

## 6 THE SITUATION OF ROMA YOUTH

### 6.1 SCHOOLING AND EMPLOYMENT OF ROMA YOUTH: CHANGES BETWEEN 2011 AND 2016

ÁGOTA SCHARLE

Roma youth complete fewer grades in school – and, closely connected to that, are less likely to get a job – than non-Roma youth (*Kemény–Janky, 2005, Kertesi, 2005*). The disadvantages that accumulate over generations (and are difficult to overcome), the discriminatory, segregating attitudes of mainstream society and policy measures (or the lack of intervention) all contribute to the disadvantages of the Roma. While the role of institutional factors in explaining the schooling gap has been examined in several recent studies (e.g. *Hajdu et al, 2014, Kertesi–Kézdi, 2014, 2016, Kiss, 2018*), there is very limited information and analysis available on the Roma non-Roma employment gap. This sub-chapter provides a descriptive overview of recent trends, based on the HCSO's population surveys, which measure Roma ethnicity more accurately than before.

#### Education

For the sake of brevity, trends in schooling are portrayed by using two indicators, the share of those completing matriculation<sup>1</sup> and the share of full-time students. The share of matriculated youth by age (*Figure 6.1.1*)<sup>2</sup> is shaped mainly by developments in the period before 2011: those who were 29 years old in 2016 completed secondary school around 2005–2006, and those who were 19 years old at that time also acquired their basic skills in public education before the reform of 2011. In the non-Roma population, there is a significant change only in the case of men: in all cohorts over the age of 18 the share of matriculated boys is significantly higher (5–6 percentage points) in 2016 as compared to 2011 (*Figure 6.1.1*). In the Roma population, there is a significant improvement both among boys and girls. For Roma girls, the share of matriculated students starts to increase only in the younger cohorts, but the improvement is large – almost twice as large as for boys.

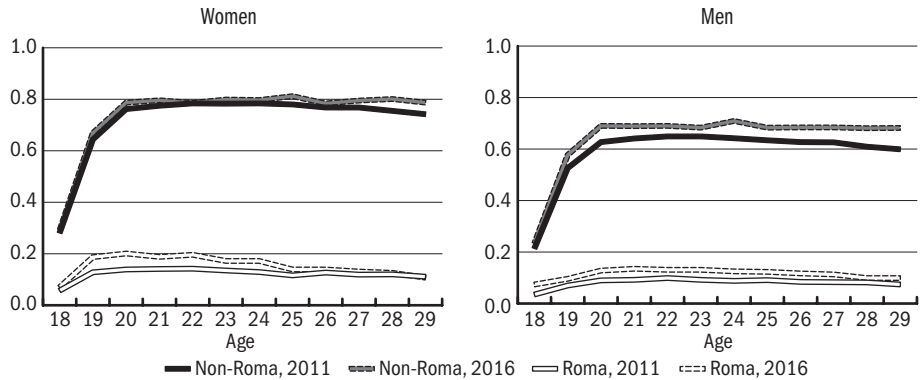
The importance of the improvement observed in the case of Roma youth is underlined by the fact that their schooling is hindered by several factors, according to previous research. Hajdu et al. (2014) estimate<sup>3</sup> that more than half of the Roma – non-Roma differences observed in the chances of dropping out of secondary education is explained by the level of knowledge acquired by the end of primary school, the quality of the secondary school, and the material and human resources available during secondary studies. A significant part of the remaining difference can be traced back to social isolation: the fact that Roma youth are much less likely to have close links with those who do well in school than non-Roma youth.

<sup>1</sup> This is an exam (comparable to A levels in the United Kingdom) that closes the academic track of secondary education (ISCED 3A or 3B) and passing it is one of the conditions of entering tertiary education.

<sup>2</sup> The employment opportunities and expected wages of matriculated students are significantly better than those of non-graduates (*Hajdu et al, 2015*).

<sup>3</sup> The study examined the school performance and entry to tertiary education of a full higher secondary school cohort of Roma and non-Roma students based on data from the Career Tracking Survey between 2006–2012.

