

THE SURVIVORS: ROMA UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN TURKEY

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ABSTRACT

THE SURVIVORS: ROMA UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN TURKEY

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This study has two aims regarding the Roma university students in Turkey. First, it attempts to discover the characteristics of their life courses in order to identify the success factors paving the way for their participation in higher education, specifically when the low education level of the Roma people, including even their own families, is concerned. Therefore, their socio-economic environment, early childhood years and school experiences are focused and analyzed respectively to expose the actors and processes making their life stories appear as success stories. Second, it aims to expose whether there are differences between the ones involved in the Roma Rights Movement and the ones not involved in terms of their ethnic identity status. That is, most of the better-off Roma, previously, preferred hiding their ethnic identity not to be excluded from participation in social, economic and political spheres. However, the Roma university students participating in the Roma Rights Movement refuse to hide their identity as they do not want to be assimilated, but integrated into the majority society. That point has a first-rate importance, as the low educational level of the Roma people, especially that of the Roma children, are closely associated with the lack of positive role models showing them how and what education pays off. On the basis of the conclusions drawn from the data analysis

collected through in-depth interviews, it is exposed that these Roma youngsters demonstrate high levels of agency for their own social inclusion through education. Although they are all supported by their families; most of their Roma school peers dropped out of either primary or high school due to poverty and discriminative attitudes of their teachers and school administrators. The stigma of inferiority attached to the Roma is so strong that the survivors, who manage to attend the high school, hide their ethnic identity from this point onwards. Therefore, the demand of the Roma university students, participating in Roma Rights Movement, for integration into the majority society appears as an exceptional case among the well-educated Roma, but making them the pioneers of a new Roma identity in Turkey: Roma intelligentsia.

Keywords: Roma university students, social exclusion, stigma of inferiority, poverty, positive role models, Roma intellectuals.

ÖZ

HAYATTA KALANLAR: TÜRKİYE’DEKİ ROMAN ÜNİVERSİTE ÖĞRENCİLERİ

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Bu çalışmanın, Roman üniversite öğrencilerine ilişkin iki temel amacı vardır. İlk olarak; Romanların, bu çalışmada yer alan gençlerin aileleri de dahil olmak üzere, düşük eğitim düzeyine sahip bir topluluk olmaları göz önünde bulundurularak, bu gençlerin yüksek öğrenime devam etmelerinde etkili olan başarı faktörlerinin, belirlenmesi için yaşam seyirlerinin özellikleri ortaya konmaya çalışılmıştır. Bu nedenle, hayat hikayelerini, başarı hikayelerine dönüştürmelerinde yardımcı olan kişilerin ve süreçlerin ortaya çıkarılabilmesi için, görüşülenlerin sosyo-ekonomik koşullarına, erken çocukluk dönemi yıllarına ve okul deneyimlerine odaklanılmıştır. İkinci olarak, Roman Hakları Hareketi’nde yer alan ve yer almayan Roman üniversite öğrencileri arasında etnik kimlik algıları açısından farklılıklar olup olmadığı ortaya konmaya çalışılmıştır. Şöyle ki, bugüne kadar birçok başarılı Roman, sosyal, ekonomik ve siyasi hayattan dışlanmamak için kimliklerini gizlemeyi tercih etmişlerdir; ancak Roman Hakları Hareketi’nin bir parçası olan bu gençler, kimliklerini gizlemeyi reddetmekte ve asimile olmayı değil, toplumla bütünleşmeyi arzu etmektedirler. Bu durum, özellikle Roman çocukların düşük eğitim düzeyine sahip olmalarının önemli nedenlerinden biri olarak kabul edilen, kendilerine örnek alabilecekleri, eğitimin ne kadar önemli olduğunu gösterecek iyi eğitilmiş Romanların olmaması sebebiyle büyük bir önem taşımaktadır.

Derinlemesine görüşmelerle toplanan verilerin analizlerinden elde edilen sonuçlara dayanarak; bu çalışmada yer alan Roman gençlerin toplumsal dışlanma riskine karşı aşırı bir kişisel çaba gösterdikleri ortaya konmuştur. Her ne kadar, eğitimleri aileleri tarafından desteklenmiş olsa da, bu gençlerin çoğu, yoksulluk ya da öğretmenler ve okul idarecileri tarafından gösterilen ayrımcı tutumlar sebebiyle ya ilkokulda ya da lisede okulu bırakmaktadırlar. Bu gençlerin üzerlerine yapıştırılan “aşağılık yaftası” öylesine güçlü ki; liseye devam etmeyi başaranlar, hayatta kalanlar, liseden itibaren çoğunlukla Romanlıklarını gizlemektedirler. Bu durum, Roman Hakları Hareketi’nde yer alan Roman üniversite öğrencilerinin, toplumla bütünleşme yönündeki taleplerini istisnai bir hale çevirse de, kimliğini gizlemeyi reddeden bu gençleri, “Roman aydınları” olarak adlandırılabilir, yeni bir Roman kimliğinin öncüleri yapmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Roman üniversite öğrencileri, toplumsal dışlanma, aşağılık yaftası, yoksulluk, olumlu davranış modelleri, Roman aydınları.

To My Mother:

She died and I became the “other” child;

To My Daughter:

She was born and I became the “mother” of a child.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iv
ÖZ.....	vi
DEDICATION.....	viii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	ix
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	x
LIST OF TABLES.....	xii
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION AND OUTLINE OF THE THESIS.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Outline of the Thesis.....	6
2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	10
2.1 Introduction.....	10
2.2 A Brief Genealogy.....	11
2.3 Hilary Silver’s Three Paradigms of Social Exclusion.....	13
2.4 Social Exclusion as a Framework for Understanding Society.....	17
2.5 A Three-Stage Model of Ethnic Identity Development in Adolescence.....	21
3. ROMA IN EUROPE.....	23
3.1 A Brief History.....	23
3.2 Roma and the European Union.....	27
3.3 UN Millenium Development Goals and the Decade of Roma Inclusion.....	34
3.4 UN’s Approach versus EU’s Approach Towards Roma.....	38
4. ROMA IN TURKEY.....	39
4.1 A Brief History.....	39
4.2 The Birth of Roma-led Advocacy Associations.....	40
4.3 The Recognition of Roma both by the Mainstream NGOs and Academics.....	43
4.4 The Ignorance of Roma by the Political Elite.....	49
5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	52

5.1 The Objective of the Study.....	52
5.2 Research Sample.....	53
5.3 Research Approach and Data Collection Methods.....	55
5.4 Difficulties and Deficiencies of the Research.....	57
6. SOCIO-ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT AND EARLY CHILDHOOD YEARS.....	63
6.1 Introduction.....	63
6.2 Family Socio-Economic Status and Demographic Characteristics.....	63
6.3 Early Childhood Years.....	69
6.3.1 Relations with the Parents.....	69
6.3.2 Relations with the Brothers and Sisters.....	77
6.3.3 Neighbourhood Socio-Economic Status.....	79
6.3.4 Relations with the Neighbours.....	84
6.3.5 Serious Problems of the Neighbourhoods.....	87
7. ETHNIC IDENTITY FORMATION AND EDUCATIONAL PROCESS.....	95
7.1 Introduction.....	95
7.2 Ethnic Identity Development.....	95
7.2.1 Foreclosed Identity Status Group.....	96
7.2.2 Achieved Identity Status Group.....	101
7.3 On the Path to Higher Education.....	110
7.3.1 Family Support.....	111
7.3.2 Schools, Teachers and Discrimination.....	116
7.3.2.1 The Teacher: An Agency for Social Inclusion or Exclusion.....	116
7.4 Future Expectations.....	122
8. CONCLUSION.....	127
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	139
APPENDICES	
A. QUESTIONNAIRE FORMS (ENGLISH).....	144
B. QUESTIONNAIRE FORMS (TURKISH).....	146

LIST OF TABLES

Table 5.2 The Demographic Profile of the Roma University Students.....	61-62
Table 6.2 Family Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Roma University Students.....	63-64

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND OUTLINE OF THE THESIS

1.1 Introduction

The Roma people, in other words “Gypsies”, had been treated as invisible for centuries almost in all parts of the world, until approximately the beginning of the 21st century. As Liégeois and Gheorghe stated in relation to the European Gypsies¹:

The Gypsies themselves-scattered and diverse, with no territory and few written records of their own- tend to rely on invisibility, for experience has taught them that if they stand out they suffer rejection and punishment, and if they cling too closely to someone or something, they will lose their prime tactic of day-to-day survival: to bend in order not to break (Liégeois and Gheorghe, 1995: 13).

However, the invisibility associated with the Roma people has begun to disappear gradually, due to the negative impact of the globalization and intense competition among the industrialized countries of the world which led their visibility on the agenda of the European Union and the United Nations within the context of social exclusion. Social exclusion, a contested and a polysemic concept, became the subject of discussion first during the 1960s; however only in the late 1970s, it was pointed out as the central problem of the new poverty in France from where it has spreaded across the rest of Europe (Hilary Silver, 1994).

The Lisbon European Council of March 2000 adopted the Lisbon Strategy, through which it assigned the European Union an ambitious goal; i.e., making Europe, by 2010, ‘the most competitive and the most dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion’ (Tania Zgajewski & Kalila Hajjar, 2005: 1). The main components of the Lisbon were: the economy, the social protection and the environment. Thus, tackling poverty and social exclusion became indispensable to

¹Here, the term Gypsy is used as an umbrella term consisting of a wide range of labels attached to different branches of that ethnic community. However, throughout this thesis, the term “Roma” is used instead of “Gypsy” as an inclusive collective term.

modernize the EU's social model. Preventing the risks of exclusion and helping the most vulnerable segments of the European population were among the objectives set for eradicating poverty and overcoming social exclusion in the EU.

Although, the ethnic minorities, including also the European Roma, have not been explicitly mentioned in any of the binding legal documents related to the Lisbon Strategy up to now, their disadvantaged situation has been brought to light through the national action plans for social inclusion (NAPs/incl). The NAPs/incl have been prepared by each of the Member States annually, as a component of the open-method of co-ordination employed to monitor the success of the Lisbon process, with respect to the elimination of the social exclusion in the EU. Following the EU's enlargement in 2004 and 2007 to include new members in Central, East and Southeast Europe, Roma become the largest ethnic minority in the Union (ERRC, 2004: 1). In most of the NAPs/incl, the situation of Roma has been associated with on-going discrimination, severe poverty and social exclusion. Therefore, the integration of Roma into the mainstream society through eliminating the discrimination levelled against them and ensuring their accession to key sectoral fields, like education and employment, appears as a rising concern just recently to meet the goals of the Lisbon Strategy in the region.

In addition to the rise of Roma as an EU policy concern in relation to the Lisbon process; it has also become a matter of concern for the relevant agencies of the UN in terms of the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals adopted in 2000, particularly with respect to the Central and Eastern Europe countries. As the Roma communities are among the most vulnerable groups in the CEE countries, a number of regional reports, including comprehensive quantitative data, have been published until recently, in order to put their situation clearly and make the relevant Member States implement their commitments made in relation to the MDG-related targets. In the latest report, published by the UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and CIS (2006), it is explicitly stated that the problems faced by Roma are primarily issues of underdevelopment, poverty and social exclusion (UNDP, 2006: 2). As the main incentive behind the adoption of the MDGs is to make globalization fully equitable and inclusive for all; overcoming the social exclusion of Roma is an

essential mission that should be undertaken by the CEE countries to keep their MDG-related commitments, including also Turkey as a member of the UN.

Although the Roma population in Turkey differ in many ways from Roma people living in the CEE countries; both of them suffer from, more or less, severe poverty and social exclusion as demands for their traditional skills and crafts like blacksmithing and sieve-making fell sharply over time due to globalization and technological changes taking place since the 1980s (UNDP 2002 and Suat Kolukırık 2004). The Roma population is estimated at ranging between 600000 and 2 million in Turkey and they had arrived in Byzantium by the end of the eleventh century (IRSN, 2005: 7-8). However, they had not been even noticed as a separate ethnic group until the emergence of Roma Rights Movement indicating a rising demand for the recognition of Roma, which is activated by the recognition of Turkey as an EU candidate country on an equal footing with other candidate countries at the EU Helsinki Summit of 1999 (Ayhan Kaya, 2005: 5).

The Roma Rights Movement has been strongly supported by the NGOs specialized in the area of human rights and academicians in Turkey since the 2000s. Until recently, a number of symposiums have been held in different cities of Turkey to make the Roma people and their problems more visible. In addition to that, a few Roma-targeted projects have also been conducted by different mainstream NGOs in co-operation with the new Roma-led advocacy associations to improve their capacity building; to raise their awareness about human rights issues in general and human rights violations against the Turkish Roma in particular, and to expose the basic problems faced by the overall Roma population in all walks of life (For example, those of the SKYGD and HYD).

The implementation of these projects, particularly the one led by the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly, have contributed a lot both to the identification of the severe poverty, discrimination and social exclusion faced by the Roma people in Turkey, at levels similar to those of their European counterparts; and to the foundation of the first Roma Youth Association in Turkey which is led by a number of Roma university students; i.e., Romankara. Romankara appears as an exceptional case, mainly in two respects: First, it is led by a number of Roma youngsters participating in higher education whereas the majority of the Roma people are either with low levels of education or are uneducated (that is supported by a reasonable number of

reports on Roma, such as UNDP 2002 and ERRC 2004). Second, all of them identify themselves openly as Roma unlike their well-educated or better-off antecedents, who preferred to hide their ethnic identity not to be excluded due to the discrimination levelled against the Roma people by the majority society, for example Mustafa Aksu who declared his “Gypsiness” only after his retirement, through the autobiographic book he penned, *Türkiye’de Çingene Olmak* (To Be a Gypsy in Turkey) in 2003.

Hence, this thesis has two aims regarding the Roma university students in Turkey, a number of whom I met during the implementation of the UNICEF project, which was supervised by my thesis advisor, Ayşe Gündüz Hoşgör, in 2007. First, it attempts to discover the characteristics of their lifecourses in order to identify the success factors paving the way for their participation in higher education. As their appearance in higher education is noteworthy when the role that can be played by them in altering the stereotype of Roma people as uneducated and poor is taken into consideration. As it is also argued by Anna Kende who studied the lifecourses of the Roma university students in Hungary in order to identify the success factors underlying their participation in higher education; the identification of the individual strategies adopted by these students to overcome social exclusion on their paths to higher education can play a great role in the development of appropriate social policy:

The individual lifestories of these students highlight some of the opportunities students of minority of ethnic background have to overcome the multiple disadvantages and social exclusion they face within society. Although the stories describe individual strategies, it is extremely important not to overlook them; these students represent the ultimate goal of policy measures toward socially deprived, and especially Roma students. Both positive and negative experiences must be analysed to come to better policy measure: shared and individual experiences with families and schools, with prejudiced people and institutions, and with dilemmas of identity (Anna Kende, 2007: 135).

Second, it aims to explore whether there are differences or not, between the Roma university students participating actively in the Roma organization process and the ones not participating, in terms of their ethnic identity status. That is, the Roma university students participating actively in the Roma organization process whom I met during the UNICEF project, unlike their antecedents, have been putting an overemphasis on their desire for integration into the majority society as a Roma and don’t want to hide their Romaniness anymore in order to achieve their education- and career-related goals due to the fear of being excluded by the majority society.

Therefore, it is a matter of concern for this thesis, to expose whether refusing to identify with the ethnic group is still adopted as an identity strategy among the better-off Roma by focusing on the role of the actors and institutions necessitating such a survival strategy due to either covert or overt discrimination against the Roma people.

The research questions constructing the map of this study can be listed as follows: What is their parents' socio-economic status? What are the main features of material conditions of their lives? Where do they live: in predominantly Roma neighbourhoods or non-Roma ones? How do they describe their relationships with their parents, brothers, sisters and the people of their neighbourhoods? Is there a difference between the ones actively participating in the Roma organization process and the ones not involved in terms of their socio-economic environment and early childhood? Do they hide their ethnic identity among non-Roma people or not? What are the main characteristics of their educational process? What are their future expectations? What does education in general and higher-education in particular, mean to them: a tool to move upward and assimilate into the majority society, or to become a positive role model for the Roma children and youngsters in Turkey to show them how and why education pays off?

The data were collected through in-depth interviews in order to gain more insight into the students' thoughts, feelings and attitudes. Two questionnaires were prepared, one of which was semi-structured and the other one was unstructured. The former one was used for obtaining data regarding the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the students, such as sex and monthly average household income; and the latter was used for learning about the details and characteristics of their lifecourses such as their relationship with their parents or the role played by the teachers in their educational achievement. The interviews applied to nine Roma university students from different cities of Turkey. Four of them are female and the rest of them are male. Four of them are actively involved in the Roma Rights Movement and five of them do not participate. All the interviews were recorded, then transcribed in order to identify the common patterns emerging from the lifecourses of these nine Roma university students regarding their socio-economic environment, early childhood, ethnic identity development and educational process.

1.2 Outline of the Thesis

Prior to the collection of data through in-depth interviews; Oscar Lewis' theory of Culture of Poverty was adopted as a theoretical framework for this study. However, during the data collection process, the basic assumptions consisting of the Culture of Poverty theory failed to provide me with appropriate theoretical tools to make a satisfactory interpretation of the patterns emerged in their responses when they were interviewed. This inappropriate choice of theoretical framework can be attributed to my previous encounters with many Roma youngsters having a diverse socio-economic background. For example, there were the ones who were affluent; but with a lower educational attainment and were complaining of feeling ostracized and segregated due to the stigma of inferiority attached to the Roma people. Moreover, there were the ones being desperately poor residing in the least desirable neighbourhoods of the cities they live in, but with a higher educational attainment; i.e., participation in the Open University. In comparison to the former, they were more class-conscious regarding their social position in the society, according to whom, the existing power structures promoted and maintained by the capitalist economy were the main source of all sorts of inequalities. However, as it is exposed in the analysis chapters and conclusion, the Roma university students included in this study have different profiles from those of the mentioned above. Consequently, during my first meeting, the two members of my dissertation committee, other than my thesis-advisor, challenged me both methodologically and theoretically regarding the above mentioned problem and provided me with further insights into how I had to keep on working on my thesis. They told me first to analyze my data and then decide on the appropriate theoretical framework. Therefore, during the analysis process, I predominantly came across emerging patterns of different kinds of deprivation faced by the respondents and of different identity patterns among them, which made sense when the former was interpreted through the concept of social exclusion and the latter was classified in terms of the three-stage model of ethnic identity development in adolescence introduced by Jean Phinney (1989).

Hence, Chapter II gives a detailed description of the concept of social exclusion by focusing on its genealogy and context-specific nature, on the basis of Hilary Silver's three paradigms of social exclusion. Then, Arjan de Haan's

conceptualization of social exclusion as an holistic understanding of deprivation is discussed as it provides the most appropriate theoretical tool to describe and understand the aspects of social exclusion embedded in the data of this study. According to him, social exclusion has two characteristics, which make it appear as a lens through which people can look at reality: First it is multi-dimensional; and second it is a dynamic process taking place over time and its aspects are interrelated. As Howard Williamson argues that any fixed depiction of a distinctive population of “socially excluded” young people is premature. Although some young people at particular times, may suffer hardships, this does not make them locked into some alternative way of living as most aspire to ordinary, mainstream lifecourse trajectories (Howard Williamson, 2007: 24). Based on these inferences, the participation of the Roma students in higher education can be described as standing at the crossroads of social exclusion, integration and assimilation. Followingly, Jean Phinney’s three-stage model of ethnic identity development in adolescence is also touched upon due to providing the best match with the emerging identity patterns of the respondents.

In Chapter III, the situation of the Roma population in Europe is discussed by focusing on the way they appeared as a matter of concern both for the EU and UN. Due to the impact of globalization and uneven economic growth, poverty and social exclusion become two key problems that should be overcome not just for the developing countries, but also for the developed ones. The Roma population in Europe is regarded as the largest ethnic group in Europe by the EU; however the relevant agencies of the UN regard them as the largest vulnerable minority of Europe. The contradiction between these two views regarding the characteristic of the Roma population also takes place in their approaches towards solving contemporary problems faced by the European Roma.

In Chapter IV, after providing a brief historical background of the Turkish Roma, the emergence of the Roma Rights Movement in Turkey by focusing on the contributions made by the different actors of civil society is pointed out as it is this process leading the appearance of Roma university students as Roma activists. Moreover, the ignorance of Roma by the political elite in Turkey is examined in terms of the activities of the members of parliament.

Then, in Chapter V, the objective of the study; the data collection method; data analysis procedure; ways of verification and basic characteristics of the sample, including also a table showing the demographic profile, are given. In addition to that, the difficulties faced during the interview process and deficiencies identified regarding the absentee sample are touched upon.

Followingly, in Chapter VI, the family socio-economic status and demographic characteristics of the Roma university students are given to expose material conditions of their lives; in addition to that the socio-economic status of their neighbourhoods are provided to have a picture of their socio-economic environment which has a strong impact on their educational process. Moreover, their relationships with their parents, brothers, sisters and the residents of their neighbourhoods are analyzed to have an understanding of their early childhood experiences prior to their school life.

In Chapter VII, the emerging identity patterns of the Roma university students are categorized and discussed on the basis of the three-stage model of ethnic identity development introduced by Jean Phinney. The differences between the ones participating in the Roma Rights Movement and the ones not participating appear in terms of not just their identity patterns, but also the way they interpreted their school experiences and future expectations.

In the conclusion chapter, the results driven from the analysis of the data are discussed by focusing on factors having either a positive or a negative impact on their educational attainment. These Roma university students have been challenged not just by poverty, but also by the stigma of inferiority on their paths to higher education. They demonstrate high levels of agency for overcoming social exclusion through education. Although, all are supported by their families to complete their education, most of the time, the schools and teachers fail to keep them in education. Depending on the quality of their attitudes towards the Roma children living mostly in vulnerable socio-economic conditions, they may be either the agents of their social exclusion or inclusion. Within such a context, the Roma university students, especially the ones identifying themselves openly as Roma, bear great responsibility as they are the only positive role models for the Roma children which is very important to raise the children's expectations through education; whereas the others preferring to hide their ethnic identity due to the fear of exclusion triggered by the

stigma of inferiority are likely to be assimilated into the majority society rather than to become positive role models. That is why the study concludes with a social policy proposal concerning the introduction of positive discrimination programmes aiming at increasing Roma youngsters' representation at higher-education.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

Social exclusion has been maintaining its popularity, especially among the European policy-makers and academics, particularly since the early 1990s. Although it first became the subject of discussion in France in the 1960s; it had not been addressed explicitly until the late 1970s until it was identified as the central problem of “new poverty” (John Welshman, 2006: 185). The concept of “underclass” was influential in debates both in the United States and Britain in the 1980s; however the term social exclusion has been replaced by the term “underclass” and is used by different European nations in general and the European Union in particular in order to prevent and solve a wide range of problems faced by a wide range of people to modernize its social model to promote a sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion. Martine Xiberras, who made a long review of the sociological literature on social exclusion, defines the concept as the the rupture of the social and symbolic bonds that normally attach the individual to society (Hilary Silver, 1994: 534-35).

On the other hand, as it is suggested by Hilary Silver (1994), the poverty discourses, including also that of social exclusion, tend to be nationally specific. So, in her remarking study, she introduces three paradigms of social exclusion and indicates how each accounts for economic disadvantages like poverty and long-term unemployment (Welshman, 2006: 185).

Therefore, the three paradigms of social exclusion introduced by Hilary Silver will be mentioned, following a brief genealogy of the concept in order to indicate the context-specific use of it. Then, Arjan de Haan’s conceptualization of social exclusion as an holistic understanding of deprivation will be touched upon to gain an insight into main features of such a polysemic concept. Finally, the three-stage model of ethnic identity development in adolescence introduced by Jean Phinney will be

given following the social exclusion section as it provides the best typology for the categorization of the ethnic identity status of the respondents included in this study.

2.2 A Brief Genealogy

Social exclusion first became the subject of debate in France during the 1960s. Although a wide range of professionals made ideological references to the poor as *les exclus*; the social exclusion discourse did not become widespread until the times of the economic crisis. As successive social and political crisis erupted in France during the 1980s, the so-called concept came to be applied to more and more kinds of social disadvantage.

It is the work of Hilary Silver through which the origins and invention of the concept are attributed to René Lenoir (1974), who was the Secretary of State for Social Action in the Chirac Government who estimated that “the excluded” made up one-tenth of the French population; the mentally and physically handicapped, the suicidal people, abused children, delinquents, drug addicts, aged invalids, single parents, multi-problem households, marginal, asocial persons and other “social misfits”; all of which were social categories unprotected under the social insurance (Welshman, 2006: 184). As Silver mentions social exclusion became the subject of discussion first during the 1960s; however only in the late 1970s “exclusion” was pointed out as the central problem of the new poverty in France. The discourse of exclusion has spreaded across the rest of Europe from France (Hilary Silver, 1994).

Although the concept of underclass was influential in Britain during the 1980s, the new European emphasis on social exclusion had also been supported by the British Conservative governments of the 1980s to mid-1990s as it de-emphasised the language of poverty. However, when the British New Labour government came to power in 1997, it took up the concept with gusto (Robert Macdonald and Jane Marsh, 2005: 14). While the concept became the central objective of government domestic policy, the government’s Social Exclusion Unit was established in December 1997. The SEU has issued a range of reports on a variety of subjects like rough sleepers, teenage pregnancy, neighbourhood renewal and child poverty since it was established. For example, Tony Blair gave a speech at Stockwell Park School in

December 1997, in which he strongly emphasized the government's intention to tackle the problem of social exclusion and defined the term as follows:

Social exclusion is about income but it is about more. It is about prospects and networks and life-chances. It is a very modern problem, and one that is more harmful to the individual, more damaging to self-esteem, more corrosive for society as a whole, more likely to be passed down from generation to generation, than material poverty (http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/cabinetoffice/social_exclusion_task_force/assets/publications_1997_to_2006/pm_speech_seu.pdf , last visited on July 2008).

As it can be seen Tony Blair, through his speech, touched upon the structural causes of deprivation, the effect of the behavioural factors and the intergenerational transmission of the deprivation. As Welshman states that Blair and other intellectuals on the Left have been influenced by the American emphasis on communitarianism in their attempts to overcome the problem of social exclusion. Tony Blair has described the political position of the New Labour as a Third Way and Anthony Giddens, one of the intellectuals close to New Labour, in his remarking book 'Third Way' has put forward two types of social exclusion, one occurring at the bottom and the other one occurring at the top of the society and suggests similar solutions to those of the New Labour government. As underlined by Welshman, his solutions include any strategies breaking the poverty cycle, specifically education and training, but especially the participation in the labour force (Welshman, 2006: 188-89).

Although, the social exclusion took place in Maastricht Treaty establishing the European Union (signed in 1992) and Amsterdam Treaty (signed in 1997) as a social policy concern; the Lisbon Strategy can be evaluated as a turning point in terms of its overwhelming emphasis on the fight against poverty and social exclusion. For example, prior to the meeting of the Lisbon European Council, the Commission, through its contribution report, identified underemployment, poverty and social exclusion as the main social challenges and added that the key challenge was now to move from an agenda of tackling social exclusion to one ensuring social inclusion and mainstreaming it at the heart of all policy making (European Commission, 2000: 7-8).

Moreover, the concept is also used both by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in order to address to the social disadvantages, taking place due to the globalization and uneven economic growth, experienced by different segments of the world population, and

vulnerable groups like Roma and the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). However, social exclusion within the context of the EU and UNDP will be discussed in more detail in Chapter III.

2.3 Hilary Silver's Three Paradigms of Social Exclusion

Social exclusion has been conceptualized and defined in a wide range of ways due to its being a vague and a comprehensive concept. Silver argues that exclusion is polysemic, i.e. it has multiple meanings and adds that the different meanings and uses to which the term is put are embedded in conflicting social science paradigms and political ideologies (Silver, 1994:536). She claims that social exclusion varies in meaning and scope depending on the national context. For example, Anne Power has argued that social exclusion is about 'the tendency to push vulnerable and difficult individuals into the least popular places, furthest away from our common aspirations' (Power, 2000). For Power social exclusion is an urban issue as inner-city ghettos have become sources of trouble in relation to the 'neighbourhood collapse' and the tendency of the poorer neighbourhoods forming 'poverty clusters'. On the other hand, Peter Townsend while introducing his concept of relative deprivation, also touched upon the subject of exclusion, but in an implicit way:

Individuals, families and groups in the population can be said to be in poverty when they lack the resources to obtain the types of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary, or are at least widely encouraged or approved, in the societies to which they belong. Their resources are so seriously below those commanded by the average individual or family that they are, in effect, excluded from ordinary living patterns, customs and activities (Townsend, 1997: 269).

Although Townsend stressed on poverty and people who were unable to participate in the activities that other people would regard as normal through his theory of 'relative deprivation', the way he put it corresponded with the idea of social exclusion. Furthermore, while comparing underclass with social exclusion Littlewood and Herkommer put forward social exclusion 'as a process, where underclass is a more or less stable situation which results from the exclusionary process' (cited in Welshman, 2006: 18).

In one way or another it is possible to multiply the arguments on the meaning and conceptualization of social exclusion; however Hilary Silver has asserted three paradigms of social exclusion each having a separate theoretical perspective, political ideology and national discourse. Depending on different notions of social integration, she calls these types the *solidarity, specialization and monopoly* paradigms (Silver, 1994: 539). Before proceeding with a detailed explanation of Silver's three paradigms of social exclusion, it is relevant here to touch upon the issue of social integration which is generally taken for granted as the opposite of it.

As Graham Room points out the concept of social exclusion as both a process and an effect of the failure of integrative institutions has its roots in the functionalist social theory of Emile Durkheim (Graham Room, 1995). Writing at the turn of the 20th century Durkheim was primarily concerned with the transition from agrarian to industrial society. Thus, he was mainly focused on in what ways would it be possible to maintain social order and stability in times of rapid socio-economic change. Unlike Marx who maintained that it was the idea of conflict that embedded in social relations between different social classes having divergent interests over the means of production and therefore "the existing society was the history of social struggles" (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karl_Marx, last visited on July 2008). Durkheim stated that it was the consensus on fundamental moral issues which he defined as collective consciousness leading social solidarity and individuals forming an integrated social unit. So, to Durkheim times of rapid socio-economic changes were important as they had a negative impact on the integration level of the individuals into the society. Based on Durkheimian sense of social integration, Room argues that social exclusion is a concept rooted in continental social theory and maintains a focus primarily on relational issues, in other words, inadequate social participation, lack of social integration and lack of power (Room, 1995).

