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Session 3

Ministering to Marginalized Groups: A Story from Hungary

Szabina Sztojka and Rev. Balázs Ódor

“There is a need in this country and we are urged to do something”

Both economically and socially, the predominantly Roma areas are the most disadvantaged parts of Hungary. In these areas, the employment rate is the weakest while the unemployment rate is the highest. Most of the families live in flats without modern conveniences, the graduation rate is the lowest and the number of violent and aggravated crimes is the very high. A 2010 survey showed that only 27 percent of the Roma population, ages 16-64, is employed, 15 percent is retired and 55 percent of households have no family member with a stable job.

As a part of its Roma Mission Strategy and Action Plans, in 2013 the Synod of the Reformed Church of Hungary committed “to strengthen in their mission identity and become open communities, which glorify the Lord, and where reconciliation with God opens new perspectives for individuals, families and the wider community.”

“I hope it will help our church and congregations to turn their faces more to the marginalized groups, not just Roma, and understand the call of God who calls us to ministry,” said Eszter Dani, head of the RCH Mission Department.

This reflection comes from two members of the Reformed Church of Hungary.



Szabina Sztojka works for the Mission Department of the Synod office of the Reformed Church in Hungary. She is actively involved in Roma mission and began studies at the Reformed Theology School in September in the hope of becoming a pastor.

The Rev. Balázs Ódor serves as Ecumenical Officer for the Reformed Church in Hungary.