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Community Culture and the Roma

Researching Roma Community Houses in the North Hungarian Region

PhD dissertation theses

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1.   Context and the selection of the research theme

By the early 21ˢᵗ century culture has changed in terms of its quantity, quality and values. Globalisation, accession to the EU, the emergence of modern regional development concepts, social integration, inclusion processes, as well as the development of civil society and local communities have all become crucial in the planning and renewal of community culture processes. New phenomena have created the need to rethink tasks, redefine old concepts, as well as to build and use new knowledge. Community culture activities can also only be renewed on the foundation of the real social situation and feasible expectations. A structure of tasks should be established that facilitates the inclusion of the poor and those on the fringes of society, while strengthening local communities. In the initial stage of this research, we started out from the assumption that Roma community houses are essentially[1] those elements of the institutional system of community culture and community mediation that carry out important, gap-bridging and complex socio-cultural[2] activities – both local government and government tasks – aimed at speeding up the inclusion and the social integration of the Roma.

At the initial stage of selecting the research theme there were many grey spots in the above area. There was virtually no information available on the history of Roma community houses after the change of the political and economic system in Hungary; no creditable databases are available in this regard even today. Online reports can be read now and again about the foundation of Roma community houses, or at times about their closing down. No reliable data is available, however, about the number of these centres, their organisational structure, types, activities and financing. With the exception of a few earlier sources, no objective data are available about the organisations that operate these community spaces, the managers of these venues and even about the number and distribution of their visitors (Lukács 2000). A seemingly paradoxical question that arose was whether these centres can be regarded as segregating institutions since their primary target audience is the Roma population; are these places that exclude any other, non-Roma visitors? Do the Roma community centres act as segregating organisations? In order to answer these questions, the idea of examining the Roma community centres in Hungary with empirical tools emerged. Following the selection of the research theme, the empirical and theoretical information was analysed in the past few years. The findings of these were previously published at various platforms and were shared at several conferences. After this, primary and secondary hypotheses (hypotheses and sub-hypotheses) were set up using the variables included in the research.

2.   Research methods used

Regarding the aspects of the sample selection, the primary database compiled from various sources contained 228 Roma community centres and Roma organisations across Hungary.[3] Importantly, instead of conducting a nationwide study, we decided to focus on three counties of North Hungarian region, mainly because of such restraints as the length of the dissertation, as well as the personal and financial resources of the research project. During the research, the venues already included in earlier databases were supplemented by those identified by online research as well as any other associated organisations we discovered through the 'snowball-effect' method. The database was 'cleaned' primarily through telephone conversations, and later with the help of two interviewers. It was established that the sample

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[1] Phrases used synonymously with Roma community houses: Roma community venues, Roma community spaces, Roma houses.
[2] Their activities equally extend to cultural, social welfare, health and educational tasks.
[3] These include not only Roma community houses but Roma minority local governments, foundations, associations as well as Roma organisations established with an educational and cultural purpose.

will include 32 venues in the three counties of the North Hungarian region that were available for the purposes of the research (11 in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County, 11 in Heves County and 10 in Nógrád County). Contact was successfully established with most of them and we conducted interviews with them. Three Roma community centres could not be reached after several failed attempts. While this research is neither nationwide nor representative, it is nevertheless of regional importance since data were collected at virtually all the venues in the sample, allowing us to make accurate statements about the North Hungarian region; moreover, in its main characteristics, the sample also reflects the features of all community venues.

Depending on the various objectives, the research strategy applied was in part deductive (theoretical) and in part inductive (empirical). Data tables of studies published on the theme earlier as well as data lines of statistics on community culture were used in the section devoted to community culture after the change in the political and economic system in Hungary. Whenever a comparison was possible, aggregate tables were made using these data; these were processed with a secondary analysis method. In the theoretical part, the available literature was analysed and theoretical conclusions were drawn about the appearance and utilisation of cultural and social capital in the contexts of community culture and the Roma community culture venues.

In the planning phase of the empirical research, quantitative and qualitative empirical methods were used in combination, supplementing each other. Chosen as the main research method during the research stage in 2015 and 2016, the hypotheses were mainly explored by way of a quantitative method: with a questionnaire survey primarily containing close-end questions. The questionnaire had 67 questions, comprising both dependent and independent variables. Close-ended questions were used in order to make the answers easier to process. The questionnaires were filled in by the heads of the operating institutions as well as by the staff members of the community centres. It is our contention that since we worked with a homogenous sample, the completed questionnaires and interviews allowed us to draw thorough conclusions even though we did not have the opportunity to work with a larger sample. The examination of the changes of organisational structure, activities and financing were of top priority from the perspective of social integration.

Supplementing the questionnaire survey, a half-structured interview accompanied the questionnaires. The interviews were conducted with the managers of the region's 14 community venues. These 14 interviewees were in effect managing 19 Roma community venues, since in several cases, mainly in Nógrád and Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén counties, one organisation is able to manage more than one venue. Thus, more than two-thirds of the managers of the community venues discussed were reached. As laid down by the research methodology objectives, the interview was designed to consolidate and deepen the research objectives to be fulfilled by the questionnaire. Like in the case of the questionnaire, the priority focus was on the organisational structure, activities and financing. The interview conducted was not an in-depth interview; instead, in-depth information was gathered about the features of the operation of the community venues, the professional factors that drive their managers as well as about the local environment that influences their activities.

