there are several studies about child poverty in Hungary and child rights in Hungary, this thesis aims to contribute to knowledge and data on explicit influence of SDGs on the eradication of child poverty in Hungary.

(7) Relevance of the study

This study provides an insight into the perspective of child poverty through the experience and perceptions of children themselves. The process of participatory work with children in poverty could be empowering. It is relevant as there would be first-person knowledge about poverty which could contribute to policy-making to design better poverty-alleviation measures or better implement them in practice. Children want their opinions to be respected and not considered as lacking competence or knowledge. This study is therefore in line with the principles of the CRC. Child poverty affects particularly vulnerable and powerless human beings who are largely dependent on others and need special and more comprehensive protection than adults. This study is thus relevant to provide a platform for the voices of these children. Though I am able to analyse just a five years period of time (since SDGs was introduced until now), this research may be a good starting point to find the gaps which may hinder the effective fulfilment of SDGs.

(8) Scope and limitations of the study

Ideally the scope of the study should cover all children experiencing poverty in Hungary to understand their perception about well-being and child rights in relation to SDGs. However, the study has its limitations due to the qualitative nature of the research. Additionally, it was carried out with no financial assistance. The limitation included time factor, as the data collection had to be conducted in a certain period of time. Nevertheless, I visited three settlements where the incidence of poverty is higher than in other counties of Hungary.

(9) Chapterisation

Chapter one introduces the topic and provides a background to the issue of child poverty in Hungary and the relevance of the study. It elaborates the problem and the objectives of the study. Further it also briefly states the theoretical underpinning of the study. It describes the key terms and also the scope and limitations of the study. It includes the chapter plan for the study. It includes the outline of my whole study. Chapter two includes the studies that have been done in the area of child poverty. It includes studies from other parts of the world. Further it will also focus on studies conducted in Hungary, UNICEF reports, governmental and non-governmental organizations reports from Hungary. Chapter three discusses the research methodology in detail, it highlights the design, setting, data collection, instruments for data collection and data analysis. It also discusses the ethical considerations that were undertaken while conducting research with children. Chapter four discusses the results of the study and lastly chapter five provides the discussion of the findings and the recommendations that would emerge from the study.

(10) Conclusion

This first chapter lays a framework to the background of the study, indicating the problem to be studied. It discusses the relevance of such a study and more importantly it tries to understand child poverty through the lens of SDGs and from the perspective of children. After the contextualization of the relation between SDGs, child poverty and human rights gaps are identified. This chapter describes in brief the scope and limitations of the study. It provides a chapter plan and lastly provides definitions of key terms and an outline of the chapter.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This thesis will focus on exploring studies on child poverty around the world, and studies from the perspective of children living in poverty. Further it will also look at studies on poverty and social exclusion focusing on children in Hungary. Studies on social exclusion, especially among the Romas will also be included to provide a state-of-the-art. The review of literature will identify gaps in the existing literature which also paves way to the present study. Though there are several studies about child poverty in Hungary and child rights in Hungary, this study will contribute to knowledge and data on explicit influence of SDGs on the eradication of child poverty in Hungary.

(1) Child poverty in the EU and around the world

A recent report on universal social protection for children depicting the situation of children in poverty states that children are more than twice as likely as adults to be living in extreme income poverty. The youngest children aged 0 to 9 years are the most affected, around 20 per cent of them struggle to survive on less than USD 1.90 a day, compared with 14.6 per cent of children aged 15 to 17 and 9.5 per cent of adults. While around a third of children living in extreme poverty are in South Asia, Africa is home to half the world's children struggling to survive on less than USD 1.90.⁴²

Another report highlights that even though child poverty rates have reduced in the majority of EU member states in recent years, a significant number of EU countries still face a growing child poverty issue. Between 2010 and 2015, child poverty rates fell in 16 European countries, especially in Latvia (-10 per cent), Bulgaria (-6 per cent) and Poland (-4 per cent). Yet, child poverty has grown in 11 Member States over the same period, with Greece experiencing the largest increase (4 per cent). As a result, the disparities in child poverty rates across Member States also continue to be significant. Some Member States such as the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland and Slovenia have very small proportions of children at risk of poverty and social exclusion (around 14 to 15 per cent). By contrast, seven Member States including Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Romania have 30 per cent or more children at risk of poverty and social exclusion.⁴³

According to a study of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) almost 25 million children live in households with low incomes, low employment rates or with material deprivation. Children from such groups or children with migrant backgrounds, as well as children living in Roma communities face even greater risks.⁴⁴ Another study indicates that in 2016 the percentage of children at risk of poverty or social exclusion was with 3 per cent higher than the 23.5 per cent of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the general population.⁴⁵

⁴²ILO-UNICEF Joint Report on Social Protection for Children. (2019). *Towards Universal Social Protection for Children: Achieving SDG 1.3*. NY, New York: USA, United Nations Children's Funds. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.unicef.org/reports/towards-universal-social-protection-children-achieving-sdg-13>

⁴³ European Commission. (November 2018) '*Thematic Dossier 4: Addressing child poverty and well-being through FEAD*', Brussels, Belgium: Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, European Commission. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?advSearchKey=thematic+dossier&mode=advancedSubmit&catId=22&doc_submit=&policyArea=0&policyAreaSub=0&country=0&year=0

⁴⁴ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. (2018) *Combating Child Poverty: An Issue of Fundamental Rights*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2018-combating-child-poverty_en.pdf

⁴⁵ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. (2018) *Combating Child Poverty: An Issue of Fundamental Rights*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2018-combating-child-poverty_en.pdf

By means of measuring the income below the poverty threshold in across Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries, 13.4 per cent of children live in relative income poverty, with rates differing considerably from country to country. In 28 of the 36 OECD countries children are slightly more likely to live in income poverty than the general population. The OECD average poverty rate in households with children and only a single adult is at 31,6 per cent over 20 percentage points higher than the poverty rate in households with children and two or more adults. On average across the OECD 63,4 per cent of individuals living in jobless households with children also live in relative income poverty, compared to only 9,2 per cent of individuals in working households with children. The Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic and Latvia have the largest gaps in the OECD, while Denmark and Iceland have the smallest, at 20 per cent points or less.⁴⁶

A report highlighting the multidimensional child poverty in the EU gives an overview about the cross-country variation in dimensional child poverty rates, multidimensional child poverty headcount rate, and gives also recommendations how to overcome the problems noticed. Regarding cross-country variation in dimensional child poverty rates the study shows that on average across 31 countries poverty is highest in housing, leisure, and social activities, while poverty in nutrition, clothing and educational resources tends to be low, except in Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania. Social protection systems and cash transfers play a crucial role in addressing child poverty and socio-economic problems. The impacts of poverty on children are devastating and yet they are twice as likely to live in poverty as adults.⁴⁷

(2) SDGs and child poverty in Hungary

UNICEF recommends five indicative milestones on a pathway to address child poverty. This guide utilises knowledge and experience to support national processes to achieve the first SDG on ending poverty, includes children explicitly for the first time in global poverty goals and support all the SDGs which are crucial to the realization of child rights. The five milestones are building a national pathway to end child poverty, understanding what is available to measure child poverty, identifying objectives and indicators for child poverty advocacy, reducing child poverty through policy and programme change, and the fifth milestone is to end extreme child poverty and halve it by national definitions. Children are more likely to live in poverty than adults and child poverty does long-term damage to children and societies.⁴⁸

A recent guide recommends seven key areas to ensure children's equitable access to justice and effective realization of their needs. These areas include: violent discipline of children; children being victims of human trafficking or sexual violence; low crime reporting rate of children; unsentenced child detainees; unregistered children at birth; children experiencing discriminatory

⁴⁶ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2018). *OECD Family Database: Indicators Child poverty*. Paris, France: Social Policy Division - Directorate of Employment, Labour and Social Affairs, OECD. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <http://www.oecd.org/els/family/database.htm>

⁴⁷ Chzhen, Y., Bruckauf, Z., & Toczydlowska, E. (2018). Monitoring progress towards sustainable development: multidimensional child poverty in the European Union. *Journal of Poverty and Social Justice*, 26(2), 129-150. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1332/175982718X15154249173514>

⁴⁸ United Nations Children's Fund and the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty. (2017). *A World free from Child Poverty: A Guide to the Tasks to Achieve the Vision*. NY, New York: UNICEF. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2434Child_Poverty_SDG_GuideCompleteMarch_2017.pdf

behaviour.⁴⁹ In line with the SDGs and with the organization's social, economic, and environmental priorities, UNICEF seeks to promote programs in favour of children. UNICEF's 2018-2021 Strategic Plan is based on the 2030 Agenda, particularly SDGs 1, 3, 6, and 13, addresses the themes of children living in extreme poverty, lack of education for youth, and lack of proper healthcare. SDG 3, SDG 4, SDG 5, and SDG 16 include targets for early childhood development; universal access to education; access to legal justice; and protection of girls and boys from violence, abuse and exploitation. The 169 targets of the SDGs are measured by 230 specific indicators, 50 of which are directly related to children. UNICEF is the custodian for 10 SDG indicators and co-custodian for seven further indicators.⁵⁰

Another report explored inequalities in child well-being in rich countries and found that gaps in educational achievement, health and overall life satisfaction were significantly higher in wealthy nations that had greater levels of inequality in their societies. The UN system will need to support the national authorities of the Member States to report official statistics which are disaggregated by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location, or other characteristics. The text highlights that in order to improve the quality of aid and its impact on development it has a significant importance to shift from development for people to development with people, particularly in the case of children.⁵¹

Children are most at risk of living in extreme poverty in countries that have experienced conflict and where the livelihoods of citizens are threatened by a range of factors including inadequate national economic management, a lack of policies to combat inequity and a weak civil society. Around the world, UNICEF and the World Bank Group are already working with governments and other partners to address child poverty and to promote a range of cross-sectoral investments in the early years of life. They are supporting nutrition, health and education programmes that take monetary and non-monetary approaches to help children move out of poverty. They are also working to help governments and other partners to reform the country's healthcare, education and social systems. The joint study of UNICEF and the World Bank Group highlights how important is to strengthen child sensitive social protection systems, including cash transfer programs that give direct payments to families to help lift children out of poverty, that prevent people falling back into poverty after setbacks like droughts, disease or economic instability.⁵²

Hungary played an active role in drafting the SDGs. Ambassador Csaba Körösi, Hungary's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, co-chaired the Open Working Group on the SDGs, with Ambassador Macharia Kamau from Kenya. In 2013 Hungary organized the Budapest Water Summit, the final document of which called for the development of a stand-alone SDG on Water and contained almost the same elements as those in SDG 6 on water and sanitation. Despite

⁴⁹ Edwards, A. and Venegas, J. M., (2019). *United Nations Children's Fund: Background Guide 2019*. NY, New York: National Model United Nations. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.nmun.org/assets/documents/conference-archives/new-york/2019/ny19-bgg-unicef.pdf>

⁵⁰ Edwards, A. and Venegas, J. M., (2019). *United Nations Children's Fund: Background Guide 2019*. NY, New York: National Model United Nations. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.nmun.org/assets/documents/conference-archives/new-york/2019/ny19-bgg-unicef.pdf>

⁵¹ United Nations Office on the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2020). Report on the Protection of the Rights of the Child in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Submissions by UN bodies and other international entities – United Nations Children's Fund. Geneva, Switzerland: OHCHR. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Children/ThematicReports/Pages/2030Agenda.aspx>

⁵² United Nations Children's Fund & World Bank Group. (2016, October 3). *Ending Extreme Poverty: A Focus on Children* (Briefing Note). NY, New York: UNICEF. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://www.unicef.org/publications/files/Ending_Extreme_Poverty_A_Focus_on_Children_Oct_2016.pdf

this, Hungary faces a number of challenges with regard to the SDGs, the country's National Framework Strategy on Sustainable Development (NFSSD) 2012-2024, issued in 2016, is also criticized as being not explicitly aligned with the SDGs. Benyik emphasizes that no effective and long-term solutions can be expected without resolving social problems such as eradication of extreme poverty as well as without dealing with unfavourable situations, such as the weakness of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), the high level of loans and the deteriorating labour skills.⁵³

The Opening Doors for Europe's Children campaign highlights that an increasing number of children are entering public care despite the fact that institutions are struggling to provide even the most basic care. Material deprivation and poverty are among the most common causes of children entering public care, despite a law prohibiting the removal of children from their families on the basis of low family income, housing problems and other financial problems. The legislation is also prohibiting the placement of children under the age of three into infant homes. The lack of resources, lack of training and deep-rooted prejudices in the system lead to the fact that many children are still being institutionalised. Although foster care is in place, there is a shortage of suitable foster families. Only 5.8 per cent of foster carers are formally employed and trained. The support of foster families is limited, supervision inadequate, and there is no clear accountability.⁵⁴

There are however various employment policy measures introduced to increase employment levels among people from disadvantaged backgrounds, including Roma. The 'Growing Chances' program helps further the employment of Roma women in social and childcare institutions and supports them to obtain qualifications.⁵⁵

(3) Measuring child poverty

The Overall Risk of Poverty or Social Exclusion (AROPE) is a specific indicator which combines three sub-indicators on the household level among EU Member States assessing in a comparative way the risk of poverty, severe material deprivation and low household work intensity.⁵⁶ Around 8 million children in the EU-28 (8.5 per cent) experience severe material deprivation. In Bulgaria, Romania and Greece, more than 25 per cent of children live in households with severe material deprivation.⁵⁷ The risk of poverty affects certain minority groups disproportionately. Among them the Roma group is the most vulnerable. Immigrant children despite their high rates of being at risk

⁵³ Benyik, M. (2016). *Can the National Framework Strategy on Sustainable Development Advance the SDGs?* Budapest, Hungary: Social Watch Hungary National Reports. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <http://www.socialwatch.org/sites/default/files/2016-SR-Hungary-eng.pdf>

⁵⁴ Opening Doors for Europe's Children. (2015). *Strengthening families. Ending institutional care.* Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.openingdoors.eu/where-the-campaign-operates/hungary/>

⁵⁵ Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary. (2018). *Voluntary National Review of Hungary on the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda: Transformation towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies.* Budapest, Hungary: State of Hungary. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/20137Voluntary_National_Review_of_Hungary_v2.pdf

⁵⁶ European Commission. (November 2018) 'Thematic Dossier 4: Addressing child poverty and well-being through FEAD', Brussels, Belgium: Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, European Commission. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from

https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?advSearchKey=thematic+dossier&mode=advancedSubmit&catId=22&doc_submit=&policyArea=0&policyAreaSub=0&country=0&year=0

⁵⁷ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. (2018) *Combating Child Poverty: An Issue of Fundamental Rights.* Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2018-combating-child-poverty_en.pdf

of poverty, are still living less often in poverty than Roma children.⁵⁸

The NCSO prepares a bi-annual Progress Report based on certain key indicators, one of which measures material deprivation. According to the Progress Report for the first time in the history of the reports, two of the 16 key indicators have broken through the mid-level, showing a good position in European comparison. Hungary is doing particularly well in increasing economic capital and in respect of certain macro-economic indicators. However, the report also suggests that 19.6 per cent of the population (1.89 million people) are at risk of poverty or social exclusion, meaning that Hungary has met its 2020 target. The decline also represents a significant improvement over the last report, with the proportion of people living in poverty and social exclusion in Hungary falling from 26.3 per cent in 2016 to 19.6 per cent in 2018. Hungary has exemplary fiscal discipline when looking at a steady decline in public debt (as a percentage of GDP). There is a remarkable improvement in the number and proportion of the employed and in the reduction of unemployment and the decrease in the number and proportion of people excluded from society for financial reasons. Taking into account the results of the previous two reports, despite the improvements in certain areas, it can be foreseen that by 2024 Hungary will not be able to achieve the goals set out in the NFSSD and generally, it will show less progress than necessary. Accordingly, Hungary may be lagging behind in its national contribution to meeting the UN's 2030 SDGs. Additionally, in terms of sustained catching-up with the average EU welfare level, Hungary has been performing poorly for one and a half decades, and its catching-up rate (according to GDP per capita in PPS) is significantly below that of the former socialist countries.⁵⁹

(4) Legal obligation of Hungary with reference to child rights

The EU Member States have specific legal obligations with regard to child poverty and CRC. This is also mentioned in the treaty system of the European Social Charter (ESC) of the Council of Europe. In exercising their competences to fight against child poverty, EU institutions, as well as Member States, are bound by the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. Member States are also bound by the international legal standards of human rights. In respect of child poverty, these are mainly the ICESCR, the CRC and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) at the United Nations level, and the treaty system of the ESC at the level of the Council of Europe.⁶⁰

The ICESCR, adopted in 1966 does not explicitly refer to poverty, but it recognises human rights such as the right to education, the equal rights of men and women, the right to work, the right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, and the right to an adequate standard of living. It also provides the right to protection and assistance for families with children, and for children and young people themselves.⁶¹

⁵⁸ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. (2018) *Combating Child Poverty: An Issue of Fundamental Rights*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2018-combating-child-poverty_en.pdf

⁵⁹ National Council for Sustainable Development. (NCSO). (2019). The third progress report of the National Framework Strategy for Sustainable Development 2017-2018. Retrieved from https://www.nfft.hu/documents/1238941/1261771/NFFS_3EHJ.pdf/5f6c02dc-0720-1cfe-f926-272ead306659?t=1575543833848

⁶⁰ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. (2018) *Combating Child Poverty: An Issue of Fundamental Rights*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2018-combating-child-poverty_en.pdf

⁶¹ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. (2018) *Combating Child Poverty: An Issue of Fundamental Rights*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2018-combating-child-poverty_en.pdf

Article 24 of the EU Charter is exclusively dedicated to the rights of the child, child well-being and the protection and best interest of children taken by public authorities or private institutions. Article 33 (1) of the EU Charter states that “*the family shall enjoy legal, economic and social protection.*” This provision is based on Article 16 of both the ESC and its original 1961 version, which obliges States Parties to promote this right by means such as “*social and family benefits, fiscal arrangements, provision of family housing, benefits for the newly married and other appropriate means.*”⁶²

The CRC adopted in 1989 also enshrines certain child-specific economic and social rights that are closely linked to child poverty. Article 6 refers to the obligation of governments to ensure the survival and development of the child to the maximum extent possible. Article 27 enshrines the overarching right of every child to a standard of living adequate for their physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development. The text highlights that building a universal social protection system for children requires to achieve SDG 1 on poverty and SDG 2 on hunger, but also SDG 3 on health and SDG 4 on education. It also mentions that child and family cash benefit programmes should be anchored in national legislation, as children ultimately rely on their families, the range of policies and policy instruments available to achieve improved income security and social protection for children must be broad.⁶³

Hungary ratified the CRC in 1991 and took the obligation of reporting after every five years for the Committee on the Rights of the Child. The LOIPR formulated by the Committee for the first time in 2019 is a simplified questionnaire, Hungary has to submit the country report in 2019 by answering these questions. The list of issues includes several topics and questions which are referring to child poverty in Hungary.⁶⁴ In the Fundamental Law of Hungary, a number of SDG implementations are embedded, such as a national debt limit, a set of policies aimed at stopping population decline and measures to support a healthy lifestyle. Poverty alleviation measures are not mentioned, though only one third of the population were winners from the system change of 1989, while another third fell into extreme poverty.⁶⁵

In Hungary, social investment is not a central issue in social policy however some provisions focus on child poverty and early intervention, but the conditions of provisions for the unemployed, of social provisions and of family cash transfers have been tightened. A successful model in the field of early childhood education for disadvantaged children is the ‘Sure Start Children’s Houses’. From age 3 years, kindergarten attendance is compulsory, but fees (from the age of 3) are quite moderate, depending on the financial situation and the number of children there is a reduction. Under 3 years of age, the availability of crèches as a result of the long maternity leave is limited but improving.⁶⁶

⁶² European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. (2018) *Combating Child Poverty: An Issue of Fundamental Rights*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2018-combating-child-poverty_en.pdf

⁶³ ILO-UNICEF Joint Report on Social Protection for Children. (2019). *Towards Universal Social Protection for Children: Achieving SDG 1.3*. NY, New York: USA, United Nations Children’s Funds. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.unicef.org/reports/towards-universal-social-protection-children-achieving-sdg-13>

⁶⁴ Hintalovon Child Rights Foundation. Mit tett Magyarország 2014 óta a gyerekekért? (What has Hungary done for children since 2014?) Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://hintalovon.hu/en/node/298>

⁶⁵ Benyik, M. (2017). Implementation of the Agenda 2030: Are “partners” delivering? Budapest, Hungary: Social Watch Hungary National Reports. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <http://www.socialwatch.org/sites/default/files/2017-SR-HUNGARY-eng.pdf>

⁶⁶ Bouget, D., Frazer, H., Marlier, E., Sabato, S., Vanhercke, B. (2015). *Social Investment in Europe: A Study of National Policies*. April 2015. Luxembourg: European Social Policy Network (ESPN). Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=7881&furtherPubs=yes>

The Government of Hungary has made a commitment to address extreme poverty, child poverty and poverty among the Roma population by adopting the National Social Inclusion Strategy (2011-2020). The framework agreed in 2011 before the SDGs were adopted, aligned to the targets of the Europe 2020 strategy, included a specific target on the share of children living at risk of poverty, defined by the share of households with children with a disposable income below 60 per cent of national median income. The monitoring indicators to ensure progress are: the poverty rate before and after social transfers, proportion of children attending day care, number and rate of early school-leavers, difference between educational qualifications of parents and children, disaggregation of child poverty rate between Roma and non-Roma population and by jobless households. Though high priority was given to child poverty, challenges remain in implementation and policy response. Concerns appear about the short time frame of the projects and the low level of social benefits.⁶⁷

(5) Perspective of children living in poverty in the world

Focusing on macro-analyses of childhood, Qvortrup emphasizes that for children themselves were hardly given a role as agents in shaping the reality, although from time to time they have been the objects of thoughts and plans. To demonstrate the power of macro-conditions in producing childhood and children life's world, he selected three possibilities which involve comparisons: historically and inter-culturally, between countries and between generations. Qvortrup argues that the phenomenon of childhood has been historically altered and formed in accordance with the demands of prevailing instances, such as: society, nation, mode of production, culture or historical periods, while a phenomenon being a sub-unit of instances.⁶⁸

Regarding children's agency in the context of poverty examining world-wide literature on children's perspectives on poverty Redmond proves that children are competent actors and agency is a possibility for young people even though they live under economic constraints and the authority of adults. Findings from researches in poorer and richer countries are summarised and compared, and children's agency is categorised into a number of different types including self-exclusion, exclusion of children by other children, getting by, getting at, getting out and getting organised. The study mentions a number of forms of self-exclusion, including truancy and drug addiction. One of the more common forms of self-exclusion appears to be not asking parents or the school for support to participate in an event or to access regular services. This suggests that the children may be protecting both themselves and their parents from the stigma of having to ask for support from the school.⁶⁹

Redmond further states that children are excluded by other children or bullied by them because they do not have the right clothes. However, it is also possible that exclusion practiced by children may be reinforced by other barriers, such as transport costs, excursion costs and admission prices. Getting by represents an everyday and personal response to poverty and includes the many little things that children do in order to cope with everyday situations, for example saving pocket money and birthday money, taking advantage of informal and ad-hoc opportunities to earn money, helping

⁶⁷ United Nations Children's Fund and the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty. (2017). *A World free from Child Poverty: A Guide to the Tasks to Achieve the Vision*. NY, New York: UNICEF. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2434Child_Poverty_SDG_GuideCompleteMarch_2017.pdf

⁶⁸ Qvortrup, J. (2000). Macroanalysis of Childhood. In Christensen, P. & James, A. (Eds.). (2000). *Research with Children: Perspectives and Practices* (2nd ed.). (pp. 66-86). London, UK: Routledge.

⁶⁹ Redmond, G. (2009). Children as actors: How does the child perspectives literature treat agency in the context of poverty? *Social Policy and Society*, 8(4), 541-550. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S147474640999011X>

parents with housework and childcare. Getting (back) at is an everyday and political response to poverty, and signals resistance to bureaucratic and social norms. Children in these cases are involved in petty crime, engaging in confrontational behaviour, vandalism, graffiti writing, or taking excessive amounts of drugs also characterises as self-exclusion. Getting out represents both a personal and strategic agency type. It is the ‘officially sanctioned’ response to poverty, particularly if it involves taking up employment, or improving one’s employment prospects through education or training. Getting organized is a strategic-political response to poverty. This is often a particularly difficult because of the ‘othering’ process that objectifies poor people/ children as passive and because membership of this group is associated with lack of political power, and sometimes self-blame.⁷⁰

Noble and Cluver argues that measurements of child poverty need to be based on child-relevant definitions, and on a model with absolute and relative components which are both multidimensional. Although absolute concepts of poverty are commonly defined by reference to financial resources, a multidimensional definition was characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, drinking water, sanitation, health, shelter, education and information.

