

LOOSE ENDS

*Mapping the roots of youth
marginalization in the underclass*



RESEARCH REPORT ROMANIA

On the research conducted in the 'Loose Ends' project

RESEARCH REPORT

ROMANIA

On the research conducted in the 'Loose Ends' project



Find out more:
egyutthato.eu/loose

This document was created within the frameworks of the 'Loose Ends' project implemented by Együttható Egyesület, Association Nevo Parudimos and RROMA. The project was supported by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union. Project number: 2020-1-HU01-KA205-078586. This document does not necessarily reflect the official views of the European Commission, the European Union or the organisations co-operating with them.

Authors: Prof. Dr. Ileana Rotaru
Adrian Caciula
Daniel Grebeldinger
Zeliha Busra Akdogan

Issued by Association Nevo Parudimos

office@nevoparudimos.ro
+40-355-429-351



Table of Content

1. Research problem and aim	4
2. Conceptualisation – Literature review and legislation	4
3. Legislation on Special Education in Romania.....	6
4. Data collection methods	14
5. Measurement.....	18
6. Recording	18
7. Analysis	18
8. Results – main findings	20
9. Conclusions	21

1. Research problem and aim

Our purpose is to explore the process of Roma children education, more clearly to collect and analyse the data on a specific topic of the education of Roma children in the special schools, how Roma families and children end up in segregated institutions. We would like to understand the process of the special education, how the Roma children are evaluated and decided to be enrolled in the special schools, how the background situation is, how are the reactions of Roma families towards this and so on.

We wish **to understand the target group's socio-economic background and cultural particularities that affect the educational path** while also **studying** their individual considerations and **the factors influencing behaviour** in order to find the means and the possible explanations for a pattern of marginalization and some possible similarities for the institutional offer for educational path of the Roma children.

2. Conceptualisation – Literature review and legislation

Research problem and aim

Our purpose is to collect and analyze the data on a specific topic of the education of Roma children in the special schools, how Roma families and children end up in segregated institutions, we would like to understand the process of the special education, how the Roma children are evaluated and decided to be enrolled in the special schools, how the background situation is, how are the reactions of Roma families towards this and so on.

Introduction

According to the estimation of Council of Europe, there are 1.85 million (8.32% of the whole population) Roma people are living in Romania, maybe even more up to 2.5 million – the reason behind this uncertainty is the lack of proper housing, unregistered children etc. - which makes Romania is the country that has the largest Roma population in Europe. Percentage of Roma children whose ages are between 5-15 out of the whole Roma population is between 10-15%. (FRA, Education of Roma in 11 Member States, 2011) Besides some researches state that most of the special school students are Roma children.

Segregation in Romania

In this research, we mainly discuss the manner in which Romanian educational system deals with the integration of Roma children in the special needs education. Throughout the Romanian education system, Roma children are second or sometimes third-class citizens. Sadly, the contrasts between the model schools and Roma schools in so called “ghetto schools” is very strict. Roma children are almost always educated in less resourced schools than non-Roma children; they are almost always taught by less qualified teachers; and they are often treated differently and worse by their principals, teachers, and classmates than non-Roma children. Roma children are often left behind as non-Roma children progress through Romania's educational system.

Roma Children and Special Education in Romania

In Romania, students from the Roma ethnicity are characterized by poor school enrolment, high dropout rates, and limited participation in higher education. More specifically, they are

disproportionately overrepresented in the special school system, with estimates suggesting that they account for 70% of the pupils. This number is astounding considering they represent well under 10% of the total population of the country. The causes for this overrepresentation are multiple, complex and sometimes, intertwined.

A first explanation is the prevailing negative and discriminatory attitudes that have slowly engendered a process of self-isolation of the Roma community, who may feel that the mainstream educational system does not correspond to their needs and way of life. As a result, parents may be unsupportive of their children's search for education, making it a struggle for both students and teachers. On the other hand, Romanian teachers' lack of understanding of Roma culture and lifestyle contributes to placing children's school failure on the families. Because of this, some of these children do not succeed in the traditional system and thus, special schools appear as a worthwhile alternative.

Misdiagnosis is also common. Sometimes, it is due to cultural differences that may invalidate assessment of abilities. Other times, these pupils are considered to have an intellectual disability because of potential behavioural problems or learning difficulties. This is notably due to the lack of standardized definition of 'intellectual disability' but can also be explained by the fact that these students often come from larger families where everyday hardships may prevent them from getting the intellectual stimulation they may need.

