

Roma Childhood in Eastern Europe*

Tamás Kozma

Hungary, 4010 Debrecen, Egyetem ter 1.
University of Debrecen, Faculty of Arts,
Doctoral Program
in Formal and Non-Formal Education
Tel.: (36) (52) 512-900 * 2660
Fax: (36) (52) 512-922,
e-mail: kozma@helka.iif.hu

Gabriella Pusztai

Hungary, 4010 Debrecen, Egyetem ter 1.
University of Debrecen, Faculty of Arts,
Doctoral Program
in Formal and Non-Formal Education
Tel.: (36) (52) 512-900 * 2660
Fax: (36) (52) 512-922

Katalin Torkos

Hungary, 4010 Debrecen, Egyetem ter 1.
University of Debrecen, Faculty of Arts,
Doctoral Program
in Formal and Non-Formal Education
Tel.: (36) (52) 512-900 * 2660
Fax: (36) (52) 512-922,
e-mail: torkos@yahoo.com

Introduction

This paper illustrates the problems of Roma children through the life of a particular group of emigrants, and looks for the answer how much their ambition, that is behind the undertaking of the emigrants, supported their adaptation to a new social environment. European literature has not really dealt with the emigration of this ethnic group until this time because during the existence of the “iron curtain” until 1990 the migration directed from the east towards the west did not have large dimensions except during the big political upheavals.

Ongoing research demonstrates a region called the “Partium” that is suitable for representing the whole area like a drop in the sea because of its mixed ethnicity. Then this paper shows the present situation of the Gypsies in this region, the background of Gypsy children’s school failures and at last gives a case study on an emerging class of the Gypsies and their problems. During the empirical analysis the method of network analysis is also used that seems as an adequate approach of researches dealing with social integration of immigrants according to the international literature (Kelly & Portes, 1993).

I. The area of the “Partium”

The area of the “Partium” today involves three countries and it is one of the slightly researched areas of Eastern- and Central Europe. This re-

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port is part of a long-term research that deals with the present situation of the communities of this area.

The name of "Partium" designates for a kind of historical and geographical unit which expansion and political content has been changed several times during the semi-millennial history of the Carpathian Basin but its latent intellectual and cultural unit can be still touched in several social manifestations. The historical heart of its area at present is in the area of Hungary, Ukraine and Romania that involves the Counties of Bereg, Szatmar, Central-Szolnok, Kraszna, Bihar, Zarand and Arad. Legally, first the "Partium" was part of the independent principality of Transylvania then the Hungarian Monarchy for long centuries. After the Second World War when in consequence of the Treaty of Trianon two-thirds of the area of Hungary was attached to the neighbouring countries, its area was divided into three parts. Its western part remained under the rule of Hungary, its big eastern part became part of Romania and its northern part became first part of Czechoslovakia then part of the Soviet Union and at last part of Ukraine.

Owing to its good cultivable land, the "Partium" became a significant agricultural area and because of its roads connecting different regions it also transformed into an important commercial centre but in the 20th century it has changed into a periphery. In the area of the Soviet Union the "Partium" was the farthest south-western part of the country, which acquisition was nothing more just a military matter for them. In Romania this area was systematically neglected partly because of its big distance from the capital and the nationally significant industrial areas, and partly the national policy relying on the negative discrimination of the Hungarian inhabitants whose rate was very high here. The small part of the "Partium" that remained in Hungary had to face to the dramatic

problems of the acquisition of territory: the industrial, economic and cultural centres of the area (Arad, Nagyvarad, Munkacs) and the railways that connected these areas got over the border of Hungary. That is on the one hand why this area broke away from the economic and social circulation that stimulated development and on the other hand Hungary also neglected this area for a long time. After the Treaty of Trianon in 1920, this previously economically rich area has been divided by national boundaries into parts that stopped development here even up to the present. Today in the course of such negative consequences probably the most significant problem is poverty and the lack of qualifications among the inhabitants in this area.

Determinant feature of this region up to now that it is remarkably rich in its ethnicity: there are not only Hungarians but also Romanians, Ukrainians, Ruthenians, Gypsies, Jews, Slovaks etc. In spite of the economic disadvantages it is characteristic of this area that ethnic groups successfully and traditionally live together without any conflicts in contradiction to other European countries in similar situation where there are strives or impingements.

The religious richness of the "Partium" that lies on the border of the western Christianity and the Orthodoxy is also remarkable. It is accompanied with the traditional religious tolerance of the inhabitants in this area, which symbols could be the different denominational churches built close to each other in the centres of the settlements. This is not accidental because the "Partium" was earlier part of the principality of Transylvania where in 1568 has been enacted the religious freedom of the four established religions for the first time. After the Counter-Reformation, apart from Transylvania, reformation remained here the strongest line but not exclusive, and its consequence was, for example, the higher rate of denominationally heterogamous marriages.

In the twentieth century the three divided parts of this region notably drift away from each other in the respects of the level of economical development, the degree of social security and political culture. By the turn of the millennium the situation of the Hungarian parts had been the best and the worst those parts that belonged to Ukraine. This multi-factorial difference in the above mentioned level explains the remarkable degree of migration in this region, which main characters were the Gypsies who crossed the loosening national boundaries as a consequence of the Eastern-European political transformations.

In this paper is given an overall picture of the above mentioned problems by giving the most important data and literature concerning the Gypsies then during the analysis of the empirical part will be shown the first results of this research.