They argue that poverty depends not only on income but also on access to social services and that multidimensionality is more often associated with concepts of relative poverty, which specifically links poverty to the living standards of a reference group. Thus, they link it to the child’s ability to participate fully in South African society. They propose a model that suggesting policymakers to consider health, material needs, human capital development, social participation, living environment, adequate care, protection from abuse, and physical safety as the most important components related to access to good-quality services.⁷¹

Wordsworth, McPeak and Feeny categorize children’s experiences of poverty into three domains: deprivation, exclusion and vulnerability. Deprivation denotes a lack of the material conditions and services necessary for development: food, health, safe drinking water, shelter, sanitation facilities, education. But there are other important aspects to children’s experience of deprivation that also require further elaboration: severity, intensity and context. Exclusion focuses on the broader processes that contribute to the lack of basic necessities. It is relational and is one of the most immediate ways in which children experience poverty. Vulnerability is about the longevity and insecurity of impoverishment as a dynamic and unpredictable condition. Vulnerability is a question of tracking the dynamics of poverty over time and examining how this relates to the factors that lift children in and out of impoverishment. The concept has a dual aspect, incorporating external threats to well-being, and internal risk management and coping capability. These are considered as ‘dimensions’ of child poverty that can be simultaneously manifested in the same child.⁷²

Another study on children’s experiences and perceptions of poverty in Ethiopia highlights that the main causes of poverty from the perspective of children are weaker work ethics, extravagance and large families. The study also presents the thought of children about moving out of poverty. They gave clear advices what kind of measurements should be taken by the government, how should

⁷⁰ Redmond, G. (2009). Children as actors: How does the child perspectives literature treat agency in the context of poverty?. *Social Policy and Society*, 8(4), 541-550. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S147474640999011X>

⁷¹ Noble, M., Wright, G., & Cluver, L. (2006). Developing a Child-focused and Multidimensional Model of Child Poverty for South Africa. *Journal of Children and Poverty*, 12(1), 39-53.

⁷² Wordsworth, D., McPeak, M., & Feeny, T. (2005). *Understanding Children's Experience of Poverty: An Introduction to the DEV Framework*. (Children & Poverty Working Paper No. 1) Retrieved from Christian Children's Fund (CCF) on April 5, 2020. <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/11807/pdf/Wordsworth-McPeak-Feeny-2005-Understanding-Childrens-Experience-of-Poverty.pdf>

parents and children themselves act in order to overcome poverty. The study further states that while poor children could potentially have similar lives, their location, gender and age will alter their experiences of poverty. Regarding the intergenerational character of child poverty, the study shows that children who were not invested in may grow up into poor adults like their parents. Children whose basic needs are not met and who are unable to attend school properly are likely to have negative experiences. The data from these children also indicate that children are not just victims of poverty. They have also demonstrated their agency and resilience, mainly by providing data about their lives and by making practical efforts to manage life in poverty.⁷³

A qualitative study made in Macedonia on children's perception on poverty and its effect on their lives provides macroeconomic indicators of poverty, analyses available data on social exclusion and poverty, provides an overview of recent state reforms of basic children's rights in the country and of budget allocations for children. The aim of the study was to ascertain the views of children of different ages and from different cultural, social and ethnic backgrounds and to incorporate this knowledge into a more comprehensive understanding of poverty and its impact on children's development and wellbeing.⁷⁴ Children drew and offered a picture that reflects their families' economic and social status as well as their own experiences. The study revealed that for younger children, poverty was a shortage of material goods but was also associated with basic human needs. Adolescents' views included causality factors and the long-term consequences of poverty on the health and well-being of children and on the community as a whole.⁷⁵

(6) Poverty and social exclusion of children in Hungary

The inequalities between regions, even among towns and villages are growing rapidly since the system change in 1989, primarily in the north-east and south-western part of Hungary and the prejudice against Romas has grown into a never seen height. The severe material deprivation rate has been declining to 16.2 per cent in 2016, but it is still the double of EU average.⁷⁶ In Hungary 14.6 per cent of population live below the poverty line compared to the EU average of 17.2 per cent. Altogether 44 per cent of the Hungarian population cannot afford basic resources, compared with an EU average of 19.5 per cent.⁷⁷

While defining the dimension of poverty Lukács states that extreme poverty among Romas is examined on the level of education and housing. One of the reasons for the low level of employment is the low qualifications of Romas. Almost 57 per cent of Roma youth aged between 18-24 years belong to the early school leaver group. In general the inactivity rate of the Roma is 13 per cent higher than of the non-Roma. Regarding housing it is mentioned that in 18 per cent of the households inhabited by Roma, there is no running water. In close to 30 per cent there is no

⁷³ Tafere, Y. (2012). *Children's Experiences and Perceptions of Poverty in Ethiopia*. Young Lives Working Paper 85. Oxford, UK: Young Lives.

⁷⁴ Gancheva, Y., Spence, K., & Petrova, P. (2007). *Child poverty study in FYR Macedonia*. Skopje, Macedonia: United Nations Children's Funds. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/Macedonia_childpoverty.pdf

⁷⁵ Gancheva, Y., Spence, K., & Petrova, P. (2007). *Child poverty study in FYR Macedonia*. Skopje, Macedonia: United Nations Children's Funds. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/Macedonia_childpoverty.pdf

⁷⁶ Benyik, M. (2017). *Implementation of the Agenda 2030: Are "partners" delivering?* Budapest, Hungary: Social Watch Hungary National Reports. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <http://www.socialwatch.org/sites/default/files/2017-SR-HUNGARY-eng.pdf>.

⁷⁷ Benyik, M. (2017). *Implementation of the Agenda 2030: Are "partners" delivering?* Budapest, Hungary: Social Watch Hungary National Reports. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <http://www.socialwatch.org/sites/default/files/2017-SR-HUNGARY-eng.pdf>

bathroom and in 78 per cent of the buildings there is no central heating. In order to provide help in this situation the ‘Complex Housing Programmes’ include all the current coordinated programmes aiming to improve the housing situation of Roma.⁷⁸

The rural development in Hungary is very important considering the fact that the country is almost at the top of the list of the most rural countries in the EU. The greatest socio-economic problems in rural regions in Hungary is the lack of economically active population. In addition, the transformations of the economy caused huge GDP misbalances between regions. The disproportions between predominantly rural regions are smaller according mortality rates, infant mortality rates, medical doctors and higher education students. On the other hand, according the other variables as GDP, unemployment, migrations, hospital beds, population density and roads there are larger disproportions. Toseva mentions three programmes which are crucial in overcoming rural inequalities. These are the National Strategy Report on Social Protection and Social Integration and Inclusion, the National Program against Child Poverty (2007-2032) also called ‘Legyen jobb a gyerekeknek’, and finally, the present and future rural efforts in Hungary are represented by the Hungarian Rural Development Programme (2014-2020) adopted in 2015 by the European Commission.⁷⁹

Hungary’s Voluntary National Review (VNR) from 2018 enumerates further measures of the government in order to overcome poverty and child poverty in the country. Since 2017, the organisation of children’s day-care is mandatory if the number of residents under the age of 3 in a settlement exceeds 40 or if 5 families need day-care service. The gender pay gap in Hungary was 14 per cent in 2016, but in the recent years a wage increase has been carried out in healthcare, child welfare, and child protection sectors which are dominated mostly by women. A tender was also issued in June 2017 entitled “Women in the Family and at the Workplace” in order to improve the employment situation of women. Hungarian families are entitled to tax allowances based on the number of children they have.⁸⁰

In 2017 an overall analysis of events related to child rights throughout the previous year was completed by Hıntalovon Foundation. One of the most challenging problems in 2016 was the segregation of children of the Roma minority, because of this fact in that year even an infringement procedure was initiated by the European Commission against Hungary. The report is referring to the European Commission 2016 country report on Hungary which criticized that high quality education is hampered by the lack of basic skills and vocational training, early school leaving and segregation. The report also highlights that since 2013 – when the age limit of compulsory education was lowered to 16 years – each month an average of 1100 – 1200 young persons work as public workers. The report considers all these changes harmful in relation to the rights of the child to education.⁸¹

⁷⁸ Lukács, Gy. (2017). *Addressing Extreme Poverty in Hungary – How the Development Sector is working with, and for, Communities*. Budapest, Hungary: The Badur Foundation. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://www.badurfoundation.org/images/badur/reports/Third_sector_mapping_EN_WEB_FINAL.pdf

⁷⁹ Dimeski, B., & Tosheva, E. (2018) Examining Rural Regions in Hungary after EU Accession: Public Management of Some Key Performances (2004-2014). *Balkan Social Science Review*, 12(12), 7-25.

⁸⁰ Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary. (2018). *Voluntary National Review of Hungary on the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda: Transformation towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies*. Budapest, Hungary: State of Hungary. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/20137Voluntary_National_Review_of_Hungary_v2.pdf

⁸¹ Hıntalovon Child Rights Foundation, (2017). *Child Rights Report Hungary 2016*. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://hintalovon.hu/sites/default/files/hintalovon_child_rights_report_2016_0.pdf

Another report of Hintalovon Foundation highlights that every third child was raised out of his family because of the family's financial situation. One third of children living in orphanages are children with disabilities, while the number of parents specialized for foster care decreased by 20 per cent. According to 2017 figures children with disabilities as well as Roma, poor and asylum seeker children are suffering from discrimination. In 2017, 232 children alone and another 1,600 children with their families crossed the Hungarian border seeking asylum. In this year less children received family allowances, and the number of children not admitted to nursery schools due to lack of places soared. Between the ages of 10 and 14, 25 to 30 children die each year. Inequalities in education within the country have worsened, some regions lag far behind, and 5 out of 6 schools deal with lack of resources. According to this report 1.8 million children are at risk of poverty and over 33.6 per cent of them did not know whether there would be anything to eat tomorrow and 60,000 children do not have access to paediatric care.⁸²

(7) Social exclusion of Roma children in Hungary

The poverty level of the Roma population is decreasing in Hungary. Though the most important macroeconomic indicators show a clear positive trend over recent years in Hungary, it is not yet clear to what extent has the most vulnerable social group – the Roma – benefited from the general rising living standards. Anyhow though they make up approximately 7 per cent of the entire population of Hungary, they are the most exposed to social exclusion and the risk of poverty. According to Bernát their situation has improved primarily in terms of employment, but it has taken place mainly in the public works scheme. It is also emphasized that in the field of education improvement is still needed, as the indicators show the still huge gap between the education of Roma and non-Roma youth. Bernát concludes that this would be a key factor in overcoming their multi-generational disadvantages and in achieving successful integration.⁸³

Hungary's VNR highlights that as a result of general improvements, the infant mortality rate dropped to under 3.9 per thousand in 2016. According to the report, Hungary is the only Member State of the EU that provides children and citizens with vaccinations for a wide range of infectious diseases. This report also highlights the Hungarian mentorship programs for the inclusion of students from disadvantaged backgrounds ('Útravaló' and 'Arany János' programs), including Roma students. In 2017, more than 13,000 students received a grant or mentorship, and approximately 10,000 students receive support through programs developed to prevent students from leaving school before having completed a program of study ('Tanoda', 'Second Chance').⁸⁴

The report mentions that in Hungary 91 per cent of Roma children go to kindergarten, this ratio is close to that of the non-Roma children. The government has approved a concept named 'Vocational Training that Serves Economy' in order to meet economic demands by training more skilled workers and technicians. 1,012 Roma women have acquired vocational qualifications through the training and employment program created by the government in 2012. To reduce the rate of Roma girls who leave school without having completed a course of study and improve their chances of

⁸² Hintalovon Child Rights Foundation, (2017). Child Rights Report Hungary. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://hintalovon.hu/sites/default/files/hintalovon_child_rights_report_2017.pdf

⁸³ Bernát, A. (2019). Integration of the Roma in Hungary in the 2010s. In *Hungarian Social Report 2019* (pp. 195–214). Budapest, Hungary: Társi. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.tarki.hu/eng/tarsadalmi-riport> pp. 210.

⁸⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary. (2018). *Voluntary National Review of Hungary on the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda: Transformation towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies*. Budapest, Hungary: State of Hungary. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/20137Voluntary_National_Review_of_Hungary_v2.pdf p. 18.

pursuing continued education, a new program entitled “Bari Shej” was launched in 2015, the target group of which is girls aged 10–18 who attend primary or secondary school and face the risk of dropping out.⁸⁵

(8) Capability approach

Capability approach evaluates a person’s ability to achieve various valuable functions as part of the living.⁸⁶ The Indian economist Amartya Sen was among the first who researched the topic of development looking beyond economic growth. Sen’s approach explained development from a human development perspective. The basic principle of this approach is the individual freedom and its opportunity aspect, the extent to which people have the opportunity to achieve outcomes that they value.⁸⁷

As freedom is qualified and constrained by the social, political, and economic opportunities, institutions and societal arrangements are of much importance for promoting the freedoms of individuals. Thus, human development occurs with the improving of institutional frameworks. A capability – according to Sen – is a person’s ability to do valuable acts or to reach valuable states of being.⁸⁸ Sen does not list out capabilities required in the society to realize human development. A set of capabilities presents a larger menu of real opportunities unlike functionings which present one of the available choices in the capacity set. Functionings range from elementary physical states to the most complex social achievements such as being happy or taking part in the life of the community. According to this theory, children are considered not just as recipients of freedoms, but as active social actors and agents in their communities. These ‘functionings’ together constitute what makes life valuable. A functioning is an achievement, whereas a capability is the ability to achieve. According to Sen an additional aspect of freedom is the ‘process’ aspect, which is concerned with the procedure and process of free decisions and includes participation in political decision-making, involvement in social choices and immunity from interferences. Assessing a person’s real freedom, Sen pays attention to ‘well-being’ and ‘agency’ aspects. Well-being freedom concentrates on a person’s capability to have various functioning vectors and to enjoy the corresponding well-being achievement, while agency refers to the various ways in which persons themselves act and exercise their choice to achieve valuable states of being.⁸⁹

Sen’s development approach does not negate capitalism, but it is laced with transparency and behavioural ethics. He says that economic security is one of the advantages of democratic pluralism. The World Report on Human Development appeared in 1990 became influential for introducing the Human Development Index (HDI). According to this mode of measurement the traditional focus on standards of living, economic variables and goods was replaced by human welfare in terms of life expectancy, education, and health. But Sen’s capability approach was not considered to heal all the problems of the world regarding inequality, and the theory was often

⁸⁵ Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary. (2018). *Voluntary National Review of Hungary on the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda: Transformation towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies*. Budapest, Hungary: State of Hungary. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/20137Voluntary_National_Review_of_Hungary_v2.pdf p. 24.

⁸⁶ Nussbaum, M., & Sen, A. (Eds.). (1993). *The Quality of Life*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press. p. 30.

⁸⁷ Sen, A. (2001). *Development as Freedom*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. p. 285.

⁸⁸ Kohumba, S. K. (2018). Amartya Sen’s *Development as Freedom: Ten Years Later*. *Journal of Sociology and Development*, 1(1), 127–145. p. 130.

⁸⁹ O’Hearn, D. (2009). Amartya Sen’s *Development as Freedom: Ten Years Later*. *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, 8, 9–15. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.developmenteducationreview.com/sites/default/files/Issue8.pdf>

criticized by arguing that it does not pay sufficient attention to groups of people. Critiques are saying that Sen's insistence on individual's freedom may be important only in a community framework together with others. According to critiques Sen's version of the capability approach is weak in its assessment of social justice, inequalities, and human well-being, especially in multicultural societies.⁹⁰ Qualifying development as freedom and indicating that poverty is unfreedom his work on human development has contributed to the foundation of an international consensus on the meaning of poverty and development. By the end of the twentieth century, this consensus had been operationalised in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) valid from 2000 until 2015.

While Sen defines capabilities as real opportunities, for Nussbaum they also include talents, internal powers and abilities. Nussbaum enumerates the capabilities that are grouped together under ten "central human capabilities": life; bodily health; bodily integrity; senses, imagination and thought; emotions; practical reason; affiliation; play; and control over one's environment.⁹¹ She formulated the list at an abstract level, always open for revision and advocated that the implementation should be done taking into account local differences. She says that it is the role of institutions to ensure that a threshold level of central capabilities is achieved.

Thus, the equality of opportunities to well-being in the case of children can be also expressed on the basis of functioning and capabilities. Children are also entitled to a set of functioning and as they grow older capabilities that are important for their well-being and well-becoming.⁹²

All the literature what I have reviewed in the context of child poverty gives a broad overview about the current situation and challenges regarding the topic, But there was not yet made a research which would show in how far the different perspectives (the perspective of children, the perspective of NGOs working for children living in poverty) could match with each other. It is not yet researched how are thinking about the fulfilment of SDG 1 the different actors, it is not yet researched in how far they could think together, what are the similarities and differences between their different worldviews. Though the annual reports of Hintalovon are made in order to enhance the fulfilment of child rights and the reports are written separately for children too, these reports are not giving an insight to children's opinion regarding their rights. This thesis tries to be unique in the sense that it aims to find out how children themselves are thinking about poverty, about their rights which are hampered living in poverty.

⁹⁰ Kohumba, S. K. (2018). Amartya Sen's *Development as Freedom: Ten Years Later*. *Journal of Sociology and Development*, 1(1), 127–145. p.129.

⁹¹ Nussbaum, M. C. (1997). Capability and human rights. *Fortham Law Review*, 66(2), 273–300. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://www.palermo.edu/Archivos_content/2015/derecho/pobreza_multidimensional/bibliografia/Sesion3_doc1.pdf pp. 287-288.

⁹² Schweiger, G., & Graf, G. (2015). *A Philosophical Examination of Social Justice and Child Poverty*. London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan. p. 13.

Chapter Three: Methodology

This chapter outlines the research methodology, the research design, sampling, data collection processes, instruments used in the study, and the process of data analysis. It also highlights the ethical aspects of the study with special focus on children.

(1) Research setting

The research is based in Hungary. The experts for interviews are based in Budapest and Berettyóújfalu. The interviews were conducted via face-to-face. The expert interviews were collected over a period of two weeks, in January 2020. Children were interviewed from three regions in Hungary. A detailed selection of the participants is mentioned in the sampling and data collection section.

(2) Research design

The study is a qualitative research presented in case study method using semi-structured interview guide. The research design is based on the theory of Amartya Sen's capability approach which was further developed by Martha Nussbaum. As a base of research, the interlinkages between capability approach and multidimensional poverty analysis is also considered. SDGs, with special focus on SDG 1: 'End poverty in all its forms everywhere' is also a significant aspect of this study.

Based on the above problem, the overall objective of the study is to explore dimensions of child poverty through the SDGs.

The sub-objectives are as follows:

- To analyse the perception of children about poverty with reference to their own well-being or ill-being;
- To identify the consequences of poverty in the lives of children;
- To explore the methods to alleviate child poverty.

Since this is a qualitative research it allows me as a researcher to investigate the *meanings* children attribute to their behaviour, actions, and interactions with others. Qualitative research can illuminate why certain connection exists between different variables like education, health, (what are the other variables) and to link them to child rights through exploring narratives of the children themselves.⁹³ It is assumed that the participants may have an empowering experience in the study as they would have an active role and can voice their individual benefits and harms. In addition, the relationship between the researcher and the participant is often less formal than in quantitative research.⁹⁴ It is also assumed that trust can be built between the researcher and the participants. Qualitative data collection allows collecting data that is non-numeric and helps to provide detailed insight. For reaching such conclusions the data collected should be holistic, rich and nuanced and one hopes that the present study might be able to gather such data.⁹⁵

The semi-structured interviews will employ a blend of closed- and open-ended questions beginning with 'why, how, where, what and which' questions. The dialogue will meander around the topics

⁹³Crossman, A. (2019, October 24). An Overview of Qualitative Research Methods. Direct Observation, Interviews, Participation, Immersion, Focus Groups. *ThoughtCo*. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.thoughtco.com/qualitative-research-methods-3026555>

⁹⁴Pathak, V., Jena, B., & Kalra, S. (2013). Qualitative Research. *Perspectives in Clinical Research*, 4(3):192. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3757586/> doi: [10.4103/2229-3485.115389](https://doi.org/10.4103/2229-3485.115389)

⁹⁵Bhat, A. (2020). Qualitative research. Definition, types, methods and examples. *QuestionPro* Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.questionpro.com/blog/qualitative-research-methods/>

on the agenda, and may even delve into unforeseen issues, thus giving the opportunity for the participants to express their thoughts more freely. Relying on children's voices requires recognising their agency. Mosaic approach is a special method developed to listen to the voices of children about their lives. Starting from the viewpoint of young children as competent meaning makers and explorers of their environment, the wider questions of the study are raised about adult-child power relations and the status of young children. The mosaic approach uses multi-methods recognising the different 'voices' of children; treats children as experts and agents in their own lives; includes children, practitioners in reflecting on meanings; it is focusing on children's lived experiences.⁹⁶

(3) Sampling

There were two types of sampling in the study. Sampling one was where a list of experts was prepared based on (legal and professional) knowledge and experience of having worked in the child-rights setting. They were ranked based on the number of years of experience and their length of working with child rights policy. Three persons ranking the highest was chosen. Thus, the following three organizations were chosen - the NCSD, Hungarian Charity Service of the Order of Malta, and the Real Pearl Foundation. An expert from UNICEF was supposed to be interviewed however that did not work out due to the expert's lack of time. In the sampling two, the population of the study was all children living below poverty line in Hungary between the age of 0 to 18 years. The regions and participants for this study were supposed to be selected using stratified sampling. The regions were selected geographically based on certain characteristics such as segregated areas in certain locations. Children were supposed to be selected based on the knowledge that they live below poverty line. In multidimensional poverty approach, there are three dimensions of poverty – health, education and standard of living. The sample was supposed to be selected based on age, gender, ethnicity, region of origin. The poverty aspect was to be determined through randomly selecting 10 children – equal number of boys and girls. The children were to be administered an adapted version of the Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children (HBSC) questionnaire.⁹⁷ This questionnaire allows to identify poverty among children based on family affluence scale, parental occupation, perceived family wealth, food poverty, health conditions, risk behaviour, general life satisfaction. Two children (one boy, one girl) ranking the highest in each of the three regions were to be selected for the study. Based on the assent from each participant, and consent from parents, children were to be interviewed. If consent was not given, the next highest-ranking participant were to be selected. This was to be done, till there was a participant.

However, in reality the sample size was five children between the age of 6 to 18 years, and they lived in segregated areas of certain settlements. They all lived with their parents, who were mostly in public work services available at the place.

(4) Data collection

The data was gathered in two phases. In phase one of interviews with expert, a list of experts was created by doing compiling names of people working in the field of child rights and SDGs. They were ranked according to the years of experience. They were contacted via email and an appointment was set with them. Interviews lasted around 2 hours with each of them. The experts were individuals working with the State and civil society organizations. In phase two, interviews

⁹⁶ Clark, A. (2005). Ways of seeing: Using the Mosaic Approach to Listen to Young Children's Perspectives. In Clark, A., Kjørholt, A. T., and Moss, P. (eds.) *Beyond Listening: Children's Perspectives on Early Childhood Services* (pp. 29–49). Bristol, UK: Policy Press.

⁹⁷ Roberts, H. (2000) Listening to Children: and Hearing Them. In Christensen, P. & James, A. (Eds.). (2000). *Research with Children: Perspectives and Practices* (2nd ed.). (pp. 260-275). London, UK: Routledge.

were conducted with children living in poverty. Data was collected from the following region/location: Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg, Hajdú-Bihar, Pest. These locations were chosen as they are some of the poorest regions in Hungary; further it includes a high number of Roma population in segregated areas. Segregated areas are spatially distinct subdivision in which the low status population is concentrated. Their share is based on the proportion of those with at least primary education and those with no regular working income within the working-age population. In segregated areas the low-status population exceeds 40 per cent.

Table 1: Data collection location

Sr. No	Regions	Poverty rate	Settlement	Percentage of Roma Population	Specific criteria
1	Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg	38 % GDP per capita	Nagydobos	15,5%	A village with segregated parts
2	Hajdú-Bihar	44% GDP per capita	Biharkeresztes	9%	A border village to Romania with segregated parts
3	Pest	70% GDP per capita	Monor	4%	A town with segregated parts

Figure 1: Map⁹⁸ of Hungary representing locations of data collection



(5) Instruments for data collection

Data collection was conducted through semi-structured qualitative interview guides. Interview guide i.e. the instrument for collecting data from children will have questions related to poverty, their perceptions and their efforts to alleviate them or people in similar situation from poverty. The interview guide for experts will explore child rights policies in Hungary and the implementation of SDGs to alleviate child poverty.

