Monsieur le Président,

Mesdames et Messieurs les Représentants permanents,

Mesdames et Messieurs,

La Hongrie s'est engagée dans le processus de l'EPU (L'Examen périodique universel) depuis sa création, car le gouvernement hongrois est convaincu que c'est le dialogue fondé sur le respect et la compréhension mutuels qui doit régir les discussions sur les institutions juridiques, les valeurs de l'État de droit, ainsi que les phénomènes sociaux et économiques. S'il y avait le moindre doute sur la nécessité d'un véritable dialogue et d'un échange de bonnes pratiques dans le domaine de la protection des droits de l'homme, la pandémie du COVID-19 a clairement démontré que la coopération internationale est inévitable pour résoudre les défis des temps modernes. Dans cet esprit, comme conclusion finale, permettez-moi de rappeler quelques réalisations principales de la Hongrie.

During the pandemic, the Hungarian Government considered the saving of citizens’ lives as its utmost priority. The Government has taken measures that are necessary and proportionate to the purpose of preventing, tackling and eliminating the COVID-19 outbreak and preventing and combating its detrimental effects. The system of checks and balances has been working properly. The Government shall report to the National Assembly about its measures introduced to curb the coronavirus pandemic regularly. This solution ensures the democratic control over the activities of the Government. The functioning of the Constitutional Court has been continuous during the state of danger and provides an independent and adequate constitutional review of legal provisions (as under normal conditions); special procedural rules facilitate its activities. Similarly, the conditions for the undisturbed functioning of the judiciary have been ensured.

Unlike some Member States, Hungary has not introduced any derogation under Article 15 of the European Convention on Human Rights. In Hungary, vaccination is considered to be the most efficient tool to fight the pandemic and get back to normality.

The good cooperation with EU and non-EU Member States significantly contributed to the fact that Hungary could achieve significant results in the vaccination at a very early stage. In order to make vaccination easily accessible to people living in remote areas, vaccination buses were set up to offer both rapid pre-registration and vaccination. Hungary became the first country in Europe to offer the third vaccine, with both heterologous and homologous booster shots. The vaccine is available to everyone, regardless of health status or occupation. Hungary was one of the first countries in Europe to start vaccinating children over 12 based on the consent of the parents. A government website provides up-to-date and transparent information on the vaccination programme and the new developments. Being aware of our international responsibilities, Hungary has donated a significant amount of vaccines to third countries.

The pandemic has posed an unprecedented challenge to the society and the economy. Even during the crisis, the policy measures of the Government efficiently foster economic growth. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has just recently raised its forecast for GDP growth in Hungary this year to 7.6% in its latest World Economic Outlook. The overall positive developments of the Hungarian economy – even despite the difficulties caused by the pandemic – contribute to better living conditions for the whole society.

Especially the protection and well-being of families, as key elements to the future development, is a high priority in Hungary. In Hungary a stable, complex, targeted and flexible family policy aims to establish a framework that is capable of adapting to changing needs and conditions.

Parents and parents-to-be need to have long-term stability and reliable financial situation. In this respect, employment and the easy reconciliation of work and family life are of key importance. For this reason, we attempt to support parents in harmonising their career and raising their children. The central budget allocated to support families will be three times higher in 2022 than it was in 2010. 60% of children receive free or discounted meals; every student in public education receives their textbooks free-of-charge (1.2 million students). Creating new crèche places facilitates work-life balance. The baby expecting subsidy, the housing subsidy and the family tax system support the adequate circumstances for raising children.

The Government also puts much emphasis on the protection of rights of the most vulnerable. E.g. In order to protect children, since 1 January 2019, regional child protection services will be able to operate a service based on the Barnahus model, which will facilitate the hearing, assessment and therapy of neglected and abused children, particularly those who have been sexually abused. In 2020, the Committee on the Rights of the Child noted with appreciation the legislative, institutional and policy measures taken to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in particular the Digital Child Protection Strategy and the implementation of the Barnahus model.