As a result, they do not thrive in the elitist mainstream system and their only option is to enroll in special schools. However, poverty remains the strongest factor leading to marginalization in education and statistically speaking, Roma families tend to be more vulnerable to it. Special schools offer free services that mainstream schools do not, such as hot meals and accommodation, which can make a real difference in times of profound financial distress. Despite the numbers, to this day, no national institution has made the statistical connection between special education system and the high rate of enrolled students from the Roma ethnicity. While the government has made the explicit commitment to improve the socio-economic status of this community, negative attitudes are still strong and the Roma remain marginalized with respect to educational, political and economic opportunities (Walker, G. (2008). *Overrepresented Minorities in Special Education in the United States and Romania: comparison between African-American and Roma populations in disability studies. Research in Comparative and International Education*).

For example, it is found some claims on anecdotal basis about over presentation of Roma children in the special schools. As an example, one school visit in Cluj, it was found that 100 % of the special school classes are Roma (Interview with Editha Cauli, Teacher, School 12, "Traian Darjan," Cluj (May 25, 2005).

There are several reasons why Roma are disproportionately placed in special schools. In some cases, Roma children "get no stimulation at home." When psychology students examined the children, the conclusion was that "almost all of the Roma students were of "limited intelligence." In other cases, Roma students attend special schools because they receive free clothing and meals there (as

opposed to regular schools, which provide neither). (Interview with Florin Moisa, Executive President, Resource Center for Roma Communities, Cluj (May 25, 2005).

Members of the Romanian government were also aware of the special schools' issue. When asked about special schools, the head of the Romanian National Agency for Roma replied: "This is segregation. This is very dangerous for these children, because it is not clear that they belong there. These shouldn't be segregated on the basis of ethnicity." The Director-General for Pre-University Education noted that Roma children in special schools would oftentimes not attend the regular schools due to their extreme poverty. (Interview with Ilie Dinca, President, National Agency for Roma, in Bucharest, Romania (May 30, 2005)

The survey conducted by FRA Roma in 2011 showed that the percentage of children up to the age of 15 reported as having attended a special school or class, which was organized 'mainly for Roma' was only 2% for Romania with a special note "The very low figures for Romania could be a result of the inadvertent omission of 'special class' in the translated questionnaire, thereby limiting the question's scope".

Measures to combat segregation restricted former rights to organize Roma-only schools or classes. According to the Order no. 1540 of the Ministry of Education, 'setting up of first and fifth grade segregated classes consisting of majority or entirely Roma children' was prohibited from the school year 2007-2008. Although segregation is now banned, the objective of desegregation is yet to be 'completed' in educational practices (Stoian and Mark, 2010). In the new National Education Law of 2010 there are also sanctions against 'abusive diagnosis of children based on race, ethnicity, language, religion, membership of a disadvantaged category..., which leads to placement in classes with special educational needs' (The Right to Education of Roma Children – Florin Moisa).

In Romania, although County School Inspectorates were set up to make sure schools were upholding the right to inclusive education for Roma children, their lack of training and understanding of the issues resulted in the continued practice of in-school segregation. (The Right of Roma Education- Position Paper, UNICEF) Generally speaking, the educational system heavily segregated, with mainstream schools in one hand and special educational schools on the other hand.

3. Legislation on Special Education in Romania

Chapter I

General dispositions

Art. 1. - Special integrated education represents a form of differentiated school training, as well as a form of complex educational, social and medical assistance children / pupils / young people with special educational needs integrated in educational institutions table. It must meet the developmental needs of children through assessment adequate learning / development potential and by ensuring rehabilitation, recovery and compensating for deficiencies or disorders, learning difficulties. Children, pupils and young people with special educational requirements integrated in mainstream education are supported through supportive and itinerant teachers, on a case-by-case basis.

Art. 2. - Educational support services for people with special educational needs is organized and operates in accordance with the principles governing education pre-university.

Art. 3. - For the purposes of this methodology, the terms and expressions below have the following meanings:

a) deficiency - the absence, loss or alteration of a structure or a function (injury anatomical, physiological or psychological disorder) of the individual, resulting from a illness, an accident or a disturbance, which prevents him from participating normally in the activity in society;

b) special education - the whole process of implementing the programs, learning activities and complex recovery, compensation, psychotherapeutic assistance, medical, social, cultural, adapted to people who fail independently to reach, temporarily or throughout schooling, an age - appropriate level of development for training basic skills in order to prepare for adult life;

c) special school - the educational unit in which it is provided by specialized teachers education and psycho-pedagogical intervention for people with different types and degrees of disabilities / deficiencies;

d) special educational requirements (SEN) - additional educational needs, complementary to the general objectives of education, adapted to individual particularities and those characteristic of a certain deficiency / disability or learning disorder / difficulty or of another nature, as well as a complex assistance (medical, social, educational, etc.);