Children who were selected for the study were asked if they wish to draw. As research data children's drawings and artwork were used for the first time in the age of psychoanalysis, the child's innermost mental states were revealed using adult projective techniques. This approach has been superseded by more child-centred approaches where children are enabled to be more active participants also in the explanation and interpretation of their own work. To avoid adultist interpretation the data from visual sociology focuses more on the child's account of the images than on the actual images. Visual sociology continues to move with the digital times, such as the use of emoji to stimulate discussions about conceptions of well-being, using social media as data, and using new possibilities from smaller computing devices.⁹⁹

The data was analysed through thematic analysis using a Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis (MODA) as guide. MODA is a rights-based tool developed at UNICEF Innocenti that

⁹⁸ Disclaimer: Map is for representational purpose, it does not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

⁹⁹ Flick, U. (2018). *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*. London, UK: Sage Publications Limited. p. 624.

measures and defines multidimensional child poverty. MODA is a flexible tool which was developed for children, can be adapted to any context and allows an in-depth monitoring of SDG target 1.2. It unfolds which dimensions of poverty (education, information, water, sanitation, health, nutrition, housing) children are experiencing, providing enhanced analytics to guide programming and policy responses. More than 50 national studies and 3 regional studies using MODA have been produced.¹⁰⁰

(6) Data analysis

Data was analysed through thematic analysis, a general process of induction where the researcher reads and codes the data to understand what the participants have to say about the research topic. Braun and Clarke proposed a six-step process of thematic analysis: immersion in the data through repeated reading of the transcripts; systematic coding of the data; development of preliminary themes; revision of those themes; selection of a final set of themes; organization of the final written product around those themes. This approach can be applied in a deductive format, where codes are based on pre-existing theory, or a more inductive fashion, where codes are derived from the interviews themselves. Thematic Analysis is a flexible strategy that can be paired with almost any approach to data collection.¹⁰¹ Children's conception about their well-being and their own rights, governmental measures, and the work of organizations were analysed. The interviews with the experts helped to understand the endeavours of the selected institutions with their work on SDG 1 and the rights of the children stated in the CRC. The findings of this study are presented based on key themes that emerged on based on the analysis. The information from children and expert interviews are weaved into each other than presenting them separately.

(7) Ethical aspects

The rights of research participants are anchored in fundamental human rights and the fundamental ethical principles. The key sources of EU and international law are the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and its Protocols. Other important sources are the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the CRPD. Additional declarations that codify principles of research ethics and ethical treatment of research participants include the Nuremberg Code, the Helsinki Declaration and the Belmont Report.¹⁰² The ethics principles applied to research with adults are applicable equally to children. In addition there are four provisions specific to research: children's competencies, perceptions and frameworks of reference, according to their age, may differ from those of adults; children's potential vulnerability to exploitation in interaction with adults; the power relationships between adult researcher and child participant; the role of adult gatekeepers in mediating access to children.¹⁰³

According to Roberts, listening to children has moved from the margins to the mainstream in academic, policy and research. The rediscovery of children is akin in some respects to the rediscovery of poverty, of women, or of the working class in the 1960s and 1970s. Listening to children, hearing them and acting on what they say are three very different activities, although they

¹⁰⁰ United Nations Children's Fund. (2020). *Multidimensional Child Poverty: Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis (MODA)*. Florence, Italy: Office of Research – Innocenti, UNICEF. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.unicef-irc.org/research/multidimensional-child-poverty/>

¹⁰¹ Flick, U. (2018). *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*. London, UK: Sage Publications Limited. p. 259.

¹⁰² European Commission. (2018). *Ethics in Social Science and Humanities*. Brussels, Belgium: Research and Innovation, European Commission. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/hi/h2020_ethics-soc-science-humanities_en.pdf

¹⁰³ The British Association of Social Workers (BASW). (2012). *The Research Ethics Guidebook: A Resource for Social Scientists*. Birmingham, UK: BASW. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <http://www.ethicsguidebook.ac.uk/Research-with-children-105>

are frequently elided. The text mentions that although ethical guidelines cannot give definitive answers, they can lead the researcher to ask himself/ herself the right kinds of questions regarding the purpose of the research, the costs and hoped-for benefits, regarding privacy and confidentiality, selection, inclusion and exclusion, regarding funding, revision of the research aims and methods, regarding information for children, parents and other carers, regarding dissemination.¹⁰⁴

The initial consent from gatekeepers, parents, teachers or others with a duty of care for the child is essential, but the active consent from each individual child is also needed. According to the Declaration of Helsinki when the subject is a minor, permission from the responsible relative replaces that of the participant in accordance with national legislation. Whenever the minor child is in fact able to give consent, the minor's consent must be obtained in addition to the consent of the minor's legal guardian.¹⁰⁵ In every case the child's assent should be obtained through the provision of age-appropriate information. The application of general principles indicates that, where children have "sufficient understanding and intelligence to understand what is proposed", it is they and not their parents whose consent is required by law.¹⁰⁶ According to the Hungarian legal framework obligatory parental consent is required for children under 16 years, but some codes of ethics in universities suggest parental consent up to 18 years. Consent of children above 16 years is sufficient. Oral consent is enough if the child is under 14 years and written consent is required if the child is over 14 years.¹⁰⁷

Harcourt and Conroy in their study insist that the presence of children, and their accounts of life, is an essential element to understanding their world. This challenges the traditional notions of developmental psychology that children become someone. The study highlights that researchers must dedicate time to establish a trusting research relationship with children, if they want to work with children rather than on children. In this context the power of the pedagogy of listening with intentionality, creating sustained opportunities for children's thinking to become apparent is of crucial importance. Discussions about the concepts of the researcher's institution, the work of the researcher and the role and purpose of research, the roles and responsibilities of those participating in the research project, how data would be gathered and analysed, and with whom they would be shared need to be undertaken. It is important to inform the children that a decision to withdraw their consent, at any point in the project, would be respected without consequence.¹⁰⁸

In order to minimize the risk of harm ethical guidance aim to minimize possible exploitation and ensure the rights and welfare of children in research. Risk refers to the potential harm (physical, psychological or social) that may arise from the research.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁴ Roberts, H. (2000) Listening to children: and Hearing Them. In Christensen, P. & James, A. (Eds.). (2000). *Research with Children: Perspectives and Practices* (2nd ed.). (pp. 260-275). London, UK: Routledge.

¹⁰⁵ Ferdousi, N. (2015). Children as Research Subjects: The Ethical Issues. *Bangladesh Journal of Bioethics*, 6(1), 6-10. <https://doi.org/10.3329/bioethics.v6i1.24398> p. 7.

¹⁰⁶ Ferdousi, N. (2015). Children as Research Subjects: The Ethical Issues. *Bangladesh Journal of Bioethics*, 6(1), 6-10. <https://doi.org/10.3329/bioethics.v6i1.24398> p. 9.

¹⁰⁷ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. (2014, November 6). *Child Participation in research*. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/child-participation-research>

¹⁰⁸ Harcourt, D., & Conroy, H. (2011). Informed consent: Processes and procedures seeking research partnerships with young children. In Harcourt, D., Perry, B., & Waller, T. (Eds.). (2011). *Researching young children's perspectives: Debating the ethics and dilemmas of educational research with children* (pp. 38-51). Abingdon, UK: Routledge.

¹⁰⁹ European Commission. (2018). *Ethics in Social Science and Humanities*. Brussels, Belgium: Research and Innovation, European Commission. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/hi/h2020_ethics-soc-science-humanities_en.pdf

In terms of minimizing harm, it was essential to follow if children said anything that indicates they may be at risk of harm. A confidentiality policy that clearly sets out the circumstances was established between the supervisor and me on when confidentiality could be broken. This also included procedures where I or the child could access further support. If I suspected that a child might be at risk of harm, then the research would have been stopped until that child's safety was secured.¹¹⁰ Not maintaining confidentiality, disclosure of identity and personal information are risks faced by research participants.¹¹¹

(8) Sites of research

It is relevant that research is responsive to the local needs and the study has value for the welfare of the intended participants. In many cases it is important to explain how the research proposal fits into local customs and practices, how it helps in building local capacities and how the benefits would be shared.¹¹² Hatzinikolaou, Mitakidou argue for the importance of multicultural reality and the rejection of the culture of ethnocentrism. The study highlights the situation of Roma as a subordinate group in Greece living in silence, because whatever it says is an echo of the dominant voice. The study is focusing on Roma children and communities, whose subordinate living conditions combined with the lack of education make the Roma a vulnerable cultural minority that does not have the power to make decisions. According to the text people should understand culture in the sense of a procedure, and Roma children would need knowledge appropriate to discovering and comprehending themselves and their cultural values and at the same time reinforcing their self-definition.¹¹³

Ball in her study discusses the ethical principles of respect, inclusion, reciprocity and relevance. The study emphasizes that relationships of trust are the foundation for ethical research practice, and these relationships require time, self-disclosure and care. Researchers need to observe cultural protocols when approaching an Indigenous organization or community to explore their interest in a research project. Partnerships can help to ensure that topics under investigation reinforce Indigenous values, are understood using Indigenous frames of reference, and are beneficial to Indigenous people. As part of the topic of intellectual property the text highlights that many Indigenous participants in research instead of remaining anonymous prefer to be named. Anyhow the researchers must ensure protection of Indigenous participants and communities, including protection from any negative impact that might result from the findings of the project being made public. The text also emphasizes the importance of capacity building and argues that partnership in research can be an opportunity to learn new skills, explore topics of interest, and network with others.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) (2020). Research with children: ethics, safety and avoiding harm. Retrieved from <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/briefings/research-with-children-ethics-safety-avoiding-harm/>

¹¹¹ European Commission. (2018). *Ethics in Social Science and Humanities*. Brussels, Belgium: Research and Innovation, European Commission. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/hi/h2020_ethics-soc-science-humanities_en.pdf

¹¹² European Commission. (2018). *Ethics in Social Science and Humanities*. Brussels, Belgium: Research and Innovation, European Commission. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/hi/h2020_ethics-soc-science-humanities_en.pdf

¹¹³ Hatzinikolaou, A., Mitakidou, S. (2005) Roma Children: Building "Bridges". In: Soto, L. D., & Swadener, B. B., (Eds.). (2005). *Power & Voice in Research with Children* (pp. 125-136). Vienna, Austria: Peter Lang Publishing.

¹¹⁴ Ball, J. (2005). "Nothing about us without us": Restorative research partnerships with Indigenous communities. In Farrell, A. (Ed.). (2005). *Ethical Research with Children* (pp. 81-96). Berkshire, UK: Open University Press.

Richards in her study highlights that voices of the interview partners are shaped not only by the views of researchers but also by the social context, the positioning of the individuals involved in the encounters and the power relations that produce such conversations.¹¹⁵ The research with disabled children should place considerable significance on the way in which they function in relation to social structures and institutions, the way in which rights are accrued in particular areas by particular social groups and the contexts in which they are implemented and given meaning.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ Richards, S., Clark, J., & Boggis, A. (2015). The Rights of Participation and the Realities of Inclusion. In *Ethical Research with Children* (pp. 62-77). London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

¹¹⁶ Richards, S., Clark, J., & Boggis, A. (2015). The Rights of Participation and the Realities of Inclusion. In *Ethical Research with Children* (pp. 62-77). London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan. p. 77.

Chapter Four: Findings

This chapter presents the findings gathered during data collection analysed from the interviews of children and experts. It is divided in four sections. The first section provides an overview of the field of setting and the participants of the study. The second section presents child poverty through Nussbaum and Sen's capability approach through the perception of children and experts and the rights of the child through the CRC through the perception of children and experts. It further looks at the multidimensional nature of child poverty. The third section highlights the different perceptions on the concept of poverty, the layer of ambiguity of the State confronting poverty or shirking away its responsibilities, social distribution in Hungary, including access to basic services, role of the SDGs in poverty eradication. In the fourth section the characteristics of poverty in the lives of children are discussed.

(1) Section one: Introducing the field setting and the participants of the study

As mentioned above, the first section firstly provides an overview of the settlements in which the five children were interviewed, secondly it provides an overview of the civil society organizations working in these settlements and thirdly it narrates the personal stories of children who were interviewed.

(i) Overview of settlements

There were three settlements that were explored – Nagydobos, Biharkeresztes and Monor.

(a) Nagydobos

The first place of my research was Nagydobos, a village in Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county, in the Mátészalka district. The population of Nagydobos is 2297 people.¹¹⁷ According to the last population census 84.5 per cent of the population is Hungarian and 15.5 per cent declared themselves Roma. Since 1998, the International Pumpkin Festival is held every year in the settlement. Each September, a call is made for the title of 'Biggest Pumpkin' in the country. A colleague (I will call her Ms. A) who works with the Pro-Cserehát Association helped me to find the interviewees in this settlement. Ms. A recommended two children from Nagydobos with whom I could conduct interviews. On the day of the interview, I reached Nagydobos via train. It is 339 kilometres away from Budapest from where I live. Ms. A waited me at Nagydobos railway station and led me to a segregated street in the village where she lives. The segregated parts of the village are the Cemetery street, Dózsa György street, Petőfi street, Munkácsy street and the neighbourhood of Elek's shop. The Cemetery Street is located at the end of the settlement, there is no paved road in this area, there is a cemetery on one side of the street and small houses on the other side, with only vast fields behind them. The houses on this street are very similar. Ms. A's house is small, less than 50 square meters. The toilet is on the courtyard, it has no door, providing a wide view on the cornfields. Everyone wash their hands in a washbasin, because the water is also in the yard, not introduced into the house. In the room where I prepare the pencils and papers for the children, is warm, there is no gas in the house, so the heating is resolved by burning woods. Both of my interview partners from Nagydobos live on the Cemetery street in quite similar housing conditions, but their everyday and personal stories are quite different and unique in many ways.

¹¹⁷ Population: Hungary. (2019). Nagydobos népessége - The population of Nagydobos. Retrieved April 5, 2020 from <http://nepesseg.com/szabolcs-szatmar-bereg/nagydobos>

(b) Biharkeresztes

The next stage of my research was Biharkeresztes in Hajdú-Bihar County. The population of Biharkeresztes is 4386 people.¹¹⁸ At the end of the first decade of the 2000s, a gradual immigration from Oradea, Romania began. The lower real estate prices in Hungary provide favourable conditions, therefore more and more Hungarians and Romanians are relocating and commuting between Biharkeresztes and Oradea. As a result, in 2011 there was already a 5 per cent Romanian community in the city, with 85 per cent Hungarian and 9 per cent Romas. The labour market of Biharkeresztes is severely depressed and there are few businesses in the area. The most important employers in the region are the municipalities implementing public work programs. Lack of jobs affect the majority of the under-educated population, but with the absence of a local economy, the current lack of skills does not mean a plus disadvantage. The civil and community activity of young people in the settlement is low, the integration of the resettlers from Romania is low, and the Roma segregate is also present in the settlement. There is a tendency towards segregation on the elementary school level and lack of local health care is also a characteristic of the settlement. The True Pearl Foundation helped me with the selection of children for the interviews. This Foundation deals with the students of the school, mainly Roma children and organizes art school for children, mainly Roma children, with the purpose of personality development and disadvantage compensation. I interviewed the two selected children in the corridor of the elementary school. It was a constant disturbing fact that sometimes the bell rang with a loud noise, indicating that it is break-time, friends and classmates were hanging around listening to what we were talking about or sometimes even commenting on it.

(c) Monor

Monor is a city located in Pest county and according to the 2011 census, 87.6 per cent of the population declared themselves to be Hungarian and 4 per cent declared themselves to be Romas. The population of Monor nowadays is 18566 people.¹¹⁹ The Hungarian Charity Service of the Order of Malta works in this settlement with the Presence Program since 2004. Inside the city, in the Taban area, there is a segregated part and a larger, more coherent area threatened by segregation. Taban is the most disadvantaged part of the city where the local population is also disadvantaged in terms of housing conditions, labor market position and income levels. The Charity Service has created the Safe Start Children's House, a local school, and lead a number of catch-up programs in the city with EU funding. As a result of the support, locals have set up a football team, learn music and are setting up a bio-briquette plant. By now, the circus caravans that used to be lodgings for several families have ceased to exist. According to this organization, previously, 8 out of 10 children had to repeat the classes in school, today this number has fallen to two. Nowadays there is a public bath in the middle of Taban segregate, where the people can clean themselves if there is no water in the house.

(ii) Organizations tackling poverty in Hungary

There are several Hungarian organizations working towards poverty reduction. Of the several, I have chosen three organizations, namely, the NCSO, the Hungarian Charity Service of the Order of Malta and the Real Pearl Foundation. As mentioned earlier, these organizations were chosen on the basis of their availability.

¹¹⁸ Population: Hungary. (2019). Biharkeresztes népessége - The population of Biharkeresztes. Retrieved April 5, 2020 from <http://nepesseg.com/hajdu-bihar/biharkeresztes>

¹¹⁹ Population: Hungary. (2019). Monor népessége - The population of Monor. Retrieved April 5, 2020 from <http://nepesseg.com/pest/monor>

(a) The National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD)

The NCSD is an advisory and interest reconciliation body including representatives of political parties, the scientific community, economic interest groups, civil and religious organisations. NCSD releases publications and working papers on sustainability and regularly reports to the Parliament on its activities. NCSD maintains relations with the institutions responsible for the sub-fields of sustainable development including the National Environmental Protection Council, the Ombudsman for Future Generations and the Directorate for Environmental Sustainability at the Office of the President of the Republic. The president of NCSD is the incumbent speaker of the Parliament, the composition of NCSD is including representatives of political parties, the scientific community, economic interest groups, civil and religious organisations. NCSD publishes a Monitoring Report every two years to inform the public and the Parliament on the implementation of the NFSSD.¹²⁰

In this regard, the NCSD is responsible for facilitating the definition of the principles, objectives and tasks of sustainable development in Hungary, the consideration of the related international cooperation, supporting the coordination of the relevant planning and consultation activities, raising awareness and social engagement and implementation of the SDGs, promoting the regular revision and implementation of the NFSSD. In March 2013, the Parliament adopted Hungary's NFSSD for 2012-2024, in line with the Fundamental Law of Hungary, to safeguard the requirements of sustainable development, the protection of future generations and the long-term responsible management of national resources. NCSD engages not only in the global sustainability but also focuses on the European sustainability cooperation since 2009. One of NCSD's priorities is to promote an attitude change in the society, to strengthen social engagement, to encourage public outreach activities. The NCSD offers advices to facilitate the transition towards sustainability in the country by increasing top-level political commitment to sustainability, by promotion and dissemination of health-conscious behavioural patterns, by improving quality and efficiency in education, by addressing sustainability challenges in public services.

(b) The Hungarian Charity Service of the Order of Malta

The experts informed me that the charity organisation of the Sovereign Order of Malta dates back 900 years. The motto of the Charity Service and the Order of Malta is "*Tuitio fidei et obsequium pauperum – Defence of the faith and assistance to the poor.*" The Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem was founded in the eleventh century to provide care for crusaders coming to the Holy Land, settled in Hungary in the twelfth century but after a few hundreds of years disappeared from the country. At the beginning of the twentieth century appeared again but after 1945 was banned. The foundation of the Charity Service goes back to the 1980s when Freifrau Csilla von Boeselager, who was born in Hungary but lived in Germany, decided to collect donations for indigent Hungarians. The person she found to distribute the donations was Father Imre Kozma, the priest of the Holy Family Parish Church Zugliget in Budapest, who became the head of the Hungarian Charity Service Association of the Order of Malta founded in 1989 as one of the first civil organisations after the regime change in the country.

In 1989, ten thousand of East-German refugees arrived in Hungary and the Charity Service opened its first refugee camp for them in the garden of the Zugliget Parish Church. Following the outbreak of the Romanian Revolution in 1989, the Charity Service delivered relief supplies to Romania. At the time of the breakup of Yugoslavia they opened their own refugee camp on the field. The Charity

¹²⁰ The National Council for Sustainable Development. (NCSD). (2020). *About NCSD*. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.nfft.hu/web/ncsd/national-council-for-sustainable-development>

Service developed into a national organisation by the middle of 1990s with its centre in Budapest, regional organisations, local groups and several volunteers. The ambulance service of the Charity Service was launched in 1992 which is now part of the National Ambulance Network. In 1995 they founded the House of Providence which hosts a home of the elderly, a home for people with mental health issues and the centre of the Charity Service's Foster Parent Network, which was the first institution in Hungary to be built directly for the purpose.

In 2004 the first 'Presence' programme was launched in Tarnabod. The settlement was the emblematic site of marginalization and fight against misery. The basis of the 'Presence' programme is the continuous and intensive social work in the slums and impoverished settlements. This programme not only deals with local social problems but also works out and implements long-term strategies sustainable from both financial and social aspects. In 2005 the Charity Service started its mission in the Roma colony in Monor. The organization summarises the results of the complex activity in the past years in one single sentence: no more exam failures in the school.

This organization helped the country in the red sludge catastrophe in 2010, opened a sanitation centre in Kenya, in Kibera, a district of Nairobi. In the summer of 2015 when nearly 400.000 people walked through the country the organization followed the life of masses of people providing health services, food and clothing at numerous locations.¹²¹ The expert states that *"the Charity Service is not a religious organization, everyone thinks that it is compulsory for us to practice the faith, to go to church, but it is not like it. We are a civil organization led by a priest. It's a curiosity, it's interesting, our employees have to represent a certain value, but we have a colleague with punk haircut, we have an avatar tattooed social worker. This kind of order loosens up, and obviously a person with a tattoo can be religious also. What protecting faith means is different for everyone? Caring for the poor is a fairly clear goal, to help those who are in trouble, those who are weak, those who have fallen. Whether this is due to a disaster, a life situation, an illness, or because of a disability or crime, it is irrelevant."*

(c) The Real Pearl Foundation

This organization was established in 1999 and strives for the abolishment of child poverty and the cycle of extreme poverty for the next generation, with the help of the current generation. The foundation works within the ten poorest regions of Europe, in Hungary's Northern Great Plain region, their centre is located in Berettyóújfalu. As a newly graduated teacher, Nóra. L. Ritók, the founder and leader of Real Pearl Foundation Hungary when realised that the knowledge she obtained at the university would not be enough in a class where the majority of the children were disadvantaged, handicapped, or overage. She started with her other passion: she sat down to draw. *"Nóra decided to create practices with which the children could easily achieve success, so they felt motivated and confident during their classes and wanted to join after-school activities too. She did not want to train artists: the main purpose was to create, and draw to get their attention with a playful, effective and very creative interaction."*¹²²

They started the education in Berettyóújfalu, but they realized that it would be nearly impossible for children from underprivileged communities to join the courses, so they decided to reach children in nearby villages. In 2000 the Real Pearl Primary Art School was opened. The child-centred visual education and its method is focused on self-expression, to emphasize the

¹²¹ The Hungarian Maltese Charity Service. (2020). History of the Hungarian Maltese Charity Service. Budapest, Hungary. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.maltai.hu/mmsztortenete>

¹²² The Real Pearl Foundation. (2020). Our Story. Retrieved from <https://igazgyongyalapitvany.hu/en/about-us/our-story/>

individuality, and to use the most creative technical solutions in order to develop visual memory, fine movements, concentration, and logical skills. It was a period when this style of education became popular on an international level. They included more and more tasks which helped to strengthen other subjects such as biology, history, literature, English etc. They also realized that the individual competencies such as self-confidence, self-esteem, self-assessment, identity, social skills, the level of cooperation, tolerance, or solidarity can be easily implemented into the development generated by art. In this way they developed their new methodology called the ‘threefold focused visual education’, which not only develops visual communication but also compensates the underprivileged circumstances and evolves social competencies. Meanwhile the foundation achieved international recognition for children’s art education, their students win several prizes per year, on a local, domestic and international level.

As the foundation faced that the integration of highly disadvantaged children would never fully take place within school walls, they began a long-term (20 year) complex strategy in 2009 which is based on three pillars: education; family care and community development; and institutional cooperation. The emphasis is on enabling, the slow but sure aid to building a participatory democracy. In addition to the Primary Art School, they also run an After-School Activities Program (‘Tanoda’) to assist children with their schoolwork as well as a scholarship program for the children. They provide support for school equipment, organize programs to assist integration which often involves parents and families.

This model was first introduced in Told, a small village near the Romanian border. The village has approximately 270 citizens, 70 per cent Roma, the other 30 per cent Hungarian and Romanian. Today the community is stronger, the level of criminalization minimalized, there are no girls in the last 5 years who given birth to her child under 18, drug-use and prostitution vanished. The importance of participatory democracy became an important. The social innovations of the Real Pearl Foundation have gained international acclaim, possible adaptations of their educational model are now being developed, and certain elements of their program are now being used in 20 other settlements. They provide material, educational and financial support for approximately 1200 families per year.¹²³

The expert of Real Pearl Foundation emphasized that the establishment of the institution “*was not determined by the Millennium Development Goals but wanted to find a solution to a particular social problem. First of all, we had to take into account that education has not provided equal opportunity, but this problem existed even before the regime change. Being more and more involved in the educational situation, we have encountered other problems, and today the organization carries out five–six non-profit activities.*”

¹²³ The Real Pearl Foundation. (2020). Our Story. Retrieved from <https://igazgyongyalapitvany.hu/en/about-us/our-story/>

(iii) Lives of children

(a) Barni

Barni is eleven years old and attends the fifth class in the elementary school at Nagydobos. He has one little brother who is four years old, one younger and one elder sister. He is an outspoken child. When I gave him the pencils and the paper to draw, he asked: “Do you mind if I draw ugly?”

His parents are public workers, they are slaughtering ducks, get up at dawn and come home in the evening. Seeing his parents rarely after a while Barni felt himself neglected and began to avoid going to school. The consequence was that the director asked the family to justify his absence.