II. Gypsies in the “Partium”

II.1. Problems of the social integration of the Gypsies

Originally the Gypsies is an ethnic group from North-India that appeared in Europe in the fifteenth century. At present most of them live in Eastern and Central Europe: in Romania, in the Czech Republic, in Slovakia and in Hungary. There was another big wave of arrival of the Gypsies into this area in the eighteenth century. There have been data about the number of the Gypsies since 1721 but it causes a big difficulty to determine who the Gypsy is. In 1990 in Hungary on the occasion of the national census those people who acknowledged themselves Gypsies were only five percent of the population but the number of those people who followed a kind of Gypsy lifestyle was much higher, it was almost ten percent. This difference derives from the fact that there are a lot of people

who can be put into Gypsy category owing to their origin but do not acknowledge themselves Gypsy people. On the other hand only very few of them speak Gypsy language and there are also several non-Gypsy people among those ones who acknowledged themselves having a Gypsy lifestyle. The most characteristic features of the Gypsy lifestyle are the followings: extremely low degree of qualification, disadvantaged situation in the labour market, segregation inside the settlements, high rate of children among them and high rate of them behaving against the accepted norms. Researches dealing with Gypsies usually use the definition that “Gypsy is a person who is acknowledged Gypsy by its non-Gypsy environment according to particular criteria, for example lifestyle, anthropological nature etc.” (Kocsis & Kovács, 2000, p. 13)

Among other ethnic groups in this region the Gypsies lost the most significantly their ancestral language but in spite of their staying here for several centuries their integration into the European culture is still a big problem. Even in the eighteenth and nineteenth century there were determined arrangements for settling the Gypsies, making them accustomed to the farming and organizing their formal education. During the socialist period in the interest of cancelling the segregated Gypsy communities there was a housing policy program to resettle them in a straggling way but after a short time there became new Gypsy communities. According to some researchers, this anomalous situation of the Gypsies derives from a transitory state when their traditional internal legal institution, the voivodeship, has been cancelled as a consequence of resettling and the acceptance of the norms of the major society went very slowly.

On the other hand there is an ambitious and industrious class of the Gypsies who would like to change the circumstances of their life. These people live on regular wages as taking part in the labour market, want to live among Hungar-

ian people but according to the present researches they are gradually giving up their Gypsy identities as a consequence of their mobility.

II.2. Spatial settlements of the Gypsies

The areas inhabited by the crowd of the Gypsies are peripheral and border regions. As the map shows most of the Gypsies live in the north-east and the south-west part of Hungary but in the north-west part lives only six percent of them. More than one-third of them live in the north-east part of Hungary. There are several settlements where their rate is over sixty percent or even one hundred percent.

Because of the forced industry policy the countries of the Eastern part of the world had a characteristic of a one-sided urbanisation that undervalued the importance of the traditionally agricultural areas, and supported the educated and ambitious people to move towards the industrial centres and the capital. The regional policy sealed especially the fate of those regions where there are mostly small villages (the number of inhabitants is under one thousand) and at last it caused a kind of succession in some regions that caused the replacement of one community by another. Besides, it is important to emphasise that most of the Gypsies live near the closed boundaries namely in the countries of the Soviet block. In the previous years, crossing the borders in this block was minimal and moving towards the Soviet Union almost impossible. These borders were guarded very strictly and the inhabitants of the different countries were cut off very strongly.

This situation increased further the poverty of these areas. The regions near the closed boundaries have not been in living economic connections with each other for many decades. The prospering black market in the second half of the eighties that involved also the Gypsies, was due to the decline of the political system. In

this area near the boundaries the wages and the education level are low, and the local governments are poor and frequently deficient.

There are not only regional differences in the rate of the Gypsy students but there are remarkable differences concerning the type of the settlements. Gypsy children are significantly underrepresented in the cities and overrepresented in small villages. In the cities the rate of Gypsy children is about twenty percent but in the villages it is fifty-six percent. It can be stated that the smaller a settlement is, the higher is the rate of Gypsy pupils (Kertesi & Kézdi, 1996). There are mostly small villages in the area of the "Partium" and the rate of the Gypsies is very high.

II.3. Gypsies and Poverty

In Hungary the relative poverty has become bigger and more visible for some years. According to the Central Statistical Bureau of Hungary the rate of people living under the poverty line was about ten percent of the population in the eighties and it became about fifteen percent in the year of 1992 and until 1995 it raised with fifty percent (Förster, 1997). In 1995 the standard of living decreased in case of about half of the Hungarian society.

There are some indicators that can definitely forecast poverty, for example, low educational level, living in villages, unemployment, living on disability or widow's pension, being dependant, being an agricultural worker, unqualified people, children and old people, big families, single mothers, parents under the age of thirty, Gypsies etc. (Andorka, 1995). People being low qualified and living among bad circumstances are especially endangered by poverty. Those ones, for example, who live in far away dwelling-places and the head of the family has less than primary school education it is twice most likely that they will be poor later. Labour

market participation also influences the state of poverty. Households with unemployed head of the family is twice most likely that will be poor than employed ones. Those people are the most likely threatened by poverty who have been unemployed for a long period of time and not old enough to retire or unentitled to any social insurance. Demographic factors that determine poverty are also very strong. You are the most likely to be poor when you have at least three children, you are a single mother and you are younger than thirty or you are over sixty and living alone.

According to the above mentioned factors can be seen that Gypsy families are the most threatened by poverty. Poverty rate is very high in case of the Gypsies, it is about seventy percent. Researches show that the stricter poverty definition is used, the higher is the rate of Gypsies living in poverty. Longitudinal analyses also proved that there is practically no chance for the Gypsies at present to get out of this poverty (Förster, 1997).

