

A complainant of Roma nationality turned to the Office of the Commissioner for Fundamental Rights about discrimination at work, but withdrew his complaint, claiming that he had managed to resolve the conflict in the meantime. Subsequently, another employee of the institution concerned requested that the case be investigated further.

A complainant of Roma nationality had his contract for a municipal rental apartment terminated due to rent arrears and was placed under temporary guardianship. In his complaint, the complainant asked the Minority Ombudsman for help in resolving his housing conditions and his problems with guardianship.

A petitioner spoke on behalf of Roma refugees from Ukraine. In his complaint, he complained about the discriminatory treatment of Roma at the Nyugati railway station, where he was told that Roma from Ukraine were received differently by volunteers and police officers than Ukrainian refugees. Due to the reorganisation of refugee care in Budapest, the Minority Ombudsman was no longer able to investigate the specific complaint, but indicated that she would keep a close eye on the conditions of provision of services to refugees.

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A petitioner of Roma nationality complained that the building authority had ordered him to demolish his residential building within 180 days. He reported that they were raising four minor children, one of whom was severely visually impaired, in difficult financial circumstances. They are afraid that if their property is demolished, they and their children could end up on the street.

A complainant of Roma nationality who had been evicted due to the demolition of a flat owned by the local government and was living in a caravan in the same place asked for help to resolve his housing situation. On the basis of a signal by the Minority Ombudsman, the local family assistance service visited the family and drew the attention of the Mayor to the municipal care obligations of the municipality in case of circumstances endangering the life and physical integrity of the person in need.

A public statue of emblematic value for a nationality community was removed from the façade of a property under renovation without prior consultation with the nationality self-government. In response to a request from the Minority Ombudsman, the property investor replied that the statue would be preserved and that it would be housed in a museum in the future. In her reply to the parties, the Minority Ombudsman stressed the importance of direct dialogue and consultation with the representatives of the nationality community concerned on the final placement of the work of art.



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QUARTERLY INFORMATION BULLETIN OF THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF NATIONAL MINORITIES IN HUNGARY , 2022/1



The National Self-Government of the Greeks in Hungary has lodged a complaint with the Minority Ombudsman against the removal during construction work of a statue made of copper plate by Makris Agamemnon, a prominent figure of the Greek community in Hungary. The figure of Hermes has been of the same age as the building and it was specially designed by the artist for the building, placed at the front of a building in Szentáromság Square in the Buda Castle district. **The Greek community and the NGOs concerned have complained that the statue was removed from its original location without their involvement and have no information about its whereabouts. The Minority Ombudsman addressed a request to the president of the board of trustees of the foundation responsible for the construction project and the removal of the statue**, in order to investigate and resolve the complaint in a satisfactory manner.

In his letter of reply, the president of **the board of trustees** of the foundation informed her that one of the foundation's fundamental objectives is the preservation and development of Hungary's cultural heritage, including works of emblematic value for the nationalities living in Hungary and works by foreign artists with affiliation to Hungary. **He indicated that this was why the foundation considered it of the utmost importance to take proper care of the Hermes statue that had come into their possession.** In his reply, he explained that the statue, which is part of the cultural heritage, has been **professionally removed, its safe storage has been arranged and the foundation intends to undertake the restoration of the work of art.**

According to the president of the board of trustees, **the foundation intends to donate the statue to the Museum of Fine Arts**, so that the work of art would become part of the museum's contemporary collection and would be open to the public.

In her letter of reply to the foundation and the complainant, the Minority Ombudsman stressed that one of the most important ways for the nationality communities concerned to exercise their rights recognised in the Fundamental Law with regard to architectural and artistic monuments and works of art linked to the cultural identity of their nationalities is to give them the opportunity to articulate their relationship to the work in question, their values and interests, and to express their opinions and proposals.

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The existence of a relationship of special value for the nationality concerned may be established even if the national community or any member of it does not have ownership, use or any other legal relationship to the work. In the light of the above, **the Minority Ombudsman considers it essential that a direct dialogue between the investor foundation and the elected representatives of the Greek community in Hungary should be established with regard to the final placement of the statue.** She stressed that if – in the form of a consultation with the National Self-Government of the Greeks in Hungary – the representatives of the nationality communities concerned are given the opportunity to express their views, a solution will be found to the question of the final placement of the statue which will be reassuring and acceptable to the Greek community in Hungary.