Another, structured sketch interview was also made; it was filled in by Roma men and women who visit community centres. Altogether 10 interviews were conducted in the region. It is important to note that a visitor questionnaire was not part of the initial research plans. According to the original plans, the aim was to supplement and add more in-depth information to the statements gathered from the questionnaire and the managerial interview. As the number of elements was low, no scientifically reliable conclusions could be drawn and no generally valid statements could be made. However, the statements made based on the visitor questionnaire and the questionnaire itself could serve as a sound basis for larger-scale research conducted at a later date using a bigger visitor sample. To our knowledge, the utilisation of

social and cultural capital in the institutional system of community culture and in Roma community venues had not been researched prior to the current project.

The questionnaire and the interviews were compiled based on the theoretical elements. The organisations and persons studied were contacted in person, by phone or by email. In Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén and Nógrád counties the venues were reached with the help of interviewers in some cases. The analysis of the research results was done using an SPSS database with the aim of establishing institutional typologies within the currently existing Roma community centres along the dissertation's hypotheses. The open-ended questions were summed up in an Excel table, thus, after the coding process, they were made accessible for statistical analysis. The interviews were typed and brief summaries were created of them. The research is regional, while its time dimension is built on the empirical examination of the processes from 2001 to 2015. It was our ambition to identify areas of comparison in the research. Indeed, comparisons were made between the counties, settlement types (county seat, town, village), the types of venues (children's centre, after-school programme, traditional community venue, minority school, integrated community and service centre), and between the for-profit and non-profit sectors. The similarities and differences as well as the reasons for these were explored. The methodological tools were compiled, and the references and footnotes were used following the guidelines provided by authoritative literatures (Falus – Ollé 2008, Babbie 2003, Falus (ed.) 2004; Kozma – Sike 2004).

3. Findings, conclusions, scientific outlook, recommendations

The next section will discuss the independent findings and conclusions in the context of the research objectives and hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1: We assume that in the decades following the change in the political and economic system in Hungary, the qualitative, quantitative and value-related changes of culture, the mediatisation and digitalisation of culture, as well as cultural globalisation and its effects on Hungary resulted in a decrease in traditional community culture activities and the number of people they attract.

One of the priority objectives of this research was to present the fundamental changes and main trends that took place in the past 30 years in the cultural domain and within that in community culture using a scientific method. At the time of globalisation, a decrease can be observed in regard to available cultural events and programmes. People are generally inundated by modern mass cultural products. Global culture pushes traditional culture and its representatives into second line and gives preference to the transnational elite (Bayer 2000, 3-9). The vast changes in data carriers and data transfer have resulted in the various means of home entertainment and culture coming to the fore. The ever-expanding mass usage of the internet goes hand in hand with a decreasing interest in traditional community culture activities (Bárdosi – Lakatos – Varga 2004, 120). New data carriers mediate completely different content compared with the conventional venues and institutions mediating culture (Kuti 2009, 151-201). Many people have never participated in the traditional system of culture mediation; the number of visitors to institutions mediating culture has decreased and the structure of cultural consumption has changed. Visual culture has assumed priority compared to written culture (Kapitány – Kaptány 2009, 35-42). The social strata that fell behind and became poorer as a result of the economic crisis can no longer afford many cultural products (Benedek 2009, 115-151). Based on previous research, the layer passive to culture in Hungary was 37% in the 1980s, while a 1996 study reveals that is increased to 43%, while the same figure was 60% in 2003. Regarding the value selection of the population, when we compare the years 1996 and 2003, culture was pushed into the background, while its social prestige and value also

decreased (Hidy 1997, 137-157; Hunyadi 2005, 67).

The period from 1985 to 1994 was generally characterised by crisis and decline in virtually all areas of community culture.[4]

The number of *creative art communities* fell to almost half, and their membership decreased by more than a quarter in the surveyed period, which primarily resulted from the economic crisis after the change in the system in Hungary, the high unemployment rate, work overload as well as a decrease in solvent demand, and only secondarily by the negative effects of cultural globalisation, the rapid proliferation of mass culture and the changes in leisure time practices. This is confirmed by the fact that when the crisis ended, i.e. during the period of consolidation, after the new act on culture entered into effect, the number of creative communities steadily increased and rose threefold from 1994 to 2015.

A sudden jump in the number of *regular platforms of community culture* (clubs, circles, workshops) took place after 2008: it increased from 8,000 to 14,700. We believe that this can be partly explained by a decrease in the crisis that had started after the change in the political system, by an increase in leisure time as well as by an increase in the number of pensioners, their leisure time and participation in cultural activities.

A drastic decrease can be seen in the 2005-2014 period in regard to *training programmes and courses* too; however, the reasons for this were not those indicated by the hypothesis but, among other things, the modification of statistical data, the shortage of human, material and infrastructural resources in the majority of community culture institutions, and the highly competitive situation (too many 'rivals') in the area of adult education.