Silver asks the question of "exclusion from what?" before proceeding with her explanation of threefold typology of multiple meanings of social exclusion (Silver, 1994: 541). As it is stated above, the social scientists intensively focused on providing explanations for how to reconstruct and maintain the social solidarity through promoting integration failed due to the fundamental socio-economic structural change, i.e the transition from feudalism to capitalism, at the beginning of the 20th century. Likewise under contemporary conditions, i.e., economic

restructuring and globalization, the notion of social exclusion requires an account of social inclusion. In Silver's terms theories of "insertion", "citizenship", or "solidarity" provide points of reference through making it possible to identify three paradigmatic approaches to social exclusion: solidarity, specialization and monopoly (Silver, 1994: 541).

According to Silver it is important to identify correctly the diverse uses of the concept of social exclusion in different national and political contexts due to its negative and positive impacts on the situation of the disadvantaged groups and communities. The idea of social exclusion could be useful in building new broad-based coalitions to reform European welfare states while exclusion discourse may also ghettoize risk categories under a new label and publicize the more extraordinary patterns of cumulative disadvantage in line with distracting attention from the general rise of the unemployment, inequality and family dissolution which is affecting all social classes (Silver, 1994: 540).

Silver's first of three paradigms is *solidarity* which embraces the approach of the Republicanism, in particular the French Republicanism, toward social exclusion as in French Republican thought, exclusion appears when the social bond between individual and society that is social solidarity breaks down. This paradigm is based upon the idea of social order as it was defined by Durkheim. In Durkheim's social theory, collective consciousness or general will ties the individual to the larger society through vertically interrelated mediating institutions. So, the social order is assumed as external, moral and normative. Like deviance and anomie, in the Durkheimian social theory, exclusion both reinforces and threatens social cohesion, so the inverse of exclusion is "integration" and the way of accomplishing it is "insertion". So, social solidarity is provided through moral integration of different groups into the society (Silver, 1994: 540-42).

In Anglo-American liberalism, exclusion is considered as a result of *specialization*: of social differentiation, the economic division of labour and the separation of the spheres. Its basic assumption is the difference of individuals which paves the way for specialization in market and social groups. Thus, this approach considers social order as networks of voluntary exchanges between autonomous individuals with their own interests and motivations. The liberal modes of citizenship stress the separation of spheres in social life and the contractual exchange of rights

and obligations. As Silver states that an individual's exclusion from one sphere of life does not necessarily mean his/her exclusion from all walks of life. By the way, exclusion results from inadequate separation of social spheres and from barriers to free movement and exchange between individuals. Obviously, in this paradigm exclusion appears as discrimination if social groups prevent individuals free movement across different social spheres. However, such a kind of exclusion is obstructed by market and group competition and the liberal state through securing an individual's liberty of free movement across different social spheres (Silver, 1994: 542-543).

Lastly, the third one is the *monopoly* paradigm. Silver states that it is influential on the European Left as it conceives exclusion as a result of group monopoly over scarce resources and rights. In line with Silver, Welshman (2006) in his work about underclass considers how social exclusion is taken for granted by the New Labour in Britain. Thus, just after Blair's speech given in December 1997, the Social Exclusion Unit was established in order to fight against exclusion. As it is discussed above, the interpretation of social order differs in the social theory of Durkheim and Marx. As it is specified by Silver, in the context of monopoly paradigm, drawing heavily on Weber and, to a lesser extent, Marx, social order is viewed as coercive and imposed by a set of hierarchical power relations. In this social democratic or conflict theory exclusion emerges as a result of interplay of class, political power and status and serves the interests of the included. Thus, the fight against exclusion can be conducted through inclusive citizenship and social rights enabling the extension of equal membership and full participation in the community (Silver, 1994: 543-44).

Finally, Silver in her remarking work, illustrates the difference between the solidarity and monopoly paradigm by the European Union's shifting discourse of social exclusion:

....Initial discussions use the French Republican sense of of the term, "in a spirit of solidarity, it is important to combat social exclusion." However, the European Commission's report, *Towards a Europe of solidarity*, already shifted towards a rhetoric of social rights, "...social exclusion refers, in particular, to inability to enjoy social rights without help, suffering from low self-esteem, inadequacy in their capacity to meet benefits, and stigmatization which, particularly in the urban environment, extends to the areas in which they live (Silver, 1994: 566).

2.4 Social Exclusion as a Framework for Understanding Society

Robert MacDonald and Jane Marsh, in their recent book (2005) called as, “Disconnected Youth? Growing up in Britain’s Poor Neighbourhoods” provide a discussion of the concepts underclass and social exclusion to point out that there is a long tradition of debating the existence of an “underclass.” Also John Welshman, like MacDonald and Marsh, conducts an archeological excavation on the antecedents of the term underclass, like culture of poverty and cycle of deprivation, in his book called (2006), “Underclass – A History of the Excluded 1880-2000”. Mostly depending on the way the concept of social exclusion has been defined by Tony Blair and the New Labour; i.e., the intergenerational transmission, the behavioural factors and the structural causes of deprivation, he asks whether social exclusion should be seen as a coda to that history or it is something distinctively different from those concepts.

Although the questioning of the book contradicts with MacDonald and Marsh’s intention to abstain from labelling their sample, consisting of young people living in the poor neighbourhoods of Britain, as disaffected or disengaged, they mainly aim to understand how processes of social exclusion intermesh with processes of youth transition through using the conditions of Britain’s poor neighbourhoods as a barometer for social exclusion. So, prior to the analysis of their data, they discuss the twin concepts of underclass and social exclusion and identify some areas of consensus for the concept of social exclusion which has six components. First, social exclusion is more than just income poverty. Second, different aspects of social exclusion is perceived as interrelated by most theories of social exclusion. Third, social exclusion is not unique to just individuals or households, but it possesses a spatial concentration through including communities and neighbourhoods. Fourth, social exclusion is an outcome of a political economy through which some groups secure privilege and power at the expense of others. Fifth, social exclusion is a dynamic process that takes place over time. And sixth, due to its being a dynamic process, it has the potential to pass through from generation to generation which :

..sixthly, to observe the potential intergenerational effects of social exclusion. A common interest in dynamic, life-course processes, the multiple, cumulative causes and effects of exclusion and their neighbourhood concentration mean that some understandably – concern themselves with the extent to which the disadvantage associated with social exclusion is passed on from one generation to the next (MacDonald & Marsh, 2005: 17-18).

Arjan de Haan's conceptualization of social exclusion, in reference to these six components, mainly includes the characteristics mentioned in the first, second and fifth components. De Haan suggests that social exclusion is a lens through which people look at reality rather than a label for a stable situation to understand which the idea of three paradigms of social exclusion introduced by Hilary Silver, mentioned above, is helpful. He adds that the concept does not connote a particular problem such as "the new poor", an "underclass", long-term unemployed, or the marginalised as understood in a Latin American context (Arjan de Haan, 1999: 5). To him, all these labels are used to indicate different forms of deprivation; however the concept of social exclusion, being context-specific, as it is also defined by Silver, can be used as a holistic approach for understanding deprivation.

He points out two central points that social exclusion as a theoretical concept embraces: first, it is a multidimensional concept. For example, people may be excluded from political participation through disfranchisement; employment; education; citizenship...etc. So, the concept focuses on the multidimensionality of deprivation as people can be deprived of different things at the same time. People may be subject to exclusion from political, social and economic spheres.

Second, it is a dynamic process taking place over time and its different aspects are interrelated. Thus, it has a particular focus on the processes and social relations producing deprivation. Different groups of people, depending on the priority concern, may be excluded by others at the same time. For example, a student having a different ethnic background than that of the others consisting of the majority society may be excluded by his/her teachers and school peers during his/her educational process; elite political groups exclude others from legal rights; trade unions may exclude non-members...etc. So, the concept draws attention to 'social relations, the processes and institutions that underlie and are part and parcel of deprivation' rather than mere descriptions of deprivation (de Haan, 1999: 7). Consequently, the aspects of social exclusion mostly are interrelated. For instance, a father or mother who is unemployed also may not be able to meet his children's

school expenses and household expenses and as a result his children may drop out of school or they may become homeless or suffer from shortage of food. Although the aspects of social exclusion overlap, the central aspect changes depending on the context as social exclusion forms the basis for context-specific analysis.

Followingly, de Haan compares social exclusion with the notions of poverty and he identifies large overlaps, particularly between notions of vulnerability and capability deprivation, as also suggested by Amartya Sen, and social exclusion. As social exclusion is more than just income poverty or material deprivation; it contributes a lot to the understanding of poverty as capability deprivation in which the relational roots of deprivation plays a great role. While investigating the literature on social exclusion to place it in the broader context of the idea of poverty as a capability deprivation, Sen employs an Aristotelian approach which he defines as:

...We must look at impoverished lives, and not just at depleted wallets. The idea of seeing poverty in terms of poor living is not—emphatically not—new. Indeed, the Aristotelian account of the richness of human life was explicitly linked to the necessity to “first ascertain the function of man,” followed by exploring “life in the sense of activity.” In this Aristotelian perspective, an impoverished life is one without the freedom to undertake important activities that a person has reason to choose. Poverty of living received systematic attention also in the early empirical works on the quality of life by such pioneering investigators as William Petty, Gregory King, Francois Quesnay, Antoine Lavoisier, Joseph Louis Lagrange, and others. Adam Smith too felt impelled to define “necessaries” in terms of their effects on the freedom to live nonimpoverished lives (such as “the ability to appear in public without shame”). Thus, the view of poverty as capability deprivation (that is, poverty seen as the lack of the capability to live a minimally decent life) has a far-reaching analytical history. As it happens, it has also been much explored in the contemporary literature (Amartya Sen, 2000: 4).

Sen also, like de Haan, touches upon the multidimensionality and relational nature of deprivation focused by the concept of social exclusion. He makes a distinction between two types of social exclusion for clarification: it may either be constitutively a part of capability deprivation or instrumentally a cause of diverse capability failures. For example, a person may have poor living standards due to being excluded from labour market; here this is a case of constitutive relevance of social exclusion. However, a youngster may have a low-paid job and low level of living standards due to being excluded from high-paid jobs where s/he does not have the required vocational qualifications for such kinds of jobs due to being a school drop-out, so this kind of a exclusion has an instrumental importance leading to capability failure. Furthermore, he differentiates between active and passive exclusion. For example, the nomad Gypsies were not allowed to become Turkish

citizens until the amendment of the former settlement law in 2006, which was clearly an active exclusion. On the other hand, most of the Roma communities both in Turkey and Europe face severe poverty and social exclusion due to globalized economy (UNDP, 2003: 13). As the demand for their traditional skills (such as blacksmithing and sieve-making) fell sharply over time, most of them are deprived of participation in social, economic and political spheres which can be defined as a passive exclusion.

According to de Haan, the analysis of social exclusion should go beyond mapping of social exclusion through using a range of indicators, like measurement of social capital to capture exclusion. He suggests that the relational roots of deprivation also have to be taken seriously in addition to the measurement of its outcomes. He strengthens his argument with Paugam's research on social exclusion in France (1995):

Paugam's (1995) research on social exclusion in France is a fascinating example of the kinds of insights this type of analysis can provide. He describes 'spirals of precariousness', how in French deprived neighbourhoods loss of unemployment tends to be accompanied not only by loss of income, but also (as the classic sociological study of Marienthal during the Great Depression showed) by social and psychological forms of deprivation such as marital problems and loss of 'social capital'. Paugam's study makes intensive use of quantitative analysis of correlations between elements of deprivation. This helps to characterise specific vulnerable groups – but equally important, it serves to illustrate the processes that lead to, and are part and parcel of deprivation (de Haan, 1999: 11-2).

He argues that the mapping and monitoring of deprivation as descriptions of outcomes is significant; but the social exclusion framework should provide us with more than that through identifying the processes leading to and causing deprivation which can be overcome through a wide range of policies addressing social integration of deprived population groups depending on the characteristics of the target group and context.

2.5 A Three-Stage Model of Ethnic Identity Development in Adolescence

Jean Phinney uses James Marcia's operationalization of Erikson's theory of ego identity development as a starting point to develop her own model of ethnic identity development in adolescence based on the existing models of ego identity and ethnic groups. As Phinney argues that until recently little attention was paid to the subject of ethnic identity development; she finds it surprising as identity formation is the central developmental task of adolescence. In Marcia's paradigm, as Phinney outlines, there are four identity statuses based on the absence or presence of exploration and commitment:

An individual who has neither engaged in exploration nor made a commitment is said to have **a diffuse identity**; a commitment made without exploration, usually on the basis of parental values, represents **a foreclosed status**. An individual in the process of exploration without having made a commitment is **in moratorium**; a firm commitment following a period of exploration is indicative of **an achieved identity** (Phinney, 1989: 35).

As it is agreed by many researchers that an achieved identity is the result of a crisis or awakening, which leads to a period of exploration or experimentation and finally to a commitment or incorporation of one's ethnicity. Phinney focuses on the process of ethnic identity formation, the way in which individuals come to understand the implications of their ethnicity and accordingly, make decisions about its role in their lives, regardless of the extent of their ethnic involvement, through her research, in which she assesses ethnic identity development through in-depth interviews with 91 Asian-American, Black, Hispanic and White tenth-grade students, all American-born, from integrated urban high school ([aurora.wells.edu/~vim/PhinneyEthnic Identity.ppt](http://aurora.wells.edu/~vim/PhinneyEthnicIdentity.ppt), last visited on November 2008).

Phinney's one of the aims in relation to her research is to determine whether the stages of ethnic identity development derived from the literature can be reliably applied to adolescents from diverse ethnic backgrounds, that is, whether these stages describe accurately the way such adolescents deal with ethnicity as a component of their identity. Consequently, based on the data analyzed, she finds out no significant differences in stage assignment by ethnic group, sex, socioeconomic status, or school as sixty of the sixty-four minority group subjects have been reliably assigned to one of three stages of ethnic identity. At first, it was four, but during the coding of the

interviews, the coders experience difficulty in reliably distinguishing between the two lowest stages, diffusion and foreclosure, so these two stages are combined into a single category representing subjects who have not explored their ethnicity (Phinney, 1989: 41-42). Phinney summarizes the characteristics of the three stages of ethnic identity development as follows:

1. **Diffuse/foreclosed:** Little or no exploration of one's ethnicity; but apparent clarity about one's own ethnicity. Feelings about one's ethnicity may be either positive or negative, depending on one's socialization experiences.
2. **Moratorium:** Evidence of exploration, accompanied by some confusion about the meaning of one's own ethnicity.
3. **Achieved:** Evidence of exploration, accompanied by a clear, secure understanding and acceptance of one's own ethnicity (Ibid, pp. 38).

CHAPTER III

ROMA IN EUROPE

This chapter mainly aims to present how the situation of Roma emerges as a priority concern for both the United Nations and the European Union, particularly with regard to the development of the Central, Eastern and Southeastern European countries and within the context of poverty and social exclusion. Due to the impact of globalization and uneven economic growth, poverty and social exclusion become two key problems that should be overcome not just for the developing countries, but also for the developed ones.

As the poverty pockets and excluded groups exist in the new Member States of the EU located in CEE and Southeast European countries; a number of communities, including also Roma, are deprived of equal participation to development, irrespective of the level of overall national development. Therefore, after providing a brief historical background for the European Roma; how they appear on the political agenda of both the EU and UN will be explored in detail.

3.1 A Brief History

As it is stated by Marushiakova and Vesselin, scholarship is still confronted with a number of contested explanations concerning the origin of the Romany Gypsies, the reasons their ancestors left India, the date of their departure and the early stages of their migration toward Europe. Although the estimates for the beginning of migrations and the dispersion of the Gypsies vary widely – ranging from the fifth to the fifteenth century - determining the most accurate date for these migrations is strongly related with the attempts to establish through links to historical events, the reasons for these movements. Indeed, there are a wide range of different theories, but the predominant one is that this was a process lasted for centuries rather than a single occurrence, in which the ancestors of the Gypsies left their homelands

for various reasons in small groups to take the long road to Europe (Marushiakova and Vesselin, 2001: 11).

For example, Donald Kenrick hypothesizes that the Romany people formed outside, rather than inside, India between the seventh and tenth centuries and followingly adding that the Indian immigrants from various tribes intermarried and intermixed in Persia, forming into a people there with the name Dom (later becoming Rom). A large number of them, then moved into Europe whose descendants are the Romany Gypsies of today (Kenrick, 2004: 4). On the other hand, Marushiakova and Vesselin emphasize that, after wandering for several centuries throughout the lands of what are today Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran, and to the south of the Caspian Sea, the Gypsies divided into two separate branches. This division marks a significant stage in the development of Gypsy language and Gypsy community as a whole:

On reaching Northern Mesopotamia and the eastern boundary of the Byzantine Empire towards the end of the tenth and the beginning of the eleventh centuries, the Gypsies split into three major migration groups – the ben-speaking Dom (who took the southern route or stayed in the Middle East), and two phen-speaking groups – the Lom (who took the northern route) and Rom (who took the western route)...The third and largest group of Gypsy migrants (the phen-speaking Rom) headed west, towards Asia Minor and the Balkans and from there in due course to central and western Europe. For several centuries these Gypsies were settled permanently within the boundaries of the Byzantine Empire which, at the time, encompassed large areas of Asia Minor and the Balkans (Marushiakova and Vesselin, 2001: 12-13).

The presence of Roma in the Balkans dates from the time of the Byzantine Empire to the ninth, tenth and eleventh centuries, and most probably they entered Spain from North Africa at around the same time. Areas located in what is today known as southern Greece, were noted as centres of Romani settlement in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and it is assumed that Roma lived throughout the Balkans by that time. During the rule of the Byzantine Empire, when Roma penetrated into the Balkans, the integration of Roma into the life of the Balkan people occurred in various forms, as nomads, travelling actors, settled town craftsmen and traders and also as slaves which can be taken into consideration as a form of integration. At that time, leaving aside the slavery existing in Moldavia and Wallacia which is unique in the history of Roma, there was no absolute hostility towards Roma in the Balkans such as that which became common amongst local communities in western Europe in later times (Ibid, pp. 20-21).

In contrast to the period of Byzantine Empire, Roma could move relatively freely because of their status outside of the two main population categories; i.e., Muslim or Christian during the Ottoman period. On the other hand, within the Ottoman Empire, Roma would seem to have experienced worst in areas of the Empire considered relative stagnant regions, such as in areas today located in Romania, where local landowners and clergy enslaved Roma. Thomas Acton, for example, comments on the history of Roma in Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries: *“When Romani people from Eastern Europe meet Romani people from North-Western Europe today, it is the descendents of the survivors of slavery meeting the descendents of the survivors of genocide”* (Thomas Acton, 1997).

Moreover, for example, Liégeois and Gheorghe, summarize the situation of Roma in the Western Europe as a process of ongoing implied coercion:

From France to Czechoslovakia and from Spain to the Soviet Union, from the fourteenth century to the twentieth, it is the same story: whether aiming at rejection or assimilation, the policies adopted towards Gypsies were always negative. These policies were so similar that it is tiring to go through them all. But different types of attitudes towards Gypsies can be detected despite the apparently uniform hostility (Liégeois and Gheorghe, 1995: 87).

In the case of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Roma were free to move around until Maria Theresa’s attempts to settle them in the 18th century. The Austro-Hungarian Empire issued a number of decrees to transform Roma into New Hungarians; i.e., forced Roma assimilation. Roma were forced to settle down and prohibited to use Romani language and wear traditional Roma dress. Furthermore, Roma children were forcibly separated from their families in order to make their adoption by the Hungarians possible. Subsequently, education and school attendance were made obligatory (UNDP, 2006: 13).

Even before World War II, Nazi Germany adopted several decrees categorizing Roma as inferior persons. Roma were treated as socially alien persons during the first year of Nazi rule, and they were equated with beggars, prostitutes, persons suffering from contagious or mental diseases or homosexuals (Ibid, pp. 13). Beginning with 1943, they were designated a threat to nation both in Nazi Germany and Nazi occupied countries, the Romani Holocaust, including sterilization and isolation of Roma in concentration camps, was implemented by both German authorities and local officials (ERRC, 2004: 8). Furthermore, Roma were afforded the ‘socially progressive strata’ distinction by communist ideology, prevalent in the

Balkans during post-World War II period. At that time, policies towards the Roma were broadly consistent with the regimes' ideological framework: class rather than ethnic cleavages were viewed as the key drivers of social differentiation. So, attempts were made to melt ethnic and individual distinctiveness into a homogeneous class of labourers. As Roma did not possess land, they were targeted as ideal subjects for this social experimentation. As a result of these policies, Roma incomes grew, the educational level of Roma was increased due to the obligatory school attendance of Roma children and access to public services and health status improved (UNDP, 2002: 15). However, the post-1989 era in Europe has seen an outbreak of anti-Romani sentiment in both Eastern and Western Europe. The governments blamed Roma for a breakdown in public order and systematic persecution took place in countries including Albania, Bulgaria, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Ukraine and Yugoslavia. In 1999, Roma in Europe suffered the worst catastrophe it has endured since World War II. Following the end of NATO military action in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the withdrawal of Yugoslav forces from Kosovo, ethnic Albanians undertook a campaign of ethnic cleansing against Roma and other persons perceived to be Gypsies (ERRC, 2004: 9).

As Roma were not recognized as an ethnic or national minority until the 1990s, the challenges facing them have been treated not as 'minority protection' issues but as 'social protection' issues. However, due to the positive impact of the supranational and international organizations, for example, the European Union and the UN, the situation of Roma has been undergoing remarkable changes with respect to that of past. The enlargement of European Union, especially in 2004 and 2007, including also the countries like Bulgaria and Romania where Roma consist of the largest ethnic groups, associated with the strategies adopted at the Lisbon European Council in March 2000 marked the beginning of a new era in relation to the initiatives taken to provide the integration of the socially excluded, including also Roma, into the mainstream society.

3.2 Roma and the European Union

Regarding the exact number of Roma in Europe, there are only rough estimations, mainly due to the stigma associated with the Romani identity leading the reluctance of many Roma to identify themselves as such and the refusal of many governments to include Roma as a legitimate category for census purposes. Indeed, it is estimated at around ten million, but some experts put the figures even higher at twelve million (ERRC, 2004: 9). Roma are attributed as the largest ethnic group in Europe, in the ERRC's report, *"The Situation of Roma in an Enlarged European Union"*, which was commissioned by the European Commission. However, according to the recent report of UNDP, including also Roma as one of the target groups, *"At Risk: Roma and the Displaced in Southeast Europe"*, Roma are not the largest ethnic group in Europe, as there are more Russians living outside Russia (in Europe) than Roma, but Roma are regarded as the largest vulnerable minority of Europe (UNDP, 2006: 11).

Although, it is not a full commitment endowed with sufficient legal tools, particularly focusing on Roma, the situation of Roma has been gradually improving when compared to the ignorance and maltreatment in the past. Roma occupy the EU's agenda in relation to two areas of action: combating racial and ethnic discrimination and implementation of the targets set out in the Lisbon Strategy (2000). First, in relation to the EU's intention to combat discrimination and racism, a number of anti-discrimination directives adopted. For example, Directive 2000/43/EC, also known as 'Race Directive', "implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin" is an effective tool and particularly significant for Roma (http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/fundamental_rights/pdf/legisl/2000_43_en.pdf, last visited on July 2008).

Although some Member States had already implemented legislation prohibiting racial discrimination prior to the adoption of the Race Directive, many did not, and even those countries with traditions of combating racial discrimination through law, often had not secured a ban on racial discrimination in all fields of relevance to EU social inclusion policy. Moreover, the May 2004 and January 2007 enlargement of EU are at the heart of the rise of Roma as an area of EU policy concern. Particularly, the situation of Roma in many of the new Member States is

still a priority concern due to ongoing racism and discrimination in employment, education and health care provision, failures of the criminal justice systems in cases concerning Roma. However, all these violations prior to the accession of the new Member States, were taken into consideration as a failure to comply with the political criteria for the EU membership, as stated in the Copenhagen Criteria, adopted in Copenhagen European Council in 1993. This states that, Member States should “be a stable democracy, respecting human rights, the rule of law, and the protection of minorities” (ERRC, 2004: 11&15).

Second, Roma appear as a significant matter of concern on the EU’s Social Inclusion agenda, especially following the introduction (March 2000) and the re-introduction (March 2005) of the Lisbon Strategy of which watchword was the “knowledge-based economy” focused on jobs, competition and social cohesion. For the first time in the EU’s history, the social exclusion has become so fundamental that, it is identified as an essential element for maintaining and increasing the EU’s economic growth. The social policy has been, usually, regarded as the poor cousin of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU); however, especially beginning with the late-1980s, it is obviously seen that the economic integration is intimately associated with unemployment, poverty and deprivation. While the relatively privileged position of the European Union in the global market leads a number of its citizens enjoy their increased incomes and advantaged living conditions, an important amount of others are regarded as at-risk due to an increasing level of unemployment, homelessness and they are not able to fully exercise their economic, political and social rights as equal citizens of the EU. According to Geddes, the incentives leading a discursive shift from poverty to social exclusion in the EU can be summarized as follows:

In the mid-1990s, unemployment was around 11%, nearly 3 million were homeless and over 15% were living in poverty, reflecting the new fissures opening up in welfare capitalism under the assault by capital on the Fordist working class and the welfare state. Increased number of population are now exposed to, rather than shielded from, insecurity, and cannot any longer rely on the extension of a stable employment base and high rates of economic growth. Contemporary poverty and exclusion are further associated with a consumerist capitalism which is undermining the work ethic and welfare systems predicated on work, in a world where capital no longer needs the work-disciplined reserve army of the past and traditional class distinctions and allegiances are weakened and ‘churned up’ by post-Fordist or late capitalism. While some emphasize the segmentation of identities and social divisions on ethnic, sexual or local lines, in an as yet unstable class structure in which ‘those above have the coherence of privilege, while those below lack unity and solidarity’, conceptions such as the social proletariat may be deployed to encompass all those groups, excluded from, or within, changing forms of the wage relationship (Mike Geddes, 2000: 782).

Thus, the use of the term “social exclusion” by the European Union, instead of old conceptualizations like the culture of poverty and cycle of deprivation, is also a deliberate choice as it has been strongly related with the initiatives conducted for the modernization of the European social policy or social model. As Robert Peace indicates that the social exclusion offered a fresh alternative for the European policy makers in order to avoid the stigma of the so-called concepts like poverty; subsequently “the war on poverty” was out and “the fight against social exclusion” was in (Robert Peace, 2001: 18). Although, the social exclusion took place in Maastricht Treaty establishing the European Union (signed in 1992) and Amsterdam Treaty (signed in 1997) as a social policy concern; the Lisbon Strategy can be evaluated as a turning point in terms of its overwhelming emphasis on the fight against poverty and social exclusion. For example, prior to the meeting of the Lisbon European Council, the Commission, through its contribution report, identified underemployment, poverty and social exclusion as the main social challenges and added that the key challenge was now to move from an agenda of tackling social exclusion to one ensuring social inclusion and mainstreaming it at the heart of all policy making (European Commission, 2000: 7-8). Moreover, in the report, the paradigm shift to the new economy driven by globalization and the new knowledge economy was underlined and the Council was invited to strengthen the European social model through investing in people. Unless, the Commission summarized the possible consequences as follows:

If not, there is a real risk of social exclusion being exacerbated by uneven development throughout the Union, insufficient creation of quality jobs and major skill shortages. These problems would compound the Union’s existing social challenges of unemployment, social exclusion and poverty. They place additional strain on our social protection systems and make it more difficult to modernise education and training for the new knowledge economy (Ibid, pp. 19-20).

The main components of the Lisbon were: the economy, the social protection and the environment. Thus, it was vital to modernize the European social model, to achieve which, the growing problem of social exclusion had to be tackled. Particularly, the European Council considered that the overall aim of the Lisbon strategy should be to raise the employment rate from an average of 61 percent in 2000 to 70 percent by 2010 and to increase the number of women in employment from an average of 51 percent in 2000 to more than 60 percent in 2010 (Tove H.

Malloy, 2005: 4). Following the Lisbon European Council, the elaborations of the objectives on poverty and social exclusion, agreed at the Nice European Council (December 2000) and later updated at the Laeken European Council (May 2001). The objectives regarding fight against poverty and social exclusion were categorized into four subgroups at the Nice European Union held in December 2000:

- to facilitate participation in employment and access by all to the resources, rights, goods and services;
- to prevent the risks of exclusion;
- to help the most vulnerable;
- to mobilise all relevant bodies (The Social Protection Committee, 2002: 8).

To achieve social cohesion both within and between the Member States of the EU, Lisbon introduced a methodology, i.e, the open method of co-ordination, ‘based on common guidelines, review and deliberation, consolidating and expanding a form of policy-making that had been operating since at least 1997 in the field of employment policy which came to be known as the *Luxembourg process* and even earlier in the case of economic policy’ (Mary Daly, 2006: 466). The social inclusion OMC simply includes such stages as follows:

Its core is an iterative procedure, beginning with an annual joint report to the European Council which is followed by the guidelines of the Council based on proposals from the Commission. In response to these guidelines, member governments present annual national action plans whose effects will then be evaluated in the light of comparative benchmarks by the Commission and a permanent committee of senior civil servants. These evaluations will feed into the next iteration of joint annual reports and guidelines, but they may also lead to the adoption of specific recommendations of the Council addressed to individual Member States (Fritz W. Scharpf, 2002: 653).

The Member States were invited to participate in the fight against poverty and social exclusion through employing the open method of co-ordination. Up to December 2005, two sets of national action plans for social inclusion, known as NAPs/incl, had been submitted, the first in June 2001 and the second in June 2003. The ten new Member States submitted their first plans in July 2004. Several Spring Councils have evaluated the negative and positive results of the implementation of the Lisbon. However, at the end of the Prodi Commission, a more detailed evaluation began. The High Level Group chaired by Wim Kok reassessed the Lisbon process, beginning at the end of the year 2000 and presented a report named as “Facing the

Challenge: The Lisbon strategy for growth and employment” in November 2004. The High Level Group, throughout the report, insisted on the significance of the growth and employment in order to achieve the Lisbon ambitions. The Group reviewed the implementations conducted since the launch of the Lisbon strategy, as the mixed Lisbon picture, including both the failed promises/missed objectives and progress in a number of relevant areas (High Level Group, 2004: 11). For example, the employment rate rose from 62.5 percent in 1999 to 64.3 percent in 2003 and also the female employment rate rose to 56 percent in 2003. On the other hand, it was stated that the net job creation had been slowed down considerably in recent years and the risk was apparent that the 2010 target of 70 percent employment rate would not be reached (Ibid, pp.11).