However, the doctor rejected to provide an approbation, and the director of the school warned Barni that if he continues to be absent, he would be taken away from his parents and placed in state care. Barni said that after this incident, his parents decided to take his biggest sister, Emma out of school to take care of her younger sister and two brothers. Emma would be in ninth class, but she is currently doing the housework. Barni said that one of Emma's eyes is weaker, she should wear glasses, but her glasses were broken and there is not enough money in the family to order a new one for her. They do not celebrate birthdays in the family, and do not buy presents at Christmas because the low salary of the parents is hardly enough until the end of the month.

Barni says he does not get pocket money, but he sometimes steals some money from her mother's cashier. He does not have a cell phone, his parents are saying that he is too young for it, he has a Facebook account, but he's not really using it. Barni has many friends of whom he has drawn only one, Norbi because he does not beg for food like Barni's other friends. Norbi is well dressed and always brings Pepsi or Coca-Cola to school.

Barni surprised me again when he said that he did not want to draw their own house because it is a tumbledown cottage, he drew instead the house he would like to live in. This house is an animation element of his favourite video game. Barni and his family take a bath once a week. The water is taken from the street-tap and heated on the stove.

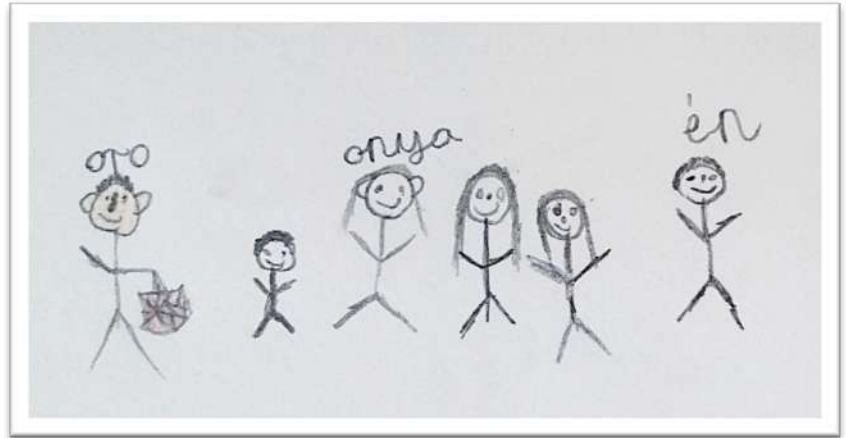


Figure 1: Family Portrait by Barni

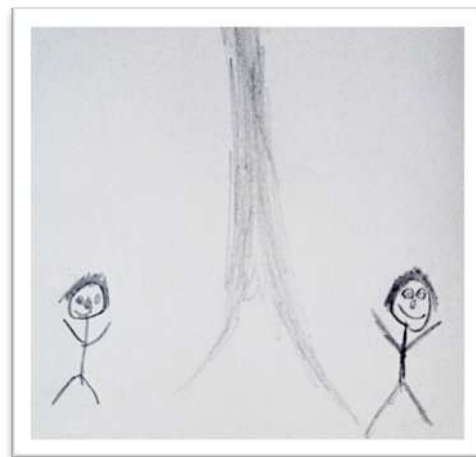


Figure 2: Barni and his best friend

When Barni was asked about the profession he would like to pursue, he thought for a long time before answering. Finally, he said that he wants to be a car mechanic because it pays well.

Barni sleeps with his parents, his dreams are restless. Though he wants a separate room for himself, it cannot be realised, but he says that his situation is still more comfortable than his sister's circumstances who sleeps in the kitchen.

He does not like to learn; he is distracted by writing badly and slowly. Despite the difficulties, he still looks up to his parents, whom he says are not like the others, because they are persevering and go to work, day by day.

(b) Janka

Janka was probably the quietest interviewee during my research. In spite of her silence, it was observed that she is a deeply sensitive child, whose vulnerability manifests primarily through her fragile health.

Janka is 12 years old; she is in the sixth class; her daily life makes difficult that she is epileptic. The underlying causes, family hardships, health and financial difficulties are only gradually revealed during the interview, while it becomes also evident that in spite of the hardships, she is fully satisfied with what she receives from her family and surrounds her mother with caring love.

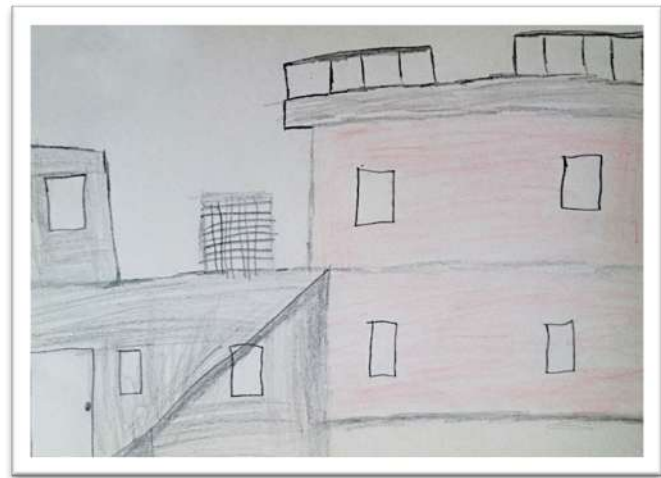


Figure 3: Imaginary family house by Barni



Figure 4: Family Portrait by Janka

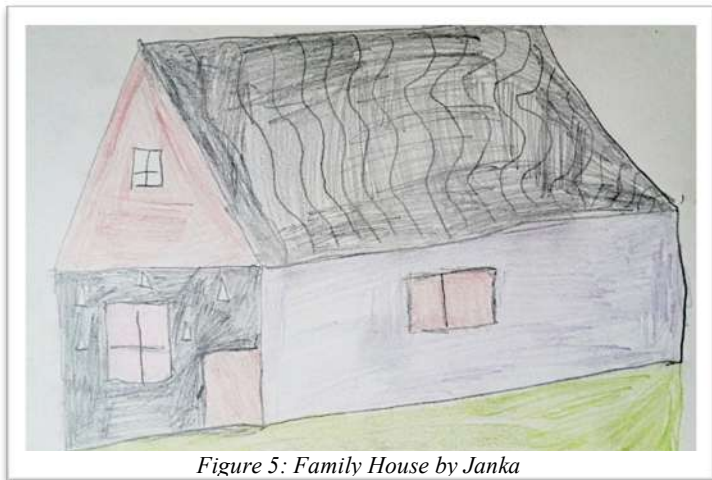


Figure 5: Family House by Janka

A drawing of her family reveals that she has two brothers and one sister. Janka has curly brown hair, which she inherited from her mother. When I asked Janka to draw her family, she drew the hair of her mother with careful preciseness, while all the other figures remained somehow rough-and-ready, having a more elaborate hairstyle than her mother. I considered this a sign of exceptional diligence towards her mother.

As I asked her about their house and her room, it turned out that she sleeps not only in one room with her parents, but also in a bed with them on her mother's side. She

also said that she is sleeping badly and uneasy, and she worries a lot about her mother because she has cancer and one of her breasts has been cut off. Her mother is not working because of her illness, her father earns money from occasional work, he was alcoholic before and often left his family alone, but always returned. Janka's two brothers grew up soon. The 15-year-old Roli and the 16-year-old Peti regularly go to Budapest to work as bricklayers because they consider that the pocket money what they get from their parents is not enough. The money what they get for their work is spent on sweets. Peti and Roli are still going to school, but they do not learn much and they are often absent. Janka also feels that it is a must to go to school, she does not really like it. Her classmates often mock her because of her epilepsy.

Janka often goes to a medical examination because of her illness, though there were times when she seemed to be recovered. However, since her mother became ill, epileptic seizures have become common again. Although her father and her two brothers also work, their financial situation is not easy, as they recently welcomed in their house the sister of Janka's mother with her two little sons who are often ill. The house where Janka lives gives accommodation for many people, but there is no room for learning. Although Janka was very enthusiastic about drawing their house, she made it solid and grey. Because, as she explained, the base colour of their house is grey.

Janka finds peace at her grandmother, playing or studying with her girlfriend there. It is not important for her to get pocket money, nor does she expect from learning to change her future. She has no big plans or dreams yet, she says she wants to be a hairdresser, because she loves combing her mother's and girlfriend's hair, but she still has to learn a lot of spinning.

(c) Martin

Although Martin is only 12 years old, I felt that an adult is hiding behind his thinking and appearance. Perhaps the early childhood traumas and ordeals contributed to his early maturity. He himself admits that he is considered to be a bad-tempered, problematic child, yet he talks to me patiently. Although he is surprised by some of my question, he knows exactly what, how and how much to say. Martin's two brothers passed away in the past years. While drawing his family on paper, he explained that he has a younger brother, but two of his brothers have already been buried, they died of dwarf syndrome due to genetic disorder. Martin also revealed that his father was a drug addict, then found God and converted and became a believer. Nowadays Martin's father is a proselytizer trying to direct others through the process of religious purification. Martin's parents are both public workers, they do not have high income, but they feel themselves in safe belonging to a Baptist community.



Figure 6: Family Portrait by Martin



Figure 7: Family House by Martin

guilty for what has happened because several other Roma children were also kicked out from that religious school. Martin admits that he is mischievous even nowadays in the class, because he is unable to pay attention, but he feels the treatment he has to bear at the Reformed school was exaggerated. At the same time, he did not abandon his pranks at the present school either, for example the English teacher overthrew him because he had impish behaviour on these classes. Martin feels that this was a revenge from the young, inexperienced teacher towards him because of his vain discipline.

Despite his pranks at school, Martin seems to be a purposeful child. He already knows that he wants to be a soldier or a firefighter, loves physical education and Hungarian literature. Though he does not like to learn in general, he loves to learn poems. He plans to attend a boxing course in the near future with the support of his parents.

Sometimes, the memory of his deceased little brothers disturbs his dreams, but he still gives the impression of a happy child opened to the world. Despite his young age he has also experienced disappointment in love, but he notes that time will cure the pain.

(d) Laura

Although Laura comes from a family facing many difficulties, she is kind of a model child. Her name is among the best students on the pride wall of Bocskai István Elementary School. The True Pearl Foundation provides her scholarship and helps to develop her creativity through her talent of drawing. She has a strong opinion of everything, and she could express it with rich vocabulary. Though she is a child who has opinions and plans, it turned out that in a new company she lacks self-

Martin's life points to a problem that is widespread in Hungary today and it would require urgent solutions. Martin, now in his sixth grade at the state funded Bocskai István Elementary School. He did not start his primary school in this institution, but at the local Zoltán Gárdonyi Reformed Elementary School, from where he was expelled. Martin admitted that the reason was his bad behaviour, however, as he told, the teachers blamed him for everything and made him responsible for every problematic cause happened in the class. Martin does not feel

himself too much



Figure 8: Best friend of Martin



Figure 9: Family Portrait by Laura

confidence. She plans to start the high school in the nearby county seat Debrecen, but still fears the new, the unknown.

Laura's parents have given birth to four children, two of whom have already grown up. Laura has one brother, one sister and one younger brother. While all four children were minors, the family was much deprived, the house was built step by step and there were times when everyone in the family was crowded in one room. Today Laura's brother lives in the county seat of Debrecen, and a

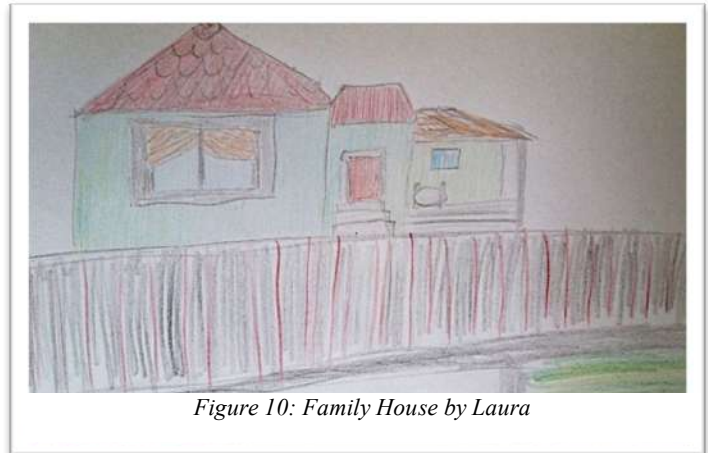


Figure 10: Family House by Laura



Figure 11: Friends of Laura

separate room has been built for her older sister next to the family house. The youngest child still sleeps with his parents, and Laura has a separate room where she could even study, but says she does not need, it is enough for her to pay careful attention to the lessons.

The initial existential difficulties in the family, according to Laura, may have been caused by the fact that both of her parents were orphans, they had no family background that would have helped them to start their lives with better opportunities as young adults. However, Laura's parents who are public workers try to give their children as much as possible. Laura is proud that her parents motivate her to dare to follow her desires and strive not to have a job that she does because it is a must. Laura generally does not feel herself excluded or discriminated, and she remembers as an exception when the family of her sister's former suitor, who were richer than they were, consequently despised her and

the whole family. Although the relationship began as a great affair, it did not end in marriage, and her sister since those times started a new relationship with a policeman.

Laura's vision about the future is positive, she seems to be confident when she says that she wants to study tourism and wants to travel a lot in the world.

(e) Anett

Anett is a tall, long-legged, smiley girl with long dark-blond hair, she is 13 years old and is in the fifth grade. She has to repeat this class at the local Kossuth Lajos Primary School. She is living in the Taban segregate, but she does not use the public

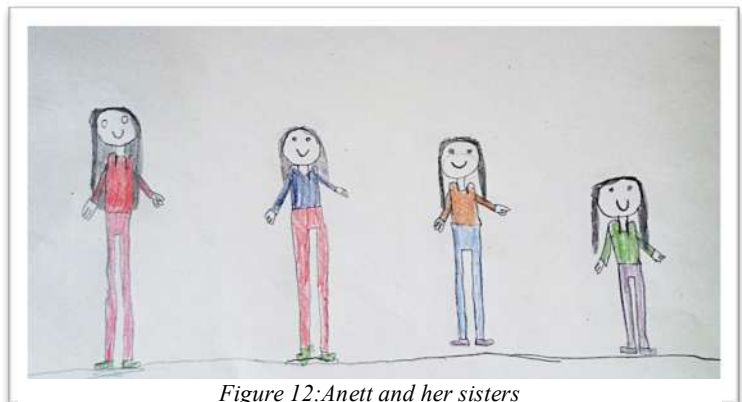


Figure 12: Anett and her sisters



Figure 13: Parents of Anett

bath as water, electricity and gas are introduced to their house. It bothers her that she learns so badly, but as she told, she is not interested enough in learning. In this particular class, she feels better and more familiar than in the previous one, because she is less mocked here, and the majority of her classmates are her relatives. Anett is Roma and most of her classmates are Romas, close and distant cousins, as she explained. In the classroom only two children are *non-romas*, and she reported that they mock her because she is a bad learner and comes from a poor family.

At home she does a lot of housework - she is cooking quite often and takes care of her younger siblings, trying to do the most to help her mother. The three siblings are living in one room together,

but they have their own separate beds. Anyhow Anett told that there is no space for her in the house to learn, there is always noise, there is always something to do. Her parents are working in a warehouse as roustabouts, they get up at dawn and come home late in the afternoon tired and exhausted.

Although Anett mostly talks about her two younger sisters, it turned out that she has a third sister too who was raised by her grandmother, as her mother was a child when her oldest child was born.



Figure 14: Best friend of Anett

Anett is interested in love. She appreciates her best friend, Panni because she can keep it as a secret. According to Anette, Panni would not tell anyone that the boy she is dating is a *peasant*. As it turned out, the Roma use the phrase peasant for Hungarians. Anett's boyfriend is a Hungarian, but this fact is hidden from everyone, including her relatives who might not be understanding about it according to her. Anett is involved in many social relations such as attending birthday parties which she knows about. Anett thinks she does not have unattainable aspirations for the future, she wants to be a confectioner and make delicious cakes for customers and friends.

(2) Section two: Capability approach and Child Rights

The following section presents child poverty through Nussbaum's and Sen's capability approach through the perception of children and experts and 'the rights of the child' through the CRC through the perception of children and experts. It further highlights the multidimensions of child poverty including the challenges, argues that child poverty is a violation of child rights, explicate partnerships that are formed to tackle poverty and some methods to monitor poverty.

(i) Capability Approach and child rights

Well-being encompasses a wide range of features of children's lives: health, education, social inclusion and participation, access to material goods and shelter and the like. Martha Nussbaum's list of capabilities may be rechecked to include all relevant dimensions for analysing the well-being and accordingly the ill-being of children.¹²⁴ In this sense an overview might be obtained about the consequences of poverty in their lives. Anyhow it must be taken into consideration that children's perception about their own well-being is relative, living in a segregate, separated from the

¹²⁴ Schweiger, G., & Graf, G. (2015). *A Philosophical Examination of Social Justice and Child Poverty*. London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan. pp. 48-49.

surrounding world they are not able to compare their situation to the living conditions of other children. The CRC mentions the rights and responsibilities of parents and carers to provide guidance and direction to their child as they grow up, so that they fully enjoy their rights, in a manner consistent with the *evolving capacities of the child* (Article 5, CRC). The capabilities and rights of child in a manner of speaking, go hand in hand. This section has the perception of children and experts on well-being and child rights. It also follows the capability approach by Nussbaum and Sen and the articles mentioned in the CRC.

(a) Life and physical health/ health related issues

Most of the children among the five missed school when they had cold. One child said that she missed school when she went for an examination because of her epilepsy or when she felt that a seizure was coming, and her eyes hurt she asked the teachers to let her go home. Another child told that she was in hospital for two weeks, but she does not know what the problem was, as the doctors only spoke to her parents. Among the five children, two were hospitalized in the last 12 months, one because of a blind gut surgery, and the other because she fainted at school.

When asked about health care services, two children said that they wore glasses and sometimes visited an optician, and two of them told that they did not go to dentist because of a filling, they go when a tooth is to be pulled out. Four out of five children mentioned about long-standing illnesses in the family. One of them told that her 44 years old father is hypertensive and suffers from migraine, which was inherited by her sister too. Another child told that the parents had terrible back ache. He also mentioned that his father had stomach ache and took a lot of baking soda against it. One of the children explained that his sister had glasses, but it was broken, his parents could not order a new one because it was very expensive. Another child said that her little cousins who lived with them in their home were always sick and that her mother has breast cancer.

While mentioning their daily routine, children said that they brushed their teeth, and took bath once a week, only one child mentioned that she took a bath every day. The family of one child has access to water from a common tap on the street because they do not have running water in their house yet. One of the children told that she avoided brushing her teeth, because one of her teeth was taken out recently. In three cases out of five there is no toilet inside the house, and they used the outdoor toilet. Regarding clothing they all told that they like fashion, but not all of them find it important to follow the fashion. One of the children told that he is getting his cloth from rummage sale, but he considers these fashionable. When asked about new clothes and new shoes, one of them answered that these things are bought from her scholarship, while another one mentioned that her mother spends the family allowance on them. They all said, that they wear one outfit one or two days. Children do not feel uncomfortable when they inherit cloth, because they get them from their elder sisters or brothers, some of them do not inherit cloths from others at all. All of them told that they have adequate warm clothes for winter.

(b) Love and care

Children were asked the meaning of love in relation to the capability approach. Their words to describe love was - commitment, encouragement. They said when we love each other, we pay attention to each other. Love also meant, loving their families, friends and siblings. Regarding expression of love, they mentioned hugs and kisses, listening to each other, or love the other one back. All children said that their parents took care of their food, clothing and schooling. The meaning of love with regards to their family had several aspects. One of them said that: *“My parents motivate me to keep on learning so that I can have a job what I want. They do not want me to have*

an exhausting work, they want me to love my job". Another child highlighted: *"My parents buy for me something, pay attention to what my needs are."* A child whose love is expressed through her awareness for her sick mother said, *"No one can give what our parents give us. We are satisfied with everything we get from them."* When children were asked whether their families were different than other children's families, they all answered that they are not different at all. They highlighted some positive features of their parents like they are persistent, they are struggling and do not give up.

(c) Education

Most of the children were contented with their school, only one of them said that he did not like his school because the older children teased him, and the teachers were strict. He also told that one of his teachers kicked a bench against one of his fellow classmates, but that teacher was not kicked-out from the school. Two of the children although they liked where they learned now, had bad experiences before. One of them explained that he started the fifth class at a particular school at Biharkeresztes but was expelled from there. The reason was his bad behaviour, but anyhow other Roma children were expelled as well. Now he is in the sixth grade at the state funded elementary school. Another child explained that she started primary school at a particular school, but she has to repeat the fifth class, because she is a bad learner. She however liked this class where she is now more than the previous one, because only two of classmates mock her, the others are all her *'relatives'*. She has a feeling of being in a fraternity or community now.

When asked about their notes and their learning achievement only one of the children told that she is a good learner and she is contented with her notes, three children stated that they were average, and one child told that she should learn better, she wants to learn better, and that was the reason why she attended the Tanoda program after school. Children believe that the school helps them to achieve their future goals, anyhow none of them think that school is an exciting place. As one of them told: *"the day goes by and it's better than being bored at home. Anyway, the school helps, and I want to be somebody"* while another said *"the school helps us to read and count. We do not listen to the teachers, we toss things at each other, some have, some do not have a pencil and eraser."*

When they were asked whether they would like to learn further or not, some of them were quite surprised because of this question. They had to think for a while before answering that they want to be a car mechanic, a hairdresser or a pastry chef. One of them told that she wants to go to a college and one of them was quite sure that he does not want to obtain a university degree and wants to be a fireman or a soldier.

(d) Best interests of the child

The CRC mentions that *'In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration'*. The organization NCSO said that though they work for children, they were not specifically an institution for child rights. *"Our organization is working to increase the quantity, quality of resources, capital and production factors available to the nation, and to reduce the loss of natural capital"*. The organizations maintain the best interests of children in providing them more development opportunities, while also giving them the chance to choose the one which suits the best their needs. As the expert explained: *"we differentiate strongly and provide highly personalized development opportunities. All of our activities are optional, so it is important to pay attention to children's needs, desires and expectations. That is why we can motivate them to participate in the programs we organize."*

Another expert explained that the best interest of the child is to help them grow within their families: *“we are only concerned with this; this is our primary concern. We help the children while also helping the family. We support families to make them able to raise their children.”* The expert added that sometimes the best interest of the child is to eliminate the danger of life, which may be the case of children living in misery. It was suggested that *‘development may be started after eliminating the danger of life’*.

(e) Social relationships

All the five children responded that they had a lot of friends, but just one or two good friends. One of them selected his best friend as being not so poor as the others, while another child mentioned that one of her best friends was taken to the orphanage: *“Bori is my girlfriend, I can tell her my secrets. I have other friends also, one of them was just taken to the orphanage. They came to school for her and took her away because her mother had beaten her, she could not clean herself, there was nothing to eat at home. The police came to the school and took the child. The next day they saw her mother with her other child on the street, and also took him out of his mother's hand and took it away. But the woman already has a man, a few days after her husband's death she already had another partner.”*

Describing their friendships, the children mentioned that it was important to talk a lot, to tell secrets what others do not know. One of the children explained that he played prisoner-game with his friends, the other one explained that her best friend knew that her boyfriend is now a *peasant* (a term for non-Roma Hungarians), but it's a secret because her classmates would laugh at it. Children said that in friendship it is important to spend a lot of time with each other, to trust each other and not to lie to each other. When asked them, on what makes other children ‘not friends’ they said that if the children judged someone by their appearance or if they are talking behind their back, or when they give up that friendship easily, then that would not make them friends.

Talking about pain in their relationship children quite often mentioned separation. The reason for separation were different, one of the children told that her friends moved away from the village because they started a new school. Another child told that the cause of separation was that her friend was taken to the orphanage. With regards to feeling of ‘pain’ (emotional), one of the children mentioned that it pained him when he broke up with her girlfriend and another one mentioned being mocked as pain. When talking about neighbours three of the children told that their neighbours are disturbing. *“The old woman is always yelling at me, trying to educate me, if someone else is doing something wrong, it is me who is responsible anyhow”* – one of the children told. The other one explained that from the woman living left to them the children were taken to the orphanage after her husband died, but they were both alcoholic. Another child said that one of their neighbours constantly quarrelled from morning till night and they could not sleep because of them. Two children said that their neighbours are calm and nice. All of them considered their neighbourhood safe, though some of them told that it is a bit noisy. When talking about things that should be changed in their ‘surrounding’, children were satisfied with how things were, only one of them told that there are no places of entertainment and that there were no jobs in the settlement.

(f) Parental guidance

The CRC states parents or guardians of a child should provide direction and guidance for the child to exercise the rights mentioned in the CRC (Article 5). The experts stated that empowerment of parents was crucial, both of the institutions work to make the parents capable to provide their children with a better life.

(g) Mental well-being

Mental health is an important part of overall well-being. Sleeping well is an indicator of peace in general terms. When children were asked if they slept peacefully, most of them told that they do not sleep calmly and share a room with other family members. Only one of the children said that she had her own room, two children told that they shared a room with their siblings, one child slept in one room with his parents and one child slept in one bed with her parents. Only two children told that their sleep is calm, one child mentioned that he dreams sometimes that someone is dying, and two children mentioned that they had nightmares regularly.