II.4. Gypsies and their chances in the labour market

In highly developed industrial countries labour force participation is essential for working-aged people. In the decades of the socialism the labour force participation of the Gypsies was almost complete but the proclaimed full employment covered a kind of latent unemployment, because these people were unqualified who worked mostly at building companies and in the heavy industry. After the political transformation in Hungary in the beginning of the nineties, the liquidation of big companies was equal with the liquidation of workplaces that gave employment to unqualified people, and it directly affected the Gypsies (Fraser, 1996). By 1993 the unemployment rate has become 13,6 percent in Hungary. Although the increas-

ing rate of unemployment can be just partly regarded as a consequence of discharges and the liquidations of the companies, because the fact is that the economy did not have enough capacity to give job all the unemployed people and that is why the rate of long-distance unemployed had increased so much. In 1995 forty percent of the unemployed had not been working for more than a year and by 1996 this rate had further increased and was about fifty percent. Social problems caused by the long-distanced unemployment were further increased that the rate was high of such unemployed who lived in households without any wage-earners at all. The risk of being unemployed was very different according to social classes. The most threatened classes were the youth, the unqualified people and the Gypsies. (Förster, 1997)

The degree of the Gypsy unemployment can be shown by the fact that in 1994 only twenty-six percent of the working-aged Gypsies were employed. Most of them were compelled to have casual works, for example, wheeling and dealing. As a consequence of this process it can be seen that the integration of the Gypsies is getting fall into the background again even though that the rate of those Gypsies who altered their lifestyle to an earlier expected rustic-civil lifestyle has been increased (Szuhay, 2000, p. 36).

Economic activity structure of those people who have a kind of Gypsy lifestyle is very different from the other groups of people. This difference can be seen very clearly both in case of working and not working population and in case of unemployment. Inside the group of people having a Gypsy lifestyle the occupational structure has very particular characteristic features. Among these ones one of the most important is that the rate of those people who have intellectual occupation is very low (CSB, 1993).

III. Gypsies and education

In the interest of overcoming social disadvantages the importance of education is outstanding because education on the one hand is prerequisite for labour force participation, and on the other hand good school performance is a very important indicator in case of success in the world of work, prestige of workplaces and the amount of income. The poor school performance increases the probability of unemployment. In case of people having only primary school qualification the risk is ten times greater that to be unemployed than in case of those ones who have higher education degree.

Programs that support increasing the education level of the Gypsies derives from those efforts that try to help their social integration, which is expected to improve the Gypsy labour force participation and by this improving their standard of living. Until this time, these programs were unsuccessful because the improvement of the school performance of Gypsy children was very hard (Pirtos, 1979). Nevertheless, there is a success in the sense that today not question their illiteracy any more but the improvement of their educational level, the increase of their qualification level and the support of school performance in case of children (Forray & Hegedüs, 1991).

As regards to their school failures, during the previous decades there was a significant improvement in case of the rates of those who finished primary school but the indexes of further studying and dropping-out show a kind of declining rate. At present Gypsy children's chance to finish secondary school is fifty times smaller than non-Gypsy ones, and six times smaller to get qualification than in case of non-Gypsies. The degree of equal opportunity further declined in the point of education that could remarkably improve the labour market chances.

III.1. Different education systems in the "Partium"

In the Hungarian education system the school-leaving age is sixteen years. The eight-year primary school is followed by secondary schools, either by the three-year vocational training or the grammar school and technical school that former two ones ends with a final examination. After this exam you can apply for three- or four-year college or five- or six-year university.

In Romania the school grades and school types differ from the Hungarian ones. The school leaving age is also sixteen years, but recently has been accepted the new education act that reduced it to the end of the first eight classes. In Romania compulsory education involves a ten-year old elementary school that is followed by secondary schools, either a lyceum or a technical school. There are two kinds of lyceums, the four-year general lyceum and the four- or five-year technical lyceum that can be divided into two equal periods. The higher vocational education can be after the technical lyceum that takes one or two years in specialized schools. The lower vocational education takes one, two or three years in vocational schools after finishing the eight classes (Varga, 1996, p. 332).

In Ukraine there is a three-year elementary school that is followed by a five-year post-elementary school that is finished by exams in four basic subjects. After it is the two-year grammar school, the three-year vocational school or the four-year technical secondary school. Finishing the technical secondary school and the grammar school you can apply for college or university.

III. 2. The education of the Gypsies in the area of the "Partium"

As regards to the educational level of the Gypsies in Romania, according to the Romanian Census Bureau, the rate of the Gypsies in case

of the whole population under the age of twelve was 0,28 percent. The rate of the Gypsies is negligible in higher education, in lyceum and in technical secondary school but 0,4 percent of them attends vocational schools. 2,9 percent of them finished primary school, and 96,6 percent of them finished the four-year elementary school or attended a course where learnt how to write and read. Comparing the education level of the Gypsies to other ethnic groups in Romania can be seen that the Gypsies fell behind. More than one-fifth of the Gypsies is said to be illiterate while in case of other ethnic groups (for example, Hungarians or Germans) this rate is about one percent (Varga, 1996).

At present we do not have all the data from Ukraine in connection with the educational level of the Gypsies (ongoing research) but it can already be seen that their educational level is even lower than it was in case of the Romanian Gypsies.

In the Hungarian part of the "Partium" in 1992, the rate of Gypsy people was 7,68 percent that means a more than twice increase in this area comparing it to the data of the 1960's. The rate of Gypsy pupils surpasses the rate of the Gypsy inhabitants that can be due to their high growth. In 1992 this rate was 10,32 percent in the Hungarian area of the "Partium". In the Ukrainian part of the "Partium" the rate of the Gypsy population is 9,31 percent and they live scattered in this area.

III.3. Gypsies and school advancing

Because of the school failures in case of most of the Gypsy children can be realized that they cannot continue their studying in secondary school. Important indicator of their failure is the high rate of dropping-outs. The rate of those Hungarian Gypsies who could not finish the eight-year primary school in the capital is 15,5 percent, in the towns it is 23,7 percent and

in the villages is 27,3 percent. The rate of those Hungarian Gypsies who could finish secondary school is 9,9 percent in the capital, 2,8 percent in the towns and 1,8 percent in the villages (Kemény, 2000).

The individual failures are added up and strengthen each other, and generally there is a strong connection between the rate of Gypsy pupils and the outcomes of the schools. The higher is the rate of Gypsy children in a school, the higher is the rate of those pupils who drop-out in several subjects, repeat the year or over-age. Researches has proved that these disadvantages can be explained by the socialization of the Gypsies at home and not in the type of their settlement, the type of the school they attend, the equipment of the schools or the phenomenon of segregation (Kertesi & Kezdi, 1996).