The Group proposed the Lisbon strategy to be relaunched through requiring European Institutions and Member States “to commit themselves” and identifying five broad priority areas of action: the realisation of the knowledge society, the completion of the internal market and promotion of competition, including services and financial services, the establishment of a favourable climate to business and enterprise, building an adaptable and inclusive labour market, and the vigorous promotion of win-win environmental economic strategies were together regarded as the sources of economic growth and higher productivity (Ibid, pp.18).

Throughout the report, some of the key objectives of the Lisbon strategy were not mentioned, two of which were the social exclusion and poverty being on rise by that time:

Despite an overall improvement since 1995, the numbers affected by relative income poverty are still very significant with more than 55 million people or 15% of the EU population living at risk of poverty in 2001...There are a number of trends that seem to be increasingly common in several countries. Unemployment levels are increasing overall. In some countries in spite of more positive developments in relation to unemployment relatively high income gaps have persisted (IRL, UK). The numbers dependent on minimum income schemes tend to increase. In terms of accommodation there are indications that housing waiting lists have grown and there is a tendency for homelessness to increase. While overall health standards have been largely maintained there has been some indication of an increase in mental health problems and in problems related to addiction (European Commission, 2004a: 6&33).

Even though the report led the Barroso Commission to present a re-oriented strategy at the beginning of 2005; a number of serious critiques were levelled against it. For example, Zgajewski and Hajjar criticized the Kok report for not questioning any basic element of the Lisbon strategy including its objectives, its global approach

and its large use of the open co-ordination method; and subsequently while pointing out the lines of change embedded in the Kok report, they put strong emphasis on the way the social problems taken into consideration:

The main change in the report lies in the very limited importance given to the social and environmental objectives of the strategy. The social problems are analyzed nearly exclusively from the point of view of employment. All other social problems are not evoked (Zgajewski and Hajjar, 2005: 5).

In addition to the insufficient emphasis put on the social problems, in comparison to the overemphasis on economic growth; no particular stress was laid on the ethnic minorities, including also Roma, both in the Kok report (2004) and the blueprint for growth and jobs in support of a re-focused Lisbon Strategy (2005). The Kok report referred to ethnic minorities only once as a sub-category of older workers (Tove H. Malloy, 2005: 3). On the other hand, in the blueprint for the relaunched Lisbon Strategy, there are mainly twenty-three integrated guidelines for growth and jobs that would be followed between 2005 and 2008 and categorized into three sub-groups as macroeconomic, microeconomic and employment guidelines (European Commission, 2005a: 10). Once more, the fight against social exclusion is presented as an essential prerequisite to ensure economic stability, economic sustainability and efficiency, and among others, specific attention is paid primarily on unemployed women, older and young workers (Ibid, pp. 27).

On the other hand, no particular emphasis is laid on the ethnic minorities except for the one embedded in the employment guidelines. The overall aim of the employment guidelines is *'to ensure inclusive labour markets for job-seekers and disadvantaged people'* (Ibid, pp. 10). Thus only here, the ethnic minorities are considered in relation to combating discrimination. As Malloy claims, while the young and older workers and women are of vital importance to the rejuvenation of Europe's economy, ethnic minorities appear ostracised from this new process (Malloy, 2005: 3). It is crucial that the Commission makes no explicit emphasis on the ethnic minorities, but it may implicitly refer them under the category of disadvantaged people only within the context of the economic growth, as it is also underlined by Malloy:

While the Commission may well be implicitly including ethnic minorities in the category of disadvantaged people, this is by no means clear from the Employment Guidelines which do not include a reference to minorities. It would seem that ethnic minorities are simply not taken into account in the pursuit of economic growth (Ibid, pp. 6).

Although the ethnic minorities, thus Roma, have not been included in the legal documents prepared within the context of the Lisbon Strategy, the disadvantaged situation of Roma has been considered as a matter of concern and mentioned among the vulnerable and risk groups in different “Joint Reports on Social Inclusion”, including common objectives and national action plans of the Member States since 2001:

...Risk groups requiring targeted measures include long-term employed, recurrently employed....and the Roma population (European Commission, 2004a: 206); ...In this regard groups such as the Roma, the homeless, victims of trafficking, alcoholics and drug users, victims of violence and crime, people living in or leaving care institutions, victims of domestic violence and subsistence farm families feature often. Some also connect very high suicide rates to poverty...Although the Roma national minorities are a heterogeneous group, a large part of Roma people belongs to the most vulnerable individuals in the EU-10 countries, as for the Union as a whole (European Commission, 2005b: 32&78).

The overwhelming emphasis repeatedly laid on the disadvantaged situation of Roma in different NAPs/inc, especially in the ones prepared by the new Member States, makes the situation of Roma unignorable for the European Union, aiming to achieve a more inclusive Europe to secure a successful Euro region in a competitive global economy. Subsequently, in the report, *The Situation of Roma in an Enlarged European Union*, the European Commission is recommended to establish a coordination structure on Roma issues to ensure the improved coherence and efficacy of its policies; provide guidance to Member States on the collection of data on aspects of race and ethnicity of relevance to social inclusion; seek to play a more active role within existing Roma initiatives launched by the Council of Europe, the OSCE and others, and investigate what role it can play in improving coordination among such bodies; continue its efforts to monitor the transposition of the Race Equality Directive and the Framework Employment Directive into Member State laws, and take action against any state not complying with this request with a reasonable time period. Last but not least, in the report, a great emphasis is put on the promotion of the social inclusion of Roma as a focus of policy of the EU guiding Member States in the specification of Roma, Gypsies and Travellers in National Action Plans covering social inclusion, life long learning and employment and

providing guidance on the definition of appropriate social inclusion indicators (ERRC, 2004: 3).

3.3 UN Millenium Development Goals and the Decade of Roma Inclusion

In line with the Lisbon Strategy, launched by the Heads of state or government in March 2000 to make the European Union the world's most competitive economy and achieve full employment by 2010; the world leaders participating to the United Nations Millenium Summit in September 2000, adopted the Millenium Declaration to commit themselves to a global partnership to reduce extreme poverty and agreed a set of time-bound and measurable goals and targets named as Millenium Development Goals promised to be achieved by 2015. Placed at the heart of the global agenda, Millenium Development Goals consist of eight priority concerns:

- Halve extreme poverty and hunger,
- Achieve universal primary education,
- Empower women and promote equality between men and women,
- Reduce under-five mortality by two-thirds,
- Reduce maternal mortality by three-quarters,
- Reverse the spread of diseases, especially HIV/AIDS and Malaria,
- Ensure environmental sustainability,
- Create a global partnership for development, with targets for aid, trade and debt relief (<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/MDGs-FACTSHEET1.pdf>, last visited on July 2008).

The main incentive behind the launch of the MDGs is to make globalization fully equitable and inclusive for all. So, the MDGs provide a framework for the entire UN system to reach a common end. Every country is responsible for preparing country reports to enable monitoring where countries are on track to meet the MDGs. However, in order to lessen the report burden, the achievements or failures taking place within the framework of MDGs have been build upon the existing reports such as National Human Development Report and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/MDGs-FACTSHEET2.pdf>, last visited on July 2008).

The first of the UNDP reports concerning the situation of Roma in the Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries; i.e., *Avoiding the Dependency Trap*, was published in 2002, in the form of a Roma Human Development Report, analyzed through the perspective of the human development. The survey was undertaken by the UNDP&ILO, and based on face-to-face interviews conducted with 5,034 Roma respondents in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and the Slovak Republic. The report is defined as a groundbreaking one, for enabling the collection of the first comprehensive quantitative data regarding the Roma population in the CEE countries, leading a more concrete projection of the level of vulnerability and marginalization faced by the Roma population in the region as a whole. Each chapter of the report was dedicated to one of the specific themes of the human development: employment and incomes, education, health, political participation and social inclusion. The data obtained regarding each of these specific areas of concern in relation to Roma revealed out so negative and poor figures that the relevant states were called for considering the situation of Roma among one of their priorities. In fact, all these states were at the pre-accession stage for the EU membership when the report was published, so the integration of Roma in a productive way into their home societies via employment, education and political participation was considered as a challenging obstacle that should have been eliminated on their way to full EU integration (UNDP, 2002: 5).

Furthermore, the attributed reasons for the emergence of the above cynical picture, regarding the situation of the Roma minorities in the relevant CEE countries in the report were, as important as, the possible results that the picture itself might lead to. In the brief historical overview, the relatively disadvantaged socio-economic situation of Roma, was explained in reference to the level of value attributed to their traditional skills and labour fluctuating, depending on the dominant mode of production and state ideology. Roma were never landowners, during either the pre-industrial period or after. In the pre-industrial period, they were part of the non-agrarian societies, possessing craft skills like blacksmithing, musical entertainment, collecting and processing wood and other raw materials and more recently recycling. However, the demands for these skills fell sharply over time due to the rising industrialization (Ibid, pp.13). Although, Roma faced with state-imposed assimilation during the communist period, through which they became part of a

homogeneous class of labourers and their sense of community weakened, all the social engineering initiatives applied to Roma, obligatory employment, Roma became cheap labour resource for the state-owned heavy-industries; obligatory education; administrative allocation of housing to the Roma; dispersion by settling Roma families among majority communities and obligatory Roma participation in the health care system-generated significant improvements in terms of human development. However, with the collapse of the regime, Roma became particularly vulnerable to the threat of social exclusion and marginalization due to loss of their traditional identities and support networks; i.e., sense of community, for which the “socialist project” in the CEE failed to provide substitutes (Ibid, pp.13-15).

The above mentioned report argued that the problems faced by Roma are primarily issues of underdevelopment, poverty and social exclusion. Subsequently, it was overemphasized that the enforcement of anti-discriminatory legislation is a necessary but not sufficient condition for addressing the hardships experienced by Roma in these countries. So, ensuring the development opportunities for Roma is regarded, as an essential complementary element of, Roma equality and their empowerment. Furthermore, both communities, Roma and non-Roma are suggested to have the opportunity to develop and implement a common policy emphasizing European diversity as a way of eliminating segregation, apathy and hatred to Roma civil society. The recommendations of the report for monitoring poverty and other MDG-related targets relevant for vulnerable groups and Roma in particular, were confirmed by the launch of the ‘Decade of Roma Inclusion’ in 2003 (UNDP, 2006: 2).

The idea of the “Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015” emerged from a high-level regional conference on Roma, *‘Roma in an Expanding Europe: Challenges for the Future’*, held in Budapest, Hungary, in 2003. The participating governments signed the Declaration on the Decade of Roma Inclusion in Sofia, Bulgaria on February 2, 2005. The aim of the Decade is to improve the socio-economic status and social inclusion of Roma within a regional framework. To achieve this end, not just governments of the above mentioned Central and Southeast European countries all of which have significant number of Roma minorities, but also the intergovernmental (Council of Europe and UNDP) and nongovernmental (OSI and ERRC) organizations, as well as the Roma civil society have been included

in the process. The priority areas of concern of the Decade are: education, employment, health, and housing. Moreover, the Decade commits the governments to take into consideration of the other core issues of poverty, discrimination and gender mainstreaming. Each of the participating governments has developed a national Decade Action Plan identifying the goals and indicators relevant to each of the priority areas. The first DecadeWatch Report (DecadeWatch 2007), published in June 2007, assessed the period beginning from the launch of the Decade in 2005 until the end of 2006. It was prepared by the Roma activists in order to put the progress achieved clearly, identify good experience and highlight achievements (<http://www.romadecade.org/index.php?content=1>, last visited on July 2008).

The above mentioned UNDP report has been criticized, in spite of its groundbreaking characteristic, for not providing a comprehensive household profiles on expenditures, education, health and employment due to the deficiency of the questionnaire design. In addition to that, the missing sample of majority population as a control group is also regarded as a shortcoming (Milcher and Ivanov, 2004: 10). So, in order to fill the theoretical and methodological gaps embedded in the previous research of the UNDP in the CEE, a regional vulnerability report, *At Risk: Roma and the Displaced in Southeast Europe*, was published in 2006, by the UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and the CIS. The study focused on three populations: Roma, displaced persons (IDPs and refugees) and respondents located in close proximity to Roma and displaced. The analysis and report was based on the data collected from the Vulnerable Group Surveys, carried out in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Czech Republic and Kosova. Roma and displaced persons have been chosen not because they are Roma and displaced per se, but because they face particularly unpleasant combinations of vulnerability risks. Through the report, an in-depth analysis of the determinants of the vulnerability risks is offered which have been analyzed in an area-based context (UNDP, 2006: 6-7). More remarkably, the UNDP's experience with ethnic-data collection in relation to the two reports mentioned, especially the latter, has contributed a lot, particularly as a baseline household survey representative for Roma, IDPs and refugees, to the Decade of Roma Inclusion (Milcher and Ivanov, 2004: 11).

3.4 UN's Approach versus EU's Approach Towards Roma

The approach of UN towards Roma is distinctively different from that of the EU; although, in both cases the situation of Roma is taken into consideration in the context of eradication of poverty and overcoming social exclusion. While the former sees people as the true wealth of nations and treats them as the means and ends of the development; the latter primarily concerns about the Union's economic growth as a whole. UN's fight against poverty and social exclusion is closely related with its concept of human development, to achieve which inclusion and equality are key prerequisites. Thus, UN adopts the individual empowerment model known as rights-based approach which recognizes social exclusion as the violation of the basic citizenship rights.

On the other hand, as it is also confirmed by the Lisbon Strategy, the EU's fight against poverty and social exclusion is vital for the modernization of the European social model which is essential for ensuring a successful Euro region in a competitive global economy. Thus, the EU adopts the growth model embracing a needs-based approach towards the disadvantaged groups, including also the ethnic minorities like Roma, for the elimination of the obstacles preventing the socially excluded individuals and groups from participation in the labour market.

Subsequently, first the EU's Copenhagen Criteria (1993) adopted for the eligibility assessment of the candidate states during the pre-accession period, and secondly, Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 which can be seen as an endeavour for meeting the UN's MDG targets for Europe's most vulnerable group – the Roma are two incentives leading the visibility of the Roma population as a matter of concern in Turkey.

CHAPTER IV

ROMA IN TURKEY

This chapter aims to present both the current situation of Roma and its rise as an area of concern in Turkey. Since the early 2000s, the Turkish Roma have become an area of interest both for the NGOs, particularly the ones specialized in human-rights, and the academics in Turkey. Undoubtedly, this noticeable rise of Roma corresponds to the recognition of Turkey's candidacy to the European Union at the Helsinki European Council of 1999. Turkey's acceptance as an official candidate for membership to the European Union has generated an unprecedented political reform process, implying also considerable commitments for the minorities, including also Roma, during the last six years.

All these improvements have led to the emergence of the Roma organization process through which both the Roma population in general, and the different segments of the population in particular, like the Roma university students, become more visible. In spite of all these improvements, the Turkish State still disregards Roma both as a political priority and as a socio-economic entity facing severe difficulties in accession to key sectoral fields, like education and employment.

4.1 A Brief History

As it is also stated in the previous chapter, the ancestors of today's Gypsies left their homeland, India, at a date ranging from fifth to fifteenth century in search of a new homeland. After wandering for several centuries throughout the lands of what are today Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran, and to the south of the Caspian Sea, the Gypsies divided into two separate branches, a division marking a significant stage in the development of Gypsy language and Gypsy community as a whole: the ben-speaking Dom (taking the southern route or stayed in the Middle East) and two phen-speaking groups, the Dom (taking the northern route) and Rom (taking the

western route) [Marushiakova and Vesselin, 2001: 12-13]. By the end of the eleventh century the mixed group that we now describe as proto-Romani, speaking an emerging language that would evolve into modern Romani, had arrived in Byzantium. In the capital, Constantinople, they were recorded as Aiguptissa, or “Egyptians”, dealers in magic charms and fortune-tellers, dancers and entertainers, metal-workers and horse-traders. The earliest settlements of “Egyptians” were on the edges of the city, outside the city walls at the Gate of Charisius, now the Edirne Kapı, close to the Sulukule (water tower) quarter. The movement over the following centuries into the Balkans and thence western Europe is intimately linked with the historical rise of the Ottoman Turks. In the context of the Gypsies of Turkey, the communities in Istanbul represent the longest continuous presence of Romani Gypsies anywhere in the world (IRSN, 2005: 8).

Moreover, an important number of Roma, entered Turkey from Greece since the Lausanne Treaty signed in 1923 through the population exchange. The target population groups included in the exchange were the Greek inhabitants of Constantinople and the Moslem inhabitants of Western Thrace. Although the exact number is still not known, an important number of Moslem Roma settled down to Turkey following the Treaty. Today, most of the Roma predominantly live in the Marmara, Aegean and Thrace regions (Ayşe Gündüz Hoşgör, 2007: 16).

4.2 The Birth of Roma-led Advocacy Associations

The exact number of Roma living in Turkey is still unclear due to absence of ethnic-data collection and the unwillingness of Roma people for revealing out their original ethnic identity due to social and economic reasons (Gündüz Hoşgör 2007, IRSN 2005 and Zerrin Toprak 2005). Census conducted every five years by the State Institute of Statistics has stopped receiving information on mother-tongue since 1985 and the data obtained between the years 1965 and 1985 were not publicized, just enounced to the relevant public institutions. However, Kıpti-native language speakers (Romani language) identified in the Census of 1935 and 1945. In the Census of 1935, out of the total 13.629.488 people counted, there were a total of 7855 Kıpti-speaking individuals. On the other hand, in the Census of 1945, 4.463

Kıpti-speaking individuals identified it as their mother-language and 193 individuals specified it as their second-language out of a total population of 16.157.450 (Fuat Dündar, 1999: 65&99). Regarding the recent population size of Roma, there are no facts; but there are just estimations changing depending on the resource. The overall Roma population of Turkey is estimated at ranging between 600000 to 2 million (IRSN, 2005: 7). However, in the report of the Minority Rights Group International, *A Quest For Equality: Minorities in Turkey*, it is stated as:

According to one researcher, who has identified 70 Roma neighbourhoods in Istanbul alone, the real number may be as high as 5 million, as most Roma live in overcrowded households and many do not have identity cards (MRG, 2007: 12).

All the branches of Roma/Gypsy population; i.e., Rom, Dom and Lom exist in different parts of Turkey. While Roma live predominantly in the Aegean, Marmara and Thrace Regions, Dom communities live in the cities located in the Southeast Anatolia Region like Diyarbakir, Batman and Gaziantep, and Lom live in the Black Sea Region. Regarding the last two branches of Roma/Gypsy population, especially the Lom communities, there is little or no knowledge about their origins or relationship to the Romani groups and the wider populations of Rom (IRSN, 2005: 6). Currently, 95% of Roma/Gypsy population are settled (<http://www.uyd.org.tr/roman3.htm>, last visited on August 2008).

As Ayhan Kaya states that the situation of Roma rises as an area of interest both for the NGOs and academics since the early 2000s which corresponds to the recognition of Turkey's candidacy to the European Union at the Helsinki European Council of 1999. Most of the minorities in Turkey become more visible in the public sphere in line with the European Union's priorities regarding the human-rights issues and the state of minorities (Ayhan Kaya, 2005: 2-3). As a result of Turkey's nation building process, which took place specifically following the first years of the foundation of the Turkish Republic, otherness was strictly rejected in order to constitute a uniform national identity and culture. Therefore, the newly established Turkish State, only recognized the Jews, Armenians and Greeks as minorities in the Lausanne Treaty (1923) which made it almost impossible for the other minorities to demand any rights, based on their national, ethnic or religious identity. Any demand or attempt to be recognized as anything, but a Turk had been identified as a threat to the national security until the beginning of Turkey's EU candidacy process. Thus, the

raising awareness regarding the recognition of the Roma population as a distinct ethnic-identity by the members of the majority population, beginning from the early 2000s, can be evaluated as an improvement led by Turkey's EU candidacy process.

The first of the Roma NGOs in Turkey was established in 2004 in Edirne and named as "Edçinkay" (Edirne-based Gypsy Cultural Research, Solidarity and Development Association). As Emine Onaran İncirliođlu states that the architect of Edçinkay is Mustafa Aksu, a retired inspector of the Turkish Railways, and in his own words, 'a Gypsy'. Mustafa Aksu wrote an autobiographic book, *Türkiye'de Çingene Olmak* (To be A Gypsy in Turkey), in 2003 to address what it is like to be a Gypsy in Turkey. The book was also defined by Emine Onaran İncirliođlu as '*a documentation of the social exclusion and discrimination of the Romani population in Turkey*'. Mustafa Aksu alone initiated his struggle to eliminate the existing prejudices and discrimination against the Roma/Gypsy population in Turkey, and subsequently, he looked for supporters to found a Gypsy association to unite all Gypsies under one umbrella, of course not a professional or labour organization, but one advocating ethnic, cultural and human rights for Gypsies (Emine Onaran İncirliođlu, 2005). After the foundation of Edçinkay, Mustafa Aksu became the honorary president of the association. The name of the so-called association was changed into "EDROM" (Edirne Romani Association) in 2006 to escape the negative connotations of the word, Gypsy. The foundation of EDROM encouraged the other Roma people and led the establishment of further Roma NGOs in different cities. Subsequently, eleven of the Roma NGOs have gathered under the umbrella of the Romani Associations Federation (ROMDEF) in February 2006. However, the ones who did not want to be a part of ROMDEF, established another federation; i.e., the Federation of Anatolian Romani Associations, in İzmir in 2005.

Although, Edçinkay is the first Roma-led advocacy association, it is not the first attempt to found a Roma association. As it is highlighted by Suat Kolukırık, the first Roma association was established by Yakup Çardak in İzmir in 1996, but it was closed due to economic difficulties within three months. Following the second and third failed attempts to re-found the closed association in 1998 and 2003; İzmir-based Romani Cultural Research, Solidarity and Development Association has founded in 2005 and it is still in action (Suat Kolukırık, 2006: 3).

Recently, there are more than forty Roma associations in Turkey; although almost one-fourth of them are active (EDROM/ERRC/HYD, 2008: 115). Fund-raising is a crucial problem for the Roma associations, primarily due to the high unemployment rate among Roma population (Ibid, pp. 118). Apart from the personal financial sacrifices of the Roma elite, pioneering the foundation of the Roma organizations in different cities; the EU funding on Turkish NGOs under the EU pre-accession process is an important fund resource leading both the foundation of further Roma NGOs and their maintenance, at least for the most influential ones. In addition to that, low education level of the Roma is another burden leading to insufficient capacity development of the organizations; which is also restricted by the statist attitude of the Roma people, particularly the elder ones due to which they cannot make a strong commitment to the advocacy for their rights.

Moreover, the underrepresentation of the Roma women at the Roma-led advocacy associations is another handicap both for the associations themselves and for the overall success of the organization of the Roma people (Gündüz Hoşgör, 2007: 57). However, Remziye Umunç (21) is the only Roma women participating in the activities of EDROM, which can be summarized as: strengthening the existing Roma organization process through awareness raising among Roma; providing financial support to the Roma university students, mostly the ones in Edirne and executing projects, mostly granted by the EU.

4.3 The Recognition of Roma both by the Mainstream NGOs and Academics

A number of Turkish and foreign NGOs; foreign Romani Studies Scholars including also the ones in Turkey and Turkish universities have made major contributions to the recognition of 'Roma Problem' as the issues of poverty and social exclusion. The majority of Roma population have difficulty in access to key sectoral fields; i.e., education, housing, employment, healthcare which give way to severe environments of poverty and deprivation (Gündüz Hoşgör 2007, EDROM/ERRC/HYD 2008, IRSN 2005 and SKYD 2007). Although discrimination

is among the problems faced by Roma; the case in Turkey is different from that of Europe as it is stated in the report of IRSN:

The most striking difference between Turkey and the rest of Europe is the perception of its Gypsy population. In Turkey, the notion of regarding the Gypsies as a separate ethnic minority is largely rejected, even by Gypsies themselves, as it is seen as divisive and therefore discriminatory. This contrasts with the European context, in which ethnic minority status is seen as a measure towards integration and the ensuring of equal access, opportunities and rights. Whilst the trans-national elements of Gypsy identity is a cornerstone of the international Romani movement, in Turkey, little recognition of Gypsies exists outside the “disadvantaged group”, or “brilliant musicians” categories (IRSN, 2005: 12).

The First International Romani Studies Conference, “Contextual, Constructed and Contested:Gypsies and the Problem of Identities” was held in April 2005 in İstanbul. It was organized by the International Romani Studies Network and took place in the Swedish Research Institute in İstanbul. It was supported both by the SRI and the Consulate General of Sweden in İstanbul. The intention of the conference was to open “a window on the East” for European Romani Studies Scholars, who had largely ignored or neglected Turkish Gypsies since the 1920s work of the Gypsylogists. Since this event, there has been an increased focus on Turkey and Turkish Gypsies from Europe and among the Romani Studies Scholars in general, with an increasing acknowledgement that the heritage of the Romani people stems from the emergence of Gypsy/Roma identity in eleventh-century Byzantium, in Constantinople to be precise. The current communities in the city of Istanbul represent (in the case of Sulukule) the oldest Gypsy populations in the world. The primary focus of the first Romani Studies conference for Turkish scholars of Romani Studies was to ensure that an awareness of their work extended beyond the region, illuminating the often misinformed discussions elsewhere about the history and contemporary situation of the Gypsy peoples in Turkey and the Middle East (Romani Music and Culture, http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Djelem_Djelem/message/714, last visited on November 2008).

Furthermore, the Second International Romani Studies Conference, “The Other Side of Europe: Diaspora, Politics & Culture” was held in May 2006 in the Kuştepe Campus of İstanbul Bilgi University. It was again organised by the IRSN and supported by the the Consulate General of Sweden in Istanbul and the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul. İstanbul Bilgi University, particularly the Centre for Migration Studies at İstanbul Bilgi University, contributed a lot to the organisation at

Bilgi University. The aim of the conference was to focus on the current debates and discussions in Romani Studies vis-à-vis Romani origins, culture and politics. While the focus was on the historical and contemporary situation of Gypsy peoples in Turkey and the region, the conference also provided the opportunity for scholars, researchers and activists from elsewhere in Europe to present findings.

Before proceeding with the events held by the other NGOs, it is relevant here to provide a brief description of the mission undertaken by the International Romani Studies Network. Adrian Marsh² and Elin Strand³ are two main founders of the IRSN. They conducted a feasibility study between September 2004 and March 2005. The aim of the research was as follows:

The feasibility study would seek to establish a 'baseline survey' for the three communities referred to, concerned with education, accommodation, employment and epidemiology. It would attempt to establish provenance of both kinship groups and individuals, the degree of mobility experienced by the community and the communal history through oral testimony. The primary material gathered through interviews and questionnaires would be analysed to produce evidence of school attendance, qualification, training, literacy and further education [...]The overall objective would be to produce a report that both demonstrated the feasibility of further, major investigations into the Roman communities of Turkey, and to address any problems that arose at a preliminary stage of research, that may be refined and resolved in the design of a larger project (IRSN, 2005: 4).

In the first phase of the research, a number of Gypsy communities in İstanbul-Tophane, Sulukule, Kuştepe, Dolapdere, Gültepe and Gaziosmanpaşa- were mapped. The research was coordinated by Adrian Marsh and Elin Strand. The research team consisted of researchers from the IRSN (Stefan Bladh, Alev Hawes, Dirk Nieubower, Ana Oprisan, Mustafa Özunal), students from the Romani Studies programme at Istanbul Bilgi University (Başak Solmaz, Dilek Özkan), and Turcology scholars at the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul (Cecilia Jansson, Martin Palm), and Kari Cağatay). The main sponsors of this research project were the Swedish Consulate General in Istanbul and the British Council in Turkey. The Open Society Institute Assistance Foundation in Istanbul (OSIAF) co-funded the first phase of the research.

The second phase of the research was carried out under the aegis of the Centre for Migration Research at Istanbul Bilgi University (CMR). The overall

² An English Gypsy, is a Romani Studies research assistant at the Greenwich University in England and still studying on the Ottoman Gypsies.

³ A Swedish Gypsy, who has already departed from Turkey and returned back to Sweden, her homeland, where she lectures on the Romani Studies at the Sweden Trollhättan College.

findings of the research study confirm the disadvantaged situation of the Roma population in Turkey. For example, in the research report, *Reaching Romanlar*, it is argued that Roma people in Turkey are more consistently under-educated, under-employed; they suffer much higher levels of ill-health; have poorer housing and higher incidences of discrimination on the basis of their ethnicity, than any other group in Turkey (Ibid, pp. 6). Furthermore, in the second phase of the research, the IRSN organised an education workshop in February 2005 at the İstanbul Bilgi University. The aim of the workshop was to focus on the situation of Gypsies and their access to education as it has a central importance on the way to social inclusion. Throughout the workshop, the issues were defined as if there was no discrimination, the problems were either exaggerated, imagined or self-imposed. There was also a widespread conviction to the extent that there were any problems, the Roma people had to do something about these themselves which was concomitant with the European approach of the past, one that has sought to identify the deficit in a particular group, without analysing the responsibilities and norms of the majority society (Ibid, pp. 30).

In addition to the conferences held by the IRSN, the Accessible Life Association (UYD) in İstanbul also held two further symposiums, the first one in 2005 and the second one in 2006. The First International Roma Symposium was held in May 2005 in Edirne within the framework of the annual Kakava Festival. A wide range of participants; foreign and Turkish academics, representatives of different NGOs and Romani activists, presented their papers and each of them highlighted a different aspect of the Roma problem in Turkey. The Open Society Institute Assistance Foundation–Turkey (OSIAF-Turkey) supported the symposium. The general characteristics of the Roma population, like the estimated population size and the traditional Roma skills were among the issues that were touched upon during the symposium, including also the discriminatory terms and provisions against Roma in the legal documents. Moreover, the Second International Roma Symposium was held in May 2006 in İstanbul. The central themes were the cultural rights, the multiculturalism and Roma, the legal status of Roma, the political and social rights of Roma and the case of the European Roma. The conclusions drawn from the papers presented have been contributed to the increasing visibility of Roma and recognition of the basic problems faced by Roma in Turkey.