When asked what makes them distracted or scared, the children mentioned quite different things. One of them told that she found it distracting that her parents are public workers and they did not like their jobs. She felt scared that she would leave her family next year when she goes to college in another town. Another child mentioned that it makes him distracted when he thinks about his two brothers who died of dwarf syndrome, but he said that it also distracted him, when he is reprimanded in the school. Watching horror films in the evening together with his parents is also distracting to one of the children. For one of the children, her mother's long-standing illness of breast cancer is her main distraction. One child mentioned that she is distracted by the fact that she is a bad learner and had to repeat the fifth class.

Children said that they do not cry often, and they usually calmed down when they were playing. Three out of the five children told that they preferred to be children rather than adults, because they do not have to be that much responsible yet, and they do not have to fight that much in everyday life. One child definitely argued that it would be better to be an adult, because *"the adults are capable to do more things, they can have a car. They are not dependent on others."* Another child argued that childhood and adulthood both have their own values: *"I think an adult can afford herself more than a child, but it is not better to be an adult than a child. A child should be a child, for example, one of my classmates is now only 13 years old and is expecting her first child, which I think will ruin her whole life."*

(h) Right of non-discrimination, right to equal treatment

The CRC states the right of non-discrimination to be applied to every child whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background. The experts accept that discrimination exists now in Hungary, it is one of the reasons why the organizations were deeply involved in the fight against educational segregation. One of the experts emphasized that some primary schools were completely segregated, with only Roma attending these institutions because there were no non-Roma children in the area. *"Today, if we call someone Roma, we immediately associate it with being poor. Poverty is strongly associated with Roma identity. The poverty rate is highest in the country where the Roma population is also high."* The expert also added that there are some poor counties, for example Szatmár or Borsod where it does not matter if someone is a Roma or not, the culture of poverty permeates the lives of non-Romas as well. The expert also gave examples of how they tried to help and catch-up children living in poverty in a non-discriminative way: *"we try to show them the world so that they have an experience that motivates them, we want them to have the same desires we had in our childhood. We want to make them aware of the importance of completing high school, of having a better life when becoming a graduate, and of speaking languages."*

(i) Violence, abuse and neglect or even separation from family

All the children in this study expressed that they did not feel neglected. One of the children told that he felt that it was an abuse against him, when he was expelled from the religious school one

year ago but justifies the teacher's reaction that he could be naughty sometimes. Another child expressed that though they did not really learn that much at school, sometimes teachers were rough and harsh. CRC addresses violence against children, both physical and mental violence. It emphasises that State Parties must have proper laws in place to prohibit violence, but it also requires States to implement administrative, social and educational measures to protect children and states that children and young people have the right to special protection and help if they cannot live with their family. In many cases, this would involve going into care (Article 19-20, CRC). The expert mentioned that in poverty such capabilities are inherited that prevent parents from raising their children safely. Neglect, domestic violence is part of a set of problems that have become the product of poverty. *"Families living in generational poverty have built mechanisms that are very difficult to interpret by twenty-first century standards, talking either about communication or conflict management they have extremely low social skills and solutions."*

The experts also highlighted that the most important intervention in this area is to protect the women. For one of the organizations, the protection of women is a long-term strategy and when they encounter domestic violence, they take immediate action, either with the police or with the Child Welfare Agency. The expert explained that a team made up of early childhood experts watch for domestic violence with the leadership of a psychologist, and whenever a problem occurs, they act immediately. The expert from this organization mentioned that they follow-up with children even after they are taken out of the family. This expert reported that the number of children separated from their parents has dramatically increased, but the education of foster parents is poor and disproportionate, and they are unable to cure the grievances that children have suffered during their removal.

(j) Bodily integrity and safety

When asked about whom do they trust in whole world the most, two children have mentioned their family. One of them also mentioned that without parents would be much harder, as she explained that one of her classmates' mother was in jail, and that child did not see her dad for a very long time, so this classmate was taken at the end to the orphanage. Two children mentioned God, whom they trusted the most in the whole world, though they also mentioned that they have some secrets which remain secrets even in front of God. One of them mentioned that her mother was the most trustworthy person in the whole world for her, this child also added that her epilepsy turned to be stronger when her mother got sick. When asked about what hurt them, three of them said that they were mocked by their classmates, one of them told that both his parents and classmates have hurt him, and one single child told that he has never been hurt.

(k) Sexual exploitation

CRC states that governments must protect children from all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation (Article 34). The experts said that girls were particularly vulnerable, civil organizations were working against all forms of exploitation, though they highlighted that it was primarily a police task. *"Young girls are very often sexually abused and often fail to notice what has happened to them, they only perceive the positive returns of it, it is dealt with them, they are earning money, and there is no return"* – one of the experts added.

(l) Recovery from trauma and reintegration

CRC states that children who have experienced neglect, abuse, exploitation, torture or who are victims of war must receive special support to help them recover their health, dignity, self-respect and social life (Article 39). One of the experts highlighted that, *"Children do not realize that they are traumatized, they do not know that it is trauma to go home in an unheated house, to have no*

table to study because there is no possibility for them to make a comparison. How would they know that it's bad for them to live in that holey house if their parents and grandparents were living in such a house as well?" This expert further elaborated that children need to be given experiences to see the difference between their lives and the world around, it is important to make children be exposed to stimuli that might be motivating later.

(m) Inhumane treatment and detention

CRC states that children must not be tortured, sentenced to the death penalty or suffer other cruel or degrading treatment or punishment, children should be arrested, detained or imprisoned only as a last resort and for the shortest time possible, and that they must be treated with respect and care and be able to keep in contact with their family. Children must not be put in prison with adults (Article 37). According to one of the experts, child poverty has nothing to do with child crime. According to this expert, the rate could be even reversed among poor children and well-off children. "So, I can imagine well-positioned children in Budapest being just as involved in childhood crime, or even more than poor children" – he said. The expert mentioned that misdemeanours resulted from shoplifting occur, children under the age of 14 experience drug-related misdemeanours, and among children under the age of 14 there are some who are taken to a detention centre. "Some you can keep in touch with, some you do not, obviously it also depends on the child's intention how much the child wants to keep in touch with the mentor" – the expert added.

(n) Juvenile justice

CRC states that the child accused or guilty of breaking the law must be treated with dignity and respect (Article 40). They have the right to legal assistance and a fair trial that takes account of their age. One of the experts explained that they conducted mediation activity in many cases when the child was found to be in conflict with the law. Both the child and the parent felt safer that there was someone near them to help, to interpret that particular situation they were in. "It is very rare that a positive story emerges from all this, and that the child comes back to us and becomes part of the community again". In this sense the expert argues that if a child is breaking the law, the possibility of reintegration is quite limited.

(o) Child labour, economic exploitation

CRC emphasizes that children must be protected from economic exploitation and work that is dangerous or might harm their health, development or education (Article 32). The experts agreed that young people often leave school for black jobs, children may do seasonal work, collecting potatoes, cabbages, and pepper. but child labour is not typical in Hungary. The general lowering of the school age to 16 years has a strong impact on young people's life, as by the age of seventeen many of them were becoming public workers. In this regard, one of the experts said that children were doing a lot of housework: "the boy is cutting wood or gathering branches in the forest, taking the role of the father, while the girl is taking care of the little sisters and brothers, she does the cooking and washing." In terms of their economic and non-economic exploitation, children said that they do not 'work', they helped in the housework. Three out of the five children told that they got pocket money from their parents, one child told that he did not get any pocket money and therefore stole it from his mother's wallet, and the fifth child explained that she has a scholarship, but she never bought things alone, she always bought things with her parents.

(p) Drug abuse

CRC states that governments must protect children from the illegal use of drugs and from being involved in the production or distribution of drugs (Article 33, CRC). Only one of the children said that he tried cigarettes before, because he was curious, and that he was not addicted to it. One of

the experts said that, *“Use of drugs is our biggest problem in these days. Poor adults are really affected, and so are children. They can buy a cigarette for 100 forints. For that amount, a child can buy that cigarette from his pocket money. The feeling of salvation, euphoria is a great temptation. There's nothing the police or anybody else can do against it. These cigarettes are called herbal, which contain minced rat poison soaked in a diluent. These cigarettes are not involved in the drug test, so the police cannot punish for it and it is spreading. (...) Children from the age of eight to ten consume these drugs. When they come into the community space, the teachers can see that they are in a changed state of consciousness but cannot do anything about it. Lyukóvölgy, Nógrádszakál is a highly infected area.”* Drugs are cheaper than alcohol and therefore in poor socio-economic areas, there is a higher risk of drug abuse than alcohol. According to the experts if such drugs would once appear in a settlement, it would spread without limits. One of the experts added: *“there are villages where their appearance has been avoided, in some villages drugs are built in, and everyone looks helplessly how the use of drugs ruins families and children.”*

(q) Shelter and environment

When talking about housing conditions children described it quite differently. One of them rated it fair, and she argued that they lived just in a peasant house and added: *“I'm not saying that we reach the ceiling if we stand up, but the house is small. There is a room to the street front, there is a kitchen and a living, and I have my own room also.”* Another child described the housing conditions excellent and said: *“we have two plasma TVs in the house, everyone has a phone.”* Two of the children rated it satisfactory and one of them rated it good. In the houses where the children lived, three of the houses are equipped with water, gas and electricity while in one there is electricity and water and one is equipped just with electricity. In the houses where there was no gas the family heated the house with branches of trees, while in the house where there is no water, the family had an outdoor toilet and they collected water from the communal tap located on the street.

When children were asked to draw their houses, four of them have drew their own house. When they described the drawing, one of them told that it was not that colourful as in the drawing, another one told that the chamber was missing, and the rooms were smaller. Another child would like to have his own room, which would be built in the near future by his father, while one child said that things were fine now but a few years ago, the whole family lived in one room, the other two rooms were built later. One of the children drew an imaginary house instead of his own and explained that *“this is not our house. It is not so miserly like ours. It is an arbitrary house This house is nice large, with many rooms. In my favourite phone game, I always see this house.”*

(r) Leisure activities, play and culture

Children when asked about their leisure activities told that they played hide and seek, played with dolls or they even played prisoner game. One of them said in terms of aspects that hinder them from playing was the housework. Another child told that she should learn more instead of playing. Most of the children said that they played too much with their mobile phones, they surfed a lot on Facebook and Instagram and that they spent long afternoons with these, and because of this they do not have enough time for playing.

CRC states that every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities (Article 31). *“We are equipped with high quality toys that are often stolen and then brought back by the children. It also happens that the child starts playing, but soon the mother takes the same toy and starts playing as well, because she is only 15 years old. There are no toys, colours, tastes in their homes, and we try to bring all these in their lives.”* – said the expert regarding the programs and opportunities for children provided in their community spaces, in the

'Safe-start Children's House' or during the 'Tanoda' Programs. One of the organizations also provides many opportunities for children to experience what it is like to live with the majority society, they take them on excursions, they organize them camping. The experts agreed that children were losing their childhood too early because of different reasons. *"By the age of 10, they need to know everything what a Roma adult can know. They are almost adult at the age of 10, they know where to collect tree branches, what is the price of a piece of metal, they can make heat in the stove"* – one of the experts added. The importance of birth control was also mentioned, as it may drastically end childhood if a girl becomes pregnant at an early age. The expert said that as a Catholic organization it is quite difficult for them to act against childhood pregnancy, but they try to provide adequate information and help during the discussions.

(s) Respect

Children described the term 'respect' with different words. For them, respect meant being polite, listening and interpreting what others were telling, understanding the other person's circumstances. When they were asked how people behaved when they were not respectful, they enumerated different cases. They mentioned prejudice, impolite manner, and disrespectful behaviour. One child mentioned that mocking is not respectful, and she was sometimes called *'dick sucker'* or *'nasty worm'* by her sisters and classmates. All of the five children agreed that children who learn more were more respectful.

When the children were asked if *'owning'* mobile phones earned respect among classmates, one of them told that if she did not have a mobile phone she would surely be mocked by the others. The other child told that he does not have mobile phone because he was just 11 years old, but the other children brought stolen phones to the school and were playing with them. Two of the children told that their phones broke, one of them said that *"it's not important to own a mobile phone because you can see a lot of nasty things on it. I only have a tablet; I broke my phone. But I cannot find it, I fell asleep with it, after waking up, I searched it a lot, but I could not find."*

Children generally told that their opinion, their views were respected, only one of them said that they had a conversation every day about that certain day, as they were a religious family after discussions they pray. The same child told a certain case when his parents listened to his opinion. It so happened that he was fired from a school because he was naughty, but his parents believed him that the accusations towards him were overemphasized, as many other Roma children were fired from that school as well. Children usually told that they were not punished because of their opinion, they were rather punished when they were naughty, one child mentioned that when she received a bad grade, she is prohibited from watching television.

(t) Freedom of expression and association

Children told that they did not express all their thoughts and feelings, two of them told that they kept things within themselves, three of them told that they shared their secrets with their friends. When asked if they attended birthday parties, only one child said that he did not go to birthday parties, because even his birthday was not celebrated as the salary of his parents was hardly enough until the end of the month. Asking them whether they were part of any group, one child told that he regularly went to the Baptist church with his parents and attended a boxing course and this activity was supported by his parents. One child also told that he sometimes went to church with her grandmother. Two of the children attend the art school conducted by an organization and one of them received scholarship from the organization. One of the children attended a program that helps her to become a better learner.

(u) Religion and identity

When children were asked if they trusted in God or followed a religion, two children mentioned that they had shared a close relationship with God. The other three children did not consider religion that much important in their lives, though they all mentioned that they celebrated all the important Christian feasts like Christmas and Easter. Only one of the children mentioned that the traditional feasts are not like they used to be. All the children told that they had a Christmas tree during Christmas time in their houses, though all of them mentioned that it was an artificial one, which was taken out from the cupboard every year. Two of the children told that they regularly received presents on Christmas eve, the other three children mentioned that their mothers cooked meals and baked cakes, they clinked their glasses or maybe visited some relatives, like grandparents. One of the children told that he never got any present, because the earning of their parents was hardly enough until the end of the month. When talking about giving presents only two of the children told that they prepared or bought something for their parents when they had their birthdays or when Christmas came.

Regarding their identity none of the children expressed that they were not satisfied, or they were not contented with their own personality. Most of the children told that they had a nickname at home, what all of them find nice, only one of the children mentioned that she was mocked with ugly words by her sisters and some classmates. Two of them mentioned that they felt different compared to the others. One told that she felt different because she had more determined goals and she was more mature than other children, the other one felt different because of her epilepsy. Talking about their future goals, about their 'would-be' identity they believed that their goals or dreams could be achieved. Two of the children expressed that they did not have explicit goals yet regarding their future.

(v) Children with a disability

None of the children had any known disability, but one of them suffered because of her epilepsy and also said that she was mocked by the classmates because of it. This child told that she felt 'disabled' especially during her seizures. CRC states that a child with disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and, as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in the community (Article 23). Asking the experts about children with disabilities they agreed that disability is a common problem in families living in poverty. One of the experts drew attention on the shortage of professionals in this field, while the expert said that there is a special teacher in their school who deals with such children, including those who cannot be integrated. They provide for these children special development from kindergarten age.

(w) Children from minority or indigenous groups

All the children part of this study belonged to Roma communities, all of them live in segregated areas or in areas in danger of segregation. All of them spoke Hungarian, did not use any Roma dialect in their everyday life. Three of the children told that they did not feel different belonging to a minority group, but two of them expressed that they felt they had certain disadvantages because they belonged to a minority group. One of them was expelled from a religious school, the other was repeating the fifth class, because she was a bad learner and in the previous class her classmates, mostly non-Roma Hungarians mocked her. Three of the children felt safe even if they were outside of the Roma community, one child told that he felt safe, but self-protection was important, so he learnt boxing, while one child expressed that she felt unsafe outside the Roma community because she was often mocked. She has now a Hungarian boyfriend, but she kept it as secret, because non-Roma Hungarians are also mocked by the Roma, where they are called 'peasants'.

The CRC states that the government should not interfere with a child or young person's right to name, nationality and family relationships (Article 8). It also states that the government should be able to help if any of these things are taken from them illegally. Article 30 is implied by many other Articles of the CRC including Article 8, but it exists to make clear that the rights of minority children and young people should not be overlooked. Article 30 says that children and young people who belong to a minority group have the right to share their culture, language and religion with other people in that group.

One of the organizations works to sustain a generation that can safely assume its identity, but the expert added that *"the acceptance of Roma and non-Roma identity, or of belonging to different language families within the Roma minority, is a very controversial issue, especially in the exclusionary environment in which children grow up today. In this sense, it is a very great responsibility to encourage a child to admit his/her Roma identity if, at the same time, it might be more useful if he or she would not talk about it."* The expert also said that today there were no communities where Roma dialects were used. Roma spoke mainly in Hungarian, with only the *Olah-gypsies* speaking their own mother tongue, and there is no need from them to maintain their Roma identity. According to the expert traditionalist and religious groups are supported by them, but they try to tailor the method of support to the needs of Roma themselves, without imposing a certain identity on them.

The expert also added that because of the *culture of misery* the Roma do not speak their own language and cannot retain their traditions. More important is in their case to eliminate the danger of life, to bring them out of misery, to give them food, cloths, to help them learn. *"There is no big girl raping anymore. We learn from them their old traditions and try to bring this back into their lives. (...) One of the national dishes of the Gypsies is the bodag (Gipsy bread), so during the holidays we often cook bodag with them, and we eat with them bodag, but it is not the goal to eat just this only thing, they can also eat pineapple. Moreover, it is important to make them aware that this fruit also exists in the world."* The expert also added that Roma experience in a more intense way their religiousness, decorating their houses with small sacred images.

(x) Time autonomy

When asking about autonomy regarding their use of time, four children considered that though they were obliged to go to school and sometimes to help with housework, they had enough time to play. One of the children told that she could not learn after school and she could not play because she helped her mother with the housework and took care of her two sisters. One of the children told that she liked to play with her telephone in the free time, another one liked to play sports, another one liked to play with his dog, the other one liked to draw and liked spinning, and another child liked to play with her dolls. Children usually consider school and housework as obligations, and if they would have had more free time, they would have slept more, played more or even learned more.

(y) Hearing children's voice – participation and advocacy

The CRC states that every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously (Article 12). The expert stated that the notion of participatory democracy needed to be built and it was not known, not just among children living in poverty but even among parents. The expert highlighted that they have a 'Tanoda' municipality, they are constantly paying attention to the rights of the child, but also added that the society, and mostly people living in poverty were not 'ready' for participatory democracy. Anyhow in the case of segregated schools, which were avoided by non-Roma

Hungarian children it is also not the case to talk about participation or advocacy. *“Parents should be also much more opened to this issue, but they still think the municipality will tell them how to resolve things. Parents also expect a solution from the educated majority, and in this sense their children are not encouraged to form their own opinion”* – the expert added.

The expert emphasized the importance of the help from outside, because *“people living in poverty cannot pull themselves out from misery by their own hair.”* Though the expert emphasized that it is important to observe and diagnose everything related to children, he stated that their opinion cannot improve their own and their family’s situation significantly. *“They need help from outside, but we do not want to tell them from outside, what would be the right way of living, and there are just a few kids who can admit that they live a little bit differently than others. Prosperity does not mean the same for them, what for us means. Boots, hats, scarves in the winter may not be as important to them, they may not freeze at home in a T-shirt, and they may not even consider it a problem having just half of their kidneys at the age of forty.”* The expert added that organizations needed to integrate themselves strongly into misery by knowing their circumstances, their way of living, their everyday problems and even some hidden truths behind their lives before they can integrate poor people out of it. This was the key of one of the programs lead by an organization. The program is based on a *diagnosis-based development approach*: the social worker primarily observes, makes a diagnosis, and accordingly assists in clothing, water scarcity, heating or other areas.

(z) Right to privacy

Talking about private space only one child told that she had her own privacy in her own room. All the others shared the room with their siblings or parents. Three of the children told that they did not have a phone, two of them told that they broke their telephones earlier, one of them told that he is still too young to have a phone. The other two children are real fans of their phones, they enjoy taking photos and talking with friends on messenger. All the children have Facebook account. One child considered it useful, the other one considered it boring, the third one though has an account did not really use it. One of the children said that she considered Facebook dangerous, because *“for example, a Chinese girl posted a scary profile picture and wrote to everyone. There are people who want to conquer everyone on Facebook. For example, a very old man wrote to me that he wants to meet me, asked me where I live, but dad blocked him.”* Another child said that Facebook depended on someone’s personality, if Facebook might be considered dangerous or not, for some might be dangerous. He told that he found Facebook a little bit illusionary because as he told: *“many times girls ask me how old am I, but I do not write back to all of them. I do not like to get friends on Facebook, because girls can talk to me badly, and face to face it would not be like that. And seeing her face to face is different because I can see how beautiful she is, because otherwise she can edit a picture that is much nicer than reality.”*

(aa) Access to information from the media

Children generally told that they watched series on television, one child told that he watched scary movies in the evenings with his parents and usually had scary dreams. One of the children expressed that he liked life better - alive things, better than television.

(bb) Knowledge of rights

The CRC states that governments must actively work to make sure children and adults know about the Convention (Article 42). Experts unanimously said that it was too early to talk about children's rights in Hungary today, neither the society nor the institutions has grown up to validate them. In places where poverty is often life-threatening, introducing children's rights is considered to be an

extra occupation that no-one has yet undertaken. As one of the experts said: *“to get to the rights of the child, there are so many obstacles to overcome. We are not there yet to affirm that they understand what human rights are, not because it is not important for me, but because they cannot interpret certain concepts or situations properly because they do not have the knowledge, skills and socialization.”*

(cc) Mobility

When children were asked if they travelled, only one child said that she was once abroad, and had spent a few days in Rome with her classmates. The other four children went to nearby places, they visited the capital of the county or bigger settlements in the neighbourhood. One of the children told that she travelled to the capital of the county once or twice in two weeks, three children told that they travelled just a few times during the year to nearby places, one child told that she does not travel at all. The purposes of these journeys were generally visiting other members of the family, buying cloths or going to doctor. Only one child told that they had an old car, the other four usually travel by train or by bus. When asking them about their summer holiday one of the children told that sometimes she went to the camp, one child went to the beach with his parents, and three children told that they spent their holidays at home, sometimes visiting friends or grandparents.

Thus, the above section accounted for factors such as life and physical health, love and care, mental well-being, education, respect, religion and identity, time autonomy, the best interests of the child, parental guidance, freedom of expression, right to privacy, protection from violence etc. related to capability approach and child rights. This also leads us to look at some of the multidimensional challenges of poverty.

(ii) Multidimensions of child poverty

Child poverty has multidimensional aspects related to health, education, nutrition, water, sanitation, living conditions, information or protection. This section highlights some challenges and strengths related to multidimensional poverty, builds an argument that child poverty is a violation of child rights, various partnerships that are formed to tackle poverty and some methods to monitor poverty.

(a) Challenges in multidimensional child poverty

The expert drew attention on the selectivity of the education in Hungary. As he mentioned among OECD countries only Chile is behind Hungary, *“so we are among the worst in terms of how parents' financial status determines a child's chances of advancing in the education system.”* The expert considers this as a much more serious problem, than the percentage of poor people in Hungarian society. The expert mentioned that the overall quality of Hungarian education is rapidly deteriorating due to the fact that teachers are not payed enough. *“The weaker part of Hungarian society is wanting to become a teacher, so less talented, less well-educated educators are teaching children. There are not enough educators, so a selection begins.”*

The expert explained the selectivity of education with the fact that well-off children have the opportunity to go to a better school, while in contrast, Roma children have to be contented with the educational opportunities available in the settlement. *“For example, schools with a Roma majority, are not formed because there is a school in which the Roma cannot go, but instead the Hungarian parents take their children from the settlement to the capital of the county because their financial situation is so good that they can manage this. The same problem is present in Budapest, although there is not such a large Roma population, but this sort of selection happens that more elite children go to Radnóti High School than to the 17th district noname school.”*

The expert regarding selectivity of education drew attention on the case of Gyöngyöspata, a small town in Heves county, where Roma children were segregated at Néksei Demeter Elementary School between 2004 and 2017. The Debrecen Court of Appeal ruled in the second instance that a total of HUF 99 million should be paid to the families of segregated Roma children. The case has become a national matter in 2019, after the Prime Minister called the sentence unfair. Since then, the government has been trying to give the compensation in form of education rather than in cash, but it does not seem to be accepted by those involved. The expert said: *“if you look at the case of Gyöngyöspata, you see that there is a legal system in which civilians have enforced the law, I mean compensation for segregated education. However, the government's response overrides the court's decision. There are many interests in the background, which makes it impossible for the government to make it clear that certain fundamental rights are not applied to children.”*

The expert highlighted that the basic services are provided on low level for deprived children in the country. But their foundation is based on the gaps of the state system, so if education is segregated, they provide additional education, if the healthcare is lacking professionals, they provide health services. They try to help with job creation as well. But the expert also mentioned that to make poor people aware of the healthy lifestyle is not enough, it also requires problem management.