e) integration (school) - the process of adapting the person with SEN to the norms and requirements the school he attends, to establish positive emotional relationships with the members of the group school (group / class) and successful conduct of school activities;

f) inclusion (school) - the permanent process of improving the services offered by the units' education to include in the education process all members of the community, regardless their characteristics, disadvantages or difficulties;

g) inclusive school - the educational unit in which an education is provided for all children and it is the most effective means of combating attitudes of discrimination and segregation. The children / students in these educational units benefit from all the rights and services educational, psychotherapeutic, medical and social, according to the principles of social inclusion, equity and equal opportunities;

h) curricular adaptation - correlation of the contents of the components of the national curriculum with the possibilities of the student with SEN, from the perspective of the finalities of the adaptation process and of its school and social integration;

i) itinerant and support teacher - teacher with higher education in the field psycho-pedagogical who carry out learning, stimulation, compensation and recovery activities with people with SEN integrated in mainstream education units, in collaboration with all factors involved;

j) individualized service plan - the way of coherent programming and coordination a individualized resources and services for children / pupils / young people with SEN integrated in training units mass education, focused on their development needs;

k) personalized intervention program - the design and implementation tool of educational-therapeutic activities used to streamline intervention activities and reaching the finalities provided in the individualized service plan;

l) Bucharest county / municipality center of resources and educational assistance (CJRAE / CMBRAE) - specialized unit of pre-university education, with personality legal, methodologically coordinated

by the school inspectorate, which provides assistance services psycho-pedagogical for parents, children, teachers and who coordinates, monitors and evaluates, at county and Bucharest level, the educational activity and services provided by interschool speech therapy centers and speech therapy offices, centers and offices psycho-pedagogical assistance, school mediators;

m) certificate of school and professional orientation - the official document / act issued by CJRAE / CMBRAE, according to the provisions contained in the National Education Law no. 1/2011, which specifies the diagnosis / deficiency and guides children, pupils and young people with SEN in mainstream or special education;

n) disability - functional limitations caused by physical dysfunctions / deficiencies, intellectual or sensory, health or environmental conditions and which reduce the possibility the individual to perform a motor or cognitive activity or behavior;

o) disability - the social disadvantage resulting from a deficiency or incapacity and which limits or impedes the fulfillment by the individual of a role expected by society;

p) disability - the result or effect of complex relationships between the state of health a the individual, personal factors and external factors that represent the life circumstances of to this individual. Due to this relationship, the impact of different environments on the same individual, with a given state of health can be extremely different. "Disability" is the generic term for impairments, limitations of activity and restrictions of participation, according to the International Classification of functioning, disability and health;

q) CIF - International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health, document developed by the World Health Organization, Geneva, 2001;

r) impairment - a loss or abnormality of body structure or physiological function, including mental functions. By the notion of "abnormality" is meant here the variations significant from the statistically established norm (i.e. a deviation from the established population average according to the standard norms measured), and this notion should be used exclusively in this meaning, according to CIF;

s) functioning - generic term for body functions, body structures, activities and participation. These denote the positive aspects of the interaction between the individual (who has a health problem) and the contextual factors in which it is found (environmental factors and personal), according to CIF;

t) curricular adaptation - correlation of the contents of the components of the national curriculum with the possibilities of the student with SEN or other types of educational requirements from the perspective the purposes of the process of adaptation and its school and social integration;

u) inclusive education - the permanent process of improving the school institution, having as purpose of exploiting existing resources, especially human resources, to support participation in the educational process of all persons within a community;

v) special vocational school - the school institution that through the organization and development the teaching-learning-assessment process facilitates the socio-professional integration of students through certification of professional qualifications;

w) special high school - the educational unit that organizes and carries out the process of teaching-learning-assessment especially for students / young people with sensory disabilities and motors;

x) special education center, resource center and educational assistance, day center, curative pedagogy center and other types of centers - educational units organized by Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports or by organizations non-governmental organizations in partnership with

the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sport, which have as their purpose and purpose the recovery, compensation, rehabilitation and school integration and social development of different categories of children / pupils / young people with SEN. These are considered alternatives of special education whose content can be based on certain pedagogies experimental (Montessori, Freinet, Waldorf etc.);

y) protected workshop - the space adapted to the needs of people with SEN / disabilities, with which they carry out activities of improvement and development of skills, in order to integrate into life active participation of young people; the workshop can operate in community locations, in day centers, in centers residential or special education units.