Especially two EU-funded projects conducted by the Helsinki Citizens Assembly (HYD) and the Association for Improvement of the Social and Cultural Life (SKYGD) have contributed a lot both to the visibility and recognition of Roma by the wider society and the empowerment of Roma through raising awareness among the Roma NGOs about their rights and issues of organization. SKYGD and Boğaziçi University Social Policy Forum co-executed the project, *Preparation of Social Policy Proposal for the Roma Communities at Local Level*, and it was supported both by EDROM and Children under the Same Roof Association (ÇAÇA). The project was initiated in February 2006 and lasted eight months. The field research was conducted in four cities, where Roma predominantly live to produce a poverty map. The main conclusion drawn from the field research is that all branches of Roma population suffer from severe poverty and social exclusion regardless of their location (SKYD, 2007: 19). The facility report, *Roma and the Social Policy*, was published as a book in 2007. Erdinç Çekiç's (chairman of EDROM) conclusions about the project are remarking:

I used to think that Roma live only in the Thrace region just four years ago. When I became aware of the other Roma communities, I was so eager to learn more about the lives of the other Roma communities settled in different cities and about our similarities and differences. Eventually I met the others through that project. During our visits to Çanakkale, Zonguldak, Nusaybin and Batman, I felt both excited and sad. I felt that we are obliged to reconsider the identified problems of Roma after witnessing the miserable situation of the Dom communities of Batman and Nusaybin... (SKYGD, 2007: 9).

Furthermore, Helsinki Citizens Assembly co-executed another project on Roma, "*Promoting Roma Rights in Turkey*", with the European Roma Rights Center (ERRC) and EDROM. It was supported both by the EU and the OSIAF-Turkey. It was initiated in December 2005 and planned to be completed by December 2007. However, the final meeting corresponding to the end of the project was held in April 2008 in Ankara. The project aimed to increase the capacity of the Roma communities and associations in Turkey in their fight against discrimination and violation of their rights; identify the social and economic problems of Roma and make an attempt to solve them through employing legal tools; ensure the citizenship rights of Roma through grabbing the attention of the official institutions to the situation of Roma.

The project was implemented in five cities: Mersin, İzmir, Edirne, İstanbul and Ankara. The representatives of the Roma associations were lectured on how to

Both mendicancy and drug dealing can be defined as poverty strategies; however they cannot be generalized into the overall Roma population. On the other hand, alcoholism is an outcome of the extending social and cultural exchanges of the musicians with the majority society. As it will be given in the next section, children of these musicians, mostly, have a tendency of dropping out of school due to both being ignored by their parents and excluded by their teachers. Furthermore, early marriage is still a common practice also among the youngsters of the Roma communities and one of the leading reasons for dropping out of school. As they don't have positive role models in higher education either from their families or their communities, they may simply fall into the trap of early marriage as it seems them the most convenient option. Moreover, depending on the practice of ingroup marriage, the children from different Roma communities can be forced to marry a relative at an early age by their parents.

Consequently, all the respondents included in this study suffer varying levels of poverty. However, being home-owners and having social support networks are important factors contributing to their survival. On the other hand, as almost all of the household income is spent on food and bills, their families face difficulty in meeting their school expenses. The loss of traditional crafts and skills due to globalization and technological improvements; and having low level of education are important aspects of increasing poverty due to which the parents, particularly fathers, can only involve in low-paid informal jobs. Their mothers also have low levels of education and are not involved in income generating activities. They can only meet the basic needs of their households and the education of their children becomes a secondary consideration. The economic deprivation faced by the Roma children makes their participation in education difficult and increases their vulnerability. Moreover, all of them lack a positive role model; positive examples showing how and why education pays off. They live in close communities with a little social and cultural exchange with outside world, as their parents, brothers, sisters and the residents of their Roma neighbourhoods are their only role models with low levels of education, they have to demonstrate agency in order to break the cycle of deprivation.

found an association and how to advocate for human rights. Erdinç Çekiç summarized the recent situation of Roma and the organization of Roma as follows:

The unity should be provided within the Roma movement, and the existing Roma associations should also include Roma youth and Roma women; otherwise Roma movement cannot be sustainable. The burdens may be overcome only through heightened sense of collectivity; individual attempts, alone, may not be enough (<http://www.bianet.org/bianet/kategori/bianet/106593/turkiyeli-romanlar-haklarini-savunuyor-gelecegi-kurmayi-tartisiyor>, last visited on November 2008).

Furthermore, this project can be evaluated as a milestone for the Roma organization process as it led to the establishment of further Roma associations and reinforced the relations between the existing ones. For example, Diyarbakir Dom Solidarity Association was established in December 2006 and Mehmet Demir was assigned as its new chairman. Moreover, *Romankara* was established in Ankara in 2007. It is different from the others as it consists of only Roma Youth and was founded by a Roma university student, Selçuk Karadeniz. The participation of Roma youth in the Roma process is a great opportunity for the current Roma associations as they are led by a number of Roma activists lacking sufficient education (EDROM/ERRC/HYD, 2008: 48). Moreover, Ayşe Gündüz Hoşgör puts a special emphasis on the same issue in the report, *Analysis of the Present State of Roma/Gypsies in Turkey*, as follows:

While strengthening Roma/Gypsy communities, the focus must be on young Roma/Gypsies with university education and civil society organisations that will help replace traditional community leaders (*çeribaşı*) by these young leaders must be supported. These educated “role models” should be included in awareness building and training programmes on the major problems of Roma/Gypsy communities (Gündüz Hoşgör, 2007: 87).

Romankara’s main purpose is to provide the participation of the Roma youth in all activities regarding Roma and they have been working for raising awareness among the Roma youth, especially the ones participating in higher education. For example, they have already gathered a number of Roma university students from different cities of Turkey in Bartın on January 2008 in order to discuss the problems faced by the Roma communities residing in different cities and the possible solutions.

4.4 The Ignorance of Roma by the Political Elite

Although there has been an increasing interest towards Roma, the Turkish political elite still ignore Roma either as an ethnic minority or as a part of the mainstream society suffering from severe poverty and social exclusion. Erdal Kesebir, a member of the Democratic Socialist Party, is the first Member of Parliament who submitted a law proposal to the parliament in 1993 for the amendment of the Article 4 of Settlement Act no. 2510, enacted in 1934 by The Grand National Assembly of Turkey, in which the “Gypsies” were not considered as emigrant-nomads and were cited together with anarchists, spies and deported aliens. However, that proposal was refused by Süleyman Demirel. He asserted the possible pressure of migration of the Gypsies living abroad to Turkey who might misunderstand the amendment as Turkey’s decision to receive further immigration as a pretext for his refusal.

Fethullah Erbaş⁴ first proposed a bill including the creation of equal education opportunities for the children of nomadic communities like emigrant-nomads and Gypsies in 2000. However, it even was not discussed. Following that bill, he proposed another one requiring a parliamentary inquiry on the situation of Gypsies in Turkey in 2001. He detailed the recent situation of the Gypsies as follows:

As it is known Gypsies live almost in all parts of Turkey. Although they are Turkish citizens, they suffer from social exclusion for a long period of time...There are 500000 Gypsies living in Turkey. In fact this is the official number, the estimated population size is around 2,5 million. However, most of us are not aware of this fact...I propose this bill of inquiry in order to eliminate the discrimination against the Gypsies and put an end to the difficulties and problems faced by them (http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/tutanak_sd.birlesim_baslangic?P4=5963&P5=B&page1=7&page2=7&web_user_id=6112365, last visited on August 2008).

However, the related parliamentary inquiry has never been conducted. On the other hand, the European Commission have been submitting annual progress reports regarding Turkey to the European Council in order to ensure Turkey’s movement towards the Copenhagen Criteria⁵, adopted in 1993 as a legal tool to assess the

⁴ A member of the Virtue Party, who used to be a MP during the 19th, 20th and 21th legislation periods of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey.

eligibility of the candidate states. These reports have been underlining the importance of dealing with human rights issues concerning Roma since 2004.

The case of Roma has been mentioned for the first time, in the 2004 Regular Report on Turkey's progress towards accession:

Legislation preventing Roma from entering Turkey as immigrants is still in force. However, in December 2003 a circular on the Law on Citizenship removed the requirement to state on the citizenship application whether the applicant is a "gypsy". Roma are reportedly socially excluded and experience difficulties in accessing adequate housing (European Commission, 2004b: 49).

Furthermore, inadequate housing, lack of accession to education, employment and health were stated as the main problems faced by the Turkish Roma in the progress report 2005. The European Commission also touched upon the research conducted by the Istanbul Bilgi University, aimed at mapping the exact number and locations of Roma in Turkey and the growing number of Roma-led advocacy organizations. (European Commission, 2005c: 37). In 2006, the Commission mentioned the amendments to the Law on Settlement adopted in September 2006, which repealed the discriminatory provisions against Roma. However, the Law on foreigners residing and travelling in Turkey containing discriminatory provisions on Roma was stated as a failure. Moreover, the forced evictions taking place within the context of the urban regeneration of historical districts took place in the report regarding Roma as most of these districts consist of a majority of Roma population (European Commission, 2006: 22). In the latest report, submitted in 2007, in addition to the above mentioned points, unparticipation of Turkey in the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 has been mentioned as a matter of concern regarding Roma (European Commission, 2007: 22).

It should be noted that the amendments made to the Law on Settlement adopted in September 2006 can not be explained only in terms of a necessity imposed by the EU pre-accession period. Mustafa Aksu's personal struggle for the elimination of the discriminatory provisions and statements against Roma, as well as

⁵ "Membership requires that candidate country has achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and, protection of minorities, the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union. Membership presupposes the candidate's ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union" (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Copenhagen_criteria, last visited on August 2008).

Enis Tütüncü's⁶ efforts are also worth mentioning in relation to the amendments made to the Law on Settlement. Enis Tütüncü proposed an amendment to the Parliament regarding the removal of the discriminatory provisions against Roma from the Law on Settlement in 2006. In addition to his advocacy for the amendment of the Law on Settlement, Mustafa Aksu is also the invisible man behind the bill submitted by Feyzullah Erbaş requiring a parliamentary inquiry on the status of Gypsies in Turkey in 2001 (İncirlioğlu, 2005).

In addition to the initiatives taken by the EU regarding the betterment of the situation of the Roma population in Turkey, Unicef Turkey also conducts activities to make a change in the way the relevant governmental institutions and agencies regard Roma. For example, a report including an analysis of the present state of Roma/Gypsies in Turkey was prepared by Ayşe Hoşgör Gündüz and sponsored by the Unicef Turkey in 2007. This study can also be assessed as an endeavour for meeting UN's MDG targets for Turkey's most vulnerable group – the Roma. The report has already been submitted to the State Planning Organization (DPT) in order to convince the Turkish State to sign the Declaration of the Decade of Roma Inclusion. The Turkish State has not signed the Declaration yet, as the report is still in process.

Subsequently, the Roma organization process in Turkey may lead crucial improvements in the disadvantaged situation of the overall Roma population in the future. Recently, the Roma Rights Movement is still so immature that there are many burdens to be overcome. Despite the positive impact of the EU and UN on the situation of Roma in Turkey through pushing the Turkish political agenda on Roma and the contributions of the mainstream NGOs and academics to the visibility of the deprivation faced by Roma, the Roma communities need more than these achievements as the web consisting their problems is a complicated one requiring more comprehensive solutions. As Gündüz Hoşgör identifies in her report that, based on the examples drawn from the international "best practices", a holistic development strategy is required for strengthening the Roma communities in all walks of life to implement which Roma Youth, particularly the ones with university education, can play an indispensable role (Gündüz Hoşgör, 2007: 88)

⁶ A Member of Parliament from Tekirdağ during the 18th and 22nd legislation periods of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey and a member of Republican People's Party (CHP).

CHAPTER V

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 The Objective of the Study

As it is mentioned, this thesis has two aims regarding the Roma university students: First, it attempts to discover the characteristics of their lifecourses in order to identify the success factors paving the way for their participation in higher education. Their appearance in higher education is noteworthy when the role that can be played by them in altering the stereotype of Roma people as uneducated and poor, is taken into consideration. Therefore, in Chapter VI, the family socio-economic status and demographic characteristics of the Roma university students will be given in order to obtain a complete picture of their conditions of life. Moreover, their relationships with their parents, brothers, sisters and the residents of their neighbourhoods will be touched upon in order to see whether they become agents of their own education or their families, kinship and neighbourhood networks provide them with positive role models inspiring them to pursue higher education.

Second, it aims to explore whether there are differences or not between the Roma university students participating actively in the Roma organization process and the ones not participating, in terms of their ethnic identity status. That is, the Roma university students participating actively in the Roma organization process whom I met during the implementation of the Unicef project, unlike their antecedents, have been putting an overemphasis on their desire for integration into the majority society as a Roma and don't want to hide their Romaniness anymore in order to achieve their education- and career-related goals due to the fear of being excluded by the majority society. Surprisingly, during the in-depth interviews with them, I realized that the way they interpreted their school experiences and future expectations is strongly affected by their ethnic identity status. Therefore, the ethnic identity formation, the

school experiences and future expectations of the interviewees will be given together in Chapter VII.

The research questions constructing the map of this study are as follows: What is their parents' socio-economic status? What are the main features of material conditions of their lives? Where do they live: in predominantly Roma neighbourhoods or non-Roma ones? How do they describe their relationships with their families; relatives; neighbours and friends? Is there a difference between the ones actively participating in the Roma organization process and the ones not involved in terms of their socio-economic environment and early childhood? Do they hide their ethnic identity among non-Roma people? What are the main characteristics of their educational process? What are their future expectations? What does education in general and higher-education in particular, mean to them: a tool to move upward and assimilate into the majority society, or to become a positive role model for the Roma children and youngsters in Turkey to show them how and why education pays off?

5.2 Research Sample

There were nine Roma university students in the sample of this study (The demographic profiles of the respondents are given in Table 5.2). Snowball sampling was used to select the interviewees. The first part of the interviews were conducted with four Roma university students in Ankara in April 2008 during the final meeting of the project, which was co-conducted by EDROM, ERRC (European Roma Rights Center) and the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly. The whole interviews lasted two days. One of the interviewees was from Edirne; one was from İzmir; one was from Diyarbakır and the last one was from Bartın. I had met three of them previously both in Ankara and then at the Roma Youth Meeting held in Bartın. Therefore, they did not have any difficulty during the interviews and helped me a lot to reach further interviewees.

In order to conduct the second part of the interviews, I had a trip to Edirne in May 2008. I stayed there for one and a half days and I interviewed five more youngsters there which lasted almost one day. The Roma Association in Edirne; i.e., EDROM in general and Remziye Umunç in particular, the only woman activist

participating in the activities of EDROM, helped me a lot to reach these five Roma youngsters. Indeed, Remziye Umunç functioned as a mediator and stayed with me until the end of the final interview. Moreover, in cases when we could not reach them via phone, she and her best friend Gamze, went to the neighbourhoods of the interviewees by foot; visited the students at their homes and told them to come over to EDROM. They did not refuse to come, because all of them were receiving scholarships from EDROM. However, I could not be able to reach these five interviewees without the support of EDROM and Remziye Umunç as it is almost impossible to identify Roma university students due to either hiding their ethnic identity or lack of acquaintances.

They were given nicknames to preserve their confidentiality. Four of them were female and the rest were male. The nine students were born after 1980. The youngest of them was 18 and the oldest of them was 26 years old. Three of them were students of faculty of economic and administrative sciences; one of them was about to register for a BSc degree in Romani Studies department at a Bulgarian University; and the rest of them were students of Trakya University Vocational School of Social Sciences. However, none of them have graduated yet, they are still participating in higher-education. As far as Roma ethnic background is concerned, there are three family types. First, three of them have Roma mothers; but non-Roma fathers, one of which is Arabic-origin, one is a Turk from Kayseri and the other one is a Kurd from Diyarbakır. Second, both parents of five of them are Roma; and the last interviewee's both parents are Dom.

The parents' educational level ranges from no education at all to uncompleted high school education. Three of them have parents with primary school education; two of them have mothers with an uncompleted primary school education and fathers with completed primary school education; one has a mother with an uncompleted primary school education and a father with an uncompleted high-school education; one has a mother with an uncompleted primary school education and a father with an uncompleted secondary school education; one has parents with an uncompleted primary school education; and lastly, one interviewee's parents have no education at all. As it can be seen, none of the parents are either secondary school, or high-school, or university graduates.

There are slight differences among the interviewees in terms of average monthly household income and parents' occupations. Eight of the students have an average monthly household income of lower than 500 YTL and even worse. Only two of them have a household income of approximately 1000 YTL per month as both of them have fathers with formal jobs. One of them is a retired miner; and the other one is a driver at the Municipality of Malkara and has his own land. However, seven of the interviewees have fathers with no formal jobs. Besides, they all have informal jobs with no social security like perfume salesman, and meatball seller. On the other hand, all the mothers are housewives and mother of one of them also works on his husband's farm as an unpaid family worker.

Furthermore, they are all home-owners, residing mostly in Roma neighbourhoods of the cities mentioned above. Moreover, four of them do not have health insurance; three of them have green cards and two of them, as they are female, benefit from their father's social security coverage for health care.

5.3 Research Approach and Data Collection Methods

The study adopted a qualitative approach as the method of inquiry to discover the main characteristics of the interviewees' lifecourses embedded in their autobiographical narratives. Therefore, the qualitative approach appears as the best choice for this study as its aim is to understand a particular situation, event, role, group or interaction (Locke, Spirduso, & Silverman, 2000). Moreover, Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln state that qualitative research is multimethod in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter meaning that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, 1998: 3). On the other hand, although John W. Creswell's definition for the qualitative approach depends less on sources of information, it bears similar ideas:

Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting (John W. Creswell, 1998: 15).

The data were collected through open-ended observation and in-depth interviews using two questionnaire forms one of which was semi-structured and the other one was unstructured. The former included both open-ended and close-ended questions and was used for obtaining data regarding the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the students, such as sex and monthly average household income; and the latter including only open-ended questions was used for learning as much as possible about the details and characteristics of their lifecourses. The in-depth interview was the best tool as it might lead to increased insight into students' thoughts, feelings and behaviour. They were asked to describe their family background, their childhood, their education from primary school to university, their relations with their sisters and brothers, the people of their neighborhoods and friends all of which had important impacts on their ethnic identity formation, either in a negative or a positive way. Beyond all these concerns, the basic point was what was it like to be a better-off Roma for them when compared with the stereotype of Roma people being poor and uneducated.

All the interviews were recorded, then transcribed in order to identify the common patterns and themes emerging from the lifecourses of the interviewees. During the analysis process, the following procedures were applied in line with the stages described by Creswell (Creswell, 2003: 192). First, all the transcriptions were read carefully. Then, the shortest one was examined in detail in order to have an initial insight into the embedded themes and categories in relation to the research problems. This one was followed by the others in order to expose the common categories. After obtaining a number of themes and codes; the relevant parts of each of the interview texts were placed under the assigned categories. The number of categories were reduced through grouping the ones relating to each other. Then these sub-categories or sub-themes were placed under main categories. Lastly, the findings were analyzed and interpreted within the framework of the research problems. The main categories and accompanying sub-categories obtained from the analysis of the in-depth interviews can be listed as follows:

The first analysis chapter was named as "Socio-economic environment and early childhood years." This chapter included two main categories; the family socio-economic status and demographic characteristics; and early childhood years. The latter was consisted of five sub-themes: Relations with the parents; with the brothers

and sisters; neighbourhood socio-economic status; relations with the neighbours and lastly, serious problems of the neighbourhoods. The second analysis chapter was named as “Ethnic identity formation and educational process.” It included three main categories: ethnic identity development; on the path to higher-education and future expectations. The first theme was consisted of two sub-themes: foreclosed identity status group and that of the achieved identity status. Followingly, the second one was made up of three sub-themes: family support; schools, teachers and discrimination; and the teacher: an agency for social inclusion or exclusion.

Growing out of the nature of the qualitative research, reliability and generalizability play a minor role in it. On the other hand, validity, is regarded as a strength of qualitative research where “trustworthiness”, “authenticity” and “credibility” are used to refer to the accuracy of findings instead of the term validity (Ibid, pp. 195). In order to ensure validity and reliability, the following strategies were employed: First, clarification of researcher bias; at the next section, the researcher’s role would be exposed. Second, peer examination; the accuracy of the findings and the content of the data analysis were also examined by the thesis supervisor. Third, presentation of negative and discrepant information; as real life is composed of conflicting and contradictionary perspectives, contrary information were also discussed to provide a clear and accurate picture growing out of the respondents’ attitudes, ideas and feelings in relation to the research problems (Ibid, pp. 204).

5.4 Difficulties and Deficiencies of the Research

I had met three of the respondents prior to the interview process while assisting to my thesis supervisor, Ayşe Gündüz Hoşgör, at the UNICEF’s project about the Roma people living in Turkey. My first meeting with two of them in Ankara in spring 2007 - with the third one I met later at the Roma Youth Meeting held in Bartın in 2007 - was an excited experience for me. Being a Gypsy or being a nomad, in other words belonging to nowhere, but long routes has been one of my imaginary selves to escape from the burdens of my middle-class life since I saw Emir Kusturica’s groundbreaking masterpiece, “Time of the Gypsies.”

When I met them, they were having a meeting with the other representatives of the Roma-led advocacy associations. They invited me to have a lunch with them. I was the only non-Roma at that table. I was expecting to hear interesting and extraordinary experiences of nomadic lives; however, they were talking about familiar issues like raising awareness among Roma about their rights, importance of education and elimination of poverty. Moreover, I came to realize that they were all settled. Then, I attended the Roma Youth Meeting held in Bartın in order to observe and learn more about the recent situation of the Roma youth in Turkey. There I met a variety of Roma youngsters having different socio-economic characteristics: the ones participating in higher education; the ones suffering from severe poverty and social exclusion; the ones having a relatively higher standards of living, but complaining about the stigma of inferiority they thought which would never change; and the ones, whether participating in higher education or not, putting a special emphasis on the structural inequalities as the reason for the deprivations they had been facing.

Then I returned back to Ankara and prepared my research questions based upon my observations and insights I obtained during that meeting. In April 2008, I had my first interviews with four of the Roma university students during the final meeting of the project co-conducted by EDROM, HYD and ERRC in Ankara. As I had met three of them previously, I did not experience any difficulty in the interviews of these respondents participating in the Roma organization process. They openheartedly told their stories and responded to my questions. Then, to complete the rest of the interviews, I contacted Remziye Umunç and she accepted to help me to reach the others in Edirne. Therefore, I had a trip to Edirne in May 2008 and stayed there for one and a half days. Remziye helped me a lot, even she and her best friend Gamze stayed with me until the end of the last interview. We could reach them, because all were scholarship holding members of EDROM.

All the interviews were conducted at the office of EDROM. These youngsters, whom were students of Trakya University and not participating in the Roma organization process met me for the first time in their lives. Owing to that, I encountered a number of difficulties in terms of the preservation of their confidentiality in relation to their ethnic identity and their real opinions and feelings about the circumstances of their lives. Particularly, the male respondents hesitated to detail the negative aspects of their lives to an unfamiliar woman. A number of them

frequently asked me what I was going to do with those data. They were so uncomfortable with their ethnic identity that they repeatedly told me: 'I am a Roma and I am not ashamed of being a Roma, but you know I have a future, I want to have a job and graduate from university without having any problem. That is why I am asking you what and where you will use these data and whether you will explain my real name...' I frequently told them that I would use nicknames and try to do my best to preserve their confidentiality.

Moreover, while talking about their childhood and mentioning the issues of poverty, domestic violence or other kinds of deprivations, especially the male respondents, preferred to preserve their silence. They provided me only with short-cut answers to feel confident enough in their masculinity. However, the female respondents, after getting used to me and coming to realize that I was not there to judge them, but to understand them, openheartedly responded to each of the questions as much as they could. Both male and female interviewees, from time to time, depending on the vulnerability of the question or situation, had the tendency for hiding their real opinions and feelings about the issues of poverty; ethnic identity; their relations with their parents, relatives or neighbours; or the political issues and expressed contradictory statements and attitudes regarding these to protect their dignity and secure themselves. However, I took observation notes on these situations based on their facial expressions contradicting with their verbal expressions and previous statements.

Furthermore, as they were scholarship holding members of EDROM and that is how I met them; they could not explain their feelings further enough about their ethnic identity; attitudes towards their ethnic community; and thoughts about the Roma organization process and the Roma-led advocacy associations involved in this process due to not being excluded by the people of their own ethnic community and keeping on holding scholarship. However, they tried to do their best to inform me about their opinions and feelings as much as possible through either making general comments or talking silently.

At the beginning I was a non-Roma achieved better than them in terms of educational attainment and career-related goals; however, during the interview process, I came to realize that, despite the varying extent, we were suffering from the same burdens growing out of living in a class society: the responsibility for achieving

better in terms of educational attainment, occupational prestige and standards of living than the previous generations, particularly our parents. Especially, gender appeared as the highest common denominator connecting my life with those of the female respondents. In addition to the obligation for achieving better educational attainment and occupational prestige to have better standards of living in a class society and to make our parents proud of us regardless of our gender; the female interviewees mentioned further expectations in relation to higher-education different from those of the male ones, which were strongly related with being a woman in a patriarchal society. They would like to have a secure job not to be dependent on their future husbands and to provide their children with better standards of living and future prospects unlike their coevals or mothers who got married early and have been suffering from lack of freedom and autonomy due to being dependent on their husbands, and therefore could not offer enough opportunities for their children to break the cycle of poverty and exclusion which is common for all women regardless of their class position or ethnic identity.

Therefore, based on the points mentioned above, the following considerations expressed as deficiencies of this study can function as implications for further study:

First, the four out of nine respondents were from Edirne; one was from Tekirdağ/Malkara; one was from Kırklareli; one was from Bartın; one was from Diyarbakır and the last one was from İzmir. As the way they interpret their ethnic community in particular and the problems faced by the Roma people in general are closely related with the possible diversities in their lifecourse patterns growing out of their provincial differences; the sample of this study was consisted of only six cities and two Gypsy groups: Dom and Rom. However there is no Lom (the third Gypsy group in Turkey living mainly in Black Sea Region) included in this study. If I could have reached the other Roma university students from other cities, for example, from Artvin and Samsun, I would have been able to expose further regional/provincial differences in terms of the points mentioned in relation to the aims of this study.

Second, all the respondents included in this study can be regarded as first generation Roma intellectuals. Although there are other Roma people with university education and with higher-status occupations in Turkey, they cannot be identified due to hiding their ethnic identity. For this reason, I could not have been able to

include the children of these people in this study as the representatives of second generation Roma intellectuals. If it could have been possible, then the study would be able to expose more diversities in terms of the lifecourses and ethnic identity formation patterns of the Roma university students in Turkey.

Third, most of the respondents included in this study have relatively better standards of living than those of the Roma youngsters living under worse conditions in least desirable dwelling units of various cities. Those youngsters also can be included in a further study in order to have a better and comprehensive understanding of socio-economic and cultural patterns of Roma communities suffering, respectively, more from poverty and social exclusion.

Lastly, three of the respondents have a mixed ethnic background (see Table 5.2); however, as the quantity was small, I could not make an accurate interpretation and comparison in terms of its effects on their ethnic identity formation. In a further study, that can be primarily focused through selecting enough number of respondents whose both parents are Roma, and who have a mixed ethnic background.

Table 5.2 The Demographic Profile of the Roma University Students

Name ⁷	Sex	Age	Marital Status	Place of Birth	Ethnic Bckgrnd	Educational Attainment	Neigh-brhd.	Average Monthly Household Income	Home-Ownership	Social Assurance
1. Mehmet	M	26	Single	Bartın	M&F*: Roma	Gazi Un. Senior Class	Bartın / Aladağ	950 YTL.	Home-Owner	NA
2. Halil	M	20	Single	Edirne	M&F: Roma	Trakya Un. Senior Class	Edirne / Küçük-pazar	600 YTL.	Home-Owner	NA
3. Serkan	M	23	Married	Diyarbakır	M&F: Dom	Open Un. 1st grade	Diyarbakır / Yeniköy	100 – 500 YTL.	Home - Owner	Green Card
4. Ali	M	22	Single	İzmir	M:Roma & F:Arabic Origin	Celal Bayar Un. 3rd grade	İzmir / Gediz	600 – 700 YTL	Home - Owner	NA
5. Cem	M	20	Single	İstanbul	M&F: Roma	Trakya Un. Senior Class	Kırklareli / Akalar	350 YTL.	Grand father's house	Green Card
6. Nilgün	F	20	Single	Malkara /Tekirdağ	M&F: Roma	Trakya Un. Senior Class	Malkara / Hacıevhat	1000 YTL	Home - Owner	SSK

⁷ All are pseudonyms.

Table 5.2 (continued)

7. Şebnem	F	18	Single	Edirne	M:Roma & F:Kurd	Trakya Un. 1st grade	Edirne / Gazi-mihal	200 – 300 YTL.	Home-Owner	NA
8. Filiz	F	20	Single	Edirne	M&F: Roma	Waiting for registering to “Romani Studies” department of a Bulgarian UN.	Edirne / Yıldırım Beyazıt	500 YTL.	Home-Owner	Green Card
9. Meltem	F	20	Single	Edirne	M:Roma & F:Türk	Trakya Un. Senior Class	Edirne / Gazi-mihal	400 – 450 YTL.	Home-Owner	SSK

*M: Mother / F: Father.

CHAPTER VI

SOCIO-ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT AND EARLY CHILDHOOD YEARS

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the family socio-economic status and demographic characteristics of the Roma university students will be given in order to obtain a complete picture of their conditions of life. Moreover, their relationships with their parents, brothers, sisters and the residents of their neighbourhoods will be touched upon in order to see whether they become agents of their own education or their families, kinship and neighbourhood networks provide them with positive role models inspiring them to pursue higher education.

6.2 Family Socio-Economic Status and Demographic Characteristics

In this section, the family socio-economic status and demographic characteristics of the respondents will be given through the data regarding average household income; home-ownership; parents' occupation and education level; access to social security and health care; expenditure and saving patterns.