The expert said that there are attempts to tackle some of the multidimensional aspects of child poverty, these developments were also prepared by several EU projects. There are health-conscious programs that target the disadvantaged regions, and there are programs which gave the opportunity for children to eat healthier, to have a healthier living, or to exercise sports. According to the expert they have gathered tremendous experiences through these projects, *“for example, we brought the kids fruits, ordinary fruits like apples or grapes, but we also brought them blueberries and pineapples that they did not know, they did not recognize. Pineapples were thought to be a hairy ball, and blueberries were believed to be a sour grape.”*

The expert also mentioned that for people living in deprivation it is not important to go to a dentist, but the development program for the 300 poorest settlements have already targeted these problems, and initiated changes. For example, a bus equipped with modern technology has been officially launched to help provide ophthalmic care to children in the 300 poorest communities. Another issue mentioned by the expert regarding multidimensional aspects of child poverty is the acute situation in Bodrogköz situated in the north-eastern part of the country where people get water from 100-year-old eternit pipes, while on the other parts of the country water is supplied from plastic pipes. The expert also mentioned that it is not a coincidence that Bodrogköz has a much higher incidence of cancer.

(b) Child poverty as violation of child rights

The expert highlighted that the aspect of sustainability in Hungary is not a legal aspect, it considers rather social aspects and welfare efficiency. The expert mentioned that there is an Ombudsman for Future Generations in Hungary who seeks to uphold the provisions of the Fundamental Law, which includes the principle of sustainable development and the protection of the interests of future generations, all these provisions being connected to human rights. The expert however argued that he does not think that the issue of improving human life – and in this sense the eradication of child poverty – can be categorized as human rights. *“I think that it is not very fertile to put everything under the umbrella of human rights, because then we will face the problem that too many fundamental rights conflict with one another, and the problem is to what extent we will sacrifice one for the other. The more fundamental rights we have, the more this problem will arise”.*

According to his opinion giving more rights always imposes an obligation on others and the question is, what comes from the fact that poverty is a human rights violation. *“The question in this regard will be whether we would be willing to pay more taxes to reduce the number of poor people in the country. Poverty can be reduced to zero only at high costs, and we can easily find ourselves in a situation where no one is willing to pay so much tax that we can fund public programs that can eliminate these human rights abuses.”* The expert also added that it is easy to argue that not just poverty is a human rights violation, but also a disease, but this kind of extension of human rights does not take into account the fact that extending the remediation of violations requires additional resources.

The expert argued that people are incapable of perceiving absolute levels, they perceive relative things about well-being. Even though we all agree that we live much better than anyone 200 years ago, virtually everyone is interested in how their neighbours are living. In this comparison, if one succeeds in achieving a good standard of living while facing the stomach-inducing situation of poverty, it would be depressing to imagine how he would live in that situation. That shift, the difference would be alarming. *“As more and more people live in prosperity, more and more people will be disturbed by poverty”*.

The expert expressed that poverty is a maximum violation of the rights of a child, but it must be recognized that the low level of knowledge and capability in marginalized social groups, does not allow anyone to speak not just about child rights but also about human rights. The expert added that the government does not differentiate between poverty and child poverty and makes child poverty entirely the responsibility of parents. Child rights are not specifically addressed by the government, but there are non-governmental organizations that specifically address this issue, the expert mentioned in this regard the Hıntalovon Foundation, a non-governmental organization dealing with child rights issues. Another expert mentioned the legal decision made regarding the segregated education in Gyöngyöspata as a positive example and added that the Hungarian legal system is working properly today, if somebody is discriminated, or is a victim of domestic violence, then the authorities are acting properly. The expert highlighted another important aspect of child rights, arguing that it is questionable whether children living in poverty know if they are being abused, do they know that they have certain rights, and here the question arises: *is it lawful that a child has to go picking up some branches on the frozen marsh?* Considering the children interviewed during the research, they are aware of the abuses committed against them, but their strong love and respect towards their parents make them ready even for sacrifices in order to help the everyday life of their family.

(c) Partnerships against poverty

The above section attempts to substantiate the argument that ‘Child poverty is a violation of child rights’. In the present section, there is a discussion on partnerships that were formed to tackle poverty. These include both State and civil society’s efforts to alleviate poverty – through implementation of the SDGs and National Policies. According to the experts, Hungary had an institutional set up or rather partnership to deal with poverty. In this regard, one of the experts said *“we do not deal with the goals of international cooperation. It is a very interesting national feature in Hungary that in 2015 when the SDGs were adopted Hungary has already developed an institutional system which I do not think would have been very correct to change after 2015, but we said that the implementation of SDGs in Hungary will work through two channels, two thirds through the NFSSD and one third within the International Development Cooperation Framework. The NCSD manages the NFSSD.”* Further it was stated that *“the SDGs have been defined in a rather undemanding way. If you look at them, you will find that they do not meet the scientific*

definitions, although they sound very good. Those who hear them for the first time usually agree with them. At the same time, the imprecise definitions have led to the emergence of many forms of interpretations of sustainable development.” SDGs in this sense is subordinated to the NFSSD, which on the one hand was adopted earlier than the SDGs and on the other hand tailored SDGs in a way to be compatible with the earlier formulated national sustainable goals.

The expert who works in an organization that strives to strengthen its embeddedness within the institutional system on the local level, said that finding partners in their case is quite difficult as they are considered to belong to the liberal opposition being *Soros* tenants (a term used for foreign funded NGOs) who are artificially generating conflicts. The expert added that, *“I am not saying that we have not been invited to certain policy talks. I was a member of the Anti-Segregation Roundtable before, but I quit because I thought that this institution did not want to solve the problem in a democratic way, because they were confirming that only their opinion was good and appropriate about segregation. I do not reject any professional cooperation, I like to attend conferences, meetings, workshops whenever they invite me, but they know that I do not hide my opinion, so they do not invite me to events where the critical tone is not tolerated”*.

While the experts are transparent about their opinion and expertise regarding matters of anti-segregation, they also deliberated on tasks and purposes involved in poverty eradication that are required for any partnership. According to one of the experts the pace of socio-economic development can be accelerated and sustained at a high level if it is found elsewhere, not in the increased use of resources, but in the enhancement and improvement of knowledge, innovation, efficiency, productivity. The expert referred to the NCS D Progress Report 2017-2018¹²⁵ which reflect Hungary's sustainability status, and one of them is the level of material deprivation. It was also emphasized that they have accumulated knowledge based on experience that is quite unique. They looked at the problem itself from several levels such as families living in segregated homes, and from the institutional level working in cooperation with the institutional system. The expert stated that the institution's functioning is determined by the policy level and added *“I think we have to do something against poverty occurring in Hungary, especially in north-eastern Hungary, otherwise this country will collapse soon, but at the same time, we have to take action against the increasing poverty in Europe as well.”*

Finance is another criterion in any partnership. Experts while referring to the financial assistance provided to people who live in poverty, said that the organizations help families in times of crisis when they cannot cover their basic needs until the end of the month, or anything that involves unexpected expenses, illness, death or some other unexpected expenses that it takes the family out of stability and makes them to ask for a loan. The expert added, *“The level of financial awareness is so low that they cannot be independent from the influence of the consumer society. As a result, taking loans is enormous, putting these people in a debt spiral. By responding to their needs consistently, they will not be motivated to emerge from their situation, but rather seeking the help of others. We are trying to help those who themselves are active in changing their lives.”*

One of the experts explained that their ‘Presence’ program was launched in Monor in 2004, and since then the integration program has been present at 15-20 locations. The program's local diagnosis method has since become the foundation of the Catching-up program, which is a long-

¹²⁵ The National Council for Sustainable Development. (2019) The Third Progress Report of the National Framework Strategy for Sustainable Development 2017-2018. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from https://www.nfft.hu/documents/1238941/1261771/NFFS_3EHJ.pdf/5f6c02dc-0720-1cfe-f926-272ead306659?t=1575543833848

term project supported by the government, 30 settlements are joining each year the project and the aim is the development of 300 deprived settlements in 10 years. Their largest national program is the 'Children's Opportunity Program', for which they provide professional support in 31 districts. The 'Safe Start Children's House' deals with children from zero to three years. There is also a kindergartens and schools founded by the organization.

With reference to the position of politicians, one of the experts explained that the politicians are far from poverty, but they bring secretary level or ministerial level meetings to the middle of misery, *"because it's quite different to talk in a ministry environment. This is also the way we try to bring them closer to the subject of poverty."* As an example, the expert mentioned ministerial or secretary level meetings held on Tiszabura and Tiszabő.

While creating partnerships is critical, measuring social efficiency in poverty is equally relevant. In this regard, one of the experts informed that *"we operate a system for measuring social efficiency. We try to quantify every element of intervention: changes in children's educational attainment, early school leavers, early pregnancies, the number of community events, the number of parents involved, the number of crisis situations solved, the number of institutional partnerships, all the elements that have adequate effect."*

Social efficiency is the optimal distribution of resources in society, taking into account all external costs and benefits as well as the internal costs and benefits.¹²⁶ Another expert also informed that the overall system of monitoring has still not been developed, in this sense poverty eradication is not yet measurable. However, the expert added that completion of each project is subject of 'control' (monitoring), so all projects are closed by monitoring.

(3) Section three: Poverty and Sustainable Efforts

The third section highlights the different perceptions on the concept of poverty, the layer of ambiguity of the State confronting poverty or shirking away its responsibilities, social distribution in Hungary, including access to basic services, role of SDGs and finally the consequences of poverty in the lives of children.

(i) The different perceptions of the concept of poverty

The experts represented different institutions, each of their attempt to eradicate child poverty differ in terms of implementation. The difference in methods also stems from a different interpretation of poverty itself. Concurrently the experts represent institutions of varying competence. One of the experts says that the problem of poverty can be seen in terms of development and in terms of sustainability. The expert further adds that in terms of development, poverty may be reduced to zero only under an extremist communist system *"that has been proven to have no real benefits, but otherwise there will always be a difference from the median income, and there will always be such a difference that certain people will be considered poor."* From the point of view of sustainability, according to the expert extreme cases of poverty are considered, which are also difficult to define, because extremity is context-dependent, depends on place and time, and social culture. *"In terms of sustainability, poverty will be problematic if it impedes social mobility and inclusion to the extent that it leads to low utilization of the factors of production."*

The expert also referred to the Christian interpretation of poverty known from the encyclical (circular) *Caritas in veritate* (Charity in truth) of pope Benedict XVI. The pope reminds that Paul VI. advised the chief causes of enduring poverty lie in failures of the will and the lack of

¹²⁶ Lefeber, L., & Vietorisz, T. (2007). The meaning of social efficiency. *Review of Political Economy*, 19(2), 139-164.

brotherhood among individuals and peoples. The Pope suggests that one of the deepest forms of poverty a person can experience is isolation. He also states that *“poverty is often produced by a rejection of God's love, by man's basic and tragic tendency to close in on himself, thinking himself to be self-sufficient or merely an insignificant and ephemeral fact, a stranger in a random universe.”* According to this encyclical solidarity and fraternity are antidotes to isolation, and also essential for effective development.¹²⁷

Another expert states that poverty identified as such a hopeless life situation might be worth eliminating. The expert highlighted the generational aspects of poverty. The expert states that those belonging to the 20 per cent of the Hungarian population living in poverty unlike modern nomads, out-of-town intellectuals, live without electricity, tap water, or infrastructure determined by their own will. But their situation is so, because they were living in affliction for generations. This expert also emphasized that it is not only about generational poverty, but also about the strata of section who tried, but failed to pay the loans, lost their jobs, became ill, and slipped down irrevocably, being full of shame. The expert highlights the difference between poverty and misery. The poor still have some vision of future, those living in misery always have just that certain day. *“They do not look at what will happen the next day. They buy bread or heat up, but they do not know what will be tomorrow.”*

(ii) Ambiguity of confronting poverty or shirking responsibilities

One of the experts gave explicit priority to the NFSSD over SDGs. Though on the webpage of the NCSD it is written that the goals and targets of Agenda 2030 are integrated to the NFSSD, the expert expressed as critique on SDGs that it is swept under the rug the conflict which appears between the aspects of sustainability and development. *“The issue of poverty and social exclusion is an important sustainability issue, but defining the related problems is far from easy. In this respect, the UN system is quite simplified. In national implementation, this must be interpreted, with each country doing the right thing by carefully mapping its own problems, the sustainability issues that arise, and formulating appropriate objectives.”*

The expert highlighted that the problem of poverty can be a sustainability problem, but not all forms of poverty or all levels of poverty are sustainability issues. In this regard, it was emphasized that from a sustainability point of view, *“poverty is a problem if it prevents the inclusive functioning of society, prevents social mobility, prevents the poor from developing their abilities and capital for their own benefit and that of society. If poverty means not being able to develop one's talent, or the income-wealth polarization will be so big that it threatens the social peace and creates social conflicts, it will erode to possibility to realise well-being. This is a sustainability issue.”*

As a critique on sustainability in Hungary the expert highlighted that though in the country income inequality is lower than the EU average, yet social mobility is very low. *“While in the Scandinavian countries one and a half generations of life would be enough to get from the poorest of the poorest to the average standard of living, in Hungary this takes 6-7 generations. This is accompanied by the problem of selection in education, all of which leads to the loss of a great number of human capital, which means that our economic performance is lower than if every Hungarian citizen could develop his or her own human capital.”*

According to the expert the roots of the problem is in education which is underdeveloped in the country, and it was identified as a problem bigger than the problem of poverty in Hungary

¹²⁷ Vatican Summary of “Caritas in Veritate”. (2009, July 07). *Zenit*. Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://zenit.org/articles/vatican-summary-of-caritas-in-veritate/>

nowadays. *“The social system is not inclusive enough, it is not mobile enough, the problem is that being born in a poor family the child does not get proper education, and consequently he/she does not have the capability, the innate ability to unfold. So, in this way we are losing human resources.”* According to the expert the NFSSD places the sustainability goals into a Hungarian context and shapes them into Hungarian conditions. The basic task for the development of a sustainable society is the enhancement of national resources. Four main resources (human capital, social capital, physical capital and natural capital) are therefore outlined in the NFSSD. The expert highlighted that the problem of sustainability is interpreted through the lack or shortage of human capital, social capital, physical capital or natural capital. *“We interpret the problem of sustainability as not properly maintaining these capitals.”* – he said.

One of the experts emphasized that northern and eastern Hungary, the Transdanubia region and in the south, Baranya county are especially affected by poverty, mainly the small settlements, where there are less services and a lot of people do not have jobs. According to this expert the generational poverty is estimated to be around one million in Hungary today, and there are those who cannot be quantified, as their income depends on the public work opportunities and on other occasional sources of income. It also distorts the picture that many people in Hungary find their survival strategy in the black zone while some rural entrepreneurs declare themselves and their employees on a minimum wage and take advantage of the services, benefits and opportunities that come with this classification, while the reality is that they are living a lot better and they would not need all these benefits. The expert argued *“it is very difficult to find statistics that reflect reality. This is partly because the Hungarian government is also interested in the publication of statistical data supporting the government-transmitted success policy. Since the law changes, any data that relates to the measurement of poverty can be communicated differently.”*

Experts stated that many people are living on less than 1.90 USD per day in Hungary. The expert highlighted that the aim of the government in some settlements is to implement a "diagnosis-based" catching-up strategy where problems can be addressed on local level rather than solutions to be imposed by public institutions. The expert emphasized: *“our institutions are practically moving only in this direction to bring this threshold. Our schools, our own maintained projects, our integration programs, our aid, are all in order to overcome this goal.”*

(iii) Social redistribution in Hungary

One of the experts emphasized, *“We have our sustainability goals we want to achieve, but the way how to realise it is the subject of political debates involving parliamentary parties, experts, scientists, social workers. It also appears that there is significant non-governmental activity in addition to government services. There are associations and foundations that intervene in different ways and try to help”*. This expert explained that as Hungary is one of the poorest member states of the EU in terms of GDP per capita, everyone's income is relatively low compared to the European average. Therefore, many people are unable to buy many services, but the state compensates providing a lot of different free benefits and public services.

One of the experts stated *“Social assistance is not a priority in Hungary today. The government is working on a social policy that is highly incriminating and is constantly narrowing the ways in which these families can obtain support. They communicate as a success story that textbooks are free for children, but they do not tell that they are not only free for poor children, so the government does not distinguish between upper and lower classes of society. With the school meals the case is the same. Thus, they do not differentiate between children, their program aligns with the life strategy of the upper middle class, with educated people who are financially conscious, planned,*

and for those who remain below it, they narrow down their access to social benefits.” To underpin this critical opinion some examples are given, such as the not raised family allowances, the not raised wages for public works, while the minimum wage increases.

According to the expert education is segregated and access to health services is very poor and the problem of mental patients is untreated. The number of children taken out from the family is increasing, not only in the Roma communities but also among the non-roma Hungarians. With the impoverishment, services that would otherwise help the livelihood of the locals, such as various shops or public transport, disappear from the settlement and a depreciation process will start which is almost irreversible. The expert also added that they have 5-6 non-profit activities operating outside the state system as a non-governmental organization. *“We are actually building on the gaps of the state system, for example, if education is segregated, we provide classes in schools for everyone, if the nurse service is not effective enough, we are organizing baby-mom classes. We provide health services, try to organize health promotion. We also try to help with job creation, as obviously a wise entrepreneur will not start a business in such settlements. So, we do everything what the government neglects.”*

The expert highlighted that they are a foreign funded non-governmental organization labelled by the government as Soros tenants. *“From this position, working on this issue, we cannot become an NGO loyal to the government, even though we are now involved in a governmental program which aims to improve the situation of the 300 poorest communities in the country. One third of our budget is set for education, as we provide art education to develop social competence in 6 municipalities, teachers' salaries are supported by the government, and all the rest must be provided by us.”*

The expert highlighted the fact that the country is struggling with the lack of professionals. Large charitable organizations hunt professionals, social workers, social educators, teachers, kindergarten teachers, nurses and there are no doctors and dentists. They go abroad or find work in other areas. *“The basic needs are therefore unavailable, with a family helper being overloaded. Each nurse is overloaded, and took care of many families, so they cannot be monitored correctly. If there are few professionals, our clients move away from the service locations, anyhow it is difficult to travel there, they have no money to travel. It is secondary, for them to reach basic services, I think this needs to be changed.”*

On the other hand, experts drew attention on the fact that the development program for the 300 poorest settlements in Hungary have started and it lasts ten years, which is a considerable amount of time to achieve changes. The expert considered the appointment of the Charity Service's vice-president to become ministerial commissioner a responsible step from the side of the government with which assumed that it plays an important role in Hungarian public life, in politics, to alleviate poverty. *“It is obviously difficult to say as a politician that children are starving. In a welfare state, it is difficult to say that the regions in Borsod belong to the poorest regions of Europe. Through the ministerial commissioner, a 10-year program has been launched from domestic sources, (...) bombing settlements from all angles, not just socially. (...) I think there are many projects now aimed to eradicate child poverty. The question may be whether these programs are good, whether they are useful, effective, whether the implementers are prepared enough to implement the program. This could be the subject of debate. But the opportunities are just given.”* – the expert argues.

(iv) SDGs may not address poverty

“SDGs do not help to address problems in a practical way, but everyone knows these 17 coloured squares, so SDGs are also important for a kind of common thinking.” – state one of the experts. It was further emphasized that the biggest slice of improvement has been in the last few years, but development cannot be linked to the introduction of SDGs, which is considered by the expert as mainly a kind of communication tool, a framework for interpretation, a crutch for integrated management of social issues. The expert argued that most of the nation-states are facing these problems without knowing about SDGs and gave the example of child poverty which would have been recognized as a problem by the Hungarian government, even without the institutional system for sustainability.

The expert also mentioned that the two thirds of the 169 targets of the 17 SDGs are needed to be achieved in the country and one third of the targets are concerned with the international cooperation of the countries. The expert mentioned that the NCSO as an advisory body is responsible for the two thirds of the targets and gave some examples like reduction of water use and carbon emission, reduction of maternal mortality, and so on. For the other one third of the targets which help the international cooperation in order to fulfil the SDGs are under the responsibility of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). Hungary’s International Development Cooperation Strategy was adopted in 2014 and is valid until 2020. The Strategy is the first policy document since 2001 to outline the main directions of Hungary’s development cooperation. The policy of the International Development Cooperation Strategy was guided by the MDGs, adopted by the United Nations in 2000, but the mid-term review of Hungary’s development cooperation strategy has integrated the new set of internationally agreed development goals into the policy document. According to the policy of the International Development Cooperation Strategy the regions prioritized for international cooperation would be the Western Balkans and Eastern Europe.¹²⁸

The expert mentioned that there are good sustainability practices which are collected on the website of the organization. Anyhow the expert argued that NGOs dealing with poverty have even existed before 2015, and the SDGs as such has not added a plus value to the task of dealing with poverty.

The expert emphasized that there have been no changes in Hungary since the introduction of SDGs. Though the government proves that at a budget level they are providing huge money for families and children, they are not supporting the poor, rather those belonging the middle class or upper classes, those who are studied, who are working. Those who slide down are not real beneficiaries of those family-friendly measures. Educational segregation and the problem of deprived areas make the situation worse. *“There are civilian models, but they were not integrated into the state system. There is no analysis of how these can be made the part of the system. We are looking for a solution to the problem of child poverty based on social embeddedness, so we are also in contact with the institutions responsible for providing the various services. I would not say that Organization X is working in a systemic embedded way, but we are taking part in many training modules, it is confirmed that our experience is unique and missing from textbooks. But I would be naïve to think that this is a systemic change, obviously something has begun, but to find a solution to such a profound problem as poverty would require a cross-governmental strategy; programs*

¹²⁸ Department of International Development. (2014). *International Development Cooperation Strategy and Strategic Concept for International Humanitarian Aid of Hungary 2014-2020*. Budapest, Hungary: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://nefe.kormany.hu/strategy>.

that were launched earlier by liberal governments, no matter how good or effective they were, ended up in the trash.”

The expert added that though the SDGs are acceptable, the problem is how the United Nations can integrate all this into the strategies of individual nations, how they can work with nations so that these guidelines can be fully enforced. According to the expert the Hungarian government communicates a false reality towards the EU. *“There is no strategy, no real solution. When I came up with the segregated education of Hungarian religious schools and managed to bring the case to Brussels, I got the answer that this problem should be solved within Hungary and that there should be a law to eliminate this problem. And yes, there is a law, but it is not respected. The government overlooks the fact that religious schools segregate public schools and do not allow the admission of Roma children, and even give priority to religious schools over public schools.”*

According to one the experts, the rule of law is in danger nowadays in Hungary, and in this atmosphere, it is not clear whether the government wants to solve this situation or not.

The expert said that there is no significant change since 2015. Although it was stressed that poverty was a recognized problem before 2015, he also highlighted that since the regime-change in the country there have not been paid sufficient attention to certain social strata, so it is difficult to bridge this gap now. The expert considered a significant positive change that some programs targeted towards education for children are funded from domestic sources now but also the development program for the 300 poorest settlements.

Anyhow the expert highlighted that the smallest development may be considered as positive change as well. *“I consider success if the kid in our school asks for a handkerchief to blow his nose and does not blow his nose to the ground. For us, this is a huge success. At the same time, there are more high school students nowadays, and female employment among the poorer Roma has also increased, but these are still small successes”*. The expert sees the key to change in increasing social sensitivity and draws attention to the disadvantage that there are few social workers committed to the cause of society in Hungary today.

(4) Characteristics of poverty in the case of children

This section spells out the characteristics of poverty. First is that, children are poorer compared to any other group in the population. The experts highlighted that the gap between child poverty and old-age poverty recently has narrowed given to some governmental interventions. It was also emphasized that it is crucial to help the parents of children to reduce child poverty and to empower children themselves. However, it remains that children are poorer compared to any other group in the population. In the second part it is argued that child poverty could not be always considered as a memory. Even though a child in his/her later adulthood may get the chance to get out of poverty, in many cases, poverty is an intergenerational problem. It thus becomes a heavy ‘heritage’ carried from one generation to another, a problem which may be solved only through long-term solutions.

(i) Children poorer compared to any other group in the population

“Poverty can occur at all ages, but two segments of society are at greater risk of poverty, namely children and the elderly because they have no income”, emphasized the expert and said that child poverty in Hungary was much higher than old-age poverty. But the recent NCS D Progress Report, 2018 indicated that the gap between child poverty and old-age poverty has narrowed and stated that the value of the indicator of the proportion of those at risk of income poverty or social exclusion among children increased from 33 per cent to 44 per cent between 2008 and 2014, before falling substantially to pre-crisis levels by 2017. Here the proportion of children affected by income poverty or social exclusion is higher than that of the general population (26 per cent in 2017), but

the gap between the values for children and the elderly has also narrowed in recent years. In international comparison, Hungary, together with Italy, Spain and Lithuania, is the group of countries with the second highest risk of poverty or social exclusion among children.