Figure 6.1.1: Share of matriculated youth by age, 2011, 2016 (percentage)



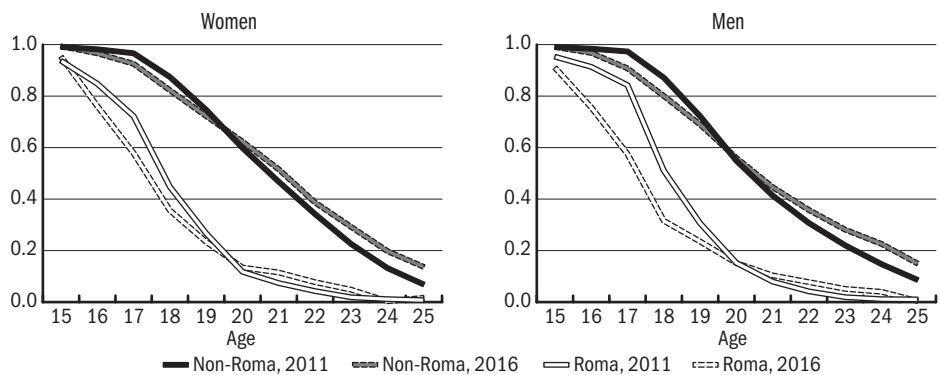
Source: Calculations of Tamás Molnár using the 2011 Census and 2016 Microcensus of the Hungarian Statistical Office.

4 Act CXC of 2011 on National Public Education lowered the compulsory schooling age from 18 to 16. The age limit of 16 first applied to those who started eighth grade in the 2011/2012 school year.

5 The measurement of Roma identity was very similar in two surveys, but the census may include a higher rate of those who claim to be Roma for two reasons: on the one hand, the sample is comprehensive, while in the sample of the microcensus, Roma settlements are underrepresented, and on the other hand a special campaign encouraged the assumption of Roma identity at the time of the 2011 census.

Most recent developments are captured by the other indicator: the share of full-time students by cohort shows the share of young people who continue their education in secondary and higher education after primary school. The reduction of the compulsory school age introduced in 2011<sup>4</sup> increased the share of early school leavers among both Roma and non-Roma youth, but this effect was significantly higher for Roma, particularly Roma men (Figure 6.2). As discussed in subchapter 6.2, this effect was above the average in disadvantaged small regions. Comparing the data of the 2011 Census conducted before the reform and the 2016 Microcensus five years later,<sup>5</sup> the share of full-time students decreased by 4–7 percentage points for non-Roma, and by 14 (women) and 27 (men) percentage points for Roma youth in the 17 year-old cohort. The decrease is already significant among 16 year-olds in the case of Roma youth.

Figure 6.1.2: The share of full-time students among Roma and non-Roma youth, 2011, 2016 (percentage)



Source: Calculations of Tamás Molnár using the 2011 Census and 2016 Microcensus of the Hungarian Statistical Office.

The comparison of the data for 2011 and 2016 also shows that Roma youth are less involved in the expansion of higher education: in the 21–23 cohort, the share of full-time students among non-Roma increased by an average 5 percentage points, while among Roma it increased by only 3 percentage points in five years. This also means that the disadvantage of Roma people has further increased in participation in higher education.

## Employment

According to the CSO Labour Force Survey, in 2017, 55 percent of men and 36 percent of women were employed in the Roma population aged 15–64, while within the non-Roma population, the proportion of the employed was 76 and 62 percent, respectively. The employment of Roma people increased more than that of non-Roma between 2014 (the first year when ethnicity was included in the Labour Force Survey) and 2017, so that the Roma employment gap has somewhat narrowed. At the same time, the already huge disadvantage of the Roma further increased regarding the rate of early school leavers and youth not in employment, education or training (NEET). These two indicators slightly improved in the non-Roma population between 2014 and 2017, while they worsened or remained unchanged in the case of Roma youth.<sup>6</sup> In the five years between the 2011 Census and the 2016 Microcensus (roughly corresponding to a period of steady economic growth), the employment rate increased from 16 to 25 percent for Roma men, and from 7 to 12 percent for Roma women aged 16–25 (excluding public works).

**Table 6.1.1: The 16–25 year-old population by ethnicity and labour market status, 2011 and 2016 (thousand people)**

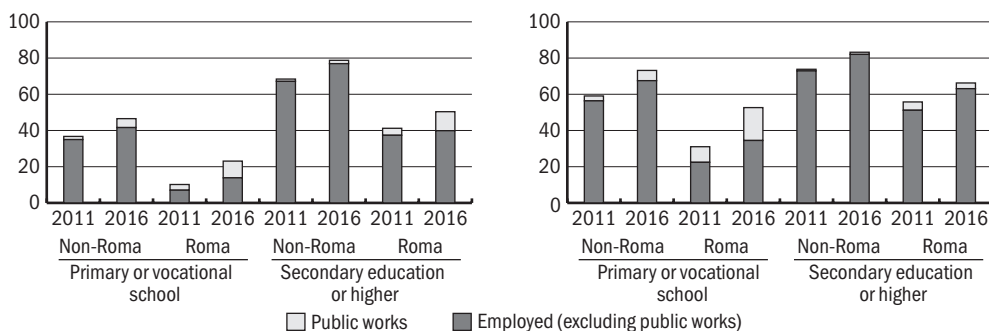
	Roma		Non-Roma	
	2011	2016	2011	2016
<b>Men</b>				
Full time education	9.8	7.9	311.1	261.6
Employment	5.0	9.2	184.2	213.8
Public works	1.7	4.3	5.1	9.1
Parental leave	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.3
Other	15.4	15.7	99.9	69.5
Total	32.2	37.2	600.6	554.3
<b>Women</b>				
Full time education	8.3	6.9	303.8	258.8
Employment	2.1	3.6	149.0	171.6
Public works	0.7	2.0	3.7	7.4
Parental leave	9.2	7.6	29.7	30.6
Other	9.8	10.1	84.6	59.5
Total	30.1	30.2	570.8	527.9