Table 6.2: Family Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Roma University Students

	Education Level		Occupation	
	Father	Mother	Father	Mother
1. Mehmet	Drop out of high-school / 2nd grade	Primary School	Retired miner	Housewife
2. Halil	Primary School	Primary School	Self-employed/Own a mobile meatball car	Housewife
3. Serkan	Non-educated / Illiterate	Non-educated / Illiterate	Musician	Housewife

Table 6.2 (continued):

4. Ali	Drop out of primary school / Literate	Drop-out of primary school / Literate	Self-employed/ running a coffee house	Housewife
5. Cem	Primary School	Drop-out of primary school / 3rd grade / Poor writing and reading skills	Former-drum player / Currently, perfume salesman	Housewife
6. Nilgün	Primary School	Drop-out of primary school / Literate	Municipality Driver / Farmer	Housewife / Farmer
7. Şebnem	Primary School	Primary School	Self-employed housepainter	Housewife
8. Filiz	Primary School	Primary School	Irregular jobs like building cleaning	Former cleaning lady/Currently, housewife
9. Meltem	Drop out of secondary school	Drop out of primary school / 3rd grade	Self-employed taxi driver	Housewife

Eight out of nine students consider themselves as members of the middle-class; only Serkan (Diyarbakır) evaluates himself and his family as members of the lower-class. Except for Mehmet (Bartın) and Nilgün (Malkara), where the former's father is a retired mine labourer and the latter's father is a driver at the municipality and has his own farm; the others' fathers are either involved in informal jobs with no social security such as meatball seller and perfume salesman or are self-employed like being a house-painter. Among the ones involved in informal jobs, just the father of Meltem (Edirne) who is a house-painter has social security which has been possessed just recently. Their mothers are all housewives; and Nilgün's mother (Malkara) also works on his husband's farm. Moreover, Filiz (Edirne) is the main breadwinner in her house as her father is death, her elder sister is unemployed and her mother cannot keep on working as a cleaning lady. Serkan (Diyarbakır) is also one of the breadwinners in his house as he works with his father as musicians. Most of them have parents with primary school education and are literate. However, Serkan's parents (Diyarbakır) are uneducated and illiterate. Moreover, Mehmet's father, as an exceptional case, is a secondary school graduate, but dropped out of high school in second grade.

Moreover, four of them do not have any health insurance; three of them have green cards and two of them, as they are female, benefit from their father's social security coverage for health care. On the other hand, all of them are home-owners, they all live in low quality houses located in the predominantly Roma neighbourhoods of the cities they live in.

The average household income of all varies between 100 YTL and 600 YTL per month, again except for Mehmet (Bartın) and Nilgün (Malkara). Unlike the others, these two students have a regular household income of approximately 1000 YTL per month, as their fathers are blue-collar workers. However, according to the ones belonging to the former income group, having a house is the reason leading them to label themselves as middle-class, except for Serkan (Diyarbakır).

Although Serkan (Diyarbakır) is a home-owner and has an average household income varying between 100 YTL and 500 YTL per month depending on the number of weddings he participates with his father as musicians, he labels himself as a member of lower-class, even as desperately poor. This is not just because they live in Diyarbakır which is one of the poorest provinces of Turkey, and in Bağlar, one of the poorest districts of Diyarbakır, but also he is the one experiencing the severest poverty and deprivation all through his life among the nine students:

“I was five years old, my father accused of killing someone due to blood feud. So, I and my parents, we had lived in the mountains for five-six years. Like nomads, we lived in the Karacadag mountains. We used to be fugitives. Then my father was arrested, my mother and I, we stayed behind. We used to stay at my grandmother's house, we also had a house. We had always changed our place of residence until my father went behind bars. We could not be able to live a secure and a stable life, because the police were after us. My mother's mother and my father's mother, they were helping us. My mother wasn't working. Really, we went through very hard times, we even didn't have the money to buy bread. We have suffered a lot, we still do...”

On the other hand, labelling themselves as members of middle-class does not mean that they have not had any economic difficulties up to now. Indeed, except for Mehmet (Bartın), the rest of them frequently mention the economic difficulties they

have been facing since their childhood; but they consider this situation as something temporary, not permanent, which can be overcome through family solidarity. For example, Ali (İzmir) expresses his faith in family solidarity for overcoming the emerging economic difficulties:

“Even if we have economic difficulties in the family, our points of view are so similar that even when facing severe problems, we know how to stand shoulder to shoulder to overcome all the possible troubles together...”

On the other hand, a number of them compare their present economic situation with that of past, and claim that the past situation was better than that of present due to the extended-family income pooling. For example, Halil (Edirne) says:

“Our economic situation was better than today in the past. Thank God, we earn enough to maintain our living, but it used to be so much better. My father has got five brothers, and they used to pool their income. Although everyone used to possess his own money, the expenditures used to be common. For example, when my grandmother was ill, they all met her health expenditures together. But when she died, everyone crept into his own house. Everyone began to spend his own income and cook his own meal...”

Like Halil (Edirne), Nilgün (Malkara) mentions the extended family income pooling as a positive factor; however when her grandfather became ill, they began to face economic problems as none of the family members had social security:

“When I was a child, I had responsibilities and we had economic difficulties. We used to live with my grandparents, when my grandfather became ill, he was treated at the university hospital. I was eight years old and we were doing well financially. But when he became ill, we sold our farm and farm animals to pay the debts made for meeting my grandfather’s health expenses. Although we experienced hard times, now we are doing better. Of course, my educational expenses and those of my brother’s cost too much.”

Moreover, especially two of the female interviewees, i.e., Şebnem (Edirne) and Filiz (Edirne), although they label themselves as middle-class, when they are asked for describing their childhood, they tell stories of poverty and deprivation. For example, Şebnem's father (Edirne) is in jail now, due to smuggling activities and now just her younger brother, who is a fifth grade primary school student, works at a coffee-house to earn their living. Also, her grandmother gives them 100 YTL every three months from her widow's pension:

“We had economic difficulties when I was a child. And I always stood aside and thought about our future as we did not have money. For example, when I went to school, everyone could buy and eat something, but I was just looking at them as I could not buy anything to eat... My grandmother, for example, she is not rich, she is a poor person, but she is very generous. She gives us 100 YTL for every three months from her widow's pension...”

In addition to her, Filiz (Edirne) remembers the second-hand clothes she used to wear during the religious festivals given by the women whose houses were cleaned up by her mother:

“I cannot say that I had a happy childhood, I used to wear the second-hand clothes given to my mother by the women whose houses were being cleaned up by my mother. I always wore somebody else's clothes during the religious festivals, for example. I used to ask them when they would buy me new clothes, when we would go for shopping. All these problems made me more decisive in overcoming the difficulties by myself and providing my family with what they could not achieve...”

Six of them have their own rooms in their houses where they can study and stay alone without interruption. However, three of them do not have rooms even their own beds or wardrobes into which they can put their clothes or closets into which they can put their personal belongings. Moreover, two of them have inconvenient housing conditions where there are no separate toilets and bathrooms. They are either at outside of the house or if the toilet is at outside the house, the bathroom is located within the kitchen. Moreover, five of them have first-hand furnitures in their houses.

The rest of them have both first-hand and second-hand furnitures in their houses. All of them have television sets. Eight of them have washing machines in their houses except for one interviewee. Moreover, none of them have dish washers in their houses.

The parents of eight of them cannot make any savings due to either the school expenses of their children, this case is only one, or having irregular income. Most of the time, they spend what they earn on food and bills. Only the parents of the one respondent, who can make savings in terms of gold, do it in order to give either to their daughters or future daughters-in-law when their daughters or sons get married.

Although most of them consider themselves as members of middle-class, they have low and irregular household income as their fathers predominantly involved in informal jobs with no social security. As the household income is mostly spent on food and bills, they cannot save money. Home-ownership is an important factor for them to label themselves as middle-class. While making such an evaluation, they compare themselves not with the better-off members of the majority society; but with the other Roma people who have a lower standard of living than them. This can be associated with their living in predominantly Roma neighbourhoods; i.e., in closed Roma communities with little socio-cultural exchange with outside of their own neighbourhoods. Most of them have their own rooms in their houses which indicates that their education is encouraged by their families through providing them with a convenient environment for studying their lessons.

Even though most of them face poverty, they do not see it as a permanent situation. A number of points they have mentioned can be regarded as significant strategies to combat poverty. First, even the ones that have grown up in nuclear families can survive through family solidarity. Second, as most of them have grown up in extended families, they put a special emphasis on the social and economic support provided by the members of their extended families. However, most of them, recently, turned into nuclear families due to the death of the grandparents which led a decrease in the average household income due to disappearance of extended family income pooling. Last, use of second-hand clothes and furnitures also can be defined as a poverty strategy.

6.3 Early Childhood Years

Under this section, their relationships with their parents, brothers, sisters and the residents of their neighbourhoods in relation to their early childhood years will be given. As all of them have grown up in predominantly Roma neighbourhoods in closed communities with little socio-cultural exchange with outside of their own neighbourhoods, except for musicians or other craftsmen, the neighbourhood socio-economic environment and the relationship with the Roma communities of these neighbourhoods have an important impact on their ideas of what they want to become in the future. As it is also stated in Unicef's recent report, "*Breaking the Cycle of Exclusion*" that the experience and development of the Roma children during their early childhood years have an important impact on their chances of success when they reach school age as that is the time to lay a solid ground on which the child can gradually build the capacities required to break out from the intergenerational cycle of poverty (UNICEF, 2007: 36).

6.3.1 Relations with the Parents

Four out of nine students recall their childhood as happy despite the economic difficulties and arguments took place between their parents. As most of them didn't experience any psychological and social deprivation during their early childhood, they say they could manage to overcome the possible economic difficulties and small arguments emerging from time to time. For example, even if Ali (İzmir) describes his childhood not as a prolonged one during when he had to take care of both himself and his younger sister due to his mother's illness, he says if he had a chance he wanted to return back to his childhood:

"My relationship with my parents is very good. My mother was born in 1970 and I was born in 1986; she married at an early age, so we have a friendly relationship. Whenever I have a problem, I can tell her without any hesitation. Whenever we need to make a decision about any kind of problem, we try to give a common decision and my dad respects our opinions. My father also was born in

1966, so I can say that we have grown up together. I used to have a happy childhood and raised up in a happy family. If it were possible, I wanted to return back to my childhood. Even if we have economic difficulties, we can overcome it through mutual help and solidarity.”

Moreover, Mehmet (Bartın) recalls his neighbourhood, where he has been living since he was born, and the members of his extended family, when he is asked about his childhood and his relations with his parents. While describing these early years of his life, he tells about his grandmother who was a sieve-maker and how they were living in a closed-community away from the developments took place in downtown Bartın:

“I recall my neighborhood at first. My grandparents were living there, there used to be just a number of houses, there used to be very few people. At most, there were 5 or 6 houses. Our neighborhood was surrounded by forest. My father was working and my grandmother was a sieve-maker. She was making really good money through selling the sieves she made. We used to be an extended family, my grandfather was a retired mine labourer, he retired from Amasra Coal Mine. I remember we, the whole family, used to go to various villages of Bartın to sell the sieves that my grandmother had made. We used to pitch tents. We were accompanied by the other people dealing with sieve-making, approximately 10-15 persons. Seven or eight tents were pitched. We used to sell sieves and shakers to the villagers in return for wheat, boiled and pounded wheat or corn, not money. We were wealthy, but our house was in a very bad condition as it was made of wood. When the others in the neighborhood began to build new houses, that attracted my attention so much, and my family began to think why we were still living in such bad conditions, although we had money. It was because they hadn't seen such a thing and felt such a need for renewing their house as they were living only in Aladağ neighborhood, they were not going downtown. They decided to demolish the house completely and rebuilt it. Thus, we stayed in a tent for a while. Moreover, do you know leather shoe? I wore my first pair of leather shoes when I began to school. Until that day, I was wearing plastic shoes. I knew that we had money, they were buying meat, we never had difficulty affording food. My grandmother and my father

were earning money and my grandfather had employee pension, but we still had such a kind of problem: always the same things, always plastic shoes, the same old house and the same plates...”

On the other hand, three out of nine interviewees do not want to detail both their relationship with their parents and the relationship between their parents. Although they give implicit clues about serious family problems, they find giving short answers enough for the relevant questions. Actually, they have a parental-like attitude toward their parents. They try to understand before judging them. One of them, Halil (Edirne) for example, has divorced parents and has been living with his father since they got divorced. When he is asked about the date of their divorce, he answers: *“It’s been a long time ago, I was about 14-15 years old or maybe younger than, I really cannot remember.”* He adds that their divorce has not affected him in a negative way as what he really cares about is himself, his future. Moreover, he prefers more talking about his extended family rather than his own parents: *“ My extended family’s house was very crowded. The house used to be not divided. Although everyone used to have his/her own room such as those of my uncles, grandparents and my parents, we used to live together in one house. The house was crowded, the street was crowded....”*

Moreover, Şebnem (Edirne) and Cem (Kırklareli) mention their fathers’ jealous attitudes towards their mothers which from time to time has been leading serious arguments between their parents, even physical violence. According to Cem (Kırklareli) they become matured as he and his sister have grown up:

“The relationship between my parents is very good. I guess, they become matured as my sister and I have grown up. When we were small, they were arguing. However, after we become grown ups, they begin to understand everything. My father is a jealous person, he is still very jealous of my mother; although my mother is 42, and my father, I guess, 50 years old now. It has been all about jealousy, how may I know, for example, while my father was talking, she was interrupting him and my father was getting angry. That was why they were arguing.

My father is not a brutal person, he behaves depending on the situation. He can't hurt either my mother or my sister or me."

In addition to Cem (Kırklareli), Şebnem (Edirne) says that she has a good relationship with her parents. When she is asked about the occurrence of physical violence during the arguments of her parents, first she wants to deny, but followingly she accepts: *"No, not that much. There used to be physical violence, but whenever it occurred, just after one day everything was forgotten."* However, while we were interviewing, Şebnem's mother came in the room, as she wondered her daughter. She was also included in our interview and talked about her early marriage, her husband's jealousy and her regret being uneducated:

"I am, for example, always at home and taking care of my children; but if I had been educated, I would be in a different place right now or if I had been working, my children would be in a better situation now. I have suffered a lot due to being uneducated. My husband is from Diyarbakır, I suffered a lot from his jealousy. I married at a very early age, when I was 15. People used to be more ignorant in the past, that was why they used to marry at early ages. Moreover, we used to be poorer and we could not do whatever we wanted, we were not free, so we thought of marriage something as a haven where we could have more freedom and comfort. I have suffered a lot from economic difficulties since I got married, but thank god, we can still survive..."

Unlike the seven out of nine interviewees, the rest of them, Serkan (Diyarbakır) and Filiz (Edirne) recall their childhood as mostly unhappy due to poverty and serious family problems which led them to experience psychological and social deprivation. Indeed, Serkan (Diyarbakır) seems to be suffering more than Filiz (Edirne) regarding their relationship with their parents and severe poverty of their early childhood years. Serkan (Diyarbakır) is the only child of his parents; he has got step sisters and brothers. Serkan's father has two common-law wives; however he has been living with his second wife; i.e., with Serkan's mother. He neither lives with his first wife nor takes care of her and his children from her. As it is mentioned above, while Serkan was a child, his father went behind bars due to bloodfeud.

Before he was arrested by the police, they had lived in the Karacadag mountains not to be arrested. When he was arrested, they began to live in their house in Bağlar neighbourhood and his grandparents took care of him and his mother. He suffered not just from economic difficulties, but also from the absence of his father, a father whom he could only see during the permitted visiting days:

“It was really hard for me. You have a father and you see them just on visiting days. Those days I didn’t want to go there to see him. I recall the prison guards picking me up from the dining table. It was an open prison where the prisoners could cook their own meals, and one day while I was eating my meal cooked by my father for me, one of the prison guards pulled out my arm and told me to leave the dining table. Of course, my dad later finished him off. I was the only one eating as my dad cooked it just for me. We had gone through very hard times really, we experienced days when we didn’t have money even for buying bread.”

After his father came out of prison, he began to school when he was 8-9 years old. His father is a well-known horn player in Diyarbakır, so when he became 12 years old, he began to accompany his father in the weddings through playing drum to earn their living. However, with the introduction of electronic instruments, the number of weddings they participate as musicians begins to decrease. Consequently, they have been suffering from irregular and low wages they earn as it depends on the number of weddings they are invited as musicians. Also, they do not want to deal with another job, as they see it as a status loss. So, according to Serkan, the quality of both his relationship with his parents and their relationship with each other is closely related with poverty:

“The relationship between my mother and my father is sometimes good, sometimes bad. Of course, when they don’t have money, they are going through economic crisis, everything becomes unpredictable during times of economic crisis, everyone tries to do something independently. If you do not have money, what are you going to do? You will certainly have an argument with anyone, so they generally argue with each other. Really, sometimes money means happiness.”

Serkan's situation is also more complicated than those of the others, as he has two common-law wives which is prevalent in Diyarbakır. His first wife is his aunt's daughter. When they were small, their parents promised to each other to marry them when they became old enough to get married. So, when he was a 14-15 year old secondary school student, they got married. However, they could not get in with each other and his wife ran away to go to her own family's house. This situation took place for several times and at the end they broke up. Serkan continues his life, his education, but his wife is still regarded as his first wife, although it is a common-law marriage. She is not allowed to get marry with somebody else, she cannot leave his father's house for whatever the reason is as they live in Diyarbakır which is one of the provinces of Turkey where patriarchal system is so prevalent and strong that there is almost no room for the emancipation and empowerment of women. Well, after he broke up with his first wife, Serkan got married again when he was a second grade high school student, approximately four or five years after his first marriage. Her wife ran away from her family's house to marry him. Her mother did not allow her to marry him. Her wife is also a Dom from Gaziantep and they met when his wife came to Diyarbakır for a seasonal work as her family members are seasonal workers. Now, they have three children, two sons and a daughter. They live in the same house with Serkan's parents, in other words, they are an extended family. However, they have been facing severe poverty and social exclusion which makes Serkan feel so vulnerable against life:

“ We earn our living through playing drum and horn at the weddings, but now the electronic instruments have brought an end to our job. They prevent us from earning our bread money. The drum and horn business is over in our city. When we don't have money to buy food, we borrow from the markets. We buy the food, but we pay for it whenever we have money. They trust us. Recently, we cannot pay our electricity bills, we have to steal it. Moreover, just my father and I have green cards, when the others become ill, we borrow the green cards of one of the women living in our neighborhood. Most of the time, we try to get well at home, we believe in Allah, if Allah wants it can heal us. But if I don't consider the state of my children, I can think of other ways of earning a living like thievery.”

On the other hand, Filiz (Edirne) was born in Edirne as the last child of an immigrant family who had lived in Germany for a long period of time. His father, prior to his marriage, immigrated to Germany in search of an improved standard of living during the 1970s. After her mother and father got married, her mother also went to Germany. His father could only buy the house now they are living in with the savings he made while he was working in Germany. After the birth of her three elder brothers and an elder sister, her grandmother on her father's side died in Edirne. After his mother's death, his father had a nervous breakdown which lasted for a long period of time. He began to beat his wife. Then Filiz's mother could not stand his husband's violent attitudes against her and returned back to Turkey. Following her, also his husband returned back to Turkey. They did not divorce, but lived at different houses for seven years. His father withdrew all his money collected in his social security fund and spent all of it. His mother and father got together at the end of those seven years and her mother became pregnant with Filiz. His father died four years ago due to a heart attack. When she recalls her childhood, she recalls his father's repetitious nervous breakdowns during which her mother was being beaten by his father; the second-hand clothes she wore; the poverty trap they were stuck in and the deep unhappiness she felt:

“ I can't say that I used to have a relationship with my parents, I mean, I was not like the other guys who could talk to their parents. I could not say everything on my mind or want anything I wished to have. I knew that they could not be able to afford them and their heart would be broken. I used to be very shy. But now, especially since I began to work in the Roma association, I can talk to my mom about whatever I want without hesitation. However, previously I could not talk especially with my father. He was very nervous. I could say nothing to him. If he hadn't died, I would not be working in the Roma association today, he would not let me, because he was very jealous. For example, when I began to work, I attended to a dinner organized by the association. The dinner ended at twelve o'clock at night. So, I arrived home late. My family, my father was death, got angry with me and they told me to leave the job. I am also very stubborn and determinant. If I decide to do something, I achieve it. I managed to persuade them and returned back to my job. Now, they trust me so much and never judge me. For example, I may be away from

home for one month, but they don't even ask me what I have done. When my father was alive, we all had to obey what he said, but now we decide together. My mother used to work as a housekeeper. My father used to have repetitious nervous breakdowns and he was beating her from time to time which made me feel upside down. I mean we didn't love my father. It was unique to our family, was not common in our neighborhood. Prior to my birth, she had been beaten by him more frequently. That was why whenever our neighbours saw me, they told me about my father's misbehaviour against my mother and due to that I didn't love my father. I could not say that I had a happy childhood. I used to wear the second-hand clothes given by the women whose houses were being cleaned by my mother..."

Although most of them show a strong attachment to their parents, this does not mean that they lived a happy childhood without witnessing domestic violence. It is obvious that most of them have grown up in traditional patriarchal families providing them with macho father figures treating badly to their wives due to jealousy, and submissive mothers who are subject to even physical violence by their husbands. The practice of early marriage through running away is prevalent among their parents. The marriage type and practice of the parents varies depending on the marriage patterns practised by the majority society by whom they are surrounded by. For example, while both Serkan (Diyarbakır) and his father are polygamists due to the prevalence of polygamy in southeastern Turkey, the others' parents have a monogamous marriage.

Moreover, due to the early marriages of their parents, they are treated as small adults by their parents. They both have a friendly like relationship with their parents and are expected to feel responsibility for their families very early. They either help their fathers with maintaining their living or their mothers with the domestic chores. Despite an early sense of responsibility, poverty and occurrence of domestic violence within culturally accepted limits, they recall their childhood as happy. However, the ones experiencing severe family problems like witnessing frequent and severe occurrence of domestic violence or having an absentee father who is in jail, can feel themselves deprived, underprivileged or unloved, and when these negative feelings are associated with poverty, material deprivation, they are more likely to suffer severe early childhood deprivation which may have a negative impact on their future.

In addition to that, disappearance of the social support provided by the extended family and declining popularity of traditional crafts and skills provided by the Roma communities due to technological improvements and globalization are among the leading factors causing an increase in the level of poverty experienced by them.

6.3.2 Relations with the Brothers and Sisters

Except for Serkan (Diyarbakır) who has got step sisters and brothers older than him, the others have at least one sister or a brother. They all have good relations with their brothers and sisters. Except for Nilgün's (Malkara) younger brother who is a student of the Anatolian Teacher Training High School and is expected to attain also higher education, the others' sisters and brothers' are either primary school and secondary school graduates or primary school and secondary school drop-outs. The reasons for incomplete education varies depending on the individual desire for education and gender. Mostly, the families are more likely to encourage the education of their boys than that of their girls. For example, elder sisters of Halil (Edirne) and Meltem (Edirne) could not complete their education due to gendered prejudices levelled against the educated girls. The eldest sister of Halil, whom he defines as distinctively different in comparison to the other Roma girls preferring marriage rather than education, cannot complete her education due to gendered prejudices supported by the negative role models:

“My elder sister has always had a strong desire for education, but my parents didn't allow her to complete her education because of being a girl-child. I mean, at the beginning, they supported her education as she was a very hard-working student. But when she was in secondary school, a friend of her from the neighborhood, who was two years older than her, ran away with a boy to marry when she was a first grade high school student, during the first week of the school. So, the elder people in the neighborhood told my parents not to let my sister attain high school. They claimed that if she was allowed, she would also find a boyfriend and ran away to marry. So she couldn't continue her education after graduated from primary school. On the other hand, the other elder sister of mine is a secondary school graduate as

she didn't want to continue her education and got married when she was 21 years old. However, my eldest sister, a distinctively different person whom I can't even compare with the others, just recently got married. She is against early marriage and is informed about everything."

Like Halil's sister, Meltem's elder sister also could not complete her education, but this time due to her own brother's negative behaviour:

"My eldest brother was going to school, he even won the entrance examination of the Police Training School; however, he dropped out of school due to his love affairs. Then he didn't let my elder sister complete her education, because he thought that she might also find a boyfriend and leave the school like he did. She graduated from the secondary school and didn't go to the high school. She always gets angry with them and asks them why they didn't let her complete her education. So, I am the one now who has to complete the higher education."

Moreover, unlike the sisters of Halil (Edirne) and Meltem (Edirne), Mehmet's (Bartın) sisters did not complete their education due to personal reasons. One of them left the school after graduated from the secondary school as she did not want to go on. On the other hand, the other one left the school when she was a second grade secondary school student, because her boyfriend whom she got married later, did not want her to complete her education due to gendered prejudices:

"My younger brother left school when he was a first grade super high school student. He was the only Roma student in that school. An argument took place in the school and he was accused of initiating it, so the school director humiliated him in front of everyone, he called him as "Animal man, get out of school!". So, he dropped out of school, he didn't want to go back again. On the other hand, my sister, she left school because of her former boyfriend, now who is her husband. There is such a common gendered prejudice in our neighborhood, I mean in Aladağ: 'If a girl goes to school, she becomes a bitch.' The education of the girls is not something good, it is not supported."

In addition to the stories mentioned below, there are also cases where both brothers and sisters either are unwilling to complete their education or cannot go on any further beyond primary school or secondary school due to financial difficulties. In such cases, mostly the ones having the desire, but lacking the means for completing their education support their brothers and sisters to achieve what they could not have done either through providing financial support or helping them with their lessons as much as possible. For example, the elder sister of Filiz (Edirne) supported her to attend high school through working in the textile factory. She both met her school expenses and maintained the living of her family.

Most of them have families with a reasonable amount of children and good relations with their brothers and sisters. However, their brothers and sisters, unlike them, have low levels of education. The reasons for incomplete or low educational attainment are closely related with poverty, gender and early marriages. The Roma girls are more unlikely to be encouraged for education than Roma boys due to the gendered prejudices generated by the strong patriarchy prevalent in the Roma communities. However, the educational deprivation of their brothers and sisters can also be regarded as an important factor in terms of their educational advancement. As all of them are now regretful for not completing their education regardless of the reason, they support their brother and sisters for achieving what they could not do through either helping them with their lessons or meeting their school expenses.

6.3.3 Neighbourhood Socio-Economic Status

Except for Ali (İzmir) and Serkan (Diyarbakır), they all live in neighbourhoods with predominantly Roma residents (see Table 5.2 for the full names of the neighbourhoods). However, in the neighbourhoods where Serkan and Ali live, there are more Kurdish residents than Roma residents. For example, Serkan lives in Bağlar district in Diyarbakır, and he says that there are approximately 15-20 Dom households residing in his neighbourhood, most of which are his relatives. On the other hand, Ali lives in Gediz Neighbourhood in İzmir. He says that their house is at the entrance of the Roma neighbourhood and the whole neighbourhood is consisted of predominantly Kurdish residents migrated from Southeastern Turkey in search of better living standards. So, he defines the location of his house in the neighbourhood

as: “...on our left side there are Roma people, while on the right side there are Kurdish people.” Furthermore, Nilgün (Malkara) lives in a rural neighbourhood unlike the others living in urban neighbourhoods.

Moreover, six out of nine interviewees classify their neighbourhoods as being middle socioeconomic status; two of them classify those of theirs as being low status; and the last one classifies her own neighbourhood as being upper status. The basic criteria for distinction can be summarized as: home-ownership, land-ownership and income level. For example, Nilgün (Malkara) labels her neighbourhood (Hacıevhat) as upper status as almost all residents are farmers and have their own farms. Moreover, Mehmet (Bartın) names his neighbourhood (Aladağ) as middle status; because the majority of people in Mehmet’s neighbourhood are musicians earning their lives through playing at weddings, and a number of them have formal jobs as they work in Amasra Coal Mine. However, Mehmet’s identification regarding the craft-based distinction in his neighborhood is also an important point worth mentioning:

“My grandparents are the indigenous people of Aladağ neighbourhood. When I was a child I remember, there used to only four or five houses. However, the number of houses in Aladağ began to increase due to marriage of the siblings. For each of the new couples, a new house was being built as people’s earnings were so good. During the 1980s when Ecevit was in power, almost all of the Roma people in our neighborhood were compulsorily employed due to which unemployment decreased drastically with the opening of the Amasra Mine Coal and brick factory and that led an increase in the number of the double- and triple-storeyed houses. Most of the men were, after work, getting prepared and going to the weddings in which they participated as musicians. They were doubling their incomes through working both as labourers and musicians, there used to be such an economic growth. Then Roma people from the İkinci Makas Neighbourhood in Zonguldak and the ones in Bolu migrated to Aladağ due to increasing employment opportunities. Then, our neighbourhood was divided into two groups: the sieve-makers and the blacksmiths. The sieve-makers are us, the indigenous people of the neighbourhood, and the people consisting the group of blacksmiths are the ones migrating from Bolu and various other places. Followingly, the male sieve-makers of our neighbourhood became

musicians as sieve-making began to lose its popularity. Moreover, the group blacksmiths migrating from the cities mentioned above, including also Giresun, had already become musicians when they arrived Aladağ. Then the residents of our neighbourhood have begun to establish relations with the people⁸ through the emergence of musicians. In order to play in the weddings, one has to get along with the people. The more they encountered with people the more they changed the way they looked. For example, the ones wearing pink and red shirt began to wear smarter clothes and the attractive youngsters of our neighbourhood began to wear casual clothes. The people of my neighbourhood through that way have renewed their life styles. It is a matter of process, the process has developed in that way. The economic situation of my neighbourhood is very well, because there are really very talented musicians and they earn approximately 90 billion TL (90.000 YTL) per year.”

The first group consist the majority of the interviewees labelling their neighbourhoods as being middle status. They make this assessment predominantly on the basis of either home-ownership or the comparison between their neighbourhoods and the other Roma neighbourhoods in the city they live in. For example, Ali (İzmir) classifies his neighbourhood as being middle status as the Roma residents in Buca where his neighbourhood is located have their own houses and have better living conditions than those of the ones residing in other Roma neighbourhoods:

“In my neighbourhood, there are not just the Roma residents. The majority of the residents, almost 80 percent of them, are either from Kars or Sivas. Mostly, our people migrating from Southeast Anatolia live in my neighbourhood. Moreover, a part of the neighbourhood is segregated for the Roma people; i.e., the Gediz Roma Neighbourhood. There are approximately 3000-4000 Roma people residing in Gediz. On the other hand, in Örnekköy Neighbourhood in Karşıyaka, there are the Roma people who are widely known as nomads. Although they are Roma, they are called by a different name. They have a nomadic lifestyle. They travel to work. After the flood took place in Karşıyaka where we used to live when I was a child, we stayed in the public housing for army officers for two years during when there was no single Roma nearby. Then we moved to Buca where my uncles were living and we have

⁸ He refers to the majority society as “people”.

been living in the same neighbourhood for 12 years. I conducted a survey in my neighbourhood to expose the socio-economic status of the residents within the framework of the Roma association's activities. According to the result obtained from the survey study, my neighbourhood is a middle status one. Moreover, Buca is also more modern than the other Roma neighbourhoods in terms of culture and that makes it more superior than the others. For example, the Roma people predominantly live in rental houses in the other neighbourhoods; but the ones in Buca have at least a house. Furthermore, as İzmir is one of the industrialized cities in Turkey, some of the residents in my neighbourhood work as polisher, metalworker, motor worker, turner...etc, and the others not included in the industrial sector deal with seasonal jobs like selling balloons, corn and water melon. As we are also high in number, we have good relations with the Buca Municipality. Our neighbourhood is like Sevgi Yolu⁹. For example, the streets are paved in cobblestone. We have sculptures around and good lighting. Maybe it is not a top-level Sevgi Yolu, I mean we are privileged.”