There was a significantly decrease in *popular science lectures* too: between 2005 and 2008 the number of lectures and those attending them fell by 75% and 58%, respectively. While 2014 data show that the number of lectures almost doubled as compared with 2008, this is more likely to result of a significant increase in the number of those who shared their data. In this element, however, the hypothesis seems to be borne out by the findings, since the drastic and continuous decrease can be primarily put down to the changed cultural consumption habits of the past 30 years or so. The number of events rose by 75 percent between 2005 and 2014.

Hypothesis 1 was only partly confirmed by statistical data. In the case of some community culture activities, the number of events and visitors actually decreased, but in the case of others an increase could be seen in the same categories. Our hypothesis was not confirmed either in that the number of visitors to community culture programmes did not change significantly in the past ten years: in an annual breakdown it amounted to an average of 73,000,000 visitors.

Hypothesis 2: We assume that the local governments of municipalities continue to play a major role in carrying out community culture tasks, as well as in the management and financing of institutions and community venues.
Following the change in the political and economic system in Hungary, cultural centres managed by companies and cooperatives closed down one after the other. The economic crisis, including a high rate of inflation, led to a continuous cutting down of funds in the central and local government budgets allocated to culture, community culture institutions and community venues. The management and

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[4] In order to confirm our hypothesis, as well as to explore and analyse the tendencies of community culture activities, we used the data tables of previous studies (Hidy 1997, Talata-Dudás 2009, Talata-Dudás 2011, EFOP Háttértanulmány [Background Study of the Human Resource Development Operational Programme] 2015, Közművelődési statisztika [Statistics on Community Culture] 2016). In cases where comparison was possible, we combined the previous data tables and conducted a secondary analysis with them.

financing of culture by the government decreased and thus the majority of community culture institutions were managed by local governments. From 2000 onwards the number of cultural centres again rose above 3,000 (Sári 2007, 127-128, Koncz 2005, 38-48). This numerical rise after the decline that followed the change in the system has two main reasons. Firstly, local governments realised that their local residents looking for cultural opportunities and venues for their cultural events needed community spaces. Similar places were also needed by the local governments as well as other institutions and organisations for their own social events, municipal and national celebrations and programmes. Secondly, Act CXL of 1997 stipulates that municipal local governments must provide community venues or community culture institutions to carry out their community culture tasks.[5] Thanks to this, as much as 73 percent of the 3,660 spaces carrying out community culture tasks were managed by local governments in 2004. Civil sector organisations managed 26.6 percent at the time (Gelencsér 2010, 563-577). The leading role of local governments thus resulted from legal regulation on the one hand, and from the fact that local governments had the resources required by management, maintenance and financing in the majority of municipalities. The dominance of local governments in this regard has remained to this day, since looking at the relevant data lines from the 2006-2015 period approximately half of those who provided data about carrying out community culture tasks were local governments. *Hence, hypothesis 2 is borne out by the above.*

Sub-hypothesis 2.1: The cost-effective approach taken by local government operators resulted in organisational changes in the area of community culture such as merging institutions, terminating their organisational autonomy, and carrying out tasks in a simpler organisational framework.

It was a trend in the 1990s that, modelled on Western European examples, multifunctional leisure time centres were operated, mainly in the places previously occupied by the cultural centres of larger towns. In order to maintain their budget balance, the local governments often performed their community culture tasks in a changed – typically minimised – organisational structure, by merging institutions and outsourcing. A typical tendency aimed at rational and cost-effective solutions was to perform task of public education, community culture and in some cases those pertaining to social welfare and healthcare in merged institutions, such as in so-called 'General' Cultural Centres (ÁMK) for example (Sári 2007, 127).

After the change in the country's political and economic system, new elements appeared among organisations operating community venues, such as for-profit organisations, non-profit associations and foundations, and later on public benefit companies. Based on 2014 data, municipal local governments amounted to only 51 percent (1,628) of organisations carrying out community culture tasks, but they still played a central role in this respect. Civil sector organisations carrying out community culture tasks represented 29 percent (Gelencsér 2010, 563-577). However, the number of institutions operated by local governments shows a decreasing tendency. An important and generally applicable reason for this is the merging of institutions necessitated by the budgetary restrictions. The municipal local governments often perform their tasks by establishing business organisations in which the community culture and community tasks and venues are integrated. The increase in the number of businesses also results from the fact that community culture institutions continue their operation as special public utility non-profit organisations or the operation of the community culture institutions is transferred by the local governments to civil sector organisations or in some cases to private individuals. The size of the given settlement also influences the form in which it operates: the number of civil sector organisations operating community venues is higher in larger towns, which we believe can be explained by the larger number of civil sector organisation undertaking cultural tasks, a higher level of organisation and differentiation, as well as the availability of material and human resources (EFOP Background Study

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[5] Act CXL of 1997 on the protection of cultural assets, museums, public library services and public education.

2015, 49-55). The establishment and increasing number of multifunctional institutions is a trend even now (Statistics on Community Culture 2015, 11-13; EFOP Background Study 2015, 50-52). The appearance of multifunctional institutions can also be explained by objectives aimed at rationalisation and cost-effectiveness. Local governments often opt to integrate several service provision areas (community culture, public collections, sports, social welfare, and healthcare) in one institution. *Hence, based on the above, sub-hypothesis 2.1 proved to be accurate.*

Sub-hypothesis 2.2: We assume that civil sector organisations increasingly participate in carrying out community culture tasks.