Examining the schools visited by Gypsy children become evident that the equipment and personal conditions of the schools are in close connection with the circumstances of a settlement. On the one hand there are schools in the towns where do not attend any Gypsy children and the above mentioned conditions are poorer than those ones where attend Gypsy ones. On the other hand as regards to the settlements, the schools of small villages are very poor in their equipment and personal condition but this both concerns the Gypsy and non-Gypsy children. The disadvantage of the settlement in case of education system is independent on the rate of Gypsy inhabitants and means almost the same problem everywhere in the country.

The education policy is not really able to emphasize the school achievement because the family and contemporary influences play a more significant role in this respect. It is indicated as the main cause of the educational problems of the Gypsies that they are cumulatively disadvantaged people, their education level is very low, the living circumstances and lifestyles are not suitable, and the rate of unemployment is

very high. Gypsies is a kind of people who live on the edge of the society, whose children should be learnt some basic skills of civilization and should be supported financially. As a consequence of it can be said that the traditional culture of their families, communities is considered as one element of their disadvantages, which elimination seems very important to guarantee equal chances. From the sixties it seemed a proper way to create Gypsy classes in the schools to reach these purposes, which originally was not for supporting segregation and saving expenses but decreasing the cultural and civilizational disadvantages. Moreover, they had the illusion that later these children can adapt successfully to mixed classes. Today we can realize that this plan collapsed. In some places student boarding schools were organized to support Gypsy pupils to separate them from their cumulatively disadvantaged environment. Probably the number of such boarding schools did not increase because of financial causes (Förrey & Hegedus, 1991).

Influence of the disadvantages deriving from the families is, for example, that the Gypsy families traditionally have a bad relation to schools. Parents' qualifications are also very low and they cherish the memory of a school full of failures. They even do not know those behaviour patterns that would enable them to communicate with school in a proper way, they are not able to cooperate with school, and their relationship to school are full of anxiety, and in case of uncertainty and injuries full of aggression. As a consequence, parents generally are not able to manage successfully their children at school and moreover there is a big chance that they transmit their own negative attitudes to their children in connection with school and by this is guaranteed their children's school failures, too. Furthermore, Gypsy children also have to face the consequences of the stereotypes of the majority in school communities. Failures de-

riving from learning miscarriages and the rejection of a prejudicial environment can easily conduce to giving up the efforts, escaping from the difficulties and early dropping-out from school. Furthermore, the learning motivation of children from Gypsy families are generally very low because on the one hand the educational level of their parents is also very low and they do not call their children to account about the school achievements. On the other hand the special skills that can be found in the Gypsy families are suited on not skills learnt at school but trade tricks are learnt from the family and the relatives. At last we have to mention that education in Hungary is free, there is no school tuition but school equipment have to be bought by parents. Most of the Gypsy families live under the poverty line and it is a serious financial burden for them in spite of the social allocations to start the school year, for example, cloths, books, school equipment, catering etc.). Most of the Gypsy families are financially interested in their children's early dropping-out of schools to earn money as soon as possible (Lisko, 1996).

Most of the Gypsy pupils attend a school where their rate is over ten percent. In case of non-Gypsy children two-thirds of them attend a school where the rate of Gypsy children is less than two percent. In one-fourth of the Hungarian schools there are not any Gypsy children. On the whole, it means that most of the non-Gypsy children never see Gypsy children at school. The segregation of Gypsy and non-Gypsy children is huge in the nineties in Hungary and the regional position of the Gypsies does not give reasons for such a big segregation (Kertesi & Kezdi, 1996).

With the knowledge of the crucial influence of the family socialization it is said to be an important result that in case of Gypsy families there has been a kind of change in their scale of values for some decades. Between the researches of 1971 and 1993 it can be seen that most of the

When we asked them what the reason is for their steady norm system it has appeared that they are conscious of the characteristics and the importance of inherit family subculture. They usually gave answers for their behaviour that *"we saw it this way"* *"this is a habit in this family"*, etc.

Religion plays an important role in the life of the immigrant Gypsy musician families and the middle-aged generation. This generation became non-believer in Hungary during the years of socialism. Certainly, this religious life is supported by the state of being an ethnic group because belonging to a church or speaking mother tongue are very important identifying things for them. It is also part of their education to make attend their children to divinity classes and church. Otherwise it has been a frequent phenomenon in the "Partium" for a long time that catholic and protestant Gypsy communities support Gypsy families in solving their problems. In case of the families of Gypsy people being in low social position these communities supported them in their everyday problems by, for example, motivating them, sometimes it was financial motivation, to get a qualification to have a higher standard of living. In this case, low social position means closed communities, lack of outer relationships and because of these things not having the ability of self-interest enforcement.

According to the interpretation of gender roles between the generations can be seen that there are differences. People in their fifties embody the model of a big family that is based on the prestige of the father and beside it the mother's role is to keep together and to take care of the family with a kind of function that to make milder the father's severity. A father said, for example, that his adult son is afraid to smoke when the father is present. In case of young women the identification with the roles seems rather uncertain because on the one hand the

traditional mother role is fading as a consequence of educational institutions, and on the other hand because of their low qualification level they cannot take part in the labour market. The situation of young men is much more stable because of the inherited musician trade and that they saw a strong father model both inside and outside the house in their childhood. Furthermore being a musician is not only a sure income possibility but it means a kind of pride and self-confidence for them, for example, they show very proudly the articles and photos about their performances to other members of the family.

The differences in the dressing of the generations are also remarkable but very similar to the dressing of non-Gypsy people. Middle-aged people of Gypsy musicians are wearing simple and tidy clothes of the low- and middle-class but the youth are having very fashionable and expensive sport clothes.

They consider their relationship between the generations ideal and exemplary but the differences in their attitude to life are present. The older people are more economic, rather solid who are able to give up things but the youth is consumption oriented, for example, in case of dressing, technical and entertaining things. This is a widespread phenomenon not only in Gypsy communities but also among Hungarian people.

