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Minority Groups In Higher Education:
Motivations, Chances

In 2001, some news informed us of the fact that in the county of Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg six evening schools had been started only for students of gypsy origin. The training was organized and carried out by Budakalász Secondary School with the help of the Ministry of Education, the Hungarian Gypsy Community and the PHARE. That piece of news aroused our interest, it was interesting and exciting for us, and the question was immediately put, what kind of similarities and differences could be between these students and those who have been attending the so-called mixed classes. We thought we should examine this phenomenon more thoroughly, therefore we chose it as the topic of our thesis. In our research, we concentrated on the secondary school training, the ancient form of the higher education.

For the sake of the effectiveness of the examination, we decided on the complementary use of the two main tendencies in the Hungarian gypsy research: the sociological and the anthropological approaches. We expected that the methods of both approaches and also the differences between them would assert.

First, we interviewed 32 students who had attended gypsy classes. We reached these students for the interview by the snowball method, in which the starting points were our acquaintances studying in the class, the teachers and the minority leaders. The aims of the interviews were collecting information, making the questionnaires for the survey on the basis of the acquired information, shading the examination problem, defining more precisely the hypotheses of the survey. The aim of the examination was to reveal what former and contemporary factors, circumstances, people help the person start studying again, after a previously unsuccessful school career. Our aim was to collect the claims and the further aims concerning the final examination, which can be connected with the former circumstances of their life. We paid special attention to the people who had had a significant influence on the self.

The second step was the survey where we made the research on a control group collaterally with the examination of the students of gypsy origin. At the organization of the control group, the schools of self-government in the county of Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg had to be taken into consideration. On the basis of the interviews, we chose as the aim of the survey to define who are the people who choose the evening school training as adults to obtain the final

examination nowadays. And they do this, when the final examination is thought to be a social expectation, a "political" aim, which also means that it is not (will not be) considered as privilege, as a qualification leading towards advantages as it has become common. Why do they choose this training? What do they expect from it? Do they need it to improve their professional qualifications or are they planning to continue their studies in the higher (university) education? We wanted to know why the people, who felt capable to obtain the final examination as adults, after spending years without studying, had not obtained it previously, at school age, in the day-school system. Mainly, the focus of our research was the motivation of the people who have chosen this educational form.

While defining our aims, we put another question on the basis of the experience of the interviews: Is the social-economical situation of the students attending the evening school / correspondence course in the county of Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg different from the Hungarian average?

The results and the experience of our research (can) draw the attention of the policy of education and of the local training organizers to the following result, amongst others: the evening school and correspondence course secondary school training organized for adults, has three influences:

- its influence on the self: by the increase of his/her cultural and social capital, his/her economic growth is also expected (he/she will be employed, will be promoted to a better position, will have the possibility to take part in further trainings etc.)
- its influence on the society: as the person who has obtained the final examination has an influence on his/her own family, expresses his/her expectations connected with his/her children
- its influence on the gypsies as a population: as the life and the school career of the students attending the evening school / correspondence course is very similar to his/her own life and school career