Chapter II

Organizing educational support services

Art. 4. - In order to achieve the specific attributions in the field of integrated education, CJRAE / CMBRAE organizes the following activities and services:

- a) evaluates and orients school and professional, in collaboration with the specialists from the unit's schoolchildren, all children / students with SEN;
- b) issues the school and professional orientation certificate;
- c) identifies the mass education units within the county / municipality of Bucharest which ensures the best conditions for psycho-individual development depending on the type and degree deficiency;
- d) offers specialized consultancy to all educational units in order to fulfill optimal conditions for providing educational support services;
- e) offers specialized counseling for parents and students;
- f) organizes multidisciplinary teams to detect all children / students with SEN and for the application of individualized service plans;
- g) provides services for the orientation of continuous training through partnerships with competent institutions;
- h) organizes working meetings, symposia, etc. in order to disseminate the examples of good practices in the field of inclusive education;
- i) identifies, in collaboration with the specialists of the school units, children / students with difficulties of learning, development or school adaptation that are at some point in a situation of failure school or at risk of dropping out of school and organizes multidisciplinary teams to ensure remedial education services, psycho-pedagogical counseling according to long-term needs long or short of them.

Chapter III

The specifics of educational support services

Art. 5. - The school integration of the persons with SEN is realized in educational units of table.

Art. 6. - For the efficient integration of the persons with SEN it is necessary to create some services of support specialized in psycho-pedagogical assistance to benefit children / students / young people integrated, as well as consulting services for teachers in the school inclusive, other students, family and community.

Art. 7. - The specialized services necessary for the integration of children with SEN are provided by itinerant and support teachers, in collaboration with all stakeholders.

Art. 8. - (1) In order to occupy a position of itinerant and support teacher, they must be fulfilled cumulatively the following conditions:

- a) graduation with a bachelor's degree, with a qualification in psycho-pedagogy special, psychology or pedagogy;
- b) graduation of a didactic master with a duration of 2 years, with one of the specializations in the field psycho-pedagogical;
- c) carrying out a practical internship, lasting one school year, completed in a unit of education, in the didactic function corresponding to the studies, under the guidance of a teacher mentor with experience in special education.

(2) The positions of itinerant and support teacher can also be filled by the graduates of an institution higher education, long-term studies, with a special qualification in psycho-pedagogy, psychology or pedagogy.

(3) Graduates of other specialties / faculties, tenured on the chairs of itinerant professor and of support, must complete their studies within 6 years of the application of this methodologies, through a 2-year master's degree in psych-pedagogy or undergraduate university studies level 1 Bologna in the field of psych-pedagogy.

Art. 9. - (1) The teaching positions of itinerant and support teachers are normed within special education units, being occupied by competition in accordance with the provisions of art. 89 of Law no. 1/2011.

(2) If there is no special education unit in a county, the teacher Itinerant and support is framed by the mass education unit that has the most many children / students with integrated SEN.

(3) Depending on the local needs, the educational units can transform positions / departments teachers in the positions of itinerant and support teachers.

Art. 10. - The activity of a traveling and support teacher is regulated as an activity of special education, according to art. 262 para. (3) point f) of Law no. 1/2011.

Art. 11. - (1) The standardization and staffing of itinerant and support teachers is carried out as follows:

- a) a position for 8 - 12 children / pupils / young people with moderate or mild deficiencies, integrated individually or in groups of 2-3 students in groups / classes in mainstream education units, equivalent to the teaching norm of 16 hours;
- b) a position for 4 - 6 children / pupils / young people with severe, profound or associated deficiencies, integrated individually or in groups of 2-3 students in groups / classes in mainstream education units, equivalent to the 16-hour teaching norm.

(2) The 16 hours / week related to the teaching norm are performed in direct activity with the child / student integrated, in the classroom or in multifunctional classrooms / resource centers in the unit education where the child / student is enrolled.

Art. 12. - (1) At least half of the activity within the 16 hours is carried out in group / class, during teaching-learning activities / lessons, in partnership with the framework teacher from the group / class.

(2) Direct activity with the integrated child / student, in multifunctional rooms / resource centers from the educational unit, takes place outside the class hours.

(3) The number of hours and the educational disciplines in which the itinerant teacher and of support are established in agreement with the teachers in the group / class.

Art. 13 - (1) The categories of children / students who benefit from the educational support services are:

a) children / students with a certificate of school and professional orientation issued by the commission of school and professional evaluation and orientation within CJRAE / CMBRAE;

b) children / students with learning, development or school adaptation difficulties that are encountered at some point in a situation of school failure or at risk of dropping out of school and benefit from remedial education / psycho-pedagogical counseling services from teachers at class / school counselor / speech therapist teacher etc. Depending on the evolution of the student, the cadres' teachers who have worked with it may recommend evaluation by the committee CJRAE / CMBRAE in order to provide a traveling and support teacher.

