

# URGENT ACTION

## ROMA FAMILIES REMAIN AT RISK OF FORCED EVICTION

**Around 100 families, mainly Roma, remain at risk of forced eviction in the ‘Numbered Streets’ neighbourhood of Miskolc, Hungary. The vast majority of previously evicted families have not been provided with adequate alternative housing or compensation.**

Since evictions resumed at the end of March, around 120 families have been forcibly evicted from the “Numbered Streets” neighbourhood. Many of those had to move in with relatives, to houses that need renovation, or face homelessness.

Amnesty International visited the “Numbered Streets” on 12 June and spoke to several families who expect to be evicted imminently and that are receiving confusing and conflicting information which increases the uncertainty they live in. E.M., who lives with her husband and two children, explained that they were told by the Miskolc municipality in February that they needed to leave their house by 13 April. This was followed by a visit by police officers on 8 April, reminding her that the family needed to leave before 13 April. On 9 April, E.M. went to the Roma Council in the city to ask for help and was told that she could stay until mid-July. On 10 April, the Order of Malta Association, an organization which is believed to have an agreement to assist the municipality in the “Numbered Streets” neighbourhood, also confirmed that the family could stay until mid-July. E.M. has continued paying the rent. On 25 June, E.M. confirmed that she had again been informally told that she could stay in her house beyond 13 July. However, the family hasn’t been provided with a temporary tenancy agreement or confirmation in writing of the extension of the tenancy and is unable to plan or predict when they will be required to leave.

O.A. his wife and their two children, who have an indefinite tenancy agreement with the municipality, had been offered alternative housing in the nearby “Iron Factory” neighbourhood, on condition that they would carry out significant repairs to the accommodation themselves to make it habitable. O.A. was told that the amount spent on repairing their new home would be deducted from their rent. O.A. signed to accept this conditions, but did not know how he would be able to afford the necessary repairs or when he would need to leave the “Numbered Streets”.

### **Please write immediately in Hungarian, English or your own language:**

- Urging the municipality to halt all evictions until genuine consultation with the affected families in the “Numbered Streets” neighbourhood has been conducted to identify all feasible alternatives to evictions and resettlement options, and until adequate alternative housing, compliant with requirements under international human rights law, is provided to all persons affected;
- Urging the city authorities to ensure that any evictions, including those of households living in the “Numbered Streets” neighbourhood are carried out only as a last resort after all alternatives have been considered and in full compliance with international human rights law and standards;
- Urging the city authorities to ensure that those forcibly evicted in 2014 and 2015 are provided with effective remedies including adequate alternative housing.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 10 AUGUST 2015 TO:**

#### Mayor of Miskolc

Mr Ákos Kriza  
Városház tér 8.  
Miskolc 3525  
Fax: (+36) 46 347 807  
Email: hivatal@miskolcph.hu

**Salutation: Dear Mayor**

#### Municipal representative in charge of the eviction

Dr Schweickhardt Gyula  
Városház tér 8.  
Miskolc 3525  
Fax: (+36) 46 348 801  
Email: schw.gyula@miskolcholding.hu  
**Salutation: Dear Dr Schweickhardt  
Gyula**

#### **And copies to:**

Minister of Human Capacities  
Mr Zoltán Balog  
Ministry of Human Capacities  
Akademia utca 3.  
Budapest 1054  
Fax: +36-1-795-0151  
E-mail: miniszter@emmi.gov.hu

### **Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:**

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 83/15. Further information:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur27/1428/2015/en/>

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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Miskolc authorities began their attempts to erase the “Numbered Streets” neighbourhood on 8 May 2014 when they decided to terminate rental agreements. The majority of residents of the neighbourhood are currently at risk of being rendered homeless by the evictions without receiving any compensation. The municipality hasn’t involved the residents in a meaningful consultation. Amnesty International wrote to the municipality on 14 July 2014 and met with the representatives of the municipality in October 2014.

On 14 May 2015, Hungary’s highest court ruled that Miskolc municipality violated the country’s equal treatment legislation when forcibly evicting hundreds of Roma from a long established neighbourhood, as well as their rights to private and family life and to freedom of movement.

On 5 June 2015, the Office of the Commissioner for Fundamental Rights published a report on the situation in Miskolc criticising the municipality’s approach to so-called ‘slum clearance’ urging it to cooperate with the Order of Malta Association to prevent evictions, together with the Order of Malta and other NGOs develop a plan for families face homelessness and to come up with a holistic approach together with the Ministry of Human Capacities to deal with slum eliminations.

During Amnesty International’s most recent visit to Miskolc on 12 June 2015, local Roma community representatives explained that the municipality had still not consulted them, and of the 100 remaining families around eight only, including the family of O.A., had been offered alternative housing. Most of those evicted had moved to other parts of Miskolc such as Lyukobanya neighbourhood, some 30 families have moved to Canada and are seeking asylum. All residents Amnesty International met with complained of poor conditions, including for instance rats and debris in the streets. Whilst the rubbish is still being collected from the neighbourhood once a week, many of the empty houses have had doors and windows removed to apparently stop anyone else moving in. Each block of four small units has at least one unit which has been destroyed and rubble left behind. Prior to the evictions the “Numbered Streets” was a vibrant community with relatively well maintained properties.

For additional information on international standards on forced evictions please refer to UA 83/15, which can be found at <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur27/1428/2015/en/>

Name: Families in the “Numbered Streets” neighbourhood  
Gender m/f: both

Further information on UA: 83/15 Index: EUR 27/1946/2015 Issue Date: 29 June 2015