The importance of the family relationship can be realized also in the everyday activities because the different generations are cooperating with each other continuously, for example, grandfathers go to the schools for their grandchildren. Helping this way like this concerns not only for people living in one household but also for bigger families where are several generations, and the relative relationships and the emotional connections are very strong. In such cases it is not rare to receive relatives in their houses for a longer period of time. Relative relationships also influence the decisions of emigration or further migration.

Kindergarten increases the chance of success because either promotes school readiness and serves to remove the distance between family socialization and the school norm system or it is about that in case of those children who do not attend kindergarten there are a lot of parents who is unemployed, having low educational level, big family and not able to socialize their children according to accept the school norm system (Kezdi & Kertesi, 1996).

III.5. Gypsies in primary school

The dispersion of Gypsy children in the countries is very disunited. The rate of Gypsy pupils in the north-east region of Hungary is surpassed, it is about fifteen percent but in the southwest part of the country it is only about two percent (Kezdy & Kertesi, 1996). As regards to the first four years of primary school it can be said that Gypsy children are more successful in this stage than in the second four years of primary school. This former one is the period when children have to face to the most failures and this is the stage when most of them give up studying. A kind of education system would rather suit to the demands of the Gypsies, which would differentiate considerably. At the stage of the second half of primary school there are more and more behaviour problems and teacher are not able to handle it. At present the analyses of the cultural and social-psychological background of disciplining problems is not the aim of this paper but it is important to mention that often the lifestyle of the Gypsy families and the workshoplike operation of schools is behind the above mentioned problems. Absenteeism is a neuralgic point in the cooperation between this ethnic group and the school (Forray & Hegedus, 1991).

The rate of dropping-outs in primary school is very high among those people who follow Gypsy lifestyle. For example, more than one-

tenth of people between the age of twenty and twenty-four, and almost one-fifth of people from twenty-five to twenty-nine have not finished the eight-year primary school in Hungary.

As regards to the fact that today primary school is prerequisite for almost all the trades, the youngest Gypsy generation almost exclude itself from the possibility of getting any kind of qualification. That is why continuously is being reproduced an unqualified class that always struggles with the problems of labour force participation, and even if they get a job they can work just as a handyman (CSB, 1993).

III.6. Gypsies in secondary school

The school admittance rate of Gypsy children to grammar schools is 0,6 percent and to technical secondary school is ten percent. In case of non-Gypsy children almost one hundred percent of them chose further education after primary school but only half of the Gypsy pupils do the same that is even a significant improvement according to the earlier decades (Kertesi & Kezdi, 1996). In Hungary after the political transmission several new institutions were founded with the purpose to support further education of Gypsy pupils. Closing up and ability improving courses, Gypsy minority educational institutions and scholarships or other supports from different kind of funds contributed to the rate of further education. As in case of both finishing primary school and applying for further education, the most important factor is the relationship of the parents and their children to school. Today most of the Gypsy families realized the advantages and disadvantages of further education as before, they also began to realize the importance of it (Kemény 2000).

The small number of Gypsy pupils, who take part in secondary education, often never finish

it. In it plays a big role that the originally sensitive young children who is separated from the home environment gets into an unknown one and have to adapt to the new environment and they also have to furnish good school achievement. By the way beginning secondary school causes a kind of breach in the case of all children, usually the school achievement in the first secondary year is worse than in the last primary school year but later it can be overcome. In case of almost all Gypsy children, except when the parents have a higher educational level, there are a lot of external influences that make more difficult the situation in secondary school. In the end we can say that only very small part of the Gypsies attend secondary school and even less of them finish it (Forray & Hegedüs, 1991).

III.7. Gypsies and vocational schools

In the present system of secondary education Gypsy pupils take part mainly in vocational education. The concept of vocational education is made problematic by the fact that the vocational educational system that was earlier connected to big companies is in crisis.

In Hungary finishing primary school is prerequisite for applying for vocational schools. In case of Gypsy pupils getting qualification is essential because on the one hand they can improve their own labour force participation and on the other hand this is the only type of school at secondary level that mostly can be achieved by Gypsy children. Furthermore, cannot be hoped to avoid that the Gypsies gradually losing touch with the society and they will not integrate. There is one thing that is missing in the Gypsies that there is not a relatively big class of qualified people who attended vocational schools that to ensure a kind of mobility, further education, for the next generation that would take care of the replacement of high qualified Gypsies (Lisko, 1996).

At present there is another problem that makes difficult the successful vocational education of Gypsy children that in the previous years pupils could find a practice area only in case if the parents bought such possibilities for their children by paying huge amount of money to the entrepreneurs. Since the parents who are counted to the lower classes of the society are not able to pay this money, the chances of attending vocational schools are disappeared for their children.

III.8. Gypsies and higher education

The participation of Gypsy students in higher education is extremely low, it is less than one percent. There is now an ongoing research in connection with those Gypsies who have degrees but there are still no results. The purpose of this research would be that to realize those indicators that supported their successful school career, and we would like to give suggestions in connection with such supporting programs that help the school achievement of the Gypsies.

IV. Empirical analyses: the Gypsy immigrants

During the analysis of the interviews we looked for the answer if there is a kind of Gypsy migration between the separated parts of the "Partium" or not because there was an intensive connection system and migration among the inhabitants according to our earlier experiences. After it the purpose was to find the aims of their migration and then we were interested in the cultural life of these families and then we followed the school career of their children.

We made different approaches to the certain stages of the research: we used both quantitative and qualitative methods because we made interviews and observations at Gypsy families, we asked schoolmasters, the leaders of Gypsy

organizations and students. This big variety of the methods can be explained by the complexity of the problem. In this paper only the first results are summarized and further steps of the research later will be laid down.