As indicated above, civil sector organisations appeared among the operators of community venues after the change in the system. In 2004, more than 26 percent of the 3,600 operators were civil sector organisations (Gelencsér 2010, 563-577). A continuous and significant rise can be observed from 2006 until today in the number of social (civil) sector organisations carrying out community culture tasks. Their proportion increased by 15 percent between 2006 and 2015 in the area of performing community culture tasks, which can be partly linked to local governments trying to realise a more pragmatic, flexible and cost-effective way of performing tasks. However, another important factor here is civil proactivity, as well as the fact that the community culture activity is a frequently undertaken, voluntary and much liked task among civil organisations. Data from 2014 show that 51 percent of organisations carrying out community culture tasks are civil sector organisations (Statistics on community culture 2015; EFOP Background Study 2015, 25). *In light of all the above data and context sub-hypothesis 2.2 is confirmed.*

Hypothesis 3: Based on previous research into the activities performed by Roma community venues, we assume that they primarily form part of the institutional system of community culture, i.e. the nationwide network of community culture venues, representing a special type of these. Hence, they mainly carried out community culture activities in the period surveyed in this thesis.

Roma community houses were studied within a nationwide research project conducted by the Autonomy Foundation in 2001. Based on this research, among others, we assumed that these venues fundamentally belonged to the large family of community culture institutions and community venues, since the 78 organisations in the scope of the above study had realised 1,300 programmes up to the time of the research, of which the largest amount of support was granted to their cultural and community culture events. Not infrequently, Roma community houses developed from Gypsy clubs founded in the period before the change in the system to carry out community culture activities, nurturing Gypsy culture and traditions (Lukács 2001, 63).

We also examined the activity performed by Roma community houses based on the work done by their staff. Their typical tasks were primarily linked to the operation and maintenance of the venues as well as activities aimed at the social integration of families and helping children lagging behind in their education. Concerts, balls, discos, writer-reader events and theatre productions – regarded as traditional community culture events – were no longer tasks performed in the majority of the researched venues. However, it must also be noted that based on the interviews conducted with the managers, nurturing, preserving and handing down Roma traditions to the younger generation are extremely important in these venues. Based on the opinions shared with us, both community culture activities and culture play an important role at these venues, since they are instrumental in decreasing the negative bias formed about Gypsies, strengthening the self-esteem of Gypsies as well as the Roma identity and the solidarity between Roma communities. It is also through culture that the relationship between Roma and non-Roma local inhabitants and communities is strengthened. Data suggest that while the community culture activity does not play a primary role at these venues, it continues to supplement, deepen and contribute to the success of the primary activities aimed at integration and helping children lagging behind in their education. The community culture activities at these venues are basically ones that support the

extracurricular self-managed, self-educational and culture-acquisition activities of the (mainly Roma) local population. They provide courses as well as services of adult education and ones aimed at improving people's quality of life. They familiarise participants with and help them nurture the values of national and ethnic culture, promote understanding and acceptance of minorities, and support knowledge acquisition, amateur creative and cultural activities of communities and individuals, primarily those forming part of a minority. Roma houses are important venues facilitating the building and maintenance of ties between cultures, while providing the conditions for cultural free time activities. Based on our research, Roma houses are mainly regularly operating community venues aimed at satisfying local needs by providing complex services in the areas of education, culture, social welfare and healthcare. *Based on the above, hypothesis 3 was not confirmed.*

Hypothesis 4: We believe that social and cultural capital are manifest and are utilised in community culture institutions and community venues in the same way as in institutions of public education.
In our dissertation, we carried out an analysis of capital theories relevant to our thesis, and within that the analysis of social and cultural capital in the context of community culture. Bourdieu distinguished between three forms of capital: cultural, social and economic. He broke cultural capital down into three large groups. Incorporated cultural capital (1) is of an individual nature and presumes some form of incorporation. The accumulation of such incorporated culture is preceded by an acquisition process, in which time is required for learning. Objectified cultural capital (2) is tangible and has a material property (paintings, written works, and instruments). Institutionalised cultural capital (3) is usually realised in the form of titles; e.g. academic qualifications or titles. The acquisition of cultural capital can also occur without planning, i.e. without those involved being aware of it (Bourdieu 1998, 155-177).

Social capital can be basically seen as a relative concept since it is typically defined in the relation between an individual and a community. A form of interaction between the individual and the community is always expected (Coleman 1998, 11-45; 2001; Fukuyama 1997, 23; 1999; 2000, 32-44 p.; Becker 1997, 13-31; 1998, 101-129). An activity performed by the individual represents an ambition to preserve resources deemed important, or is aimed at their acquisition (Lin 1997, 383-418). Social capital is based on exchanges in networks (Becker 1998, 101-129; Bourdieu 1998, 155-177; Coleman 1998, 11-45). It can be institutionalised via organisations (Bourdieu 1998, 155-177). It is related to power; it is actually a form of power (Weber 1987; Orbán – Szántó 2005, 6-7; Flap – DeGraf 1998, 129-155; Coleman 2001, 99-129). It is interpreted as a public good (Bourdieu 1998, 155-177; Putnam 2000) and a cultural phenomenon (Becker 1998, 101-129; Bourdieu 1998, 155-177; Coleman 1998, 11-45); as such it has a very strong integrating effect. Another of its characteristics is that norms and sanctions play a key role in its manifestation and operation (Coleman 1998, 11-45; 2001, 99-129). Applied to individuals, the fundamental condition required for the operation of social capital is trust (Fukuyama 1997, 23; Csermely 2005).