(2) All children / students who have been school-oriented towards educational support services benefits from the psycho-pedagogical support of a traveling teacher and support.

Art. 14. - In the situation when the student does not reach the minimum evaluation standards for each one discipline, field of study, proper preparation of the class in which he is, although a benefited from all educational support services, it can be redirected to a unit of special education, in accordance with the provisions of art. 54 of Law no. 1/2011.

Art. 15. - (1) In order to detect early, CJRAE / CMBRAE constitute teams' multidisciplinary assessment of all children with SEN or developmental risk personal skills.

(2) For the accomplishment of the activity provided in par. (1), CJRAE / CMBRAE obtains information from pediatricians, family physicians, psychologists, specialists from the general directorates of assistance and child protection, nursery teachers, kindergartens and day centers, etc.

Art. 16. - (1) All children / students evaluated and identified with SEN or at risk in development personal competencies will be school-oriented by the commissions within CJRAE / CMBRAE.

(2) The school orientation is made according to the type and degree of deficiency, towards units of mass or special education, in accordance with the provisions of art. 50 para. (1) of Law no. 1/2011.

(3) In the situation when the child is school-oriented towards the mass education units, it will also benefit from educational support services.

Art. 17. - The child / student with integrated SEN will be monitored and evaluated periodically by the internal commission of complex expertise in the special education unit to which the teacher is assigned itinerant and support, which provides support services.

Art. 18. - Annually, the internal committee of complex expertise draws up a report which it sends, together with the student's file, to the commission within CJRAE / CMBRAE, proposing the

maintenance the type of school orientation or its modification, depending on the results of the evaluation.

Art. 19. - The attributions of the itinerant and support teacher are the following:

- a) collaborates with the internal commission of complex expertise from the special education unit in order to take over the information regarding the evaluation and the individualized service plan of the child / student with SEN integrated in mainstream education;
- b) collaborates with all the teachers from the educational unit in which he / she is enrolled the child / student in order to achieve effective school integration and implementation in unitary mode of the individualized service plan;
- c) elaborates and implements the personalized intervention plan made on the basis of the plan individualized services, in partnership with the members of the multidisciplinary team;
- d) realizes the curricular adaptation in partnership with the teachers from the group / class;
- e) monitors the application of the adapted curricular programs and evaluates, in partnership with teachers from the group / class, the results of their application;
- f) develops didactic materials, specific working and evaluation tools in collaboration with teachers from the group / class in which there are students with SEN;
- g) participates, during the teaching-learning classes, in the activities that take place in the classroom;
- h) participates in school and extracurricular educational activities in the group / class as observer, consultant, co-participant;
- i) carries out individual or group cognitive stimulation activities;
- j) performs periodic evaluations and redesigns the personalized intervention program in depending on the results obtained;
- k) advises the parents / guardians of the children / students who benefit from the support services and collaborates with them;
- l) at the request of parents / guardians and / or teachers may recommend the evaluation and school guidance by the CJRAE / CMBRAE commission of all those children / students who have learning difficulties and do not benefit from educational support services.

Art. 20. - Itinerant and support teachers are paid in accordance with the provisions legislation in force.

Chapter IV

Facilities granted to integrative educational units

Art. 21. - In the groups / classes in which are integrated children / students with SEN who benefit from the number of educational support services is reduced by 2 children / students for each integrated child / student.

Art. 22. - The teachers from the integrating educational units benefit from courses training in the field of inclusive education, organized by the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports.

Art. 23. - (1) Teachers working with children / students with SEN integrated in training units. They will be given at least 5 points for each in the assessment sheets integrated child / student, but not more than 10 points. He also benefits from the score awarded itinerant and supportive teacher.

(2) It is recommended to the county / Bucharest school inspectorates that, at drawing up the grid with the scores provided for obtaining the merit gradation and distinctions, to establish for teachers in mainstream education that integrates children / students with CES a score equivalent to that awarded for obtaining performance in training distinguished students at school competitions and Olympics.

Chapter V

Final provisions

Art. 24. - Services are provided for students with SEN integrated in mainstream education units through itinerant teachers and support during pre-school education and on the whole period of schooling.

Art. 25. - In order to ensure equal opportunities, all students with SEN who participate in the evaluations provided by art. 74 of Law no. 1/2011 and at local and national exams / competitions benefit from the adaptation of the conditions for their development, based on the recommendations formulated in the certificate of school and professional orientation.

Art. 26. - (1) Children / Pupils / Youth with SEN, integrated in the mass education units, benefits from social assistance consisting in ensuring the daily allowance of food, supplies school, barracks, clothing and footwear in an amount equal to that provided children in the child protection system, as well as free accommodation in boarding schools or the assistance centers for children with SEN within the county general directorates Bucharest municipality of social assistance and child protection.