During the researches we have experienced that the internal differentiation of the Gypsies living in the area of the "Partium" is much more extreme than in case of any other ethnic groups in this area. The range of their composition is very varied that involves caravan-dwellers, lonely beggars with their children in the streets and very rich businessmen. Children form families having different lifestyles having different school achievements because children of wandering Gypsies and beggars usually do not attend school.

In the following part of the text we will concentrate on that group of Gypsy children and youths whose parents try to break out from their position even taking the risk of migration. These people came from the Ukrainian and Romanian part of the "Partium" to Hungary. By making interviews and observations will be introduced the world of the so-called "Gypsy musicians". In this case the adjective "musician" is not only a profession for them because most of them also have another profession but it is a subculture of these Gypsies, it is a kind of lifestyle, a peculiar identity that is a device to separate themselves from other groups of Gypsies. This class is able to give up the Gypsy lifestyle by having more effective norms, discipline and ambition.

IV.1. Immigration

According to the interviews made with the "Gypsy musicians" the main cause of migration is not the financial progress but rather to avoid experiencing insults as an ethnic group. One of the interviewed persons came from Romania in 1989 and they consider themselves

political emigrants. They gave an account of the regular interference of the Romanian secret police because they acknowledged themselves Hungarian, they did not speak in Romanian, sent their children to Hungarian schools and they did not want to join the Romanian Communist Party. One of the oldest of the interviewed persons said that the biggest indictment was against him in Romania that he played a patriotic Hungarian song in a public restaurant. Romania is a very young, less than one hundred years old country in its present form where the rate of ethnic groups is very high. Among the ethnic groups of Gypsies who consider themselves Hungarian and speak Hungarian were oppressed the strongest way and sometimes physical violence was also committed against them that to consider themselves Romanian people to alter the statistics during the time of national census.

One of our interviewed persons who is in her twenties and from Ukraine said that in the end of the eighties in the Soviet Union in her Ukrainian school every Hungarian and Gypsy students had to listen to the following reprimand: "*What bread do you eat? Hungarian or Ukrainian? You will see that the time will come as in case of the Jews*". That is why there appeared a strong solidarity between the Hungarians and the Gypsies. It was also mentioned that they had jobs there and their poor standard of living was not lower as in any case of other people, although these immigrant families mentioned a kind of increase in their standard of living in Hungary. One of them, for example, was a tailor who had several handymen and was considered a reliable and good worker. At present they still think that they had made good decision that to migrate to Hungary and this opinion was very attractive for other hesitating people.

The first big wave of immigrants was in the end of the eighties but to get passport or any kind of permission for the whole family was

hopeless because of the very closed boundaries. That is why most of the immigrants from Romania came by neglecting the legal way and running through the green boundary. It was full of danger and as one of the interviewed people said when he first tried the illegal way he was caught by the frontier guards and he was beaten very much and they cut his hair to bald that considers a very big shame for Gypsy people. Later the rules in connection with travelling or migrating abroad became milder in Romania but in Ukraine there are still very strict rules and you need a very good financial background and good connections to get passport. That is why most of the immigrants in case of the area of "Partium" are from Romania and not from Ukraine. From the middle of the nineties the number of immigrants has been continuously decreasing that is due to the fact that the anti-ethnic approach of the Romanian and Ukrainian politics have changed and became milder. Certainly, in both countries there are xenophobe parties but not with a government forming strength. The decline of the degree of emigration can also be explained by the fact that the more mobile families had already left Romania and Ukraine, and those who remained at home knows that in spite of their poor environment at home they would even not go ahead in life without having any helping connections abroad. Moreover, Hungary made more difficult the administrative conditions of transmigration due to the pressure of the Hungarian organizations in Romania and Ukraine. The intellectual class who founded these Hungarian organizations thinks that emigration will not solve the problem of the three million Hungarian people (involving also the Gypsies) in Romania and Ukraine.

Before transmigration, most of the interviewed persons knew Hungary as working here for years in an illegal way. They were talking about families who, for example, still regularly

come over to Hungary to work as musicians in an illegal way when there is a wedding or any other events. In preparing for the transmigration connections with relatives abroad are significant. One of the interviewed persons said that her godparents lived in Hungary and they helped her during the first months when arriving Hungary. A housewife said that in spite of her big family he let another family with nine members of it stay with them for months while they arranged everything. These connections are prerequisite for transmigration. Of course, their Hungarian language knowledge also makes easier the transmigration.

In the first half of the nineties among the ambitious Gypsy musicians emigration was general, almost all of them took advantage of this possibility, except those ones where a serious obstacle came up, for example, handicap children, not having children etc. These people consider emigration as a kind of investment into the next generation and in cases when the following generation is missing or seems not able to survive, they think that investment is unnecessary.

In the first stage of our research we looked for immigrants in that part of the "Partium" where are mostly poor small villages and live a lot of Gypsy people, and we realized that these small villages are not targets of the emigrants but the bigger towns of this region. The interviewed persons said that during the last ten years most of the emigrants came to these bigger towns but then they went to the Hungarian capitol and after it to abroad, for example, Germany and Canada. The reason for going further from the "Partium" is probably that these emigrants found the Hungarian part of the "Partium" an economically disadvantaged area that does not reserve enough opening breaks for them.

For those emigrants who came to the Hungarian part of the "Partium" cheap living places were available only in the poor parts of the city

centres. Their ruined lodging-houses are rather big that is good for the big Gypsy families who usually spend their days at home together because the children are at home and the father works only in the evening and at night. Their houses are rather tidy, cleaner than in other Gypsy houses, over-decorated and very coloured that suits to the Gypsy tradition. The domination and continuous operation of the high tech, for example, hi-fi sets, TV sets, mobile phones etc., is characteristic of these homes but the furniture is poor and probably second hand one. Usually there is a dog that lives with the family and seemed that part of the family. Briefly, in their material environment there can be found at the same time the elements of the traditional Gypsy culture and the elements of the modern consumer society.

