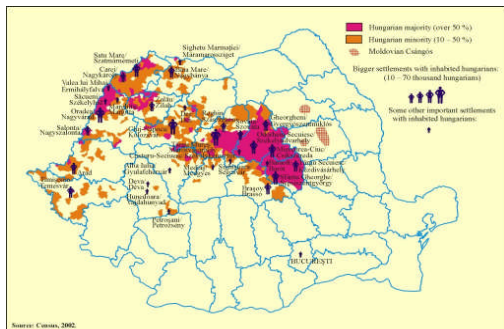


DRAFT LAW ON MINORITIES

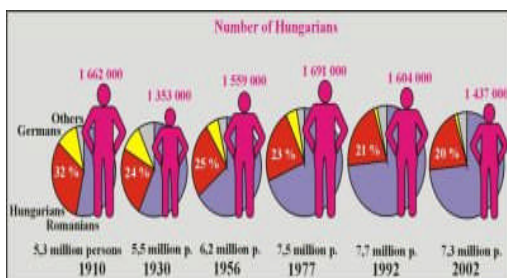
SENT BACK TO COMMITTEES

The law on minorities would provide Romania's eighteen recognized minority groups limited competence in areas that directly impact on their ability to preserve their cultural identities. One component of the bill under assault is the transfer of narrow powers to National Minority Councils, which the law would establish, and which exist in several other countries in the region. The draft was initiated in 2005 by the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania, but was opposed by members of the ruling coalition, the Conservatives and the Democrats, and also by the opposition.



Hungarians in Romania

Romanian Chamber of Deputies decided in July 2006 month to send the draft law on minorities' status back to the Chamber's committees for analysis. The decision was passed with an overwhelming majority of votes, after several lawmakers spoke during the session. They argued that that it would be a "mistake" not to have the committees' report on the law.



The draft has been debated by the Chamber's committees for education, legal issues and human rights for almost five months. Only 18 of a total of 78 articles were actually discussed. Debates in the committees were often blocked because of procedural issues or lack of quorum. In the end of June, it was decided to include the draft on the Chamber's agenda, even without committee reports.

Despite the European Parliament reiterated that "additional measures needed to be taken to ensure the protection of the Hungarian minority in accordance with the principles of subsidiary and cultural autonomy", as in the European Parliament Resolution on Romania of 15 December 2005 (Article 27), the Romanian Parliament has been successful in finding the bureaucratic excuses to delay the adoption of the bill.

DELAYED UNTIL FALL

The turmoil over the minorities' statute was boosted by the Conservatives, who are also part of the governing coalition, as they announced they have not yet decided if they will support the draft when it is debated in Parliament. However, Deputy Daniela Popa from the Conservative Party has said all conditions imposed for the draft already have been fulfilled.

Asked if the Conservative deputies will vote in favor of the statute in case the draft passes through the Chamber of Deputies, Popa said the draft's form after approval by the deputies needs to be analyzed by the special commissions. "Depending on the negotiation, each article will be voted on separately," Popa said.

COMPUTER GAME

TO KILL ETHNIC HUNGARIANS

National Council to Combat Discrimination was informed as regards a computer game called "Romanians in outer-space", Romanians having to kill groups of ethnic Hungarian insurgents.

The game is the variant of Romania's domination of earth for a century, as of 1988, when Nicolae Ceausescu begins the attack. "Emperor Traian Basescu" promises to conquer the entire galaxy.

NCCD self-informed on a player's attempt to exterminate a group of ethnic Hungarian insurgents who sets against the Romanians' expansion policy. NCCD asked for the identification of the website's owners and said "they will hinder the spreading of the game in the commercial circuit, in the event it instigates to hate on ethnic criteria".

Hungarians aren't too happy about the way their nation is portrayed in the game. It's already been the subject of discussion on Hungarian TV, and has won a "Lemon award" from GameStar, Hungary's biggest gaming magazine.

Meanwhile flame wars have erupted on dozens of forums, both Romanian and Hungarian, including the forum of developer 2 Bad Design - where one poster wrote: "The problem with this game is that it makes people hate. I mean, if a Romanian kid plays this game, even if he never saw a Hungarian before, he plays the game [and sees the Hungarians] are the enemy, they are the bad ones, of course he will hate them... "

ROMANII IN SPATIU OVERVIEW

Unfortunately, the beta playtest is closed.