Based on Coleman (1998, 11-45) – who states that social capital also exists in dimensions outside families – it is our contention that the institutional system of community culture, or the network of community venues, induces social capital. It basically works in the same way as schools and hometowns because – in the context of social capital – it provides circumstances, social relations and relationships that cultural communities are built upon. The cultural communities, clubs, societies and study groups that operate in community culture institutions, community venues and Roma community houses are basically forms in which the importance of organising groups, building communities and the social capital is manifest and utilised. Bourdieu's institutionalised cultural capital can appear in the community venues examined in the scope of this research based on their activities, since they provide opportunities, places and practices for individuals to be organised into communities. We believe that the cultural processes (activities conducted in workshops, clubs, and cultural communities), non-formal training

programmes and opportunities for informal learning are suitable for the acquisition of Bourdieu's cultural capital (taking his basic definition) to be realised. The institutional system of community culture provides the opportunity (time and place) for the acquisition process of incorporated culture to take place too. This acquisition process, which also requires time for learning, can be basically understood as a community cultural and learning process taking place at community venues. In other words, the community culture and culture acquisition as well as informal, formal and non-formal learning are no other than the process of acquiring incorporated cultural capital. The mediation of Bourdieu's objectified cultural capital is basically one of the most marked forms of community culture activities (culture mediation: exhibitions, art circuit cinemas, writer-reader meetings, theatre productions etc.). Based on Coleman (1998, 11-45), it can also happen that social capital is generated by relationships between different communities. Coleman calls this a multiple relation in which the individual's capital created in one dimension is used by the same individual in a second or even third relationship. Such a multiple relation is also applicable to community venues. The social capital produced from the multiple relations of community spaces basically develops human capital by improving people's quality of life, expanding social connections and improving individual competences. *Based on the above, hypothesis 4 is confirmed.*

Sub-hypothesis 4.1: We assume that – similarly to traditional community culture institutions and community venues – Roma community venues also have social and cultural capital, which they further develop.

Based on the above-discussed theoretical and practical conclusions, the questionnaire survey of our empirical study inquired about communities that play an important role in regard to social capital. It was found that 75 communities operated at the venues surveyed. These communities represent the framework and form of the manifestation and utilisation of social capital. The presence of social capital was also shown by the existence of voluntariness and its extent at the venues discussed. Altogether 312 people worked at these venues, with 31% of them (98 persons) on a voluntary basis. The social capital (in the sense of capital of relations) can be regarded high in the case of Roma community houses whose networks of relations are mainly local, micro-regional and regional. It transpired from the interviews conducted with managers that the social capital was already present when these houses were established since the founders came from among civil organisations and volunteers who wanted to do something for the culture of the Roma, as well as for their social integration and inclusion.

The managers of these venues did not only wish to include tasks related to the afore-mentioned objectives but also aspired to build and develop local communities and hence build social capital through these communities. Other values they community houses have – related to social capital and confirming its existence – are sincerity, solidarity, listening to each other, reliability, openness, special treatment, a family-like atmosphere and trust. The visitor questionnaire also contained questions about some important elements of social capital such as the capital of relations, the presence of social norms, helpfulness, civil and voluntary participation as well as the presence of trust within the Roma community houses and felt towards them. Based on the answers, visitors mainly came to these venues to learn and make friends. They said they enjoy being part of these communities and their children also like coming to these places. Most of them also added that they made new acquaintances at these venues, which strengthened their social relations, or social capital. As expressed by the visitors, by coming to these venues they can be part of a larger community where mutual appreciation, time spent together as well as shared interests and needs help the Roma children, Roma adults and other others who use the services of these community houses to find common ground. Visitors admitted that they utilise the social capital they acquire here since they have many conversations, exchange their thoughts and problems in places outside the community houses. The responses clearly show that visitors feel they can rely on the people

they met here in the future. As time passed, this is how mutual trust – which is the basis of these relationships – formed between the visitors. The majority of the respondents also said that they met people at the community houses who did not become their friends but helped them a lot later on with their everyday problems. The majority of the respondents said they had previously done voluntary work, which is an important segment of social capital and helps to develop it.

To sum up, the community cultural and educational activities, informal learning, non-formal and formal training courses, community development and adult education programmes all mean social capital, developing it and ultimately contribute to enriching human capital. In light of this, we believe that Coleman's social capital and Bourdieu's cultural capital are not only present but also acquired at Roma community venues and represent one of their fundamental features. *We think that sub-hypothesis 4.1 is confirmed based on both the theoretical and the empirical studies conducted.*

Hypothesis 5: We believe that socio-cultural activities fostering social integration have by now become a crucial part of Roma community venues.