IV.2. Culture

In case of those Gypsy musician families that want to break out from the Gypsy environment can be seen that in the interest of achieving their goals effective norms help them. The cooperation in the family is ruled by strict and particular norms that differ from the norms of other Gypsy groups. Our interviewed persons found deviance behaviour, for example, getting drunk, regular drinking and staying out late that are absolutely natural behaviour patterns in case of non-musician Gypsy families. Besides the following of the strict rules and sanctions, they consider as the device of education that big families pay a lot of attention to their children and show a kind of model to them. In these groups, opposite to general Gypsy families, it is unacceptable that young girls have partners in their teenage period that is followed by having children. According to researchers who examine their cultures can be seen that there is a kind of tradition behind the Gypsy behaviour that they begin sexual life so early because there is a

tradition that parents bring together their children in their early childhood. In case of Gypsy musicians this tradition is over and special characteristic of their habits that the father respects monogamy in his marriage. According to this it is very important for a girl to have a respectable life until marriage. The father of a twenty-two-year old girl emphasized that her daughter has never been a partner till this time. As regards to the concept of social capital can be seen that this behaviour is based on the conventions of the system of relationship that involves considering roles and experiences that determine what possibilities the youth can chose when they have to decide. In this case it is due to the fact that Gypsy musicians separate themselves from other groups of Gypsies. Partnership for the boys is also allowed according to very strict rules, for example, they cannot stay out at night. In these families children are born in families opposite to other groups of Gypsies where great part of the girls have children before marriage. Although the older generation emphasized that they do not interfere in their children's choices and they do take care of old traditions, for example, deciding about marriage in childhood, they expect that their children marry with children of other Gypsy musician families. They even do not like to marry Hungarian ones. It appears from the above mentioned things that the very layered Gypsy communities try to defend their financial status and their different culture by endogamy in their own group of Gypsies. This endogamy, that according to our experiences is the principal of all kinds of relationships, does not only select the negative effects but also prevents that these people become part of a multiplex group involving people with different social positions. This kind of closed system of relationships also prevents them to open towards groups with higher status, to get information to have a better achievement in schooling or to learn special skills to get better jobs.

When we asked them what the reason is for their steady norm system it has appeared that they are conscious of the characteristics and the importance of inherit family subculture. They usually gave answers for their behaviour that *"we saw it this way"* *"this is a habit in this family"*, etc.

Religion plays an important role in the life of the immigrant Gypsy musician families and the middle-aged generation. This generation became non-believer in Hungary during the years of socialism. Certainly, this religious life is supported by the state of being an ethnic group because belonging to a church or speaking mother tongue are very important identifying things for them. It is also part of their education to make attend their children to divinity classes and church. Otherwise it has been a frequent phenomenon in the "Partium" for a long time that catholic and protestant Gypsy communities support Gypsy families in solving their problems. In case of the families of Gypsy people being in low social position these communities supported them in their everyday problems by, for example, motivating them, sometimes it was financial motivation, to get a qualification to have a higher standard of living. In this case, low social position means closed communities, lack of outer relationships and because of these things not having the ability of self-interest enforcement.

According to the interpretation of gender roles between the generations can be seen that there are differences. People in their fifties embody the model of a big family that is based on the prestige of the father and beside it the mother's role is to keep together and to take care of the family with a kind of function that to make milder the father's severity. A father said, for example, that his adult son is afraid to smoke when the father is present. In case of young women the identification with the roles seems rather uncertain because on the one hand the

traditional mother role is fading as a consequence of educational institutions, and on the other hand because of their low qualification level they cannot take part in the labour market. The situation of young men is much more stable because of the inherited musician trade and that they saw a strong father model both inside and outside the house in their childhood. Furthermore being a musician is not only a sure income possibility but it means a kind of pride and self-confidence for them, for example, they show very proudly the articles and photos about their performances to other members of the family.

The differences in the dressing of the generations are also remarkable but very similar to the dressing of non-Gypsy people. Middle-aged people of Gypsy musicians are wearing simple and tidy clothes of the low- and middle-class but the youth are having very fashionable and expensive sport clothes.

They consider their relationship between the generations ideal and exemplary but the differences in their attitude to life are present. The older people are more economic, rather solid who are able to give up things but the youth is consumption oriented, for example, in case of dressing, technical and entertaining things. This is a widespread phenomenon not only in Gypsy communities but also among Hungarian people.

The importance of the family relationship can be realized also in the everyday activities because the different generations are cooperating with each other continuously, for example, grandfathers go to the schools for their grandchildren. Helping this way like this concerns not only for people living in one household but also for bigger families where are several generations, and the relative relationships and the emotional connections are very strong. In such cases it is not rare to receive relatives in their houses for a longer period of time. Relative relationships also influence the decisions of emigration or further migration.

IV.3. Mobility without schooling?

There is a kind of advance in the aspect of school career between the generations of the Gypsies but this is very far away from that strong social changes that could be experienced in case of the non-Gypsy Hungarian population in the last decades, for example, in case of the Hungarians mass higher education is appearing in the nineties. Although the interviewed families of the Gypsy musicians are very ambitious and take definite steps on the behalf of social advance, they are also having low educational level as in case of other Gypsy communities. This level means finishing primary school behind time and not attending secondary education. By introducing their school career this paper also looks for the answer why their education follows a way like this.

The generation of the immigrant parents still not finished the eight-year primary school and concerning the scale of values having a good trade is better than having high educational level. In spite of it the interviewed persons considered important their children's education that was a bit confusing for us.

As according to the pre-school institutions nursery was mentioned by an immigrant mother from Romania who had to go to work very early because there was not any child-care leave for mothers. She said that she let her son attend nursery with a very heavy heart and her child did not enjoyed himself there, he was always crying therefore the mother left her job soon to be able to care of her child at home. During the interviews we have experienced that most of the children was taken care of at home until the age of attending kindergarten. These children live in big families where they are always around the adults, they do not have a separated childrenlike environment, they are no children rooms or toys, they usually play with the things of the adults and take part fully in their life.