According to the expert the extension of the free provision of child meals and the provision of holiday meals to children contributed significantly to the achievements in the reduction of child poverty. Since 2016 free textbook provision has been available for the entire lower elementary school, and since 2018 it has been available for grades 1-9. students to receive free textbooks. In 2018, the Government adopted the Fifth National Health Program to strengthen the health care system, including the implementation of the National Child Health Program to eradicate child poverty and its effects, ensure a healthy start to life and prevent chronic adulthood from an early age.

The expert highlighted that child poverty is determined mainly by the poor living conditions of the parents. The expert also emphasized that they work for the next generation, but with this generation their observation was that it was not enough to focus on one area but to operate with complex systems of actions that would eliminate the ‘retracting effect’. With this the expert referred to the generation of poverty that exist in these areas and within these communities. It was further noted that it is difficult to bring change in the lives of people with low employee skills in adulthood. Therefore, it has to be ensured that parents are able to provide children to develop a positive vision for these children. The expert also mentioned that they supported the families as the families needed to be empowered to bring up their children in a best possible manner. To help the child, it also meant that the parents had to be partners in the process instead of waiting for help. Families need to be empowered to bring up their children, but – as the expert added – it is very difficult to change people with low employee skills in adulthood. In this context, the organizations support parents through maternity clubs, baby-mom clubs that help in developmental skills, they provide speech therapy, along with scholarship programs and excursions that allow kids to develop a different kind of communication that makes it easier for them to integrate in the society.

The expert, with reference to child poverty, emphasized that they consider the family as the central unit. *“We think that through children we can even change or renew the family, but within a family living in poverty and deep poverty, the average number of children is three or more. In a culture of poverty, the child appears differently, so the family can be changed through children. One more sensitive point is whether we can change a thirty-year-old Roma person, even though we do not want to change anyone, but try to intervene in his life to bring about a lasting change in his lifestyle.”* According to the expert the current programs of the organization deal with children from an early age trying to show them what is the living standard of the majority of society. *“Our schools have Hilton quality toilets. We also want to wake up in the child the need to have a bathroom and a proper indoor toilet at home, not just a toilet outside the house. Hopefully as adults they would like to realise this. There are sofas in the communal areas, there are shelves in the kitchenette to make visible for the kids how is an average Hungarian family like today as they have no such home and they do not want to wake up for something better.”* The expert added that there are Maltese Primary Schools in Gyulaj, Tiszabura, Tiszadob with a kindergarten and even more schools would be established within the development program of the 300 poorest settlements. The Charity Service teaches children in a different way, which make children more successful. *“As we are struggling with teacher shortage, we will introduce measures that will provide higher pay for teachers in disadvantaged communities. The educator society is struggling against this, but we expect from teachers more in return. Educators are required to be socially sensitive, so they do not solve*

problems in the classroom by hitting the children” – in this sense the expert emphasizes that social sensitivity is considered to be a value added at the Charity Service.

(ii) Becoming an adult – poverty as memory or a heavy heritage

As children progress towards adulthood, it is an assumption that they carry the heavy ‘heritage’ of having lived in poverty, just a few of them are able to get out of poverty in their adulthood. The expert argued that the potential to become a well-off adult being poor in childhood, is rather depending on the institutional system of the society. In the global context, poverty has been greatly reduced, especially in developed countries, and it is the institutional system that ensures this. The expert highlighted that there are institutions that determine people's future careers, and healthcare and education are particularly important in this regard. It was also highlighted that Hungary has an advanced nurse network and paediatric care. If the institutional system is properly developed a child grown up in poverty might have all the chances to become a successful adult: If the educational system is good a talented and diligent child living in poverty can get a degree and could find a job with good salary. The expert argued that in this way anyone can get out of poverty by the age of 30. Another expert highlighted the intergenerational aspect of poverty. The expert discussed on the organization’s work to getting children out of poverty. Their strategy is a 20-year strategy, started in 2009, now in its eleventh year. They set the long-term goal of working with children and parents for a generation to make some sort of change in their lives. The expert emphasized that there might be really bad effects of childhood poverty on the later adult growing up early, losing childhood early, growing up in a poor environment, damaging their health in early childhood. The third expert talked about the long-term effects what poverty has on the life of children. The expert explained that in Monor kids regularly had their fingertips burned. There were 15 families living in a circus caravan and the stove was very close to the entrance, the children ran, fell to it, and their hands burned and there were purulent wounds on their fingertips. Later they put stops in front of the stoves, explained for children that they should not fall to the stove, and their hands were healed. But as the expert added *“a 4-5-year-old kid with a wrinkled hand is unlikely to be a cardiac surgeon or musician at the age of 20, or a Bosch worker because his fingertips are insensitive. At the same time, we, the majority are angry about why they do not go to work”*.

Chapter Five: Conclusion and recommendations

This final chapter is divided into six parts. First, there is a discussion and interpretation of the findings from the perspective of poverty, child rights and SDGs. Second, the potentials of well-becoming is discussed in the case of children interviewed. Third, it is argued that the violation of child rights is a consequence of poverty. In the fourth part an overall conclusion is given on poverty, well-becoming and child rights. In the fifth section recommendations are made, based on the interpretations of results. Ultimately a conclusion with scope for further research is presented.

(1) Poverty, child rights and SDGs

There are varying degrees of responses regarding the concept of poverty. Poverty in the context of sustainability and in the context of development, poverty as intergenerational problem, poverty as a way out from misery. According to the experts, child poverty has been reduced in Hungary in the last years, but the country still lags behind other EU states. The percentage of children living in material deprivation being above the 25 per cent threshold of the EU average. The expert highlighted that there is no reliable data regarding poverty, and statistical data is manipulated in that way to underline the success policy of the government. Experts highlighted different aspects of child poverty. One of them mentioned that among vulnerable groups like elder people or children the proportion of children living in poverty was much higher than the proportion of elder people. Though the situation has changed, another expert mentioned that child poverty and poverty in general is still quite typical to the Roma minority. Visiting three settlements in Hungary, observing and interacting with children living in poverty, all of my interview partners were Roma children. In this sense, my experience corroborates the observation of the experts on a wider range. The children who participated in the study spoke Hungarian, they do not keep any specific Roma traditions alive and belonging to a Roma community generally does not help them to be more successful within the society. One child mentioned that she feels safer among Roma, because she is not mocked by them, but this is just not yet enough for a conclusive statement.

Child poverty is not necessarily considered as violation of child rights by the experts. One expert highlighted that improvement of human life does not necessarily mean improvement of human rights, the other expert mentioned that a child living in poverty is not aware of the fact that his/her rights are abused, while the third expert emphasized that poverty is a maximum violation of child rights, but these are not specifically addressed by the government. The study also revealed that child poverty may have a deteriorating effect on later adulthood. The experts suggested for long-term projects and systemic change in order to overcome generational problems of poverty. In terms of systemic changes, emphasis was on institutional changes and development mainly in the field of education, on the importance of long-term projects, like the development program for the 300 most deprived settlements in Hungary, and most importantly, the empowerment of parents.

The study confirms that health-care and educational system should be improved in Hungary, especially in terms of recruitment of professionals in these two sectors. The results indicate different causes of educational segregation in Hungary. One of the reasons is that well-off Hungarian families try to provide their children the possibility to be enrolled in a better school, so they take away their children from deprived regions. The expert confirmed the fact that the schools in deprived regions are totally segregated with only Roma pupils. It also indicates that educational segregation is typical in religious school, which are supported by the state, and their education is achievable for better-off children. Religious institutions have higher standards, have their own admission system - all of which has contributed to further strengthening of the selectivity of the education system. In this sense the Hungarian school system is not able to bridge socio-economic

disparities. Experts agreed that disadvantaged students who feel socially and emotionally secure, perform significantly better than their peers. The study highlights the problem of drop-out among school children. This is mainly due to economic reasons in order to support the families. Thus, more and more young people enter the labour market unqualified, making it difficult for them to survive and move on. The experts highlighted that almost all child rights are violated in case of poverty.

In terms of the first SDG: end poverty in all its forms everywhere - cannot be considered as principle guidelines in Hungary. The work that were done by civil societies is difficult to be represented through the SDGs framework. This is in spite of the fact that the organizations work for the poor. This could also be due to the fact that their ideology is based on the concept of Christian solidarity. There was also scepticism expressed towards Hungary's commitment towards SDGs, and the doubt whether the United Nations system is developed enough to integrate these guidelines in the national policies. However, the results also suggest that sustainability in Hungary prevails through the NFSSD being valid until 2024. According to the Progress Report of the NCSO from 2018, despite improvements in some sub-areas, it is predictable that by 2024 Hungary will not be able to achieve the goals set out in the NFSSD. Accordingly, Hungary may be lagging behind in its national contribution to achieving the 2030 Development Agenda which is about transforming lives of people. The experts agreed that there were no significant changes since the introduction of SDGs in 2015, small steps have been made, but there have been no attempts towards systemic change based on SDGs. The institutional cooperation is still very weak, such initiatives like the development program for the 300 poorest settlements in Hungary are rather exceptional. All of the experts agreed that there are best practices and lessons learned, but these are experiences of certain institutions, not a common direction in order to achieve more sufficiently the SDGs.

The Government of Hungary has made a commitment to address extreme poverty, child poverty and poverty among the Roma population by adopting the National Social Inclusion Strategy (2011-2020). The framework aligned to the targets of the Europe 2020 strategy, and since then the share of people living in low-intensity households fell by half, while the number of people experiencing severe material deprivation decreased, although their share remains high in the EU. However, the share of children living in child poverty has decreased. Hungary's international development policy has restarted with the country's accession to the EU (2004), however convergence to global requirements and best practices are not promoted by Hungarian foreign policy and the weakness of non-governmental stakeholders also hinders a more effective cooperation.

In spite of near-universal ratification of the CRC the transfer of poverty from one generation to the next continues and still millions of children are being left behind. The main future beneficiaries of the 2030 Development Agenda are the children, and the SDGs are a crucial opportunity to realize their rights and well-being.

(2) Potentials of well-becoming

The study focused on the well-being of children through the perspective of children. Considering the concept of justice for children their well-being and well-becoming is concerned not just with them being happy but with providing them capabilities and functioning that they are entitled to reach a certain level of well-being. The interpretation demonstrates how the capabilities of children influence their ill-being or well-being in everyday life. This leads to an understanding of the functioning that they practice. Functioning as mentioned earlier, is an achievement, whereas a capability is the ability to achieve. The functioning of certain children is identified through their stories.

(i) Life of Barni

Lack of capabilities which influence ill-being

Barni's mental well-being is hindered by his regular nightmares, he dreams with characters known from different horror films while watching television with his parents. Education is also an injured capability as Barni left out school for several days, because his parents work excessively, and they are unable to pay attention to their children. Though he is free from exploitation as he does not work, he never gets pocket money. In this case, he steals it from the parents.

Barni is not sheltered adequately as the living conditions of the family are poor, the water-tap is on the street, they heat with tree branches. Barni has no room of his own, no table to learn, just a separate bed in the room where his parents live. The capability of being able to choose to live according to a religion and identity is also violated while they do not really celebrate any feast, they do not buy presents, they do not celebrate birthdays due to lack of their financial means. The capability of being able to move is also hindered, he usually spends summer at home, they do not have a car and he has visited just two nearby settlements yet.

Capabilities which enforce well-being

The capability of being able to love and be loved by those who seems to be fulfilled, he is contented with his parents because they are persistent, they do not give up, they work. The capability of being physically healthy is also satisfactory as he is in general healthy, though he mentioned that he goes to the dentist only when one tooth is needed to be pulled out. He has many friends, though he is proud just on one of them because he is not begging for money, in his sense we can say that the capability of being part of social networks exist in his life, though he feels that children living in misery cannot give the example of good friendship. He has not mentioned that he is part of any religious group, but he trusts God and goes to church sometimes with his grandma, in this sense the capability of being able to choose a certain religion or belief is fulfilled.

Achieved functioning

In the case of Barni capabilities which influence ill-being are more compared to capabilities influencing well-being. His functioning is developed, but still should be enhanced. Being well-nourished, being in good health, being clothed and sheltered, being literate, all these could be still improved in the case of Barni. Anyhow he finds the happiness in life, he is taking part in the life of the community, he is having self-respect and he is sincere towards himself.

(ii) Life of Janka

Lack of capabilities which influence ill-being

The most injured capability in the case of Janka is the capability of being healthy. She has epilepsy from her early childhood, the sickness renewed as her mother got sick. Her capability of a wealthy living is also hindered by her mother's sickness, and as it later came out by parents earlier alcoholic habits. Her mental well-being is also injured as she is constantly having nightmares. The capability of being able to love and be loved by those who care and being able to be protected is also injured in many senses, though she adores her mother and love both of her parents, her protection as a child is not that satisfactory within the family, as only her father is working, he earns money from occasional work while her mother stays at home because of her sickness getting no financial support from anywhere. Janka's two elder brothers, who are still children are working, they are doing black jobs. The capability of being able to be part of social networks and to give and receive social support could be also improved, though Janka has one girlfriend, the other friend close to her was taken to the orphanage. The capability of being able to be educated is hindered most of all

by her health, sometimes, when an epileptic seizure comes, she has to go home, she often misses school because of her illness. Though she is not exploited as a child, she gets very slow amount of pocket money, but she defended her parents even when sharing this information, she added that children do not need money, because they are not able to handle money.

The capability of being able to be sheltered and to live in a healthy, safe and pleasant environment is also injured, they share the house with her mother's sister and her two little sons, in the house there is no gas, they heat the stove with tree branches, they have noisy neighbours, who disturb Janka's family even during their sleep. Her capability to move is reduced, she spends the summer at home and visits nearby settlements by bus or train. Her mother's sister lives with them with her two children with bad housing conditions such as heating the house with tree branches and, noisy neighbours.

Capabilities which enforce well-being

The capability of having social relations is contributing to Janka's well-being, she has one good friend, Betti. The capability to exercise autonomy in allocating time seems to be effective, Janka is drawing a lot and she likes spinning, she finds peace at her grandmother.

Achieved functioning

In Janka's case, capabilities which influence ill-being were present in a much higher proportion compared to capabilities influencing well-being, though her functioning is developed, a lot more could be enhanced. Being well-nourished, being in good health, being clothed and sheltered, being literate, all these could be still improved. She found happiness in life but also met a lot of suffering where she did not take part in the life of the community, and additional support could be provided to improve her sense of self-respect.

(iii) Life of Martin

Lack of capabilities which influence ill-being

The capability related to love and care is injured in the case of Martin, who lost two of his brothers as they died of genetic disorder. This capability (love and care) is also injured by the fact that his father earlier was a drug addict, and the family could not rely on him. The capability related to mental well-being is also injured as he often dreams that somebody is dying or sometimes, he even dreams about the death of his two brothers. The capability of being educated was also injured in the case of Martin, as he was expelled from the reformed school of Biharkeresztes, and now he attends the primary school supported by the state. His Roma identity and his naughty behaviour is considered to be the main causes of his segregation. Considering his recent love disappointment, the capability of building social relations might be injured also, but as he told this kind of detriment is cured by the time. The capability of being able to be respected and treated with dignity is also injured in the case of Martin, he was not respected enough in the earlier school from where he was expelled, and he also does not always respect everybody, he is often naughty and unperceptive in the school.

Capabilities which enforce his well-being

In case of Martin there are more capabilities upholding his well-being. The capability related to love and care not just hinders but also contribute to Martin's well-being, as his parents at the present time are caring, his father is a converted Baptist priest, of whom Martin is proud of, his younger brother is still allowed to go to the reformed school in Biharkeresztes, because he is a good learner. The capability of being able to be part of social networks and to give and receive social support is

also contributing to Martin's well-being as he has good friends and sometimes girlfriends also, he is planning to attend a boxing course, they belong to the Baptist church, the family is part of a community. The capability related to shelter and environment is that it has a good impact, Martin is contented with their living conditions, the neighbours are also good, though one of them is constantly coaching him up. The capability of mobility is also more developed compared to the other children, as Martin and his family are going to the beach in summertime, Martin's father does not have a driving license, but he is learning to drive now.

Achieved functioning

In the case of Martin, the capabilities which influence ill-being and the capabilities influencing well-being are present in a much more balanced proportion, in this sense his functioning is developed in many senses. He is well-nourished, his health is good, he is clothed and sheltered, he is literate, but is not motivated for self-development in learning. He finds the happiness in life, he is taking part in the life of the community, he has a lot of friends, his self-respect seems to be also good.

(iv) Life of Laura

Lack of capabilities which influence ill-being

The capability of being able to love and be loved by those who care and being able to be protected is injured in the case of Laura, as she explained both of her parents were orphans, and when she was younger both of them were unemployed for a while. The capability of physical health is also not that strong, she had a caecal surgery in autumn and she falls ill and gets a cold. The capability of being able to be respected and treated with dignity is also injured, she is often mocked by her classmates because she is a better learner than they are, but she was also mocked by the family of her sister's earlier boyfriend, they looked down on Laura's family because they were richer. The respect towards herself is also injured, she has low self-esteem being too much silent in a new company.

Capabilities which enforce well-being

The capability related to mental well-being is developed in the case of Laura, she is a good learner, she has a separate room, where she can sleep calm. The capability related to bodily integrity and safety is also enforcing, she feels herself safe among her parents and family. The capability of being able to be part of social networks and to give and receive social support is well developed, Laura has some really good friends, the only problem appeared when they have moved away because they started another school. Later they made it clear that they were just getting into a new environment, but they are still friends. The capabilities of being educated and being free from exploitation are well developed in her case, she is one of the best learners in the school, she does not need to do any work, she has a scholarship. The capabilities related to shelter and environment and time autonomy are also satisfying, she has time to play and learn, she has her own room and good neighbours. The capability related to mobility is good, the family has a car, they visit regularly nearby settlements, Laura was already twice in theatre and has seen already Rome.

Achieved functioning

In the case of Laura, her functioning is well developed as she is able to exercise a lot of capabilities which influence her well-being. She is well-nourished, her health is good, she is clothed and sheltered, she is literate. She finds the happiness in life, she is taking part in the life of the community, she has a lot of friends, there could be support provided to improve her self-respect.

(v) Life of Anett

Lack of capabilities which influence ill-being

The capability referring to love and care is the capability regarding mental well-being is injured in case of Anett, she is having often bad dreams, she does not have her own room and she is often disturbed by her sisters. The capability of being physically healthy is also hindered as she was for two weeks in hospital in this school year because she fainted at school, she informed that she does not know about the illness, only her parents know about it. The capability of social relations is injured in her case by the fact that though they have two sisters, but actually she has a third one also, a stepsister who is living with Anett's grandmother. The capability of being respected is hindered in that way that Anett is often mocked by her sisters and classmates. The capability of being educated is quite injured in her case, she is repeating the fifth class. The capability of being free from exploitation is injured in that way, that though she is not working, she does a lot of housework, which takes away a big amount of time from her. Both the capabilities referring to time autonomy and mobility are injured in her case as she does not have enough time to learn or play and she does not have the opportunity to travel.

Capabilities which enforce well-being

The capability of being able to love and be loved by those who care and being able to be protected enforces Anett's well-being, she speaks with great respect about her parents, who are doing their best to give what their children need. The capability of social relations is strengthening Anett's well-being, she has a boyfriend and a lot of friends, and she goes to birthday parties even when she is not invited. Now she is in a more inclusive class because the majority of her classmates are Roma as well.

Achieved functioning

In the case of Anett capabilities which influence ill-being and well-being are present as well, her functioning developed to a certain degree and still should be enhanced. She is nourished, her health is satisfactory, she is clothed and sheltered, she is literate, but has severe learning problems. She finds the happiness in life, she is taking part in the life of the community, she has a lot of friends, there could be support provided to improve her self-respect.

(3) Violation of child rights is a consequence of poverty

The study highlights that not only the main capabilities but also a wide range of child rights are violated in the case of children living in poverty. Among capabilities and child rights there are several overlaps, but there are certain rights which need separate consideration, especially because these are interpreted differently by the experts. One reason might be that children seek happiness in their lives and sometimes want to find the most harmonious answers to the questions, another reason could be that they do not have the possibility to compare their situation with other children's living conditions. When asking them about their own rights they usually seemed to be satisfied, but the answers what the experts gave sometimes are contradicting to the answers what the children gave and are also giving a wider overview on the certain topic.

While the information given by the experts regarding child rights reflects that almost rights of children are violated in case of poverty, the answers of children regarding their own rights reflects a different scenario. When children were asked regarding their rights, they did not seem to understand and/or comprehend the question. The issue of child rights is 'unknown' for them. This reflects lack of access to information. Children as right holders could get information about their own rights from different channels, for example, the educational system could provide information,

or other visual information could be provided through the media. As in the case of the majority of the child rights enumerated in the CRC the duty bearer is considered to be the government, so in this sense it is the government who should provide all the tools and help for the right bearers, in this case the children to respect, protect and fulfil their rights, with the aim to treat children with dignity, respect and according to their inherent worth.

(4) An overall conclusion on poverty, well-becoming and child rights

While the above section establishes that child poverty is a violation of child rights, several concepts on poverty, well-becoming and child rights were highlighted – some by experts, some by children themselves. This gains clarity through children comparing ‘objective’ objects with ‘subjective’ feelings; through their opinion on standard of living; through their perception on human rights; through their opinion on education; through their scepticism of attaining the SDGs; and opinions of law in theory and practice.

(i) ‘Pineapple or hairy ball, blueberry or sour grape’

One of the experts mentioned that when children were given fruits like pineapples and blueberries, they called it ‘hairy ball’ and ‘sour grapes’ respectively. This presents the subjective interpretation of life, poverty and luxury through the perspective of children. In this sense the objective world becomes a subjective perception, something with the potential of change. The expert also explained that in order to strengthen this feeling of potential of change in the lives of children living in poverty, they try to show them in different ways the potential directions of change. One of the main conclusions of the study was that it is important to highlight for children living in poverty that their circumstances could be changed and even improved. Their objective world as children is still full of potentials, not just because they are young, but because of their ability to find happiness around them. Anyhow developing the feeling of empathy within them, in the sense that they could be sensitive and receptive towards new challenges, could not be started too early. Such challenge could be met in various fields, in education, nutrition, clothing etc. and also on different levels of sensation like sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch.

(ii) Standard of living - everyone is interested in how their neighbours live

The observation of one of the experts shed light on the tension between the relationship of the perceived and the real world through the eyes of children. This expert highlighted that virtually everyone is interested in how their neighbours live. People are ‘incapable’ of perceiving absolute levels, they perceive relative things about well-being considering them as absolute realities. This expert explained the concept of poverty from the perspective of well-off people and explained that as more and more people live in prosperity, more and more people will be disturbed by poverty because it might be depressing to imagine how life would be in that situation. From the perspective of people living in poverty, their situation is not always perceived in its relativity, poor people in most of the cases do not have the chance to perceive their situation as something different compared to the majority of the society. As one of the experts mentioned children need to be given experiences to see the difference between their lives and the world around them.

(iii) Poverty far or close to human rights

The relativity of perception was further highlighted by how differently the experts defined poverty. Though they all mentioned different aspects of poverty, there was one commonality in the answers. They all tried to emphasize that the application of human rights in the case of the poor is just not the case. As one expert argued it is not very fertile to put everything under the umbrella of human rights, because too many fundamental rights will conflict with one another, and this will arise the problem to sacrifice one fundamental right for the other. The other expert emphasized that there is

a difference between misery and poverty, and poor people are not able to pull themselves out of trouble by their own hair, they need help. But it was also argued that the problem of being not able to endorse child rights is not only an institutional responsibility but also the responsibility of the people, who are not grown up enough to have a proper understanding of human rights. Their living condition, their deprived situation pull them back to become conscious right holders. The reasons enumerated were different, but the outcome of the answers was the same: the question of poverty is just not compatible with human rights in the case of Hungary. The experts representing the organizations working for the poor do not consider poverty a human rights issue, their view on children living in poverty is rather characterised by a paternalistic child-parent relationship, which in a way is true as they work with minors, but the docile and powerless image of children living in poverty should be reconsidered enabling them to represent themselves as right holders.

(iv) The extremities of education: Radnóti High School and 17th district noname school

Another problem highlighted by children and experts as well is the problem of segregation of schools in Hungary. Segregation does not happen as a result of racist laws, Hungary is the one Central European country with legislation that explicitly outlaws segregation, school segregation in this case is de facto segregation. Anyhow the government do not enforce the law, the counter-argument against segregation is that neither the school system nor the state is actively pursuing segregation.

During my research, the experts mentioned two types of segregation and in a way, while interviewing children, I met both of the cases. In one case in different locations large majorities of Roma children together with financially disadvantaged non-Roma, wind up in the same classrooms or schools while children with better financial background are concentrated in an ‘elite class’ or move to another town or to a better school. As one of the experts mentioned: *“the same problem is present in Budapest, although there is not such a large Roma population, but this sort of selection happens that more elite children go to Radnóti High School than to the 17th district noname school.”* The story of Anett underpins this situation as she fell out from the fifth class where she was constantly mocked by Hungarian classmates, and felt much better in another class, because as she told all were cousins and relatives, all were Roma like her.