You can still download our trailers, which feature in-game action and wait a little more for the Q4 2006, when the game will be released.

Also, we may release a DEMO version of the game.

Thank you for your interest in our game.

<http://www.romanii-in-spatiu.ro/betaform.html>

On a regular daily Google News trawl, we came across a tragic Bucharest Daily News article discussing "a Romanian computer game that roused controversy due to its racist theme that encourages the players to carry out a war against ethnic Hungarians."



Apparently, Romanians In Space's slogan is, wait for it: **"Follow your destiny. Kill any non-Romanian alien prick in cold blood."** What's more: "The epic story of the game starts in 1988, when Dictator Nicolae Ceausescu conquers the United States and becomes the emperor of Earth ten years later. Romanians dominate the planet for 100 years, but the new emperor, Traian Basescu (the current president) promises to conquer the entire galaxy. However, his plans are hindered by what the game calls "alien pricks."



However, the game's creator claims this was all satire: "Out of ten missions, only one is against the ethnic Hungarians. Everything was a joke and it was meant to be a joke that mocks all the problems between Romanians and ethnic Hungarians." **No comment.**

A similar case was that on the website of STEAUA football team, a game aimed to exterminate ethnic Roma. The Council removed the game from the site.

CONTINUING DISCRIMINATION

According to the plea presented last summer by the Directory Council of the Királyhágómellék Reformed Church District, the Administrative Court of Bihor/Bihar County brought a verdict on 16 June, regarding the case of the abstracted sports ground of Lorántffy Zsuzsanna Reformed High-School from Nagyvárad/Oradea. It pronounced that the local council's adjudgement as to award the sports ground to the Sfânta Treime Orthodox Parish had been illegal. Both the local council and the Orthodox Parish appealed against the decision made by the court. Consequently, the case will be heard at the Appellate Court in Oradea.

The Directory Council acknowledged that the right of the Reformed educational institution has been approved by the court's decision. Nevertheless, it gives utterance to its concerns as regards the fact that besides the Orthodox Parish, the local authority has also appealed against the decision, in spite of the fact that a personal agreement between László Tőkés, bishop, Petru Filip, mayor, and Sándor Kiss, head of County Council, resulted in a possibility that the court decision will put an end to this hostile, utterly discriminative case.

Another reason for optimism was attributed to the fact that the "criminal action" involving four employees of Királyhágómellék Reformed Church District, accused of "trespass", has been repealed by the Orthodox Parish as well as the judicial process involving the bishop of the Church District, accused of the same deceptive charge. Consequently, László Tőkés has not been cited by the Bucharest venue.

ORTHODOX CHURCH LEADER BLACKMAILING THE GOVERNMENT


The particular case of the "sports ground affair", when authorities are acting in favor of the Orthodox Church, and the Orthodox Parish, which is actually usurping the place of worship originally used by Greek Catholics and aggressively expanding on the tiny sports ground of the Reformed high-school, gains country-wide significance through a recently launched communiqué by Orthodox Archbishop Bartolomeu Anania.



The Orthodox archbishop, in fact, intends to prevent the Greek Catholic Church, reconstituted since 1989, from legally claiming back the estimated two thousand Greek Catholic places of worship that were unjustly appropriated to the Orthodox Church under the atheist-communist regime, in 1948. The Orthodox Church would like to have the possessions divided between the Orthodox and Greek Catholic churches according to the number of their adherents. **The archbishop has threatened the political parties that in case the conflict does not end in favor of the Orthodoxy, the Church's neutral attitude in the following electoral campaign may change.**

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**HUNGARIAN NATIONAL COUNCIL OF
TRANSYLVANIA**
SZÉKELY NEMZETI TANÁCS

The Hungarian National Council of Transylvania is a public organisation, which aims at representing the interests of the indigenous Hungarian community through parliamentary structures and means by preparing, sustaining and proposing for approval legal measures to ensure the forms of autonomy demanded by the community.

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