After exploring literature relevant to the theme and based on my own research, it can be stated that no scientific theory has been established for the definition and practice of social integration. We have not yet found works or compilations of texts detailing the integration process of Gypsies. We believe that Roma community houses fulfil their role in social integration, which they themselves undertook, through the socio-cultural activity explored in this dissertation's theoretical and empirical sections, discussing their cultural, educational, health and social welfare activities. Included among these cultural and community culture activities are concerts, balls, discos, writer-reader meetings, cultural events of civil organisations, camps, family days, sports events, theatre visits, workshops, exhibitions, the cultural events organised by religious organisations as well as organising leisure time programmes for children and adults, and the special task of community building. Forming part of activities of education and training are the teaching and education of children and adults, activities performed by developmental educators as well as speech therapy and tasks aimed at helping those lagging behind at school. Healthcare activities include services rendered by district nurses and doctors at the community venues, as well as events, programmes and lectures connected to the protection of health. Social welfare tasks included those aimed at supporting families, the mentoring of Roma families, helping them with life-management advice and practical tips useful in their everyday lives.

In the case of Roma community venues, the main frequently or regularly performed activities aimed at social inclusion and integration are children and adult education. Events and legal advice provided by civil organisations aimed at helping the Roma represent a smaller percentage but are also frequently or regularly held at the venues. Hence, it can be stated with certainty that when compared with traditional community culture events, tasks pertaining to social integration and inclusion now play a primary role and are far more frequent and more typical at these community venues. The most important of these are aimed at helping children who are struggling in school, supporting Roma families and facilitating their social integration. Developmental educational and speech therapy activities are also among the regularly held activities at Roma community houses. Family care and community development tasks help the lives of Roma families and their social integration. All this is confirmed by the interviews conducted with the managers of the venues. Respondents believed that the two main tasks of community houses were the facilitation of social integration and inclusion. The majority of respondents said that basically every activity at these venues serve these two main goals. The professional work conducted at the Roma houses are determined by considerations like the size of the village or town, its historical and social past, the nature and quantity of needs that arise locally, the theoretical qualifications of the managers of these venues and their practical experience, as well as the traditions of social integration that already existed at the given venue.

It was an important observation that educational and cultural activities should not be separated since they – as suggested by positive examples of multicultural education – are interrelated, supplement each other and form a synergy (Torgyik 2009, 31-42; Banks – Banks 2011, 11; Banks 2016). Educational processes naturally include elements of culture, while aspects of education are bound to be part of community culture programmes. The same observation can be made about social welfare and health programmes and development. The venues regard it as their mission to familiarise their visitors with Roma and Hungarian culture, and nurture these traditions; they can primarily realise these at family events, museum visits, exhibitions, handcraft workshops, events aimed at nurturing tradition and events mediating culture. It is exactly through cultural programmes that visitors are assisted in making higher quality cultural choices, while also helping them to shape their worldview and extending the scope of their choices. It is highly important and beneficial in terms of tolerance and mutual acceptance that most venues – mainly after-school programmes – are attended not only by Roma children but also by the children from the majority too, most of whom come from a disadvantaged background. *Based on the above, hypothesis 5 is confirmed.*

Sub-hypothesis 5.1: We also believe that pedagogical and educational activities have become one of the key activities at the Roma community venues in past years.

Based on our empirical research it can be stated that by now activities in the areas of pedagogy, education and training have become key activities in Roma community venues. This is partly confirmed by the fact that the programmes were primarily organised for children. Over the two years we examined (2015-2016) 65 events or programmes were organised for children at the venues included in the study, most of which were aimed at helping children who are lagging behind in their studies to catch up. In addition to this, value-mediating leisure activities which taught children behavioural patterns were also significant. Considerable interest was shown in arts and crafts workshops and programmes. There were 58 events or programmes organised for adults in 2015-2016, the majority of which were courses teaching crafts, but agricultural trainings and nationally registered (OKJ) training programmes were also popular. Based on the empirical studies we can distinguish two main types of trainings. The first type comprises educational and training programmes primarily promoting social integration (trainings aimed at mastering crafts, OKJ trainings, programmes aimed at helping primary school children to catch up with their studies, and courses teaching business). The second type of trainings are those aimed at helping participants in their everyday life; included here are trainings aimed at strengthening other competences, helping participants to acquire everyday life-management skills, as well as agricultural and health trainings.

The professional principles of the managers we interviewed were primarily linked to the system of objectives and tasks that appear in the processes of social integration and inclusion. In the case of most interviewees, child-centeredness, priority attention devoted to children from disadvantaged backgrounds, child poverty, and the strengthening of families as a safety net were regarded as important. They also expressed that differentiation, preparing children for life and the realisation of positive pedagogical methods, equal opportunities and social sensitivity were important considerations. Respondents also underlined that teachers are hindered on their planning work by the frequent changes in the educational system. The founders of the Roma community venues that we examined recognised that differentiation, which is highly necessary in dealing with disadvantaged children, is impossible or extremely difficult to realise in the traditional – virtually segregative – school type of today. They expressed the view that community venues should undertake tasks (e.g. the development of skills and competences) that the formal educational system has no capacity to perform. There is great potential in Roma community venues in that they have the opportunity to deal individually with the children and adults who attend their events and programmes. Differentiation at community venues also appears in the social, health, educational and cultural dimensions of the social integration and inclusion tasks. We

believe that it also forms part of the complex area of services aimed at integration that cannot be provided by institutions and organisations performing only their own, specialised tasks. It is important that visitors to Roma community houses would feel a stronger Roma identity, and – since non-Roma visitors also attended the events in several of the Roma community venues we examined – that visitors in general would be able to equally enjoy the services provided by these venues. For this reason, Roma community houses cannot be regarded segregating institutions. Based on their present activities, these venues also participate in the local economic as well community and social development processes. In these cases the economy and community development are intertwined with the pedagogical and educational activities. The children and the adults can master basic agricultural competences, which later might help them make a living. *Based on the above, sub-hypothesis 5.1. is confirmed.* Pedagogical and educational activities have indeed become key tasks at Roma community venues.