Source: Own calculations using the 2011 Census and 2016 Microcensus of the *Hungarian Statistical Office*.

<sup>6</sup> The rate of early school leavers increased from 57 to 65 percent (decreased from 10 to 9 percent among non-Roma), the NEET-rate was 38 percent in both years (decreased from 13 to 9 percent among non-Roma). The former indicator is published by the CSO on the 18–24 year-old age group, and the latter on the 15–24 year-old cohort (2018).

The large sample of the 2011 Census and the 2016 Microcensus also provides an opportunity to examine employment trends independently of education. Comparing the data of these two surveys, the disadvantage of the Roma is still large in employment, though it is significantly smaller for those completing at least secondary school (with matriculation, i.e. ISCED 3A or 3B) than for the unskilled (*Figure 6.1.3*). The disadvantage of young Roma women did not decrease between 2011 and 2016, despite an increase in the employment rate of both education categories. In the case of young Roma men, there is a significant decrease in the disadvantage of the unskilled, but this is largely due to public works. In 2016, 34 percent of low educated Roma men in employment participated in public works, while among the non-Roma, the corresponding ratio was only 8 percent. For working Roma women, the share of public workers is even higher: 40 percent of the unskilled and 21 percent even of those with at least secondary education were employed in public works in 2016.

**Figure 6.1.3: Employment rate of the 16–25 year-old, not in education population, 2011 and 2016 (percent)**



Source: Own calculations using the 2011 Census and 2016 Microcensus of the *Hungarian Statistical Office*.

**References**

HAJDU, T.–HERMANN, Z.–HORN, D.–KERTESI, G.–KÉZDI, G.–KÖLLŐ, J.–VARGA, J. (2015): *Az érettségi védelmében* [In defence of the school leaving exam]. Budapesti Munkagazdaságtani Füzetek, BWP, 2015/1.

HAJDU, T.–KERTESI, G.–KÉZDI, G. (2014): *Roma fiatalok a középiskolában* [Roma Students in Hungarian Secondary Schools]. Budapesti Munkagazdaságtani Füzetek, BWP, 2014/7.

KEMÉNY, I.–JANKY, B. (2005): Roma population of Hungary 1971–2003. East European Monographs, Vol. 702. pp.70–225.

KERTESI, G. (2005a): A társadalom peremén. Romák a munkaerőpiacon és az iskolában [On the margins of society. Roma in school and in the labour market]. Osiris, Budapest.

KERTESI, G. (2005b): *Roma foglalkoztatás az ezredfordulón. A rendszerváltás maradványai* [The employment of the Roma in the end of the 20th century]. Budapesti Munkagazdaságtani Füzetek, BWP, 2005/4.

- KERTESI, G.–KÉZDI, G. (2010): *Roma Employment in Hungary After the Post-Communist Transition*. Budapesti Munkagazdaságtani Füzetek, BWP, 2010/9. .
- KERTESI, G.–KÉZDI, G. (2014): *Iskolai szegregáció, szabad iskolaválasztás és helyi oktatáspolitikai 100 magyar városban* [School segregation, school choice and educational policies in 100 Hungarian towns]. Budapesti Munkagazdaságtani Füzetek, BWP, 2014/6.
- KERTESI, G.–KÉZDI, G. (2016): *A roma fiatalok esélyei és az iskolarendszer egyenlőtlensége* [Educational inequalities and the life chances of Roma youth]. Budapesti Munkagazdaságtani Füzetek, BWP, 2016/3.
- KISS, M. (2018): *A szelektív iskolaválasztás tényezői, motivációi és az oktatás minőségével való összefüggései a leghátrányosabb helyzetű térségekben* [Factors and motivations determining selective school choice and their correlation with school quality in the most disadvantaged small regions of Hungary]. In: *Fejes, J. B.–Szűcs, N.* (eds.): *Én vétkem. Helyzetkép az oktatási szegregációról*. Motiváció Oktatási Egyesület, Szeged, pp. 147–172.
- KSH (2018): *Munkaerőpiaci helyzetkép, 2014–2018* [Snapshot of the Labour market]. Központi Statisztikai Hivatal, Budapest.