Moreover, Filiz (Edirne) classifies also her neighbourhood as being middle status as almost all residents have their own houses and their socio-economic status is better than that of the residents living in other Roma neighbourhoods known as Gypsy/Roma “slums”:

“Although there is high level of unemployment in my neighbourhood, it can be classified as being not low, but middle status as all the residents have their own houses. I mean people don't live in rental houses. Everyone has his/her own house even if it is small. For example, the houses aren't like the ones in Sulukule in İstanbul or in Menzilahur Neighbourhood in Edirne. The housing conditions are at extremely low levels in Menzilahur; for example, 14 people may live in a one-room house in Menzilahur. How may I describe, drug addiction, unemployment, everything there is at very low level, but there are activities for the betterment of Menzilahur now. On the other hand, my neighbourhood is better than Menzilahur, for example in terms of educational levels of the residents. Furthermore, most of the working men in

⁹ Sevgi Yolu (Love Road) is a street in good repair and designated just for the pedestrians in Alsancak/İzmir.

my neighbourhood work in the factories like textile factory and the women mostly work as cleaning ladies.”

In addition to the groups mentioned above, there is the last one consisting of two interviewees labelling their neighbourhoods as being low status. For example, Serkan (Diyarbakır) cannot classify his neighborhood as being middle status; although the residents have their own houses. As he says the houses are makeshift houses. However, it worths mentioning that, although almost all of the interviewees live in makeshift houses, they do not feel the need to mention this as their housing conditions are better than that of Serkan’s (Diyarbakır). Indeed, except for Cem (Kırklareli) whose house includes only one room and an entrance and both the toilet and bathroom are outside of the house; almost all of them have, at least, double-storeyed houses with gardens. In Serkan’s house there are only three rooms including also bathroom and kitchen. They both wash the dishes and have a bath in the same place. Moreover, his household consists of four adults and three children. As the other residents in his neighbourhood are approximately in the same situation, he labels it as a low status neighbourhood. Poor housing conditions, severe poverty and social exclusion which make his neighbourhood; i.e., Bağlar Neighborhood, an urban poor neighbourhood, consisting of two ethnic communities: the Kurds and the Doms.

Home-ownership and land ownership are significant indicators used by the respondents in the identification of the socio-economic status of their neighbourhoods. Although both they and the residents of their neighbourhoods have low levels of income; low levels of education and are mostly involved in informal jobs, most of them have a tendency to categorize both themselves and their neighbourhoods as being middle-class. In fact, they again make a reference to the living conditions of the other Roma community neighbourhoods who are living either a nomadic or a semi-nomadic life due to the poor housing conditions. Therefore, the dichotomy of settled/nomadic plays an important role in the designation of their socio-economic status, as ‘the nomadic Roma functions as a polar opposite to the middle-class, industrialised and consequently "culture-less" modern age’ (Nomadic and Sedentary, <http://ling.kfunigraz.ac.at/~rombase/cgi-bin/art.cgi?src=data/ethn/topics/nomadic.en.xml>, last visited on November 2008). In fact, one of the respondents who lives in a rural Roma neighbourhood, residents of

which are farm-owners in addition to being home-owners, categorizes her neighbourhood as having an upper-status, although most of the residents have low levels of education and low levels of income. On the other hand, all of them live in predominantly Roma neighbourhoods and grown up in closed communities with little socio-cultural exchange with the majority society, except the musicians, which delays their confrontation with the outside world.

6.3.4 Relations with the Neighbours

Two of the interviewees have a poor relationship with their neighbours; but all the others say that they have good relations with their neighbours, at least, no problem at all. On the other hand, five of the interviewees say that they would move to another neighbourhood if they had enough money, also including the ones with good-neighbourhood relationships; and four of them say that they would not leave their neighbourhoods, even if they had money. The ones included in the first group put forward a number of different reasons for leaving their current neighbourhoods behind.

For example, Halil (Edirne) is a student at Tourism and Hotel Management Department of Trakya University. He has been working in hotels as a trainee since he became a student at the Anatolian Hotel Management and Tourism Vocational High School in Edirne. So, he has been to touristic places like Antalya and Muğla for his vocational trainings. He wants to change both his neighbourhood and Edirne in search of a better working and living environment compatible with his profession and future expectations:

“I want to change my neighbourhood, because I am a tourism and hotel management student and I don’t stay here during summers as I work in hotels in various cities. Desiring to live a better life in better places is something normal, because I never deny that the recent places we live in can be better. The neighbourhood we live in is not heart warming in terms of people, environment, friends and acquaintances. Moreover, I also want to change the city when I think of my future as I want to live in a city where I can find a job easily like Muğla and Antalya. Edirne is not a convenient city in terms of tourism. We have just Edirne

Palace as a historical place and Kirkpınar Oil-Wrestling Festival as a touristic facility. When the Festival takes place, most of the tourists stay over night at the garden of Selimiye Mosque, we still have hotels without a star in Edirne. Of course, I also want to change my neighbourhood. I mean people make me do it. You may want to change your living environment, friends and the other people you get accustomed to see after a certain time.”

On the other hand, Meltem (Edirne) says that she has good relations with her neighbours except her female coevals. She points out the jealous attitudes of her female coevals towards her, basically due to having a different way of life. As she says most of her female coevals in the neighbourhood are already married and she is one of the few educated women with a higher-education. In fact, early marriage is common both in the neighbourhoods and families of the interviewees included in this study. So it will be touched upon in detail later in this section. She points out the rise in drug use among the youngsters of her neighbourhood as the reason for her desire to move to a better neighbourhood:

“In my neighbourhood there are poor families earning their lives through works on daily basis like selling vegetables and fruits, and portorage. Most of the people live in rental houses. Just a few of them have their own houses. There are a lot of people using drugs in my neighbourhood; not narcotic drugs, but drugs like hashish. Most of the users are male who either uneducated or only secondary school graduates preferring using drugs to finding a job. It is prevalent, especially this year it has rised. I don’t want to live here, because it is a corrupted neighbourhood. I wish I lived in a better neighbourhood like Binevler in Edirne or İstanbul. The problem is with the Roma people, I mean drug dealers who ruin the lives of even kids with these poisons like drugs and hashish. I have got small nephews, so what will be, if they also become drug addicts because of these people who have already been? That is why we have a number of serious concerns about our neighbourhood and I don’t want to live here. If I had enough money, I would move from here.”

On the other hand, two interviewees; i.e., Nilgün (Malkara) and Cem (Kırklareli) both want to move to a better neighbourhood and have a bad relationship

with the residents of their recent neighbourhoods. They both have a negative attitude towards the residents of their neighbourhoods, who are predominantly Roma. For example, Cem (Kırklareli) describes his relationship with his neighbours initially as being good, but as the interview progresses he admits that he can't get along with any of them:

“Of course, I would like to move from my neighbourhood. Both my family and I, we don't have an intimate relationship with them. I don't like where I live; if I had a chance, I would move to another neighbourhood in Kırklareli. My relationship with the neighbours is good; if you are good, then everyone is good, but I don't have a close relationship with anyone. Also I don't have any friends there, at most one or two friends; their relationship with the neighbours isn't good, too. Almost all my friends are here in Edirne.”

The incentive behind such a preference is closely related with his ethnic identity development. For example, he likes being with his cousins on his mother's side, because they do not look or live like the overall Roma people who are stereotyped as being poor, uneducated, “lazy” and “dirty”. He wants to change his neighbourhood also due to the same reason like Nilgün (Malkara) who is one of his close university friends in Edirne. Both of them have the same negative attitudes towards their relatives and neighbourhoods; however, Nilgün (Malkara) is more unreserved and bold while expressing herself, her opinions:

“ If I had a choice right now of moving from my neighbourhood, I would move, even if my family live there. The people, I don't know, but the people's mentalities are a little bit...I mean; although it is not like the widely-known Roma neighbourhoods, there is so much jealousy among the people. You know Roma people, that is the way Roma people are. Frankly, I don't like them at all. They have jealous and hostile. They can't stand seeing people do better than them. It is always the same story, spoiling one's trade, or relationship. As they are uneducated, they can't stand seeing people achieved better than them. It sounds unusual, but that is the way my neighbourhood is. To be honest, I don't love my neighbours. You know, I hate them all. I mean they can't stand people who are richer than them. There is a

hostile rivalry among them in terms of wealth, living conditions...etc. They can't stand my family, I mean they can't stand anyone. As my family is modern, I mean they ask for my opinion and respect me and they are modest people. They have nothing to do with the others. They don't have a hostile attitude towards the others. I also have just a few friends there, not many. The children are just like their parents. To be honest, I love my university friends more, I love Edirne more. I mean I have better friends here. There is no jealousy among us as we are all university students. We have similar points of view. I mean the ones in Malkara, as they are all married, they have no plans for the future. For example, I talk about school and my future expectations during our conversations, but these subjects don't make sense to them. My living environments in Edirne and Malkara are distinctively different from each other. When I go there from Edirne, I feel like I am in space. Of course, I don't mean to look down on them. My parents have grown up there, so they can, at least, respect me. Okey, they may not want my family, they can't stand them, as they are richer and more hard-working than them, but what is my fault? I have been studying very hard day and night to have a better standard of living."

Their desire for moving to a Roma neighbourhood can be defined as an indicator for upward mobility. Additionally, such an intention also is closely related with their desire for differentiating themselves from the members of their ethnic community as they seem to internalize the majority society's negative attitudes and assumptions regarding Roma. Moreover, achieving better than the others in their neighbourhoods in terms of wealth, education and lifestyles is regarded as the main reason for high levels of jealousy levelled against them which also can be explained in terms of a hidden reaction towards the deconstruction of the social, economic and cultural homogeneity of their communities.

6.3.5 Serious Problems of the Neighbourhoods

The interviewees have reported a number of common problems regarding their neighbourhoods. Although, the seriousness of the problems may vary in degree depending on the state of the socio-economic status of the neighbourhoods, none of

them are problem-free. Except for poverty, low educational level and high unemployment level, which are common socio-economic characteristics of the interviewees' neighbourhoods, even if there are exceptions; there are also social problems that may lead or accelerate the decline of the neighbourhoods in the long run through furthering the social exclusion experienced by the residents of these neighbourhoods. Although these are closely related with the above mentioned problems like poverty and low educational level, the relationship between them can be discussed in detail in another study.

The striking social problems can be listed as: early marriages, drug addiction/alcoholism and mendicancy. The prevalence of early marriages among Roma people is confirmed by all the interviewees. Indeed, Serkan (Diyarbakır) himself, who is now 23 years old, has two common-law wives. He got married to her aunt's daughter for the first time when he was a 14-15 year old secondary-school student. He got married to another girl when he was 17 years old, as his former wife returned back to her own father's house due to the conflict between. He says he loved and ran away with her second wife to marry. As she was also 16 years old when they met each other, her mother didn't allow her to marry him. She brought him into court three times in order to get money. He says he gave money her for three times in return for his marriage with her daughter.

Moreover, like Serkan (Diyarbakır) whose first marriage was a compulsory one arranged by his family without his consent; Mehmet (Bartın) also had experienced such a compulsory relationship with his aunt's daughter. He was engaged with her when he was 15 years old as their parents wanted them to. They even did not ask them for their consent. They had stayed engaged for three years. When Mehmet was a senior high-school student studying for the university entrance examination, his fiancée asked him if he really loved her or not, and he replied: "*Oh sister, I can't even think of it!*" Then she asked whether he would marry her or not and again he replied: "*Oh sister, I can't marry you, you are my sister.*" Consequently, his former-fiancee ran away to marry a man she loved two days after this conversation.

On the other hand, most of their friends and coevals from their neighbourhoods are already married and have got children. As they prefer education to marriage, the people in their neighbourhoods joke with them that they are stay-at-

home ones in comparison to their married coevals, i.e., they have not been able to get married yet. For example, Filiz (Edirne) says:

“Almost all my friends got married married when they were 14 years old. There are just a few girls like me participating in higher education. They joke with me that I am a stay-at-home girl. In response I tell them that I am going to university, I can think about getting married only after my graduation.”

Moreover, Serkan (Diyarbakır) confirms that early, forced marriages of the children are prevalent not just among the Dom people, but also among the Kurds in Diyarbakır:

“ Early forced marriages are prevalent in Diyarbakır. The parents don’t even ask for their children’s consent. It is not unique to the Dom Gypsies, it is prevalent in Diyarbakır. One who knows himself, who knows what he/she wants doesn’t marry at such an early age. I mean I am not the one deciding to marry, it was my parents’ decision and I am very regretful.”

Like the others, Filiz (Edirne) also touches upon the early marriages of her friends and how her family was surprised at her decision not to marry, but to have a high-school education unlike her friends:

“ As it is widely-accepted that the Roma people get married at an early age, for example, all of my primary school friends are married now. After they graduated from the primary school, when they were about 14 or 15 years old, they got married. But I didn’t marry and this attracted my parents’ attention. However, they are, my married friends are very regretful now for getting married early. Now, they wish they hadn’t got married and left the school. They have got kids now and they are engaged in a quite different way of life. They have less freedom than they used to have. They have to stay mostly at home and take care of their children.”

Furthermore, the rise in drug addiction among children and adolescents is an alarming problem affecting also the overall neighbourhood community. Meltem’s

(Edirne) concerns about the rise in drug addiction in her neighbourhood have already mentioned. Although Şebnem (Edirne) lives in the same neighbourhood with Meltem, she prefers passing over the subject with a few sentences: “ *I don’t know, but there may be the ones using drugs. That’s not my concern anyway.*” However, Meltem puts a particular emphasis on the subject, as she has got small nephews to protect whom from drugs, she wants to move to a better neighbourhood. On the other hand, Halil (Edirne) who lives in another Roma neighbourhood in Edirne does not want to detail the subject like Şebnem, but gives a contradictory answer: “ *No...There are drug addicts, but I have never confronted, never met. For example, while I am passing by, I may meet the male youngsters of my neighbourhood drinking alcohol. They invite me to accompany them. I join them, but I don’t drink. They also don’t want me to drink, they just want me to join their conversation. But, I leave them and go home as soon as any one of them becomes drunk not to get in trouble.*”

However, Serkan (Diyarbakır) confirms Meltem’s concerns about the rise in drug addiction in their neighbourhoods:

“ *I am gonna tell you something, I swear that hashish has been consumed among the Dom Gypsies like cheese and bread especially for the last three years. I swear that they need it even more than food. There are both drug dealers and drug addicts, I mean, they have to sell it not to starve. If they had a job, they wouldn’t get involved in such a business. That’s a reality. Its consumption isn’t common just among Roma, look also the Turks living in İstanbul. It is not unique to Roma, noone can accuse just the Roma people of using drugs.*”

On the other hand, Filiz (Edirne) says that there are just a few drug addicts in her neighbourhood, but she touches upon it as a serious problem when she compares her neighbourhood with Menzilahır neighbourhood, a Gypsy “slum” in Edirne where drug addiction and alcoholism are pervasive problems. Also, Mehmet (Bartın) puts a special emphasis on the prevalence of alcoholism among the residents of his neighbourhood including also women and children: which from his point of view is closely related with their participation in weddings as musicians:

“ No, there aren’t drug addicts or dealers in my neighbourhood as it is a small neighbourhood, the police can easily control it. On the other hand, alcoholism is pervasive in Aladağ. All people drink alcohol including fathers, mothers and also their children. Women also drink alcohol at least once a week, not as frequent as their husbands. When I was a primary school student, that is during the end of the 1980s and the early 1990s, most of my friends’ parents, living in the same neighbourhood with me, were divorced or they were living separately. Our neighbourhood had been going through a transition period affected by increasing employment opportunities, new migrants and urbanization. When the residents of Aladağ began to participate in the weddings of the majority society, they also had new habits like alcohol consumption. When their fathers returned home from weddings, they were being drunk and then they were beating their children. I was the lucky one as I had a problem-free family.”

In addition to the problems mentioned above, three of the interviewees mention the rise in mendicancy either as a survival strategy or an occupation, mostly done by women and children. Unlike Serkan (Diyarbakır), Filiz (Edirne) and Mehmet (Bartın) touch upon the subject only when they are asked as it is something done by the “other” residents of their neighbourhoods. On the other hand, Serkan (Diyarbakır) mentions it as a survival strategy adopted mostly by the women both in his kinship and neighbourhood who are desparately poor. For example, his father’s first common-law wife, who lives in her house with one of her sons, earns her living by begging. Her son is unemployed and she is the one earning their bread money as her husband, i.e., Serkan’s father, lives with his second wife, Serkan’s mother, and just takes care of them. However, she is not the only one begging for bread money, almost all women in the neighbourhood beg for money due to severe poverty and unemployment:

“My best friend who is also a Dom lives in the Ali Pasha Neighbourhood. He neither goes to school nor has a job. He is 2 or 3 years younger than me. He is also married and lives with his mother. His mother earns their living. She is a beggar, what is she gonna do, she isn’t the only one begging for living, all our women have

been begging for bread money. For example, my father's first common-law wife, she lives next door with her son. She has to beg not to starve, her son is unemployed, because there are no jobs. Also her other sons are all unemployed."

Mehmet (Bartın) describes the emergence of mendicancy as a type of occupation mostly done by women and children whose husbands are among the musicians of the neighbourhood. However, he used the term "Gypsy" in order to define them. The ones earning their lives through mendicancy are called as Gypsies; however, the others having a negative attitude towards mendicancy and preferring labour-based jobs are called as "Roma":

"The mendicancy is prevalent in Aladağ. That is, 47 adult women, 13 old women and the others are single young girls. They say people "I am a student, please help me" and then when the people give them money, they give them the pencils, paper tissues or beads they carry with themselves. But this is not begging, they earn their lives through that way. Paradoxically, the richest people of Aladağ are the "beggars". This is a contradictory situation, I know, but the beggars in Aladağ are completely different from those in Ankara. The ones in Ankara are really poor; on the contrary the ones in Bartın are very rich. They travel to different cities to beg. They make tents and they don't pay for running water or electricity especially during the summers. They have their permanent houses in Aladağ, they go for begging just during summers. Their husbands or the men of the community stay at Aladağ and work as musicians. Just one man, who is assigned for guarding the women, travel with them. They are the "Gypsies"; but we are the "Roma". Although we are classified under the same category, "Gypsy" by the majority society, my people don't let our girls and boys marry them. They are excluded by the Roma people in my neighbourhood; however they are richer than the Roma people. That is a contradiction. The Roma residents in my neighbourhood including also my own family can't stand mendicancy, earning money without working. For example, my grandmother, who was a sieve-maker, was saying that we had never begged for money. We used to sell the sieves we made and then we got wheat, corn...etc. in return for them; even not money. It wasn't mendicancy."

In the following section, the differences between the Roma university students actively participating in the Roma organization process and the ones not participating will be given by focusing on their ethnic identity development; school experiences and future expectations.

CHAPTER VII

ETHNIC IDENTITY FORMATION AND EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

7.1 Introduction

The educational process of the interviewees will be given together with their ethnic identity development in the same chapter; because it is almost impossible to decompose them as they are closely interrelated. In fact, it is the educational process appearing as a challenge to their ethnic identity through leading them to confront the members of the majority society, such as teachers and peers, who are ethnically different from both their families and the members of their close community they live in. Moreover, both during the interview and analysis process, the differences between the ones having an active participation in the Roma organization process and the ones not participating emerged not just in their interpretations of their feelings about their ethnic identity, but also in their interpretations of their school experiences and future expectations.

Thus, before proceeding with a detailed and comprehensive description of the educational processes of the interviewees, the differences between the ones participating in the Roma organization process and the ones not participating will be given regarding their ethnic identity development by focusing on their feelings about their ethnic identity and attitudes towards their ethnic community.

7.2 Ethnic Identity Development

While analyzing the data regarding their feelings about their ethnic identity and attitudes towards their ethnic community, I have encountered with three ethnic identity patterns among the respondents included in this study. While the ones having an active participation in the Roma organization process have positive feelings and

ideas about their ethnic identity, the ones not participating have either negative or positive feelings about it. However, the ones in the latter group with positive feelings about their ethnic identity differ from the ones in the former group by their levels of commitment to their ethnic identity and the absence of ethnic identity exploration. While trying to solve the riddle of existence of different ethnic identity statuses among the respondents, I came across, on the internet, the three-stage model of ethnic identity development introduced by Jean Phinney (1989) in order to explain the ethnic identity development in minority group adolescents. Phinney classifies the individuals included in her study into three groups of ethnic identity statuses based on their degree of exploration and commitment. Although the three-stage model of Phinney is given in more detail in Chapter II, it can be summarized as follows to proceed with the categorization of the interviewees on the basis of their ethnic identity statuses:

1. *Diffuse/foreclosed*: Little or no exploration of one's ethnicity; but apparent clarity about one's own ethnicity. Feelings about one's ethnicity may be either positive or negative, depending on one's socialization experiences.
2. *Moratorium*: Evidence of exploration, accompanied by some confusion about the meaning of one's own ethnicity.
3. *Achieved*: Evidence of exploration, accompanied by a clear, secure understanding and acceptance of one's own ethnicity (Jean Phinney, 1989: 38).

Based on this model, our respondents can be categorized into two groups depending on their ethnic identity status: while the ones participating in the Roma organization process; i.e., Serkan (Diyarbakır), Mehmet (Bartın), Filiz (Edirne) and Ali (İzmir), have an achieved identity status; the others not participating in the Roma organization process; i.e., Halil (Edirne), Şebnem (Edirne), Meltem (Edirne), Cem (Kırklareli), Nilgün (Malkara), have a foreclosed identity status. Each of the ethnic identity statuses of the respondents will be given in detail by focusing on their ethnic identity development and feelings about their ethnic identity.

7.2.1 Foreclosed Identity Status Group

The ones in the group with foreclosed identity status can be divided into two subgroups depending on the quality of their feelings about their ethnic identity: the

ones having positive feelings and the ones having negative feelings about their ethnic identities.

Nilgün (Malkara) and Cem (Kırklareli) have both foreclosed identity status, but they differ from the others included in the same group with them by the quality of their feelings about their ethnic identity. They have negative feelings about their ethnicity due to the stigma of inferiority associated with the Roma identity in Turkey. Nilgün (Malkara) completed her primary school education in Malkara in a school consisting of predominantly Roma students. She says that she experienced no discrimination in her primary school either by her teachers or her school peers. However, after her graduation, especially her aunt living in Edirne persuaded her family to let her continue her education in Edirne. Her aunt's husband also is a Roma and works as a civil servant. They live in a non-Roma neighbourhood in Edirne and they hide their ethnic identity not to be discriminated by the majority society:

“I am hiding my ethnic identity here in Edirne, I have to.. However, I didn't need to hide it when I was in Malkara, because there was no such a discrimination against Roma there. Most of my friends are Roma in Malkara, unlike the ones in Edirne. Here, I have just one Roma school peer¹⁰, he is from Kırklareli. I knew his being Roma, but he didn't know about me. We met each other here, in EDROM. I know he is going to come here for your interview. He has a non-Roma girlfriend, and I told him not to come with her. Indeed, what would be, if they knew? They have known me for five years. On the contrary, I am more superior than them, not inferior to them. But I don't want them to know, because we may have an argument, and they may take a dig at me . People are ungrateful, you know, they really are. I don't trust people. But as I said, things were different in Malkara. For example, my Turkish friends used to visit my house for dinner, of course they would eat at my house, because I am more superior than them. Also we used to invite them to our weddings as we were so close. However, here in Edirne, there is so much discrimination against Roma people, they even don't want to sit side by side with the Roma people in public transportation vehicles. Both Cem and I, we hide our ethnic identity, because there are so much prejudices against Roma. If you declare it without

¹⁰ His school peer is Cem, our interviewee from Kırklareli. Five of the interviewees defined with foreclosed identity status are scholarship holding members of EDROM, but they do not participate in the Roma organization process unlike the ones defined with achieved identity status.

hesitation, what is going to be? Even if, you become a doctor or a sultan, they will keep on talking behind your back. In fact, it is also related with us, we need to improve ourselves, it is also related to being backward people. I don't know but I sometimes think that we deserve to be backward. If I talk like that in front of the others, I mean among the Roma people, they may misunderstand me. For instance, the overall education level of Roma people is lower. For example, I have a twenty-year old girl friend and she has got a three- or four-year old boy. We have such kind of people, they are in a backward situation in terms of education, but in a very developed situation in terms of marriage. In terms of having kids, they have no limit... On the other hand, there is no difference between a Roma and a non-Roma except for educational achievement, employment level and experienced discrimination level. I have been wishing for not to be born as a Roma since I was in Edirne. I said you that I define myself as a Roma, but like a...how may I say? I mean I don't identify myself with the terms mostly used for the Roma people. I mean, as I said, Roma people are backward and disordered, but I am different from them in terms of my future expectations. I have a future."

Although Cem (Kırklareli) cannot express his feelings about being a Roma as detailed as Nilgün (Malkara), he also displays negative attitudes towards the members of his ethnic community whose profiles are compatible with the stereotyped profile of Roma. While concerning also his relations with his relatives, he openheartedly admits that he is close to his relatives on her mother's side due to them having a non-Roma way of life. Although he doesn't want to reject his ethnic identity at all, he feels himself belong to the majority society rather than his ethnic community as he adopts the negative stereotypes and prejudices directed at the Roma people by the majority society like Nilgün (Malkara) which do not enable them to make a commitment to their ethnic identity:

"I can tell that I am a Roma depending on the condition. Actually, I don't feel myself like a Roma due to the recent situation. There are problems faced by the Roma people, you are excluded. However, I don't feel any discrimination directed at me. But, the society always exclude Roma. I didn't encounter such an exclusion while I was in Kırklareli, this is something new I have been encountering since I was in

Edirne. But generally, I don't want to pride myself, but I don't have such a difficulty of being a Roma in any of the social environments I am involved. I don't even mention that I am a Roma if I don't have to. Besides, people don't know, expect that I am a Roma. Even if they know, they say that you don't look like a Roma and this gives me pride, I mean it gives, it gives pride to anyone....The Roma people are "ignorant", "insensible", "impatient" and "lazy"...Well, I can't think of any further characteristics. Although, I wish for not being a Roma occasionally, I don't let anyone to insult me for being a Roma. Even sometimes I am proud of being a Roma, because they are scared of me."

As it can be seen, fear of experiencing discrimination led by negative prejudices and stereotypes generated by the majority society together with their struggle not to be excluded make them sacrifice their commitment to their ethnic identity. They hide their identities not to be excluded from life, from the idea of a better future. Although they feel themselves good when they are told that they don't look like the stereotyped picture of Roma, they, explicitly, want to define themselves as a Roma without any fear of discrimination or exclusion. While explaining her first encounter with the EDROM, apart from holding scholarship, Nilgün open-heartedly explains her secondary reason for being a member of EDROM as:

"I didn't use to know EDROM. My aunt's husband informed me about the association. We decided to come by here and meet the people. I mean whatever happens you want to look for a Roma thing, you want to be with your own people, really. Okey, I criticise them and sometimes I get angry with them, but you want to see your own people. I mean, I haven't had the opportunity to get the utmost enjoyment out of my Romaniness. I mean I wish I could tell it everyone without hesitation; but I still hesitate to tell it. I mean, telling that you are a Roma as if means you are not a human. I am a Roma, but it means that I am not a human, that is why I have to hide my Romaniness."

Unlike Nilgün and Cem; Halil (Edirne), Şebnem (Edirne) and Meltem (Edirne) don't hide their ethnic identities as they have positive feelings about their ethnic identity. However, they also have foreclosed identity status like Nilgün and

Cem as they haven't attempted to explore their ethnic identity which is defined as a prerequisite for an achieved identity status. As Phinney also argues that all the individuals included in the foreclosed status group may not have negative views of their own ethnic group, some of them may also have positive feelings about their ethnic community. She exemplifies this through the ethnic pride stressed by their families. Although these individuals do not manifest preference for the majority culture, they are still regarded as holding a foreclosed identity status as they don't attempt to examine the relevant issues for themselves.

These three interviewees put a special emphasis on their neighbourhood which function as an ethnic identifier, as they live in urban predominantly Roma neighbourhoods. This fact is also valid for Mehmet (Bartın) and Filiz (Edirne). Although they are in the group of achieved identity, when they became students of predominantly non-Roma high schools, they couldn't hide their Romaniness. Even if they didn't tell explicitly that they were Roma; when they were asked about their place of residences, they were telling the names of their place of residences which implicitly means I am a Roma. For instance, Halil (Edirne), who is a student at the Tourism and Hotel Management Department and has been working as a trainee in different touristic cities of Turkey since high school, is one of the several interviewees who have a fearless relationship with the majority society. He doesn't hide his ethnic identity as he refers to being a Roma as a privilege:

“I never hide my Romaniness, because I am from Küçükpazar Neighbourhood, whenever I hear a melody, I begin to dance. You couldn't get it as you are not living in Edirne. Gazimihal, Küçükpazar and Süpürgeciler (The Broomers) these are all Roma neighbourhoods in Edirne. When I tell someone that I am living in Küçükpazar, he/she understands that I am a Roma. Non-Roma have deficiencies in comparison to Roma. They lack social environment, close relations, so much incapacities. They even don't know how to dance correctly.”

On the other hand, when he encounters with statements comparing him with the prejudiced picture of Roma such as: “You don't look like a Roma, dude!”; he doesn't feel himself good or filled with pride. He simply gets surprised at their

prejudiced thinking and explains patiently it is not related to being a Roma, but is related to being educated which is common for all people regardless of their ethnic identities:

“I don’t need to hide my ethnic identity regardless of wherever I am. I just go and introduce myself to people. They ask me where I live. I reply that I live in Küçükpazar. Then they say: ‘You don’t look like a Roma, dude! I ask them how I should look like. I am a university student, I can’t speak in broken Turkish. Being a Roma is totally different from being a Laz. A Laz speaks in broken Turkish from birth to death. It is all about his/her accent. You can’t expect an English and an American to speak English in the same way. But, I am a university student, of course I will speak the language decently, it’s natural.”

