

CASE LAW MOSAIC

QUARTERLY INFORMATION BULLETIN OF THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF NATIONAL MINORITIES IN HUNGARY, 2021/2

In the context of the implementation of an EU-funded project for the rehabilitation of run-down urban areas in the eastern Hungarian city, the petitioners complained to the Minority Ombudsman that the local government, without providing them with alternative accommodation, had asked several Roma families to leave their social housing, which was to be renovated within the framework of the rehabilitation project, within a short deadline. In addition to the specific complaints, the implementation of the project has been the subject of a number of press reports, and NGOs have also reported on the difficulties encountered.

In view of the vulnerable situation of the families concerned, and in particular the overriding interests of the children, the Minority Ombudsman was informed on an ad hoc basis. In this context, she also contacted the mayor of the municipality, the president of the Roma nationality self-government and the Deputy State Secretary for Social Inclusion. The Minority Ombudsman drew the Deputy Secretary of State's attention to the risk of evictions and homelessness among Roma families, which could be exacerbated by the coronavirus epidemic.

In addition, the Minority Ombudsman informed the complainants about the relevant provisions of the Government Decree on the different rules for state and municipal leases during an emergency, in particular that in the case of municipal leases expiring during an emergency, the lease may be extended until the end of the emergency, but this is not automatic, as it requires active action by the tenant before the expiry of the lease.

Given that the case has raised further questions for clarification, in particular in relation to the implementation of the objectives of the project, in particular the obligations of the municipal government that won the competition and implemented the project, and that it is necessary to know the developments since the requests were made, the investigation is ongoing.