Parents in the families of Gypsy musicians cherish good experiences of kindergarten. They are satisfied with the kindergarten teachers and proud of their children because they are better in singing and versification than other children. Comparing these families to other non-musical Gypsy families can be seen that they do not feel the shock when beginning school because of the new expectations and demands. Parents support their children at schooling and they talked about that they hear their children's lessons regularly and their children have good marks at school. The teachers' relationship towards their children was judged undoubtedly positive and they could not mention any negative experience in connection with schooling. It can be explained by the fact that their children attended school in tidy and clean clothes, they prepared for the lessons, they had full equipment and their behaviour was very polite all the time. They said that teachers had liked their children very much and they experience it still now in case of their grandchildren.

In spite of all the above mentioned positive attitudes to schooling, their children dropped out of schools, they could just finish primary school about two or three years later and they had never applied for secondary schools. It shows that the parents' will was no more effective in the teenage period of the children's life. One of the mothers said "*I cannot study instead of my child*". Anyway they do not like talking about the failures of this period in primary school. Families want their children to get a certificate about the eight school years and they consider a kind of success when their children finish primary school.

In the respect of further education the young generation made a precise cost-benefit analysis whether to study more or not, and there were emphasised the loss of income during that period and the expectable expenses. They considered studying in parallel with working un-

imaginable and one of them stated the reason for it: *"I'm too tired for studying then"*. In these cost-benefit analysis their social advance and the increase of their income through studying played only just a very small role. This experience suits to a statement that Boudon writes in connection with explaining the decision concerning further education of socially low positioned young people (Boudon, 1981). It is also a typical information about the aspects influenced by values concerning success of the subculture since the families do not consider the missing of further education as a deficiency. Otherwise absolutely being unqualified is the characteristic of only female children because they are said to be no good for to become musicians (*"How could she sing without having her educated?"*). Parents prepare their daughters to become wives and mothers who do not need high educational level or any kind of qualification.

Boys also did not learn their professions within formal education but according to the traditions they took it from the model of their fathers so to say they grew into their profession. According to the family habits of the Gypsy musicians children are given the instruments in the age of four or five that to be revealed their talent (*"I gave the instrument into the hand of my other son and he hold it as a Gyppo, a non-musician Gypsy, he did not become a violinist but later a concertina player"*).

On the whole the characteristics of their school careers are that parents usually overvalue the school achievements of their children, describe them with better marks, their attitude to primary school changes after the first four years, their children often drop out, they are overage and they attend night schools. There is one thing that did not appeared as a problem that of dropping-out from lower secondary education. Appearing problems in connection with education were considered by the

parents as natural concomitants of the adolescence. Although their children's behaviour did not become deviant because of the strong family disciplines but their school career and their interest in studying have ended. It seems that this interest in studying has ended forever but it is promising that talking about the grandchildren's future they consider even higher education as a purpose within reach.

IV.4. People who have jobs and those who do not have

The labour force participation of the immigrant Gypsies is full of paradoxes. They said that despite they are reported officially as having minimum wages they earn much more with tips. This is the way because of avoiding to pay taxes and contributions to the state. At present this situation is both the common interest of the employer and the employee but it is a bit risky concerning the future of the employer.

The most disadvantaged is the situation of the completely unqualified young women although the Labour Centres give them job again and again but the need for uneducated labour force is getting less. One young woman said that she worked at a tobacco company as a handygirl and she had an accident some month ago but during the time of recovering her contract fell due and she was given the sack. This situation and the defencelessness that accompanied it made her suspicious and sad, and that is why they think that there are stereotypes in the background of their failures in looking for jobs. Unsuccessful job seeking and the powerlessness caused by it is the situation in which the suspicion of discrimination appeared in the head of the interviewed persons. In the respect of school career the uncertainty or the lack of young women's prospects for the future and the waiting position were outstanding. It can be explained by the fact that the daughters of the

Gypsy musician families are connected to a very strong net of family or relative relationships but they do not have other external links to other social positions. That is why they do not have prospects about the alternative ways of actions waiting for them. It seems as a kind of paradox but it is squealing that they expressed their bravest hopes in connection with further education of those children who are from mixed families concerning races. They are those who

will probably have the possibility later to use the external net of relationships. On the whole, the strong cultural and environmental separation of the families indeed can be the source of a strong family community cohesion based on effective norms but this closeness despite the norms of social advance, can stop the activity and the initiative of the family members because their knowledge and information derives only from their close environment.

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ROMŲ VAIKYSTĖ RYTŲ EUROPOJE

Tamás Kozma, Gabriella Pusztai ir Katalin Torkos

Santrauka

Šiame straipsnyje keliama romų vaikų ugdymo problema aktuali ne vien Vengrijai, bet ir visai Rytų bei Vidurio Europai. Iškeldami šių vaikų ugdymo problematiką, autoriai pateikia plačią romų vaikų, gyvenančių „Partium“ regione, esančiame Rumunijos, Vengrijos ir Ukrainos sandūroje, sociokultūrinių bei pedagoginių sąlygų (istorijos, kalbos, kultūros, skurdo, nedarbo ir kt.) apžvalgą. Autoriai daro išvadą, kad romų visuomenė yra gana diferencijuota, bet jos įvairių sluoksnių išsilavinimas yra žemas. Mat

ir pasiturinčiose romų grupėse švietimas nelaikomas prioritetu. Tad ir formuojant švietimo ir apskritai visą socialinę politiką būtina į tai atsižvelgti. Šitai turėdami galvoje, autoriai nuosekliai ir išsamiai analizuoja romų vaikų padėtį įvairiose ugdymo įstaigose (ikimokyklinio ugdymo, pradinėse ir vidurinėse, profesinėse ir aukštesiose mokyklose). Kitaip tariant, plačiai nušviečia tiek romų gyvenimo istorinį, socialinį, kultūrinį kontekstą, tiek konkrečias švietimo problemas.

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