(2) The rights provided in par. (1) will be provided from the local budgets of the units administrative-territorial to which the educational units to which they are enrolled belong children / students.

Besides, according to European Commission – EACEA National Policies Platform, special education of Romania needs provision within the mainstream education. (25.01.2019)

https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/special-education-needs-provision-within-mainstream-education-56_en

Barriers and Obstacles for Inclusion On Special Education

Existence of many bureaucratic barriers and ineffective cooperation in programs of common interest to institutions and administrative and executive responsibility for the problems of people with special needs;

With all reform measures implemented at national level is unknown number of children and adults who should benefit from them (many children with disabilities are still outside the school system); School model cultivates intellectual skills, knowledge of competition and promote the individual success;

In many cases the school cannot respond to appropriate academic and basic educational needs of all children, including those with disabilities;

For children with severe disabilities there is not yet a national curriculum for this class of beneficiaries, however, some special schools have started identify the role to receive this category of children;

Insufficient concern of the Ministry of Education for practical solutions to real problems learning of children, young people and adults with disabilities (e.g. the deaf sign language as requiring training for professionals who are working in schools for the deaf);

Lack of programs and procedures for the identification and early diagnosis of disability, lack of monitoring programs for school integration of pupils with disabilities. The voice of disabled student, located in an educational program, is still not sufficiently heard and taken into account;

Low family involvement in decisions and educational programs concerning children with disabilities. Insufficient information to the parents, professionals and society as a whole on disability, human value and possibilities of recovery;

Precarious democratic relations of cooperation and effective communication between beneficiaries and providers of educational services;

Lack of SEN teacher support and adapted services;

Lack of monitoring and evaluation;

Lack of post-school opportunities.

4. Data collection methods

To analyse the specific topic of the education of Roma children in the special schools and to explore the segregation process, we use a **semi-structured interview** for our respondents, while the visions, the individual considerations and the behaviour patterns that led to a certain educational path for special or vocational school as well as the effects of such an education for their personal and professional development are explored with the help of interviews.

The research is conducted with the use of semi-structured interviews by operators special trained for this purpose. To avoid linguistic difficulties interviewers will use the respondents' mother tongue. Interviewers will be trained to be familiarized with the topic of the research and with the main interview direction/ themes, to record the dialog and to minimize possible errors on their part. During their preparation interviewers will be informed of the research parameters and the methodological basis, they will be introduced to the exact details of the sampling procedure, the commonest sampling errors and the required administrative tasks (invitation letter, letter of appointment, survey administration sheet), together with the researchers they will review in detail the questionnaires and discuss the moral and ethical standards applied, they will do simulation exercises for making contact, and will receive the regulations concerning interviewers.

Interviewers will at all times have their letter of appointment on them which contains their name, personal data, the exact name of the research and the duration of their mandate. The letter of appointment is only valid together with a photo identification document which the interviewer must produce when so requested. The letter of appointment will be endorsed by the project leader by signing it, and interviewers are at all times required to show it to the persons contacted when contacting them. In addition to the letter of appointment, interviewers will also have an invitation letter on them in which the research leader invites the person contacted to respond to the interview.

Interview:

Special and Vocational school graduates will take part in the interviews on one occasion in order to enhance the reliability of our research results and to obtain more and detailed information in a more open setting about the individual cases of educational path, its sociocultural background and the factors in school and family that prevent or facilitate it. The present research will use in-depth interview, using semi-structured and open questions.

26 respondents from the same area (town) that graduated special schools will be interviewed in their own houses. The respondents will be sampled using the snowball method or “friends’ recommendations” as they were former colleagues or neighbours. The interviews will take in each case between 60- 90 minutes. The interview will be conducted by a qualified person (university student, socio-facilitator, social mediator, social assistant etc.) who will be trained to understand the research objectives and the interview’s sequences of themes, sub-themes and address the proper questions (with the help of the interview chart); he/she is responsible for moderating the discussion, observing time frames, and ensuring that all questions are addressed and, possibly, all the perspectives are expressed and correspond with the interviewers’ views. The interviews will be audio recorded. They will be transcript very punctual for analysis and data interpretation.

An ethnographic approach will be also used. the interviewers should make notes about the experience of the environment, their observation of their living conditions (objects, furniture, yard of the house, street view, family members’ number, clothes of the peoples, language, behaviour, etc.) of the interviewed young people. When possible, some pictures/ photos will be made, but only with the approval of the interviewer or of her/his family. A formal consent agreement will be used for all the research activity (interview and observation)

The interviewers will be informed of the use of such methods in advance, and will sign, in the case of persons in special need together with the parents/ tutors, a letter of consent.