In other cases, educational segregation is typical in religious schools, which are supported by the state. Religious institutions have their own admission system, have higher standards thus strengthening the selectivity of schools. The case of Martin is an example of this situation. He dropped out from a religious school like many other Roma children, though his family was also religious. However, there are serious attempts in Hungary to end segregation, but until even one school is considered less important than the other, until ‘elite’ classes exists, significant change in practice would not be achieved.

(v) 2015 – is it a milestone for Hungary in implementing SDGs?

The scepticism regarding SDGs is clearly expressed by one of the experts saying that *“SDGs do not help to address problems in a practical way, but everyone knows these 17 coloured squares, so SDGs are also important for a kind of common thinking.”* This kind of scepticism seems to be strange as Hungary co-chaired the United Nations General Assembly’s Open Working Group on SDGs, and thus had a highly visible position during the talks, Hungary’s small state status was countered and alliances were built. However, later the government did not act out a strong commitment to SDGs.

(vi) Law in theory and practice

One of the experts mentioned that the Hungarian legal system is working properly today. To underpin this statement, the legal decision made regarding the segregated education in Gyöngyöspata was mentioned. Anyhow the opinion of the other expert contradicted to this observation as it was stated that: *“if you look at the case of Gyöngyöspata, you see that there is a legal system in which civilians have enforced the law, I mean compensation for segregated education. However, the government's response overrides the court's decision.”* Regarding the CRC celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2019 and ratified by Hungary, the question to ask still remains, namely if this document has brought real changes to the lives of children. Child rights are seen as soft issues, children remaining politically invisible, although one of the most important preconditions for changes would be to have child rights considered among the most serious political issues. There is still a big gap between the global ambitions expressed through the SDGs, the CRC and local realities, the laws ratified and adopted and the implementation of them. Children have disadvantaged position in the political process mainly because of their vulnerability, the potential of their self-governance which would enhance the implementation of their rights is also fragile.

(5) Recommendations

The recommendations are based on the findings and pertain to enhancing the capabilities of children living in poverty in order to empower them to develop more efficient ways of functioning, to bring into the common conscious of children the knowledge of their rights and to make them able to participate in the society in a way to represent their rights efficiently. The recommendations also pertain to minimize the challenges of multidimensional child poverty and to reduce the consequences of poverty in the lives of children. The recommendations have the objective to accelerate the SDGs by leveraging the 2030 Agenda's grounding on human rights and commitment to ending poverty.

(i) Awareness-raising

- Raise the awareness of children, the parents of children and the professionals working for and with children about the provisions of the CRC considering that such efforts could result in a positive shift in the attitudes of those involved.
- Ensure that people have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development. Incorporate the concept of sustainability into the public consciousness. Sustainability is interpreted rather in a national context in Hungary being not common in public consciousness and in everyday decision-making among public policy makers.

(ii) SDGs and eradication of poverty

- Adopt a comprehensive policy covering all areas of child rights and establish effective monitoring systems of strategies and action plans.
- Develop a rights-based National Legal Roadmap to effectively leverage the human rights foundation of the 2030 Agenda by using SDGs-human rights mapping along with National Constitutions and related laws.
- After the expiration of the Hungarian Sustainable Development Strategy in 2024 and the International Development Cooperation Strategy in 2020, the new frameworks responsible for national and international sustainability policies should align more to the 2030 Development Agenda.

- Create policy frameworks at the national, regional and international levels, based on pro-poor development strategies.
- Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and actions in this regard. Differentiate between certain social strata, thereby ensuring social cohesion in different ways.
- Implement inclusive social protection systems
- Build the resilience of the poor, reduce their exposure and vulnerability to economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters.
- Prioritize programs and processes that promote legal, economic and technological empowerment of people belonging to poor and marginalized groups. In order to overcome the problem of intergenerational poverty prioritise long-term programs in place of temporary and provisional solutions.
- Include all NGOs working for and with children under the support umbrella of the government and enable them to implement their goals.
- Enhance partnerships for sustainable development by stakeholder partnerships to support the achievement of the SDGs and eradication of poverty.
- Reduce inequalities between regions, promote the catching up of regions lagging behind. Enhance capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management.
- Implement programs in order to help the improvement of the infrastructure of segregated, underdeveloped areas. Upgrade obsolete infrastructure, develop sustainable and resilient infrastructure, to support human well-being, with a focus on equitable access for all. Solve the problem of water utilities in Bodrogköz where drinking water from 100 years old eternit pipes makes people sick, often causing even cancer.

(iii) Rights of the child

- Take measures to ensure that all children, including children living in poverty, are heard in any decision affecting them.
- Ensure that children are not separated from their parents because of poverty.
- Ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums.
- Take measures to guarantee the child's exposure to a plurality of opinions ensuring the right of the child to access to information and provide material from national and international sources.
- Adopt business-friendly policy, legal frameworks capable of promoting innovation, employment and inclusive growth.
- Increase employment and the efficiency of the labour market thus providing more opportunities for parents of children living in poverty to achieve an adequate standard of living. Reduce the proportion of public works and promote transition from public works to the open labour market.
- Strengthen the financial culture of parents of children living in poverty. The country's economic growth is not yet accompanied by a spread of financial awareness, although it would provide protection against the trap of the debt spiral for the poor.

- Ensure career guidance involving parents in addition to children, so that all can choose appropriate forms of further learning according to their abilities and interests.
- Develop national strategy to prevent and address violence against children.
- Increase support and financial assistance to families with children with disabilities.
- Provide inclusive education for children with disabilities by training teachers, providing schools with necessary equipment.
- Provide health-care services to all children, including those living in poverty.
- Increase health financing and the recruitment, development, training and retention of the health workforce.
- Take measures to provide access to education on nutrition and access to sufficiently nutritious food for all children in the country.
- Increase efforts to address the root causes of unplanned pregnancies through the provision of family planning as well as adequate counselling. Take measures to prevent unwanted pregnancies and abortions among teenage girls by raising awareness about sexual and reproductive health.
- Reduce the share of early school leavers. The most jeopardised groups of early school-leaving are the disadvantaged and multiply disadvantaged, including Roma, students who start to work at the age of 16.
- Provide inclusive education for children belonging to the Roma community in mainstream schools. Foster the educational success of vulnerable and disadvantaged students.
- Promote quality education. Develop the teachers career advancement system, increase the wages of teachers. Boost teachers' motivation and performance and improve the quality education.
- Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.
- Develop the digital competence of children as an element of quality education to a level expected by the labour market.
- Provide possibilities for children living in minority or indigenous groups the right to learn and use the language, customs and religion of their family. The standard of living which should be followed is represented by the Hungarian culture in contrast to the culture of poverty in which the Roma live. In the struggle for survival, the preservation of culture, religion, identity is not in forefront nowadays in the case of Roma.
- Reinststate the juvenile courts with judges who have undergone special training. Ensure that detention of children is used only as a measure of last resort. Take measures to ensure the application of restorative justice in case of juvenile offenders.

(iv) Economic, social and cultural rights

- Allocate adequate resources for the economic, social and cultural rights of children living in families with scarce economic means, to the maximum extent of available resources.

- Ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources. Empower and promote the social and cultural inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.

These recommendations are addressed mainly towards the government and the NGOs involved in the work against child poverty. To raise awareness of children and their parents towards all the topics tackled by the above recommendations would serve their empowerment to fulfil more efficiently their rights, to develop their capabilities and to widen their future perspectives.

(6) Conclusion

The main objective of this study was to explore dimensions of child poverty through the SDGs in Hungary. In this regard it could be said that though SDGs have a certain importance in Hungary. Nevertheless, this needs to be enhanced and could be prioritized along with the national sustainability concept along with the implementation of the NFSSD. It would need further investigation how the emergence of SDGs will change after the approval of the new NFSSD in 2024 and the approval of the new International Development Cooperation Strategy in 2020. It was reinforced by the experts that the country will not be able to achieve the goals set out in the NFSSD by 2024. Thus, Hungary could be lagging behind in its efforts to achieve SDGs. It would be also interesting to investigate what kind of turning point in sustainability will be introduced by the government in order to widen the concept of sustainability which nowadays is related mainly to natural and environmental sustainability.

The study focused on the perception of children about their own lives, their own possibilities, and it revealed that children living in poverty would need access to information concerning their rights established in CRC. The most important consequence of living in poverty in the case of children is the ignorance of one's own rights. This might sound an accelerated purpose as even the parents of children are not conscious enough of their human rights, and they do not get enough support to become more self-confident right-holders. The fulfilment of human rights should be considered as big responsibility by the government as a duty bearer. As one of the oldest Roman law principles said: '*ignorantia juris non excusat*' (the ignorance of law excuses no one), in this sense people have enormous responsibility on them to know about their own rights. Sometimes for such a consciousness, awareness even a lifetime is not enough to develop, how could then one make responsible poor people or even children living in poverty that they are not conscious enough about the fact that human rights are protecting them, and even not just protecting but enabling them.

Exploring the methods to alleviate child poverty, the study revealed certain good practices through civil organizations. However, these practices were not (consciously) aligned with the SDGs in order to end poverty until 2030, and even if they would like to align their methods to this goal, it would be a challenge, because it is not adequately supported on a national level. As further research, it would be relevant to study the monitoring of SDG 1 and the SDGs in general, to understand good practices among countries in their attempt to alleviate poverty. Children are the main future beneficiaries of the SDGs, which provide a crucial opportunity to realize their rights. In spite of near-universal ratification of the CRC children continue to be left behind. Implementing SDGs in which child rights and wellbeing are placed front can catalyse sustainable development by breaking down the endless cycle of intergenerational poverty.

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Appendix I – Interview Guide – Children

Profile

1. Name:
2. Age:
3. Gender:
4. Siblings:
5. Parents:
6. Do you live together with your parents?
7. Are both your parents employed?

A. Care:

Would you like to draw your family?

1. What have you made? Who are these people?
2. What is the meaning of love for you?
3. How do you express love, and how is it expressed towards you?
4. Who takes care of your food, clothing, your schooling?
5. What does ‘love’ mean to you with regards your family?

B. Mental well-being:

1. What is it like to be a child? What is the best part of being a child? Is it more difficult than being an adult?
2. What are the things that distract you?
3. Do you cry sometimes? Why does it happen to you that you cry?
4. What makes you calm down?
5. What makes you be scared?
6. Where do you sleep?
7. Do you sleep alone or with someone else?
8. Is your sleep calm? Does it happen to you that you are disturbed during the night? What makes you disturbed?

C. Life and physical health/health-related

1. Health

- a. Did you have any sickness because of which you have missed the school? What was that sickness? How many days did you miss school? What was the treatment process?
- b. Thinking about your health, are you ever in pain and discomfort? Would you like to talk about it?
- c. What are some of the preventive (dentist, optician) health care services you have used in the past 12 months?
- d. Does anyone in the family have any long-standing illness? Would you like to talk about it? How does it affect you?

- e. Were you or anyone in the family hospitalized in the last 12 months? Would you like to talk about it?
- f. What is your daily routine when you wake up?
- g. What are some of the practices that you maintain in terms of hygiene?
- h. What kind of toilet facility do you usually use?

2. Clothing

- a. What kind of clothes do you like? Do you follow any fashion trend?
- b. How often do you get new cloths and new shoes?
- c. How long do you wear a cloth? Does it disturb you to wear the same cloth for a long time?
- d. How do you feel when you inherit some cloths from others?
- e. What kind of clothes do you have for winter? Are they comfortable?

D. Bodily integrity and safety:

1. Have you ever been hurt? If yes, would you like to talk about it?
2. Where and when do you feel yourself safe?
3. Whom do you trust in the whole wide world? Why?

F. Social relationships:

Would you like to draw your friends for me and then we can talk about it? In any case following probes:

1. Friends:

- How many friends do you have? Would you like to talk about them?
- How would you describe your friendship to these people?
- What makes friends 'friends'?
- What makes people your own age 'not friends'? What would be some reasons why all are not friends?
- What caused you the most pain in your relationships? Would you like to talk about it?
- What do you think would be solution for this pain?

2. Family:

- Would you like to talk about your parents, your family? If yes,
- What are some of things you appreciate about your parents/family?
- What are some of the things you do not like so much about your family?

Parental responsibilities and state assistance:

- How is your relationship with your parents?
- Is your family different than other children's family? Why do you feel that?

3. Community/ Neighbourhood:

- Who are your neighbours?
- How would you describe your neighbourhood?
- What are some of the best things about your neighbourhood?
- What are some of things that you would like to see being improved?
- How safe is your neighbourhood? Safe, very safe, unsafe, dangerous
- Reasons for either answer – why would you call it safe/very safe/unsafe/dangerous?
- Do you know of any violent assault incidences in the neighbourhood, would you like to talk about it?
- Has there been any incident that has caused you extreme pain or shame? Would you like to talk about it? If, yes, then continue.

G. Education:

1. Where do you go to school? Do you like it?
2. How often do you miss the school? What is the reason of your absence?
3. How do you learn? Are you contented with your notes?
4. Could you learn even better? What prevents you to be a better learner?
5. What do you think, does the school help you to achieve your future goals?
6. Do you plan to learn further?
7. What do you think what would be the cause, if you could not learn further?

H. Freedom from economic and non-economic exploitation:

1. Do you handle money at home? If yes, what kind?
2. Do you do any work that leads you to getting money?
 - If yes, what kind of work?
 - Do you think you get paid enough for the work that you do?
 - Does it hinder your school activities?

I. Shelter and environment:

4. Housing

Would you like to draw a house for me?

- How would you describe your house? (Excellent, Good, Fair, Satisfactory, Poor)
- Would you like to talk about why you give this rating to the house?
- What are the things you think is essential for a household?
- Would you say, this is your house?
- Yes – Then what are some things that are missing?
- No – Can you describe this house? Why did you draw this particular thing?
- Do you know if it is a rented house or own one?
- Have you or anyone in the house been ill due to the housing situation? If yes, would you like to talk about it?

J. Leisure activities:

1. Do you play after school? What kind of sports/games do you play? What are your hobbies?
2. What are some of the things that hinders you from carrying out the games/sports that you like the most?
3. What are some of the favourable conditions that allows you to do this sport/play this game?
4. Have you ever been to the zoo, to an amusement park?

K. Respect:

1. What does respect mean to you? Is it important for you to be polite towards others?
2. How do you express your respect towards others?
3. How do others express their respect towards you?
4. Does it happen that people are not respectful with you? How do people behave when they are not respectful?
5. What makes people being not respectful?
6. Is it important to have your own mobile phone to be respected among your classmates?
7. Who are the children in your class, who are respected and what do you think why?
8. Are you aware of the fact that children have their own rights? What do you think, when are your rights injured?

L. Religion and identity:

1. What makes you different from other children? Is it good or bad that you are different?
2. How do you imagine yourself? How will you be as an adult?
3. What do you think, do you have all the chances to achieve your dreams?
4. What do you consider that are obstacles in achieving your dreams?
5. Is religion important for you? Does it help you to be a part of a community?
6. How do you celebrate Christmas?
7. Is it important for you to get gifts on Christmas Eve?
8. Is it important for you to give presents? What kind of presents do you give?

M. Non-discrimination

- In which cases do you feel that you are treated different?
- How are you treated at school?

N. Protection and preservation of identity

- How do your parents usually call you?
- Are you sometimes called other than your name?
- Do you feel that it is a punishment, or do you feel that it is something kind?

O. Separation from parents, family reunification

- Have you ever been separated from your parents?

- How have you been reunited?

P. Respect for the views of the child

- How is your discussion with your parents?
- Does it happen that you have an adequate opinion about something?
- Are you encouraged to express it?
- Have you ever been punished because of your opinion?

Q. Freedom of expression

- Do you always tell everything what is in your mind?
- What are the things what you have not told yet? Why are these still secrets?

R. Freedom of thought, conscious and religion

- Do you like to be a Christian? Does your religion connect or separate you from others?
- How do you celebrate the main feasts of your religion? Could you mention some examples?

S. Freedom of association

- Do you often attend birthday parties?
- Have you ever prevented or rejected to go to a birthday party? Why?
- Are you a part of any group?
- Are you supported by your parents to be the part of that group?

T. Right to privacy

- When you need silence, or time to learn or time to sleep, do you have your own room, your own space where you can do all these things?
- Do you have a phone? How is it? Why do you like it?
- Do you have a Facebook account? Is it good to have a fb account?
- Have you ever experienced that having an account is dangerous?

U. Access to information from the media

- Do you get enough information from television or any other media about your possibilities as a child?
- What is missing?

V. Protection from violence, abuse and neglect

- Why and when do you feel yourself neglected?

W. Children unable to live with their family.

- Does it ever happen that your parents were not near you?

X. Children with a disability

- Did you ever feel different because of your disability?
- When did you feel yourself disabled in your life?

Y. Children from minority or indigenous groups

- What does it mean to you to belong to a minority group?
- How do you feel yourself within the group?
- How do you feel yourself when you are outside of it?

Z. Drug abuse

- Does it ever happen to you that you have tried something what is prohibited for you as a child?
- Why have you tried it?
- Do you still want to continue with it?

AA. Inhumane treatment and detention

- Have you ever been punished by someone out of your parents?
- Did you feel it just or unjust?

BB. Time autonomy

1. What are the most pleasant moments of your day? Do you have enough time for it?
2. Are there any activities which you consider as obligations? Which are they?
3. How would you spend your time, if you would not be obliged to be involved in some activities?
4. Are there any activities which you are obliged to do, but you consider it useful? Which are they and why do you think that they are useful?

CC. Mobility

1. When was the last time you went outside of your town/ village?
2. What was the purpose of this journey?
3. How do you spend your summer holiday?
4. What was the means of transportation with which you have ever travelled?

Appendix II – Interview Guide – Experts

I. Interview Guide - Experts

Personal Profile

1. Name
2. Age
3. Gender
4. Years of experience in the field
5. What is poverty? What are the various dimensions of poverty?

A. SDGs/ SDG 1 and its targets:

1. What are the responsibilities of your office/ organization to achieving the SDGs?
2. How relevant is the first SDG ‘end poverty in all its forms everywhere’ to your office/ organization?
3. How are you contributing towards eradicating extreme poverty? Are there people in Hungary still living on less than 1.90 USD per day?
4. What impact would it have on children?
6. In how far are social investments priority in Hungary? In how far is social redistribution significant in the country?
7. What are some steps that have been taken so that everyone has access to basic services?

B. Child Poverty

1. How is child poverty a violation of their rights?
2. What are some of the effects that child poverty has on children and then as adults?
3. What is most crucial to break the inter-generational cycle of poverty?
4. How does the problem of child poverty occur as part of broader poverty analyses in Hungary? How relevant is child poverty within this poverty analysis?

C. Multidimensional child poverty/ monetary child poverty:

1. What are some of multidimensional aspect of child poverty such as health, education, nutrition, water, sanitation, living conditions, information, protection Hungary focus?
2. What kind of services are ensured for the most deprived children?
3. How do you support the livelihood of the family and the employment of the parents?

D. CHANGES SINCE THE INTRODUCTION OF SDGs:

1. Since the introduction of SDGs in 2015 until now what do you think how has the issue of child poverty change?
2. What are the successes achieved?
3. What are some of the challenges in eradicating child poverty?
4. What are some of the best practices that you have adopted to implement the SDGs?

5. What are some of the lessons learned while implementing the SDGs that other countries could replicate based on Hungary's example?

E. Participation and advocacy:

1. How important is it to listen to children's opinion in the process of eradicating poverty? What are some of the methods you use to listen to children's opinions?
2. How do you build advocacy strategies for children?
3. How do you help children living in poverty make their voice to be heard?

F. Cooperation with other organizations:

1. In how far is your organization cooperating with the government (and vice versa) in order to achieve SDG1 and eradication of child poverty?
2. Do you think this cooperation is successful, in which sense should it be improved?

G. Monitoring:

1. What kind of monitoring mechanisms are developed in order to check the fulfilment of programmes for child poverty eradication?
2. Are there any milestones, measurements and analyses developed in order to achieve child poverty eradication?

H. Non-discrimination

- What kind of measurements do you take to ensure that every child is treated equal without discrimination, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background is?

I. Best interests of the child

- How do you take into consideration the best interests of the child during your decisions and actions?

J. Parental guidance and a child's evolving capacities

- Is it a priority during your work to respect the rights and responsibilities of parents and carers to provide guidance and direction to their child as they grow up?
- What kind of measurements do you take to ensure that children will be grown up by their own parents, even if they live in poverty or deprivation?

K. Life, survival and development (capability)

- What kind of measurements do you take to ensure that children survive and develop to their full potential?

L. Protection and preservation of identity

- What kind of measurements do you take to prevent the child's name, nationality or family

relationships from being changed unlawfully?

M. Respect for the views of the child

- What kind of programmes do you have which enable children to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously?
- In which cases do you think are these important?

N. Freedom of expression

- How do you help children to express their thoughts and opinions and to access all kinds of information?

O. Freedom of thought, conscious and religion

- How do you help parents to guide their children to think and believe what they choose and also to practise their religion?

P. Freedom of association

- How do you promote freedom of association for children?

Q. Right to privacy

- Do you have any prescriptions in the law which protect the child's private, family and home life, including protecting children from unlawful attacks that harm their reputation?
- How is it implemented? How does it work in practice?

R. Access to information from the media

- How do you encourage the media to provide information that children can understand?
- How do you help protect children from materials that could harm them?

S. Protection from violence, abuse and neglect

- What can you do to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them?

T. Children unable to live with their family.

- If a child cannot be looked after by their immediate family, how can you provide them special protection and assistance? This includes making sure the child is provided with alternative care that is continuous and respects the child's culture, language and religion.
- Are there enough foster parents in the country? Are they prepared enough for their task?

U. Children with a disability

- How do you support disabled children and their families?

- How does disability affect children living in poverty?

V. Health (capability)

- How do you provide clean environment and education on health and well-being so that even children living in poverty can stay healthy?
- Are the measurements satisfactory? What should be changed or improved?

W. Education (capability)

- How can you help through education the development of children living in poverty?
- How can you provide them equal chances in learning?

X. Children from minority or indigenous groups

- How do you provide the chance for children from minority or indigenous groups to learn and use their language, customs and religion of their family?
- How do you provide them an inclusive way of development?

Y. Leisure, play and culture (capability)

- How do you help children living in poverty to fulfil their rights to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities?

Z. Child labour, economic exploitation (capability)

- How do you protect children from economic exploitation and work that is dangerous or might harm their health, development or education?
- What is the minimum age for children to work? How do you ensure that work conditions are safe and appropriate for children?

AA. Drug abuse

- How do you protect children from the illegal use of drugs and from being involved in the production or distribution of drugs?
- Are children living in poverty more involved in drug abuse? How can you avoid this?

BB. Sexual exploitation

- How do you protect children from sexual abuse and exploitation?
- Are children living in poverty more involved in sexual exploitation? How can you avoid this?

CC. Abduction, sale and trafficking

- How do you protect children from being abducted, sold or moved illegally to a different place in or outside their country for the purpose of exploitation?

- Are children living in poverty more involved in abduction, sale and trafficking? How can you avoid this?

DD. Other forms of exploitation

- How do you protect children and even poor children against exploitation for political activities by the media or for medical research?

EE. Inhumane treatment and detention

- Are children living in poverty arrested, detained or imprisoned? How do they get in this situation?
- How do you provide them a respectful and careful treatment in prison? What should be changed, what should be improved?

FF. Recovery from trauma and reintegration

- How do you provide help for children who have experienced neglect, abuse, exploitation, torture to help them recover their health, dignity, self-respect and social life?

GG. Juvenile justice

- How do you enable children who have been in conflict with the law to reintegrate into society?

HH. Knowledge of rights

- How do you help children and adults to know about the Convention on the Rights of the Child?

Appendix III – Note on the research



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27 January 2020

To,
The Experts
Civil Societies, Multi-Lateral Organizations and State of Hungary
Hungary

Subject: Note on Research by Ms. Imola Rencsik on Child Poverty through University of Vienna

Dear Madam/Sir,

Greetings from Vienna.

The University of Vienna was founded in 1365 and is one of the oldest universities in the German-speaking world and one of the largest universities in Central Europe. Ms. Imola Rencsik is a Master student at the Department of International Development. I know Ms. Rencsik in the capacity of her lecturer and presently as her thesis advisor.

As a requirement for her Programme, she has to submit a thesis. Ms. Rencsik's topic is Child Poverty in Hungary through the SDGs Framework. The overall objective of the study is to explore dimensions of child poverty through the framework of SDGs. For the purpose of the study, she needs to conduct at least 4 interviews with experts on child rights and child poverty.

In this regard, I kindly request your cooperation and support to answer Ms. Rencsik's questions. Ms. Rencsik's research will certainly add value and generate knowledge in the scientific community as well as in the State and Civil Society processes.

As part of her dissemination strategy, Ms. Rencsik will share the findings of this study with you.

Please do not hesitate to contact me in case of further clarifications.

Truly,

Dr. Reena Mary George
(was signed)