Another example might be the separate strategy, which addresses the long-term integration of people living in poverty, including the part of Roma population living in poverty.

The strategy in force since 2011 applies a complex, sectoral and horizontal approach at the same time. The Hungarian National Social Cohesion Strategy 2030, renewed in 2021, was created during a wide-ranging social consultation taking into account the comments received. According to the strategy, programs with innovative elements, such as special scholarships are aimed at people living in poverty in general, and Roma people in particular, will serve a lasting and sustainable catching up. Targeted measures are aimed at improving the relative and absolute situation of Roma women.

Perhaps the most promising result of the public policy interventions promoting social inclusion based on a labour based society approach is that we managed to raise a significant number of those living in extreme poverty from the social assistance care system that confine them to passivity through the so-called public work scheme.

In 2018, 135 600 persons participated in it; according to the estimations, 20% of them were Roma. 18.2% of the participants found employment on the primary labour market within 180 days after leaving the public employment scheme, which shows an increasing trend (in 2014 it was 13% and in 2015 15.6%). This is due, among others, to the fact that 84 600 participants received training within the framework of the programme, acquiring a basic knowledge in various professions.

In the field of victim support a system based on Victim Support centres, awareness-raising campaigns and legislative amendments aim to provide more comprehensive, better tailored assistance for the victims in close cooperation with different churches and other non-governmental organizations thus contributing to more effective prevention of victimization.

The Government is working to develop a nationwide network of victim support centres. Last year, the scheme helped some 15,000 people. The victim support hotline received over 11,000 calls. The help provided included legal aid and emotional support, as well.

This targeted approach supports the protection of vulnerable groups not just on paper but also in reality. At the same time it makes resilient answers possible, whenever new challenges might arise.

New technologies have always challenged, if not disrupted, the social, economic legal and, to an extent, the ideological status quo. As we had the opportunity to discuss a month ago on the Council of Europe ministers of justice conference in Hungary held under the [Hungarian Presidency of the Committee of Ministers](https://www.coe.int/en/web/presidency) on Digital Technology and Artificial Intelligence – New Challenges for Justice in Europe there is no doubt that the pandemic had a huge impact on uptake of various technologies in the justice systems of numerous countries.

The Hungarian courts have not been immune to this digital technology invasion but are actively participating by the possibility of hearings via electronic communication system, in both civil and criminal cases. Remote hearings, via court electronic communications networks or other means of electronic image and sound transmission, allow the judiciary to continue to function during the pandemic, while ensuring the conditions for the conduct of proceedings.

Digital solutions and the electronic access to court documents enables judges and clients to access information and documents related to their pending case quickly, 24/7 online.

The development of digital technology is both an opportunity and a challenge for justice systems in the Member States, which are founded on the primacy of law and respect for human rights. Hungary bears in mind that access to justice, non-discrimination, equality of arms, adequate judicial protection and data protection are all of primary concern in the use of new technologies in the justice system.

Monsieur le Président,

Mesdames et Messieurs les Représentants permanents,

Mesdames et Messieurs,

L'EPU est un processus mené par les États, sous les auspices du Conseil des droits de l'homme, où les États membres sont liés par les mêmes idéals et les mêmes normes de droits de l'homme, tout en reconnaissant la richesse de diversité de leurs traditions juridiques, culturelles et historiques. L’EPU nous donne l'occasion d'informer nos collègues États membres et le Conseil sur les mesures que nous avons prises pour améliorer la situation des droits de l'homme en Hongrie, car il s'agit d'un processus sans fin. Nous pouvons toujours faire plus et mieux, et la Hongrie s'engage à suivre cette voie. À cet égard, nous remercions tous les États membres qui ont exprimé leur point de vue aujourd'hui. Nous prenons bonne note de toutes les recommandations et contributions et nous reviendrons en temps voulu sur toutes celles que nous pouvons effectivement soutenir. Nous sommes prêts à poursuivre le travail et la coopération constructive pour promouvoir et protéger les droits de l'homme.

Merci pour votre attention!