Interview:

The research has a specific target group: Roma families whose children were in special education – meaning the research head should be familiar with intersectionality, education, Roma inclusion, disabilities.

Group profile: Young people who are under 30 years; young people who were in special education around the year of 2000's, this school can be middle school (5-8 grade), or vocational school. So most of them now can be around their 20's. The interviewers will be Roma who will make a voluntary declaration on being of Roma origin. The respondents will be of 14 to 22 years of age. A gender balance will be maintained in the group. The interviews will take place in accordance with the Code of Ethics and the rules pertaining to personality rights mentioned above with regard to the interview methods and ethnographic research approach.

Name – Surname	Gender	Class	School Situation
U. M.	M	4	Abandon
S. L.	F	4	Abandon
C. 2	F	11	Special school
C. 1	F	11	Special School
I. S.	M	7	Abandon
R. E.	F	5	Abandon
R. D.	M	8	Abandon
R. I.	F	8	Abandon
A. P.	F	10 / 13 somehow	Abandon
M.	M	6	Abandon
M.	M	8	Special School
M.	M	2	Abandon
L. A.	M	4	Abandon
L.	F	8	Abandon
I. V.	F	8	Special School
G.	F	8	Abandon
Z. C. F.	F	8	Abandon
F. T.	F	8	Special School
D. M.	F	6	Special School
D. A.	F	7	Abandon
C. E.	M	7	Special School
C. M.	F	7	Special School
C. F.	M	8	Special School
C. M.	M	7	Abandon
A. B.	F	8	Abandon
A. C.	F	8	Abandon

5. Measurement

Hypotheses:

- a. the higher the agency level of the family is the strongest the institutional constraints will determine the child educational path toward a "special education" path;
- b. the families from marginalized area and with ethnic/ Roma statute and or/ with many children (some of them with visible disability) are "encouraged" to accept the educational path for special education schools instead of traditional school (because of an antigypsism attitude of the teachers/ parents of those schools)

Interview:

Interviews will take 60-90 minutes. These are basically semi-structured interviews concerning the topic indicated in the research and are conducted along a set of predefined questions certain elements of which are settled several dimensions in order to be coded, but are explored more deeply and openly, building on the results using more targeted and personal questions. Respondents reflect on the questions and interact with the expert which is to be documented by audio and video recording.

6. Recording

Interview:

Video recordings of interviews will be played several times, together (project team) analysed, paying attention not only to verbal but also to non-verbal communication to note feelings and emotions as well. Audio recordings will be transcribed in full, content will only be analysed afterwards.

7. Analysis

Everything said during interviews will be recorded, photo recordings will allow the careful observation of non-verbal communication, where appropriate, it will be recorded too. Based on the recordings a thematic outline of the discussion will be drawn up, then after the recordings are played for the second time a verbatim transcription is prepared.

As the next step recordings will be played for a third time to enable the analysis of the content of written documents. Recorded as a side note:

- time codes of priority parts,
- notes,
- gestures,
- references to similarities in other groups,
- various patterns, similarities.

Interview elements are coded subsequently. Using the semi-structured questionnaire as a guide, parts that are related to the research interest are sorted out, and then the relevant reasons are collected. Based on the various patterns a matrix will be drafted which will already present the respondents' answers according to pattern, content and reason.

Coding

Family background (primary and present one)
Socio-economic status
Members
Relations between members
Housing and living conditions
Profession/ working conditions
School
Level of graduation
Experiences from the primary school
Relations with the teacher and other academic staff
Experiences from the special/ vocational school
Personal experience as Roma, segregation (examples)
The process
How the educational path has been settled?
The satisfaction/ dissatisfaction with the present/ future
How to be improved
Other
Models in life, a certain person (a teacher, a family member etc.)
Relations with other institutions (NGOs, church, municipality etc.)
Laws and regulations; restrictions
Commitment
Level of social optimism

Question models:

Intro questions:

family background (primary and present one)

How old are you? Do you live with your family? (family members, relatives etc.) - relation with his original/ primary family

Are you married? Are you in a partners' relation? (new family)

What are you doing for living? (NEETs or in in dome form of education, working or unemployed, social assisted etc.)

Where do you live? (rural or urban, forms of living conditions)

B. Content:

Where did you go to school? How many classes did you graduate? How was your school/ student live?

What did you like/ dislike in school?

Was there any teacher/ other person that you felt better around him/her?

Did someone make you feel uncomfortable? If yes, in what sense?

What about your colleagues? Do you think they were the same /like you?