Furthermore, Meltem (Edirne) has a Roma mother and a non-Roma father from Kayseri. She lives in Gazimihal Neighbourhood and defines herself as a hybrid rather than a Roma. However, as living in Gazimihal have an implicit connotation of being Roma, when she is asked about her place of residence, she adds that she is also a Roma without hesitation instead of passing it over in silence:

“I never hide my ethnic identity, neither in high school nor in university. Why do I need to hide it? Is it a shame to be a Roma? They are also humans like the non-Roma. My friends in my neighbourhood are all Roma; however the ones in the university are non-Roma. The only difference between Roma and non-Roma may be that they live in different neighbourhoods. When I first met my recent university friends, they asked me where I lived. I said them: ‘I am living in Gazimihal Neighbourhood and I am a Roma; but also I am from Kayseri, I am a hybrid.”

7.2.2 Achieved Identity Status Group

Mehmet (Bartın), Filiz (Edirne), Serkan (Diyarbakır) and Ali (İzmir) are all in the achieved identity status group. Although their family background and socio-economic characteristics are different from each other, they have similar positive opinions and feelings about their ethnic identity. This is strongly related with their

active participation in the Roma organization process. Because, they gain positive self-esteem and an internationalist outlook on the world they live in during the organization process. It is the organization process making them class-conscious through providing them with the opportunities for encounters with other Roma communities living abroad and in different parts of Turkey. Moreover, their encounter with the non-Roma people, mostly representatives of various NGOs and academicians, and having a positive relationship with these members of the majority society give them dignity and lead them replace their negative feelings about their ethnic identity with the positive ones.

Three out of four interviewees having an achieved identity status say that they used to hesitate to tell their ethnic identity explicitly while they were in high-school. Filiz (Edirne) and Mehmet (Bartın) point out their neighbourhoods functioning as an ethnic identifier similar to the ones mentioned above, while they were in high-school. So, when they were asked about their neighbourhood, they were passing over the issue of ethnic identity in silence. For example, Filiz (Edirne) touches upon her recent struggle to raise awareness among the residents of her neighbourhood and members of her family on discrimination and human rights in order to eliminate the prejudices and stereotypes applied to Roma people both by the majority society and even by the different Roma communities themselves:

“Until the high-school, I didn’t have a concern about my ethnic identity, because of my primary school consisting of predominantly Roma students. When I began to high-school, at the beginning I used to hesitate to tell my identity. My school peers were talking about me among themselves, I could hear that they were saying ‘She is a Roma.’ You can easily understand one’s Romaniness from his/her neighbourhood. They were asking me about my neighbourhood and when I answered that I was from Yıldırım Neighbourhood, and my answer was followed by the question: ‘Are you a Roma?’ But then as the time went on, I got used to my school and my friends and I began to tell my identity without hesitation if it was asked. On the contrary, my family still hesitate to tell their Romaniness explicitly when they are at a different environment other than our neighbourhood. That really makes me angry. Even the Roma themselves can discriminate against one another. This is not something that can be explained just in terms of socio-economic level. For example,

one of my friends from Murath sent me a video-cassette including the record of a ceremony held for a soldier and I watched it with my close friends from my neighbourhood. While watching, my friend's elder sister said, 'These people are lower than us.' Then I asked her what she meant by lower or depending on what she classified them as lower. She said: 'Their style of clothing is different and their neighbourhood either. They are more Gypsy than us!'" She talked like that, you see. However, either Roma or Gypsy it doesn't matter. I can't make such a distinction, but everybody classifies himself / herself depending on the, I mean maybe the term Roma sounds more decent, and the term Gypsy is more associated with exclusion. I mean, sometimes when they are called as Gypsy, they may say, ' I am not a Gypsy, I am a Roma.' Since I began to participate in the activities of EDROM, the attitudes of my friends, and my family towards our ethnic group have been going through a change in a positive way. Now, they have more positive feelings and thoughts about themselves and the other Roma people. They have higher self-esteem now."

While talking about the impacts of her participation in EDROM on her family and neighbourhood which makes her a social activist primarily struggling for empowerment of her own ethnic neighbourhood, she mentions her first appearance on Edirne TV, a local TV channel, during the annual celebration of Kakava Feast held in 2006 in her first year at EDROM. When her neighbours and friends saw her on TV in traditional Roma clothes, at first they got surprised at her courage not to hesitate to be known as a Roma, not to be afraid of being visible:

"For example, in my first year at EDROM, I presented the news on Edirne TV. I wore a flower behind my ear and I wore stereotypical clothes associated with the Roma women. As a matter of fact, there is no rule imposing: 'Roma have to wear like that.' It changes depending on the age. Everyone who saw me on TV was shocked. Later when they encountered with me they asked me what I was doing there, why I appeared in stereotypical Roma clothes, why I did such a thing and why I told that I was a Roma. At the beginning they gave such reactions, but now whenever they see me they ask me why I don't appear on TV and present the news. Good improvements, they have been going through a change."

Furthermore Mehmet (Bartın) also graduated from a mixed high school, a super high school, where he felt himself, at first unsuccessful and shy. He says that he was not the only Roma student in the school. There were around 20-25 Roma students; however just one, that was Mehmet himself, could manage to graduate from the high school and won the university entrance exam. However, his story turned into a success story only after overcoming a number of serious difficulties challenging his ethnic identity formation and intellectual capabilities. His negative and positive experiences related to his educational process will be mentioned in the following section, but now it is essential to touch upon his first encounter with the members of the majority society took place when he first attended the super high school:

“I mean I was the only Roma student managed to complete the high school. There were between 20 and 25 Roma students there, but only I could graduate. I attended the high school, but it was full of super-rich kids and they were like film-stars. I had experienced a psychological problem for the first time in my life. While I was in the primary school, I was the most popular and hard-working student. So, suddenly everything had changed. They were all super kids wearing high quality clothes. I mean, you know the ‘Concon’ guys, I mean the kids were snob. I really went through hard times until I got accustomed to. I didn’t feel the need for telling my identity; although they all knew that I was from Aladağ Neighbourhood, I was a Roma. They didn’t need to verbalize it. But I told it later just to my close friend Hande.”

Mehmet won the university entrance exam and he attended to the Gazi University Public Administration Department. He wasn’t just the only one graduating from high school; but he was also the only one obtaining the right to attend university among his Roma friends living in the same neighbourhood with him. He mentioned that there were also the others, that is, just a few Roma youngsters who had already won the university entrance exam previously. One of them was a female university student going to a university in İzmir; however she was hiding her ethnic identity. Moreover, there were also the other male students graduated from university previously, called by Mehmet as “our brothers.” For

example, one of them is a deputy dean or dean of the university in Elazığ recently; however like the girl in İzmir he also still hides their ethnic identity. When Mehmet won the university exam, he began to talk about being a Roma with his history teacher at his high school. As the teacher had a socialist point of view, he tried to raise his awareness about his ethnic identity, class conscious and the problems faced by the Roma people. He visited Mehmet's neighbourhood to identify the problems in detail and to make them work for empowerment of their ethnic community. So, Mehmet began to help to the primary school students of his neighbourhood with their lessons in the primary school he graduated from during the weekends. A number of non-Roma university students whom were organized by his history teacher also assisted him to teach these students. The history teacher who became Mehmet's idol during the beginning of his first year in university, turned into a traitor when Mehmet became a member of Turkish nationalist youth movement:

“I was going to Aladağ in the weekends to teach the Roma primary schools living in Aladağ. My history teacher were paying for my bus travel fees. However, suddenly everything changed during my first year at Gazi University. I fell in love with a girl who was a member of the Turkish national youth movement. So, I also became a member of the Nationalist Movement. I was so attached to her that I completely forgot about the fact of Gypsiness. My history teacher became a traitor working for severing, even splitting the country. I was staying in dormitory, but after meeting her, I began to live in a house full of nationalist students. I still see them, they are also done with the Nationalist Movement. A Kurd from Sivas, a Laz from Trabzon and a Gypsy from Bartın in the Forges of Ideal (Ülkü Ocakları)! Then, my girlfriend cheated on me with another guy which turned my world upside down. But after that event, I began to judge the fallacies of the Nationalist Movement with my homemates. Then I dissociated myself from the Nationalist Movement. All my former friends whom I met at the Forges of Ideal (Ülkü Ocakları), began to insult me by calling me Gypsy. When they came across me, they were asking me questions like: “How you doin’ the Gypsy thief ?” It was then that I began to think more seriously about my Gypsiness. During the second year of the university, I crept into my own skin. I was leaving my home just to go to school. I was spending most of my time on the internet...”

His death in the Nationalist Movement led his birth in the Roma Movement. Mehmet, after experiencing such an identity crisis, reconstituted his relationship with his history teacher which this time led his rebirth as a Roma activist. Then he again began to teach to the Roma students in need of support in Aladağ. There he met his friend, Deniz, with whom he would co-found the Roma Youth Association in 2006. One day, when he was in Bartın to teach the students, one of his brothers from his neighbourhood, whom returned from Ereğli where he went for begging to Bartın, informed him about the Gypsy Symposium held in Ereğli in 2005 and told him that the Roma people were on the way to found their own nation-state.

At first he got shocked with this information, it sounded him unbelievable, but then they, Mehmet and Deniz, decided to keep in touch with the dean of the Ereğli Human Rights Association holding the symposium to learn more about the symposium and the associated subjects. Mr. Yılmaz functioned as a mediator and introduced them to the pioneers of the Roma organization in Turkey. Mehmet first met Erdinç Çekiç, the founding dean of the EDROM and also ROMDEF, the first Roma Federation which was formed in Edirne in 2005; and the other non-Roma NGO representatives specialized in the area of human rights. Meanwhile, EDROM, in partnership with the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly, had been implementing the project, "Promoting Roma Rights in Turkey". That project lasted approximately two and a half years and made a significant contribution to the advancement of Roma rights in Turkey. Consequently, Mehmet also got involved in the implementation process of that project through which he encountered with the other Roma communities living in the other parts of Turkey:

"While we were learning about being organized here in Bartın, the representatives of the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly treated me kind and made me get involved into the project on Roma Rights. They sent me to the other Roma neighbourhoods. For example, they told me to go to Adana and I really got shocked when I encountered with the Roma people there. They were living in tents or in huts, whereas the Gypsies live in two- or three-storeyed houses in my neighbourhood. I hadn't been to the other Roma neighbourhoods, except mine, before. Then I went to

Mersin where the Roma people were living under the same conditions like the ones in Adana. I also went to Kuştepe in İstanbul, again the same story, people were so desperate that they were in need of help. Then I gradually began to understand that there was a problem with the Roma people. So, all these experiences I had, together with the influence of the people I knew like my history teacher, Deniz and my other non-Roma friends specialized in the area of human rights, led my ideological point of view to change. I also attended the lectures of the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly on human rights in general and rights-based approach in particular. Then, I decided to found the first Roma Youth Association two years ago...

After making such a decision, a tough organization process began for him. First he founded the association in one of the most deprived areas of Ankara called as Cincin Bağları which is also known as a Gypsy "slum". There he aimed to raise awareness among the Roma youngsters of discrimination and human rights violations. He told them that they could do more to overcome the social exclusion and deprivation they had been experiencing through implementing a EU-funded project. However, his target group got his words the wrong way round and just focused on the amount of the EU grant through which they could realize their material expectations like owning a car. So, Mehmet and his fellows decided to move the association to another district of Ankara. Since then they have been struggling for organising the Roma youth both the ones attending to university and the others, to fight against discrimination and violations of the human rights faced by their ethnic community:

"We're gonna organise the Roma university students in particular and the Roma youth in general then we're gonna organise them at the regional level. Then we will revise the recent situation of the Roma-led associations participating in the Roma organization process to give them a new direction. I am so happy that I am involved in that process. The activities of our association have been going for the last three months. We went through a tough period of time, I mean our first initiative launched in Cincin Bağları. If I had been alone, I would have already quit struggling like our elder brothers leading the other Roma associations. Now, they are in a bad state. However, I have always supported by my friends, even by my father. This is my

life-long goal. Furthermore, to be able to make a contribution to the empowerment of the recent Roma organization process, we have examined the recent situation of the Roma associations in detail and we end up with the conclusion that the representatives of the recent Roma associations always need to say that they aren't against the Turkish State. They put even a superfluous emphasis on being satist. However, we decide not to repeat or even verbalize that point; we even decide to criticize the state policies, if needed. Now, my priority concern is human rights, as all the time I have been reading about the human rights issues. When we accomplish the task of organising the Roma Youth, then we will proceed with the promotion of democracy and human rights. As I said I am lucky, for instance my Roma friends from Diyarbakır¹¹ don't have any chance. I met them during that process, otherwise I wouldn't meet them. I didn't use to know that there were Roma people living in Diyarbakır. I used to assume that the Roma people live only in Aladağ and Bolu.”

Serkan (Diyarbakır) also, like Mehmet, had an identity crisis before showing a strong commitment to his ethnic identity. Serkan refers to the Kurds as the “non-Roma”; but defines himself as a Kurdish Roma as he has been living among the Kurdish people since he was born:

“I am a Roma, a Dom-Roma, I have an identity, so I don't want to compare the Roma with the Kurds. I am a Kurdish Roma as I have been living among the Kurds since I was born. However when I realized that I am a Roma and they are Kurdish, I began to move away from them.”

When Serkan was in high-school, he was the only Dom-Roma in the high school musical group. He doesn't want to detail the subject as it is mostly regarded as a threat to national security in Turkey due to the recent political conjuncture; but Serkan also joined the Kurdish Youth Movement when he was in high school, like Mehmet (Bartın) who joined the Nationalist Youth Movement during his first year at the university in Ankara. As it can be seen both of them experienced a tough identity crisis before reaching the achieved identity status during when they questioned the values and attitudes of the majority culture which they had initially internalized. At

¹¹ His friend from Diyarbakır is Serkan who is also one of the interviewees included in this study.

first, he used to define himself just as a Kurd. However, his breaking up with his friends in the same musical group due to ideological reasons initiated his ethnic identity search:

“I think the whole system should be changed. The most important problem in Turkey is unemployment then the low educational level. And then the conflict among the different ethnic groups. What is that, I mean it doesn’t matter either you are a Kurd or a Turk. We are all equal. I used to get involved in such kind of a conflict once upon a time, when I was in high school. I was in the high school musical group called as “Komasibat”. Kurdish fascism wasn’t a matter of concern in those days like today. I was the only Dom among them, they were all Kurdish. Then we separated, our group were broken up, and I went on my own way. Then I crept into my own skin and thought about their attitudes and ideas. The more I learnt about their real faces, the more I got disgusted. But I respect and appreciate the ones who are sincere idealists.”

Moreover, when they are asked to define the non-Roma, except for Ali (İzmir) who is a member of the Youth Branch of the İzmir-based Roma association since it was established in 1996, they all say that a Roma who hides his/her Romaniness is a non-Roma. For example Serkan (Diyarbakır) says: *“I think a Dom hiding his/her identity is more stranger than a Kurd or a Turk. You can’t hide it, it is so obvious. You are also a human, why you need to hide your identity?”*

Mehmet (Bartın) uses the term ‘assimilation’ when he defines the non-Roma: *“It is like that, a Roma is a Roma. If one says that I am not a Roma, I am assimilated; then there is no need to identify him/her as a Roma, that doesn’t make sense.”*

As also supported by the narratives of the respondents, participation in the Roma organization process has a strong and positive impact on the ethnic identity development of the respondents included in this study. As ethnic identity development is a progressive process, prior to their participation in the Roma organization process, they used to have a foreclosed identity status like the others.

However, the experiences they have had during the organization process have a positive impact on the development of their self-esteem due to which their identity status turned into an achieved one. The stigma of inferiority attached to the Roma people by the majority society is the leading reason for them to hide their ethnic identity. As it is mentioned, saying that I am a Roma means as if I am not human. Therefore, achieving better than the other members of their ethnic communities in terms of education and occupation within such a socio-cultural context serves as a tool for assimilation into the dominant society and separates them from their ethnic community. Moreover, the name of the neighbourhood serves as an ethnic identifier having the implicit connotation of being a Roma. Thus, the desire for moving into non-Roma neighbourhoods is not just an indicator of upward mobility, but also an indicator of assimilation which is explicitly and strongly promoted and reinforced by the stigma of inferiority.

Consequently, successful representatives of Roma population; i.e., the positive role models, holding an university degree and being involved in white collar jobs, can make a great contribution to the disappearance of the stigma of inferiority through altering the stereotype of Roma people being poor and uneducated; and to the empowerment of the Roma communities through becoming role models for Roma children; however, only if they do not hide their ethnic identities. So, the existence of the ones in the achieved identity status group indicates the emergence of a new Roma identity: the Roma intelligentsia.

7.3 On the Path to Higher Education

The two main influences on their path to higher education were family and school. Although most of them have been suffering from economic difficulties, they are all encouraged by their families to go on their education as far as possible. All of the interviewees lack a role model that may make their path to the higher education simpler. Indeed, they are the only ones participating in higher education when their brothers, sisters, parents and residents of their neighbourhoods, including also their peers, are concerned. Just one of them, Nilgün (Malkara) has a younger brother attending to the Anatolian Teacher Training High School and he will probably participate in higher education as his sister is a role model for him.

Moreover, most of the interviewees have parents with at most primary school education. Only Mehmet's father graduated from secondary school, but he dropped out of high school when he was at the second grade. This low level of parental education has a significant impact on the quality of their education process as they are unable to help them with their lessons. The ones having elder brothers and sisters suffer less from this situation, as their elder brothers and sisters are either primary school graduates or secondary school drop-outs and can help them with their lessons. As it can be seen in the following narratives of the interviewees, almost all of the interviewees demonstrate a high level of agency on the path to higher education. Five out of nine interviewees graduated from primary schools where the majority of students were Roma; on the other hand the rest of them graduated from mixed primary schools. However, all of them graduated from mixed high schools. The attitudes of the teachers and peers, particularly those of teachers, play a great role in their educational achievement.

7.3.1 Family Support

Ali (İzmir) is the eldest son of his family, he has a younger sister who dropped out of primary school. Although she has his brother as a positive role model and has been encouraged by her family, she is not eager for education:

“I attended the Hayri Özmeriç Primary School when I was in Karşıyaka, but after the flood we moved to Edremit because my father was a junk collector. We had stayed there for five or six months; then returned back to İzmir; and moved to Buca when I was a fifth grade student. Then I attended both secondary and high school there in Buca. Now, I am in Manisa for my higher education. I won the university entrance exam when I took it the second time, my family encouraged me a lot. They have been helping me with my lessons since my childhood, they always tell me to complete my education, never give up. They show me the situation of the people around us as an advice and tell me to save my life. On the other hand, my sister, who is two years younger than me, she dropped out of primary school in the fourth grade. After we moved to Buca from Karşıyaka due to flood, she didn't want to go to school

anymore. The flood affected her in a bad way. However, later she regretted not completing her education. She attended to the Public Vocational Training Center in Buca and obtained a second-degree diploma. But she wasn't eager for education. Apart from the flood, my mother was also very ill when we were small. I used to help her in the house chores. My sister and I attended the same school. So when we woke up in the morning for the school, I was the one first getting prepared for the school. She didn't want to wake up, she always used to cry in the mornings. I made her wake up and then help her with getting prepared. For example, I was plaiting her hair as my mother was ill."

Moreover, Filiz (Edirne) who is the youngest child in the family. After graduating from secondary school, her parents seemed unwilling to encourage her to attend high school due to poverty. However, her elder sister, who could not continue her education due to poverty after graduating from primary school, told her parents that she would meet her sister's expenses as she was the one maintaining her family through working in the textile factory:

"Although my family were very supportive for my education, they were saying that they wanted me to continue my education, however they were sorry that I would not be able to complete my education due to economic difficulties and then they could not stand this. When I graduated from primary school, my mother objected to my attending to high school, they felt themselves so desperate that they wouldn't be able to meet my school expenses. At that time, my elder sister was working in the factory and she told my parents that she would meet my school expenses. She said: 'We could not complete our education due to poverty, so we would encourage her to continue her education as far as possible. Then she could find a way to go further.' Then, they stopped objecting and I registered myself for high school by myself. As I am the only one graduating from high school, they could not help me a lot. However, my sister could help with my lessons while I was in primary school. Moreover, during my pre-school period, as I was so eager to learn reading, she also taught me to read a number of words at home which functioned as a kindergarten. Due to that, I became the first one learning to read during the first month of the school. Now, I am helping my nephews with their lessons and I want them to participate higher

education. For instance, my elder brothers and their wives say that if their children don't complete their education, then they will remove them from school and make them work at a barbershop or an industrial workshop. And I say, 'No, you have to encourage and support them to continue their education.' I could also prefer staying at home or marrying at an early age like my school peers in the primary school, but I insisted on continuing with my education. When I graduated from primary school, my parents really got surprised as I didn't marry like my friends who were only 14 or 15 years old."

Şebnem (Edirne), who has a Roma mother and a Kurdish father, primarily identifies herself as a Kurd and then as a Roma. Although her parents encourage both her and her elder brother to complete their education, her brother dropped out of high school in the second grade for doing which he is now very regretful. However, Şebnem wants to complete her education and have a state job to meet her parents expectations and to have a better standard of living:

"I have an elder brother who dropped out of high school in the second grade; but he is very regretful now. He helped me a lot with my lessons when I was in the primary school. Also my family have been encouraging my education since I knew myself. Especially my mother, she always say, 'You have to complete your higher education and have a state job. You may be a civil servant or a street cleaner, it doesn't matter until it is a state job. You have to take care of yourself, noone can support you all the time.' Also my father who is in jail now says, 'You have to complete your education and have a job. You see the bad conditions we live in. We aren't good role models for you. So, don't be like us.' I haven't had a boyfriend up to now. I am an eastern girl, now I am 18 years old, but I haven't been to a pub or a disco. I don't want my family to hear such gossips about me. Whenever I go, I go with my mom. Yes, I go school everyday, but I go to school in the morning, and I come home back as soon as the daily classes end."

Most of the interviewees' parents, like those of Şebnem, encourage their children's participation in the higher education through showing themselves as negative role models like in the phrase: "Do as I say, not as I did." Almost all

appreciate the value of education in a country where the unemployment is a significant problem even for the ones who have a higher education degree. Also they want their children to have state jobs as they are permanent in nature allowing also regular payments and social security. For example, Cem (Kırklareli) wants to attend a State Conservatory to become a state artist after graduating from Edirne Vocational College of Social Sciences of Trakya University. He wants it to make his parents proud of him as they have sacrificed a lot to support his education:

“I couldn’t even think of becoming a university student; living in another city other than Kırklareli and being free away from my parents when I was a child. My parents encourage my education a lot. I had difficulties with my lessons when I was in high school, but they always told me not to give up. They always say if you continue and complete your education, you will do it for your own benefit and they tell me not to be depend on anyone and at least become a civil servant to have a regular payment. They don’t want me to be exploited by the others. Of course noone can treat me badly, I am not such a kind of a person. Although my elder sister and I have had economic difficulties, we don’t let them affect our educational process in a bad way. However, our relatives on both sides are jealous of us. For example, they try to look down on me referring to my department as it is a two-year programme. They are driving me crazy. When we meet, they ask me what I will become after graduation. They mark the state of my sister and say, ‘She is also a high school graduate, but what she could do, at the end she got married too.’ They try to discourage me.”

However, unlike Cem’s relatives, Nilgün’s relatives (Malkara), particularly her aunt on her father’s side and her husband appear as the architects of her future even more than her own parents. When she graduated from primary school, her aunt had a conversation with her father to persuade him to let Nilgün continue with her high school education in Edirne to prevent her from getting married at an early age like her friends:

“My parents used to attend the parents meetings. They couldn’t help me with my lessons, I had to do it by myself. I only asked their opinions on general subjects,

but I couldn't apply their guidance in specific subjects. I researched them by myself through using the library or internet. When I graduated from primary school, my aunt on my father's side wanted me to continue with my high school education in Edirne as they are living in Edirne. She knows the situation of our neighbourhood in Malkara which made her think that I wouldn't be able to complete my education due to my friends. Almost all of them got married at an early age. As I was so small that I could easily leave education. She told my parents that I might not be able to continue my education there in Malkara and offered them to let me attend high school in Edirne. She told my parents that she could support my education and I could live with them. So, I am here by the agency of my aunt. Although she is a primary school graduate, she is a self-educated woman. She is even more superior than an educated person. If they ask me whether I had a chance I would choose my family or not, I would choose them again as my family without hesitation."

They are all supported by their parents as their parents appreciate the value of education; but they lack the means. Although their parents encourage all their children, especially the boys, to complete their education; only the respondents included in this study can achieve this goal. Early marriages, poverty and having no positive role model, especially for girls having no woman role model with a higher educational attainment, are important barriers preventing either their participation or survival in education. Moreover, as all mothers are housewives and fathers are involved in low-paid jobs due to lack of vocational training or low level of education; their lifestories - made up of social disadvantages and lack of self-esteem due to poverty - turn into cautionary tales for their children. "Do as I say, not as I do" appears as a common approach adopted by their families to encourage their children for education. Especially, mothers advise their daughters to complete their education and have a secured job instead of marrying at an early age and having kids like themselves. As they have low levels of education, they have low levels of income and due to that they can make only a little contribution to the future of their children and this make them feel completely powerless and desperate. So, if their children make something out of themselves, they will be given dignity and make something out of their deprivation.

7.3.2 Schools, Teachers and Discrimination

As mentioned earlier, five of them graduated from predominantly Roma primary schools; and four of them graduated from mixed schools. However, they all graduated from primary schools located in their neighbourhoods either mixed or predominantly Roma. So, the mixed schools they attended can also be defined as a kind of segregated school appearing as a result of patterns of residential segregation. Additionally, they all graduated from mixed high schools located, either mostly in downtown or the nearest non-Roma neighbourhood. However, the way they interpret their school experiences is closely related to their level of ethnic identity achievement. The more conscious they are of their ethnic identity the more critical they are of their previous school experiences. This is supported by the fact that six out of nine interviewees report that they haven't been discriminated against by either their friends or their teachers up to now. However, the rest of them - the ones in the achieved identity status group - say that they have either experienced or witnessed discrimination in primary and high school, even if they haven't had suffered from discrimination as much as their Roma school peers who had to drop out of school. Although, five out of nine interviewees with a foreclosed identity status are scholarship holding members of EDRROM, that is the Edirne-based Roma association, they choose to pass over the issues regarding their experiences of discrimination lightly, even the ones having positive feelings about their ethnic identity. Just Şebnem (Edirne), having a foreclosed identity status, marks the presence of discrimination through her answer, but in an implicit way: *"My friends and my teachers were all good to me. I didn't experienced discrimination...I don't think of past anymore, I have a future, so the past experiences don't make sense to me."*

7.3.2.1 The Teacher: An Agency for Social Inclusion or Exclusion

The role of the teachers in primary and high school education is very significant in terms of both these students' encouragement for completing their education and overcoming the stigma of inferiority associated with the Roma identity. For example, three of the interviewees, one having an achieved identity

status and the other two having a foreclosed identity status tell that their teachers encouraged them for completing their education and that was the basic incentive behind their participation in higher education apart from the effect of their parents. As they say, their teachers gave them dignity and made them believe that they could achieve further. For example, Meltem (Edirne) says:

“In fact, I didn’t want to continue my education after graduating from the primary school. I would like to sit at home, but not due to marriage. Then my teachers encouraged and inspired me to continue my education. They told my parents and my brothers that they should have to encourage me for completing my education. Moreover, they insistently told me: ‘You are a successful student and you are clever. You should complete your education. If you have a university degree, you will have a job and won’t be dependent on anyone in the future.’ Eventually, they persuaded me and made me so eager to continue my education.”

On the other hand, the ones reporting the presence of discrimination in the primary and high school, except for Serkan (Diyarbakır), while explaining the ways it appeared, also put a special emphasis on the low quality of the education received by the Roma children. For example, Serkan (Diyarbakır) mentions discrimination only in terms of the way his primary school teachers treated him. He says that just a number of them treated him badly due to him being a Dom-Roma, and adds that there were also the ones, the good ones, making no discrimination against him and treating all the students equal regardless of their ethnic identity. He doesn’t detail the subject any further, because his priority concerns are the severe poverty and deprivation he has been going through since he was a child.

However, Filiz (Edirne) and Mehmet (Bartın) provide a clear and detailed description of the level and possible ways of the discrimination faced by the Roma children in their educational process in Turkey. Apart from the negative and positive impacts of their teachers on their educational advancement, both of them highlight the low quality of education received by the Roma children in predominantly Roma schools even which may lead them to drop out of school and become socially excluded. For example, Filiz (Edirne) went through a hard period of time during the

first year of the high school due to being the only Roma in a non-Roma environment; poor and receiving a low quality of education in her primary school which led her to feel herself not as clever as the others:

“When I was in primary school, I would like to get out of my neighbourhood, because the quality of education provided in our school was low. As it was a predominantly Roma school, there weren’t enough school activities. There was a school in another neighbourhood near to ours. The students in that school were engaging also in social and cultural activities and we were insistently telling our teachers to get involved in such kind of activities, but they even didn’t listen to us. I mean, I was stuck in my neighbourhood. Then, when I attended the high school which was predominantly non-Roma, I went through a hard period of time due to having difficulty in adoption. The Roma neighbourhoods mostly are located in the margins of the city and the high school was in downtown, so I felt myself so lonely. Due to that I didn’t go to school for a week, I even thought of dropping out of school. For example, in the first year of the school, I couldn’t tell them that I was a Roma. However, my school peers felt that I was a Roma and they were whispering about my Romaniness. I didn’t want to tell it explicitly, because I was afraid of being excluded. I was very careful about my pronunciation, you know mostly the Roma people use a broken language. Indeed, I was speaking only if it was necessary. I was just saying ‘hi’ most of the time. It was then when I first wished not to be born as a Roma. Even I rebelled against my family: ‘I wish I wasn’t a Roma; I wish I was somebody else’s daughter, not yours. Why I have to wear the same clothes and eat the same things everyday?’ But now, I know this was all about the poverty we were stuck in.

However, she was both financially and morally supported by her teachers in the high school which gave her dignity and encouraged her to do her best for a better life:

“I could manage to complete the high school through the scholarship given by one of my teachers. She saw my enthusiasm and when my father died in the second year of the high school, they all supported me, never left me alone. Even one day, I told them that I had to leave school due to economic difficulties. I mean not

because I wanted to, but I had to. Although I had economic difficulties which might easily prevent me from completing my education, I had tried a lot not to give in as far as possible. As my home was far away from my school, I could hardly meet my transportation fees. My elder sister was both meeting my school expenses and maintaining our family. So, she could just pay for my transportation fees; but due to that I had to go to school hungry as I couldn't have a breakfast at home. For example, my friends were going to the school cafeteria for buying something to eat, but I couldn't go with them due to not having pocket money. I was suffering a lot due to the economic difficulties, and sometimes I used to rebel against my family due to our poor living conditions. I got angry with my dad for ruining our lives and not thinking about our future. That is why I am now thinking about future as I want my children to live better than me."