Hypothesis 6: We assume that due to the limited financial resources of the operating organisations and the lack of centrally assigned normative funds, the existence of Roma community venues primarily depends on the availability of tenders. Since there is no central or local financing mechanism in place that would ensure the continuous operation of these community venues, their existence is vulnerable. Hence, this uncertainty largely impacts the professional work that can be conducted at these venues.

In the period surveyed fifty development projects were realised in Roma community houses to the tune of approx. 612,000,000 forints, most of which were aimed at construction and refurbishing works as well as purchasing equipment. The proportion of funds used for maintenance and operation was only 4 percent. The most important source of funds were the sub-programmes of the EU's Social Renewal Operational Programme (38%). Projects aimed at helping the most disadvantaged micro-regions (LHH projects) constituted 14 percent, while the support granted to municipal local governments was 12 percent, and the communities own resources was 10 percent. We found that in the period surveyed the venues were not granted continuous normative support neither at country nor at local levels. Another key element that could grant the successful operation of these venues is the provision of appropriate human resources, i.e. the existence of a professional base. Uncertainty prevails in this regard too due to the lack of normative financing. The sporadic nature and limited duration of financing only allows the fixed-duration employment of professionals, which prevents the long-term planning of professional work and human resources provision. Data clearly show that as a result of this uncertain financing the number of staff members permanently employed in this area is virtually non-existent. It can be stated that virtually only fixed-duration employment contracts were concluded in the period surveyed. Interviewees confirmed that the limited availability and cyclical nature of funds is a fundamental hindrance to long-term planning. Once funds received from tenders and other sources run dry, first the operational period of the venues are reduced, which leads to a decreased number and quality of the services they can provide and in the worst-case scenario to the closing down of the venues. Hence, many years or even decades of hard work are wasted, development projects grind to a halt and the entire operation can cease. Regrettably, this also results in the millions of forints spent on infrastructural developments being 'pointless'. Interviewees also expressed their opinion about the changes in activities at Roma community centres: they said that while Roma integration and inclusion objective remained the same, certain activities were modified, discontinued or supplemented. These changes were always inextricably linked to the availability of funds, the constraint of satisfying tender requirements and to the consideration of local needs. Some of the interviewees indicated that in the initial period educational activities played a central role at their venues, mainly because of the need to meet the requirement of producing mandatorily expected indicator numbers, and then the focus of activities shifted to the development of competences as well as events and programmes aimed at quality leisure time. *Based on all this, hypothesis 6 is confirmed.*

Hypothesis 7: we also assume that the shortage of professionals able to manage and maintain Roma community houses, prepare tenders and deal with EU projects poses a severe problem.

Based on our empirical study, it transpired that 78 percent of full-timers working at Roma community houses had a matriculation exam and higher education qualifications; out of them 51 percent had degrees. The percentage of those with higher education qualifications is also high (81%) among part-timers (88 persons). This high percentage in both areas can be primarily explained by the specialised tasks they need to perform. As stipulated by law and specified in tender requirements, positions requiring the carrying out of legal, psychological, family carer and speech therapy tasks can obviously only be filled by people with higher education qualifications. Another explanation for the high percentage of those with higher education degrees is that in the areas of organisation, financing method, financial technique and activity the community venues are trying to comply with the strict professional, budgetary and administrative requirements set by EU tenders, which places a high demand on the managers and staff members of the venues in regard to organisational skills, monetary and accounting practices and professional knowledge. A further factor that plays a part in this situation that due to unemployment of degree-holders – resulting from the 'overproduction' of graduates – those with higher education degrees take every opportunity to find work. Our research established that Roma community houses indeed had the competent, appropriately qualified professionals required for their overall management, operation and financial management. *Hence, based on the above, hypothesis 7 proved to be unfounded.*

After the presentation of the research findings and the verification of the hypotheses, the next section will be devoted to presenting the new scientific results as well as the social and practical usefulness of our research, while discussing the future implications of this dissertation.

Regarding the new scientific results, we decided to undertake a project aimed at the examination of community culture and the Roma in a context and complexity that had not been carried out by previous literatures and studies. The declarations and connections established by this work in the areas of cultural studies, educational science and minority studies have introduced a new system of relationships in the given theme.

No study before this dissertation had explored the organisation, activities and financing of community culture venues after the change in the country's political and economic system; moreover, no explanations had been previously given for the connections between these elements. We believe that the secondary analysis of previous data and research findings about community culture, as well as the compilation of new summary tables and the exploration of the connections and tendencies they contain will contribute to extending the body of scientific knowledge in the area of community culture.