What were your favorite subjects? Were you ever thinking you were good at...? Did you want to follow a professional career in that direction?

How did you get to that school? Who advised you to go there? Did you want to attend that school? Did you ever think you were a person with a disability? How? (depends on the person own perception - physical or mental)

What about your primary school? Where did you attend it? How was your teacher?

Did someone ever call you""?

When did you first hear that you need to go to a special school?

Was this school better than a traditional one? What is your opinion?

Do you think that you were suited for a disability? In what sense? Now that you are a young adult, do you think that it is better for a small child to be sent to a special school?

Who do you trust most?

Was the school (institution, teachers, colleagues) helping you to improve your life (despite the disability)? What about the facilities of the school? Did you have special access, special help for doing your homeworks? Did you have access to computers, laboratories? How many hours did you spend daily in school?

If you will have a child, in the same condition as yours at that time, what would you do best for him?

C. Ending questions

If you had a decision power, what would you improve for children/ youngsters like you?

How do you see yourself in 10/ 20 years?

What would you change for the next generations of children like you? Who should help most, better?

8. Results – main findings

Family background (primary and present one):

Most of their parents did not attend school and did not have the proper conditions to attend school. This impacted their choice of dropping out school. The internal and migration process (to Resita from different parts of Romania when Resita was one of the largest industrial cities of Romania) and the external migration (from Romania to Western countries) influenced the process of attending school constantly and finally, after the primary school, they decided to abandon school. They live in marginalized areas of Resita where the schools are only for primary level. The effort to attend gymnasium is an economical and financial pressure for the families (transportation and long distance).

School – relation and process:

While attending school, the socializing process with children of the same age was described as a joyful period, with friends and games. The relation with professors is dual: some of them described it as being violent and aggressive and some of them recognized the help and support offered. Most of them declared that they did not have a special disability (some minor accidents as most) to attend special school. But they had difficulties and problems with the learning process (doing home works, reading and preparing themselves from textbooks by themselves etc.) as they did not have the family support. This was the main reason why they attended special school. Besides the help received with the educational activities, they get also 2 meals/per day which are considered a major help for the poor families.

They appreciate the curricula and the “normal” school program as very difficult and loaded compared to the one of the special school.

Other

Social optimism is rather high as they see their future in more light for their families and children, and usually concerned by health condition. Most of them have their own families and are preoccupied by their children education (to graduate more classes as they did, to attend vocational schools – to get a better jobs). They are not aware of the public policies and special measures (2nd chance program) to return to school and finish their mandatory studies (get a degree).

The young persons (usually men) are having a job (mainly construction) and they support their families. The women are generally in the household, taking care of their children (usually they are the one with the lowest level of education and this is a barrier in helping and supporting their own children with educational activities). This situation may be considered as a major impediment for children education, though they (the mothers) are more concerned about children attending school. Some of the women are working abroad (temporally) to take care of old people meanwhile their children are left with relatives and older members of their own family.

They receive in rarely occasion help and support from youth or other organisations, but once they have a contact and a type of cooperation in some educational programs with them, they are loyal and they appreciate the support (see: Save the Children Romania, local NGOs, church associations etc.)

9. Conclusions

Only our first hypothesis is confirmed:

The higher the agency level of the family is the strongest the institutional constrains will determine the child educational path toward a "special education" path; based on the socio-economic conditions and the educational background of their parents.

The second one, *the families from marginalized area and with ethnic/Roma statute and/or with many children (some of them with visible disability) are "encouraged" to accept the educational path for special education schools instead of traditional school (because of an antigypsism attitude of the teachers/parents of those schools),* was not visible during the interviews and did not played a role for attending special school form of education.

Based on our results, we consider the following:

-Special educational programs should be encouraged and adopted in "traditional" schools for all children due to the level of poverty and parents' professional activities (need to work, lack of education, lack of knowledge about school formal and non-formal activities).

-Children from marginalized areas should benefit from special public transportation facilities to attend school and this situation cannot impose a special pressure for their families (resources, time, parental concern etc.).

-The individual and tailored counselling for parents should be given a special attention in order to accept and understand the benefits of school mandatory levels of graduation (especially for the girls).

-Promoting (public organization and NGOs) programs that are targeting the marginalized and special needs children to the parents living in remote urban areas or/and in Roma communities (after-school program, 2nd chance, meals for children in schools etc.).

-Better school conditions (infrastructure and didactic materials) for children (including for the ones with disabilities), and free school supplies for children (textbooks, schoolbags, pencils, paper, text notes etc.).

-Qualified and trainings programs for teachers and didactic personal (auxiliary) to tackle specific situation of the children with the support of the families.