The theoretical frameworks set up in this dissertation were borrowed from disciplines that had previously not been used in this context, and therefore will probably yield new, scientifically researchable results for the area of community culture for Roma community venues. We believe that the adoption of capital theories – i.e. social and cultural theories – in the analysis of community culture and minorities had not been carried out in previous studies. We proved both in the theoretical and empirical parts of this work that social capital is a fundamental attribute of community culture institutions and community venues, as well as for Roma community houses. We believe we successfully confirmed that Roma community venues are important and integral elements in the processes of social integration, social inclusion and the fight against poverty.

In our research into Roma community houses we presented and analysed the educational and pedagogical activities conducted in them, thus contributing to the body of scientific knowledge in the

area of pedagogy. We believe that our theoretical analyses and empirical study helped to broaden the scope of scientific studies linked to minority communities and also opened up new research dimensions.

We believe that the methodological basis and orientation discussed and analysed in the subchapter on community studies will prove useful in future research and studies in the area of community culture. One of the main – and now priority – objectives of community culture is the development and strengthening of local communities. The starting point for this must be the scientific study of communities, which requires the review of already existing theoretical and practical knowledge, as well as their critical analysis and adaptation to today's reality; this entails the further development of the already existing methodological basis as well as the elaboration of new methods, the first step of which – we hope – we took in the relevant subchapter of our dissertation.

We maintain that the statements made in this dissertation about social and cultural capital confirm the importance of community culture activities as well as that of the work carried out in Roma community houses. Moreover, they increase the professional, social and political recognition of these venues; it is hoped that it will contribute to their receiving additional resources. We also believe that our research pertaining to social and cultural capital, as well as the statements and results formulated therein might serve as the basis of future research and studies. Given the right conditions, the research conducted here into the social and/or cultural capital manifest in Roma community houses and community culture institutions can be expanded into country-level research.

Our study of Roma community houses can also provide the foundation for a more in-depth analysis of the pedagogical activity and the educational methods used in them. A new potential research area linked to this theme includes the analysis of the theoretical and methodological basis used to implement the pedagogical activity aimed at realising social integration and inclusion, as well as the exploration of the experiences gained and general conclusions drawn at these venues. Another possible area of research is the examination of the toolkit the employees of community venues use to realise differentiation and multiculturalism in their educational activities conducted at these places.

Based on the findings of our research, we wish to make the following practical recommendations.

From the perspective of future research, it is important to complement the community culture statistical data lines with data lines about the minority community cultural activities. Based on this, a data- and information base could be compiled about the organisations dealing with minority community culture, thus laying the foundation for future research projects.

The survival and operation of Roma community houses are basically threatened by the haphazard and cyclical nature of their financing. For this reason, it is extremely important to specifically grant these venues some kind of normative government support, which could be similar to the normative support rendered to community culture and public collections and could be provided if these venues meet predefined requirements and give guarantees in regard to their organisational structure, activities and infrastructure. The elaboration of the aforesaid system of criteria would require the establishment of a professional committee whose members should include experienced and competent employees of Roma community houses.

In order to conduct more in-depth professional work, to share experiences and information, and to more efficiently represent their own interests, the Roma community houses should be organised into a network, similar to what already exists in the case of after-school programmes. Special courses, training programmes and conferences should be designed to deepen the professional knowledge of the currently available human resources.

We also recommend Roma cultural mediation and Roma community house management programmes to be launched in higher education.

To this day there is no nationwide cultural and educational professional and methodological centre in Hungary that would deal with the problems of the Roma minority and would facilitate the work performed at community culture institutions and Roma community venues. The establishment of such a nationwide centre would be a crucial to developing the above-mentioned network, to deepening professional work and to making the representation of interests more efficient.

It is also recommended that a collection of texts about social integration, its conceptual approach, as well as its theoretical and practical aspects be compiled and published, as it would not only be useful teaching material in higher education but would also be instrumental in the planning of government programmes aimed at helping Roma minorities.

It is further recommended that the National Institute for Culture (Nemzeti Művelődési Intézet) include among its tasks the rendering of professional and methodological help to Roma community house and organisations dealing with minority community culture.

In order to make professional work ergonomic and create synergy in its performance, continuous cooperation and agreements are needed alongside the development of joint programmes between the representatives and organisations of the areas of community culture, public education and minorities.

Based on all the above, the practical utilisation of this dissertation could be further facilitated by a recommendation made for the relevant ministries and supporting organisations with the aim of laying the foundations for decision-making linked to community venues and the facilitation of the implementation of such decisions.

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- 27-28. Nov. 2015. Education of teachers conference, Inland good practices. Value forming activities of minorities in the past and present. Eger, Eszterházy Károly College. Presentation title: Roma community centers in Hungary.
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- 26. Sep. 2012. 70. year jubilee conference to honor László Tamás Szabó 70. Debrecen, Academy of Sciences. Poster presentation: Roma community centers in Hungary and their effect on social integration.
- 10-11. May. 2012. Public Education – Higher education – Adult education – Community culture scientific conference and meeting in the memory of Sándor Karácsony & Mátyás Durkó. Debrecen, Academy of Sciences. Presentation title: Introduction into the assessment of the relationship of community culture and capital-theory.
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