Although Mehmet (Bartın) did not suffer from economic difficulties during the period of pre-higher education, he was confronted with challenging experiences as a successful Roma child achieving better than his Roma school peers. For example, when his primary teacher told him not to be close to his Roma friends in the same class not to be affected in a bad way, he says that he liked the way she treated him; but this led his exclusion by his Roma friends. For a period of time, they treated him as a non-Roma betraying them and his ethnic identity. He was chosen by the teacher as the most suitable one to fit into the traditional Turkish education model; i.e., creating a gadjo out of a Roma child. However, now he can see the reasons for his friends' attitudes more clearly and judge his teacher's discriminatory attitudes towards his friends which he defined as the significant factor leading their social exclusion:

"My primary school was out of Aladağ and a mixed one. There were 40 students in my class, twenty of which were Roma and the other were Turk. The teachers didn't allow the Roma students to participate in the school ceremonies. For example, only the non-Roma students were assigned to read poems during the national festivals. Although my teacher never beat me, while we were talking about our primary school experiences the previous day, one of my school friends said that one day the teacher kicked him in the face and he hit his eye off the corner of the

blackboard. I can't forget about one thing that my teacher told me. She warned me not to hang out with my Roma friends anymore. I was the most successful student in the class and then she changed my place. She took me out among the Roma students and put me among the gadje¹² and told me not take after them. At first this made me feel good. He assigned me as the deputy dean of the class. After primary school, I was registered for the secondary school. The Roma students could, at most, continue their education until the second grade. They became unsuccessful, because they didn't know anything, there were students even whom didn't know how to write and read. When the parent meetings were held, I could easily tell my father, but my friends couldn't say to their parents, as all their grades were bad. They were also being ignored by their parents. They might label their children as lazy, but didn't question the reasons for their laziness. Our primary school teacher gave us high grades on our lessons deliberately without really measuring how well we had learnt. The unsuccessful students were always excluded. If something bad happened in school, they were always accusing the Roma students. These students, my friends, they still feel themselves deprived due to their school experiences. Now, all of them are married and have at least 3 or 4 kids. They couldn't enjoy their youth, because they have to work to earn their living. They still suffer due to the bad treatment and discrimination they experienced during their school years; the fallacies in the education system blunted them and excluded them."

However, unlike his primary school teacher, who had a negative impact on the Roma students through making a significant contribution to their social exclusion, Mehmet's history and guidance teachers in the high school, particularly his history teacher, appeared as positive role models for Mehmet. When he talks about them, he feels great loyalty to them due to their struggle for him against the school administrators and other teachers and the dignity they gave him not as a possible gadjo, but as a Roma who had to be made aware of his Romaniness. As it is mentioned earlier, he went through a hard period of time when he first attended the super high school consisting of predominantly non-Roma students who were clever and even had better living standards than that of Mehmet's. All these factors were so

¹² Although he refers to all the non-Roma as "gadje", gadje is a plural noun used for male non-Roma, its singular form is Gadjo. Moreover, the feminine form is Gadji and plural Gadja (The Patrin Web Journal – Glossary, [www.geocities.com/~patrin/glossary.htm - 34k]).

challenging that, as he says, he had a psychological problem for the first time in his life. Previously, he was the most successful student in the primary and secondary schools, especially with respect to the other Roma students; however, in the super high school he became the one who had to push his luck not to be excluded:

“For instance, I attended the preparatory class, because I wasn’t taught English in my secondary school. Besides I thought of leaving super high school due to English. I mean they made us think. The school administrators told my dad to remove me from school as they thought that I wouldn’t be able to succeed the lessons. Meanwhile, my guidance teacher, I can never forget him, he is working in Ankara now. He asked them why they made me leave and to whom they were sending me. He objected to them, and asked them whether it was essential to know English. My grade was 42 and he asked my English teacher if he couldn’t increase my grade by three points. My English teacher answered him that that was not the point, the other students were more clever than me. Then he replied him that that kid had the capacity to succeed in that school, he was ranked second most successful student of Bartın while he was in primary school. Then, they persuaded us to stay. In the beginning I was very shy and most of the time I was hanging out alone. One day, my history teacher, who is also a socialist, asked me where I was from. I said, ‘I am from Aladağ.’ Then he asked me why I was alone and not spending time with the other students and added, ‘Are you afraid of your Romaniness?’ I replied him that I wasn’t afraid of. However, he said, ‘But you don’t know anything about your Romaniness. They call you as a Roma, as a Gypsy; but these words don’t make sense to you.’ Yes, it was making no sense, because I even didn’t know the meaning of the term. They insistently make you repeat, ‘How happy is he who can say I am Turkish’ and say that we are all children of Atatürk, I mean that sort of things...”

Being able to identify the existence of discrimination applied to the Roma children and discuss the low quality of education are important indicators of raising awareness and class consciousness among the Roma university students participating in the Roma organization process. As the others, the ones not participating in the organization process, lack such an awareness and class consciousness regarding their ethnic identity, they cannot make a description of the discrimination applied either to

them or their Roma school peers; although they graduated from predominantly Roma schools appearing as a result of patterns of residential segregation. The Roma children, mostly, confront outside world, especially when they attend the high school. Most of them graduate from Roma primary schools due to living in Roma neighbourhoods as the schools located in their neighbourhoods appear as the most convenient choice for schooling.

The role played by the teachers in those schools is very significant. When they attend the high school, they may also be challenged intellectually, due to the low quality of education received in the primary school. Most of the children can easily drop out of school after primary school due to feeling themselves incapable of achieving their lessons due to the low quality of education and the stigma of inferiority leading their discrimination by their teachers and non-Roma school peers. Therefore, the school appears not as a tool for a better future, but as a place for experiencing humiliation, discrimination and exclusion. Moreover, not only the Roma people, but also the non-Roma teachers dealing with Roma children have to raise their awareness and consciousness about the particular characteristics of these children in order to provide them with the dignity and respect they deserve.

7.4 Future Expectations

The future expectations of the interviewees vary depending on their ethnic identity status. The ones having an achieved identity status and an active participation in the Roma organization process mention being positive role models for the Roma children and participating in the activities that will be conducted for empowerment of the Roma population and strengthening the participation of Roma in political and social life. However, the others included in the group of foreclosed identity status, except for Halil (Edirne), display career-related goals through which they will achieve a better life and make their parents proud of them.

Except for Filiz (Edirne), who will attend to the Romani Studies Department of a Bulgarian University by courtesy of EDROM, all the others included in the achieved identity status group want to have a state job like the ones included in the foreclosed identity status group. They want to have it, primarily due to meet their families' expectations. However, Filiz (Edirne) wants to become a Romani Studies

Scholar and devote her life to the empowerment of the situation of Roma in Turkey both as a Roma activist and a Roma Studies Scholar.

The ones participating in the Roma organization process are also aware of the career opportunities provided through that process. Namely, they have met a great number of influential people during the meetings of the Roma associations or the symposiums held for the development of the Roma Rights Movement in Turkey. So, the Roma organization process also provide them with a significant source of social capital by courtesy of which they can think of becoming a Roma district governor or even the first Roma member of the parliament. For example, Ali (İzmir) wants to become both a Roma activist like Mustafa Aksu and a district governor:

“I want to see myself in the Turkish Parliament in the future. Today, the Kurdish population is represented by the pro-Kurdish Democratic Society Party (DTP), but there is no Roma member of parliament. I would like to be there to represent the rights of the Roma population. Besides, I also want to be a district governor so I am getting prepared for the examinations. I invest both for my future and my people’s future. For example, I met Mustafa Aksu today and I would like to become a Roma Rights advocate like him.”

Although Mehmet (Bartın) mentions district governorship as one of his future plans, he is not so eager like Ali (İzmir) as he only wants it to make his family happy. For him, an ordinary position as a civil servant is also sufficient due to his desire for improving himself in the area of human rights:

“If I could win the exam, I would like to become a district governor. Especially my family, they want it even more than me, it is so important to them. I mean, I have met a great number of influential people, you know nothing is possible in the allocation of the government posts without favouritism in Turkey. Actually, my greatest desire is to have a master’s degree in human rights. It is not about just Roma Rights, the Roma associations can commit themselves to the advocacy of Roma Rights. I would like to participate in the advocacy of human rights as a scholar. In the future I would like to lecture on human rights at a university. A Gypsy child lecturing at a university... I would like to make a further research on the situation of

Roma in Turkey and Europe, for example I want to study of Nazi genocide and I can accomplish all these also as an ordinary civil servant.”

Serkan (Diyarbakır), on the other hand, wants to become an academician of a state conservatory. Although he had taken the conservatory examinations twice up to now, he failed. However, he is determined and wants to push his luck as far as possible. He wants it not just for himself, he is also a father and he has to think primarily of his children rather than the other Roma children: *“My future plan is to become a conservatory student. If I could win the entrance examination, my family would have a better life. I don’t mean myself, I mean my children, they would have a better future.”*

Moreover, the ones in the group of foreclosed identity status also want to have a state job both to have a better life and make their families happy. For example, Meltem (Edirne) wants to have a job not to be dependent on her future husband, but the situation of Roma is none of her concern:

“I don’t know, they (the Roma people) can do whatever they want. Everybody is responsible for himself/herself. I am not interested in such issues, I am only interested in my own life. That is why I want to complete my education. I would like to become a customs inspector in the future, because I want to be independent and stand on my own two feet...”

In addition to Meltem (Edirne), Halil (Edirne) and Şebnem (Edirne) also mention to have a job as their future expectations. Although Şebnem wants to have a state job, Halil wants to have his own pub in a touristic province. Halil, who has a high level of self-esteem and striking leadership characteristics, mentions the significance of agency to overcome the problems faced by the Roma people and he thinks of himself as a positive role model for the Roma children whose agency he plans to encourage in the future:

“I don’t think that the Roma people have a problem. They can determine their needs by themselves. Noone can say that I am a Roma and you have to accept me

into your society. You have to prove yourself, for example, through completing an eight-year primary school education, then the Anatolia Teacher Training High School. Then you graduate from the university and become a teacher. Then you obtain a master's degree & a PhD. Followingly, you become a holder of a chair and give lectures and become a well-known authority in Turkey. At last, you pen a book and write on it: 'I am a Roma'. First, you work to meet these provisions and then expect to be respected. If you don't invest in your future, and eat what you earn on a daily basis, then you can't expect them to accept you. I know a great number of waged labourers, the others say that there is no job. No, there are jobs, but there is also laziness. They don't make plans for their future, they have a present-time orientation. They simply say; 'Allah is great, Allah gives the food for tomorrow. I have been struggling to have a future, in other words, to become a holder of a chair. In the future when I become a professional, I can keep in touch with this association and can meet the Roma children to have me as their positive role models. I even don't need to see them, I can talk them on the phone, it would be enough.'

For example, Cem (Malkara) wants to please his family through completing his education, but then he thinks of entering the conservatory examination to become a state artist: *"I would like to attend the state conservatory. My aim isn't to be famous, but to be a state artist. I always dream about the future. I would like to have a good job, a house, a car... I mean I would like to have a beautiful house, a beautiful car and a beautiful cell phone, I fed up with using this one"* (He shows his recent cell phone).

Also Nilgün (Malkara) expects the same things to have in the future like her friend Cem: *"I always dream about the future. I have already made so so so much plans about the future. I would like to have a house, a car...I expect to get marry; have a job and be wealthy...I mean both wealthy and happy."*

Based on the data provided above, it seems that only three or four of them are likely to become positive role models for the Roma children and youth in the future to help them with breaking their cycles of exclusion. The data obtained regarding their future expectations reinforces the assumption of emergence of a new Roma

identity: i.e., Roma intelligentsia, mentioned previously. Their participation in the Roma organization process helps them not just with raising awareness and class consciousness regarding their ethnic identity, but also provides them with a source of social capital through using which they think of becoming the first Roma district governor or Roma member of parliament. However, the ones not participating in the process seem to break just their own cycles of poverty, but not the cycles of exclusion as long as they keep on carrying the burden of the stigma of inferiority attached to their Romaniness. This can be deduced from the varying levels of future expectations taking place in relation to the occupational prestige. The ones not participating in the Roma organization process seek security work that is why they and their families put a special emphasis on state jobs. They cannot increase the level of their expectations, due to having lower levels of self-esteem reinforced by the stigma of inferiority; i.e., whatever they become in the future, even a president of republic, they think they will still be suffering from inferiority, discrimination and exclusion, unless they hide their Romaniness. However, the ones participating in the Roma organization process can think of having prestigious occupations, as they break down the stigma of inferiority through the positive self-esteem they gained during the organization process.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

The Roma population in general, and the Roma university students in particular, have become more visible in the public sphere since the early 2000s through the Roma Rights Movement emergence of which is closely related to the Turkey's acceptance as an official candidate for membership to the European Union at the EU Helsinki Summit 1999 (Ayhan Kaya, 2005: 5); but their publicity is still framed and controlled by dominating negative prejudices and stereotypes about the Roma population in Turkey. The Roma Rights Movement in Turkey is supported not just by the Roma associations themselves, but also by the non-Roma NGOs specialized in the area of human rights and a number of foreign and Turkish academicians. The situation of the Roma population, especially in the eastern and southeastern European countries, is mainly characterized by severe poverty and social exclusion both by the EU and different agencies of the UN which is discussed in detail in Chapter III (ERRC 2004, UNDP 2002, UNDP 2006, UNICEF 2007 and et al.) Moreover, the research studies and the projects conducted to expose the situation of Roma in Turkey have come up with almost the same conclusions regarding the poverty and social exclusion faced by the Roma population. As it is given in detail in Chapter IV; poverty, discrimination and lack of access to key sectoral fields like education, employment, health care and good quality housing are identified in most of the research reports as the leading problems faced by different Roma communities in Turkey (ERRC/HYD/EDROM 2008, Gündüz-Hoşgör 2007, SKYD 2007 and IRSN 2005). In this regard, the Roma university students appear as an exceptional case when the vulnerable situation of the overall Roma population is concerned.

This thesis had two aims regarding the Roma university students which came on the scene with the emergence of the Roma Rights Movement in Turkey: First, it

attempted to discover the characteristics of their lifecourses in order to identify the success factors paving the way for their participation in higher education, as their appearance in higher education is noteworthy when the role that can be played by them in Turkey in altering the stereotype of Roma people as uneducated and poor is taken into consideration. Therefore, their family socio-economic status, demographic characteristics as well as their relationships with their parents, brothers, sisters and the residents of their neighbourhoods were given comprehensively in Chapter VI. As stated in Chapter II, social exclusion is a dynamic process taking place over time and its aspects are interrelated. Specifically, it serves as an holistic understanding of deprivation as argued by Arjan de Haan (De Haan, 1999). It has two central aspects: First, it is a multidimensional concept; i.e., people may be deprived of different things at the same time which refers to deprivation in the economic, social and political spheres. Second, it focuses, implicitly, on the relations and processes causing deprivation through which it takes us beyond the mere descriptions of deprivation and draws our attention to social relations, the processes, actors and institutions underlying deprivation. Therefore, the analysis of their material conditions; relationships with their families, brothers, sisters and the people of their neighbourhoods; and the role played by their families, teachers and school peers in their educational process exposed the cycle of exclusion being experienced by them, their families, their Roma school peers and the people of their neighbourhoods particularly in social and economic spheres. Within such a deprived context, their participation in higher education can be explained mainly by the agency demonstrated by them to break this cycle of exclusion unlike the people nearby whose lives are stuck in this cycle.

Second, the study tried to explore the differences between the Roma university students involved actively in the Roma organization process and the ones not involved, in terms of their ethnic identity patterns. That is, the Roma university students included in this study are not the only ones participating in higher education. There were the others participating in higher education and involved in white-collar jobs previously; however, due to the stigma of inferiority reinforced by the discrimination against the Roma people in all walks of life, they were hiding their ethnic identity to make something out of themselves. Through this study, it was tried to be exposed whether this tendency is still alive among the Roma university students

other than the ones participating in the Roma organization process who construct their future upon it. As it is mentioned in Chapter VII and given in detail in Chapter II, the identity patterns emerging out of the data analysis regarding their feelings about their ethnic identity and attitudes towards their ethnic community fit perfectly in the three-stage model of ethnic identity development in adolescence introduced by Jean Phinney. On the basis of this model, there are mainly two types of ethnic identity statuses among these students: while the ones participating in the Roma organization process have an achieved identity status; the ones not participating have a foreclosed identity status and therefore, have the tendency of hiding their identities and lack a strong commitment to their ethnic identity which forms the cultural aspect of the social exclusion faced by the most of the Roma people. The stigma of inferiority attached to the Roma people is so strong that these two groups of Roma university students differ from each other not just in terms of their ethnic identity patterns, but also in terms of the way they interpreted their school experiences and future expectations.

The general conclusions derived from the analysis of the data, supporting the above mentioned results of this study, describe the situation of the Roma university students as below.

First; the socio-economic background of the respondents resemble the situation of the old immigrants discussed by Keyder and Buğra in their so-called UNDP report (2003), *“New Poverty and the Changing Regime of Turkey”*. Keyder and Buğra expose the features of newly emerging forms of poverty in Turkey through comparing the situation of new immigrants with that of the old immigrants migrating to İstanbul. The old immigrants’ integration into the urban context used to be possible through employment and acquisition of squatter (*gecekondu*) housing. The latter played even a more important role than the former in their incorporation into the urban fabric through providing them with social support networks based on kinship and neighbourhood reciprocity. However, due to the negative impact of the globalization and technological change on the lives of the people beginning with the 1980s, the new immigrants arriving to İstanbul are deprived of such a pattern of integration in the urban context. They have to come in as tenants, mostly, into the least desirable and cheapest dwelling units; are involved in low-paid informal jobs, and are deprived of social support networks closely related to settlement and housing

mentioned above. Therefore, they cannot be socially and economically integrated into the urban context and become socially excluded as they cannot participate in social, economic and political life on equal terms with the others. All the respondents included in this study have squatter houses; they all live in Roma neighbourhoods including also a part of their kinship members; most of them have grown up in extended families and therefore, they have social support networks provided by their extended family and other members of their kinship on which they can rely in times of need. They consider themselves as being middle-class due to these factors. While making such an evaluation, they compare themselves with the other Roma people either still living a nomadic life or a semi-nomadic life in poor rental housing conditions of the least desirable and cheapest dwelling units of the city. As it is mentioned previously, the dichotomy of settled/nomadic plays an important role in their class identification. As Hermann Arnold argued:

‘This pure race, nomadic Gypsy’ is not only confronted with the ‘assimilated and settled Gypsy’, but also functions as a polar opposite to the middle-class, industrialised and consequently ‘culture-less’ modern age (Nomadic and Settled, <http://ling.kfunigraz.ac.at/~rombase/cgi-in/art.cgi?src/ethn/topics/nomadic.en.xml>, last visited on November 2008).

It can be said that, on the basis of the emphasis put by them on home-ownership, for whom nomadic way of life is one of the defining characteristics of their ethnic culture, home-ownership not just serves as an indicator for being in a better economic situation, but it also serves as a socio-cultural indicator marking their differentiation from the traditional Roma people and their nomadic way of life through implying their being settled and modern.

Second; their lives have also been affected in a negative way by the globalized economy and technological changes taking place since the 1980s. They recently suffer from poverty and poor living conditions. The worsening socio-economic situation of the respondents is closely related to the sharp decrease in the demand for their traditional skills such as blacksmithing and sieve-making taking place over time and the transformation of the extended family into the nuclear family due to the death of the grandparents and hardening conditions of life which appeared as the negative side-effects of globalization (UNDP 2002 and Suat Kolukırık 2004). Although the families still, to a lesser extent, have social support networks based on kinship, their relatives cannot offer them enough to meet their needs because they

also suffer from the same levels of poverty. The social disadvantages/deprivations faced by these Roma families are interrelated. As their parents have low levels of education and do not possess marketable skills anymore, they are involved in low-paid informal jobs with no social security then a limited access to health care; as they have low and insecure income they are obliged to constantly struggle for food and basic needs. As it is exposed in two different reports prepared by different agencies of the UN regarding the Roma people in general and Roma children in particular (UNDP 2006 and UNICEF 2007): due to this cycle of poverty, the Roma parents can hardly meet education expenses of their children which make it more difficult for young Roma to escape poverty (UNDP, 2006: 26). Furthermore, combination of this cycle of poverty with the low education levels of the parents results in reduced capacities to stimulate the development of their children (UNICEF, 2007: 37). Accordingly, there is a strong and two-way relationship between poverty and poor education. As the families have poor income, they cannot meet the school expenses of their children and keeping these children in school becomes a great challenge. Mainly owing to poverty, they can easily drop out of school and involved in low-paid jobs as they do not have marketable vocational skills. Thus, the children themselves stuck in the same intergenerational cycle of poverty through which their circle of social exclusion is closed. All these mentioned aspects of the deprivation faced by the Roma people supports Arjan de Haan's conceptualization of social exclusion as a multi-dimensional concept by focusing on multidimensionality of deprivation; i.e., the people may be deprived (excluded) of different things at the same time (de Haan, 1999).

Third; participation in higher education means breaking the cycle of poverty through education for the Roma university students to achieve which they have been demonstrating high levels of agency when the above mentioned characteristics of their socio-economic environment are concerned. However, poverty and low educational levels of their parents, brothers, sisters and the residents of their neighbourhoods cannot be regarded as the only factors contributing to most of their Roma school or neighbourhood peers', particularly Roma girls', including also their brothers and sisters, dropping out of school. Ongoing prevalent practice of early marriages among Roma youngsters; lacking positive role models in the family and in the neighbourhood, where they spend most of their time as they have grown up in

such a close community structure; gendered prejudices against the education of the Roma girls indicating to existence of a strong patriarchal system among the Roma communities can also be regarded as significant factors making them vulnerable to social exclusion (UNICEF 2007, UNDP 2006 and ERRC 2004). However, the worsening economic conditions, in a positive way, have been loosening patriarchal grip on Roma girls. The recent school-age Roma girls, unlike their sisters and mothers, are also encouraged by their parents, particularly by their mothers, not to do as they did but to do as they say. They are all encouraged to complete their higher education and have a secure job with a regular income. As they suffer from the cycle of poverty, they can offer only their negative lifestories to their children as cautionary tales instead of the social support provided previously by the extended family disappeared. This emerging pattern of role modeling among the Roma parents is similar to that of the working-class fathers discovered by Richard Sennett and Jonathan Cobb (1972) in their so-called book, *“The Hidden Injuries of Class”*. They argued that calling the pressure working-class fathers put on their kids ‘authoritarian’ was misleading in that the father didn’t ask the child to take the parents’ lives as a model, but as a warning;

Working-class sacrifice is not a ritual, then. It creates no closure to shame because, indeed, the ascription of weakness the society forces on men has no limits in time; the weakness is built into who they are. The contract in sacrificing is not therefore a simple transaction of, I will give myself to you, you will therefore do what I want, that will make me feel better, and I can stop feeling I have no life except through you (Sennett & Cobb, 1972: 128).

The Roma parents also try to do their best to support their children as much as possible to keep them in schools. All the respondents put a special emphasis on their desire for making their parents proud of them through having an university degree and a state job. However, the actors and institutions; that is, the teachers and schools, involved in the education system contribute to their social exclusion rather than creating opportunities for their development (UNICEF, 2007: 66).

Fourth; mainly the primary and high school experiences of the Roma university students, also interrelated with the factors mentioned in the third conclusion, shift the focus of social exclusion - which is identified by de Haan as the second defining characteristic of the social exclusion implying a focus on the relations and processes causing deprivation - from mapping the various dimensions of deprivation to the identification of the actors and processes underlying

deprivation; i.e., in Amartya Sen's words relational roots of deprivation (de Haan, 1999: 10). Most of the Roma children grow up in predominantly Roma neighbourhoods with a little social and cultural exchange with the outside world. Accordingly, when they start school they also confront the outside world; i.e., non-Roma teachers, school peers and the society surrounding them (UNICEF, 2007: 45). This is when they are, for the first time in their lives, confronted with the stigma of inferiority attached to their ethnic identity by the majority society (Ibid and Lila Farkas 2007). However, they may not perceive it as a challenge during their primary school education as most of them attend the predominantly Roma primary schools located in their Roma neighbourhoods. They are educated in segregated schools taking place in relation to the residential patterns of segregation which delays their confrontation outside world and make them particularly vulnerable to stigmatization and discrimination. Therefore, the primary school teachers play a great role in the future of their education. The discriminatory attitudes of these teachers towards the Roma children take place, implicitly, through providing them with a low quality education and lesser development opportunities. Accordingly when these children attend mixed high-schools, due to the low quality education they received in primary school and being challenged by the stigma of inferiority explicitly in high school, they may face severe difficulties; unless they drop out of school previously and manage to survive. As it is mentioned by the respondents, many teachers and school administrators regard Roma as a 'threat/disturbance to normal school life' and due to that the Roma people are blamed for not appreciating the value of education (Farkas, 2007: 12). Although the parents may not contribute to their children's development through helping them with their lessons; they try to do, mostly, their best to keep them in education as long as possible especially when the recent socio-economic conditions are concerned. However, the teachers cannot meet the needs of these children; they cannot appreciate their diversity and culture and fail to provide them with the dignity and support they deserve (UNICEF, 2007: 45). On the other hand, the teachers can also function as mentors and positive role models for the Roma adolescents through encouraging them to continue their education, when they think of dropping out of school due to poverty and feelings of inferiority associated with their ethnic identity or intellectual capabilities while attending high school; or leaving school after graduating from primary school which is compulsory, due to

having no positive role models that stimulate them to achieve further, in relation to the homogeneous school and neighbourhood environment where early marriage, especially for the Roma girl, appears as the most convenient option:

Moreover, a Romani girl who lives in the ghetto, like her parents and grandparents before her, knows no other life. Everyday she meets people who did not go to school or did not finish and people who are unemployed or perform unskilled jobs. Thus, in the absence of positive role models and mentors, under the weight of traditions rooted in patriarchy, coupled with the broad issue of racial discrimination, Romani girls remain seriously handicapped from participating fully in, and enjoying the benefits of, education. It is argued that desegregation of schools and interaction with people from diverse backgrounds is one way of breaking this cycle of disadvantage (ERRC, 2004: 34).

Fifth; all the respondents included in this study are the survivors who managed not to be caught by the cycle of exclusion on their path to higher education unlike most of their Roma school peers who dropped out school; got married early; had kids and recently are involved in low-paid informal jobs to look after their families. However, this does not mean that they completely escape from the cycle of exclusion. Most of the respondents put a special emphasis on exclusion while explaining their feelings about their ethnic identity and the way the Roma people are treated by the majority society. They predominantly experience the fear of being socially excluded in relation to the stigma of inferiority attached to the Roma people by the majority society. Accordingly, they are obliged to hide their identity to be able to benefit from the available opportunities on equal terms with their non-Roma coevals (Farkas, 2007: 10); as Roma children frequently experience exclusion from education not just due to poverty; but also due to ethnic discrimination (EDROM/ERRC/HYD, 2008: 92). As it is also touched upon in the report of IRSN that -with respect to the children of the Roma musicians they came across during their research period- although some Roma children participate in higher education, especially the ones from the families of the musicians, they generally hide their Romaniness from this point onwards (IRSN, 2005: 20). As they have the tendency for hiding their identities not to be discriminated against both during their higher education and professional life; they are unlikely to become positive role models both for the Roma children on their path to higher education and altering the negative stereotypes and prejudices about the Roma people.

Sixth; on the other hand, the Roma university students included in this study which have an active participation in the Roma Rights Movement, unlike the others

not participating, do not want to hide their ethnic identity anymore. They have an achieved identity status, as they have gone through a period of exploration and recently have a clear and strong commitment to their ethnic identity. However, prior to their participation in the Roma organization process, they had the same identity status; i.e., the foreclosed identity status, with the others in this study that are not participating in the so-called Movement. The latter group, either having negative or positive feelings about their ethnic identity, have not gone through a period of exploration of their ethnic identity yet. They mostly accept the values and attitudes of the majority culture, indeed, a number of them internalized negative views of their own group held by the majority society. That is why they prefer hiding their ethnic identity; but as it is given above, they cannot be blamed for not identifying themselves openly with their ethnic group. They are not the ones generating the stigma of inferiority; they are the victims of it and are obliged to adopt such an identity strategy to escape from cycle of exclusion. On the other hand, not them, but the ones participating in the Roma organization process are likely to contribute to the empowerment of their ethnic community through becoming positive role models for the Roma children. Although the Roma Rights Movement, which can be defined also as Roma organization process, dates back ten years in Turkey; the Roma-led advocacy organizations have become actively involved in the advocacy of Roma rights and interests for three or four years (EDROM/ERRC/HYD, 2008: 112). The Roma university students participating in the Movement are, therefore, significant actors of it. They and their elder counterparts involved in the Movement have been going through the same process of ethnic consciousness-raising awakened by the awareness-raising activities of the non-Roma human rights NGOs. Up to now, they have been informed about human-rights in general, and human-rights violations against the Roma not just in Turkey, but also in Europe in particular and also provided them with a new source of social capital constituted by social relations with the influential members of the majority society. Therefore, their cases are in many respects unique and if they manage to become the first Roma district governors or members of parliament, they will contribute not just to breaking the mutually reinforcing cycle of absolute poverty, dependency and poor educational attainment among Roma (UNDP, 2006: 37); but also for the first time to the representation of the Roma people at higher-levels of bureaucracy and in political sphere in Turkey.

Even though it is claimed that there used to be / are high-level Roma bureaucrats in Turkey, this cannot be proved as they preferred/prefer hiding their ethnic identities (EDROM/ERRC/HYD, 2008: 58). Supported by the above mentioned conclusions it can be claimed that these Roma university students actively participating in the Roma Rights Movement - rather than their elder counterparts who either with low educational levels or are uneducated - may pioneer the birth of a new Roma identity in Turkey; i.e., the Roma intelligentsia.

Henceforth, the central government has the main responsibility in prevention of the poverty and social exclusion faced by different segments of the Turkish population in general, and by the Roma population in particular through employing both economic policies and social policies that are directly aimed at increasing the incomes of the poor through social assistance, as it is also argued by Keyder and Buğra regarding the prevention of the danger of wide spread social exclusion in Turkey (UNDP, 2003). However, based on the UNDP report's findings regarding the situation of Roma in Southeast Europe (2006), reliance of the Roma people on the welfare payments, in the long run, can exacerbate problems of vulnerability as:

Roma are particularly vulnerable to dependency traps. With limited development opportunities and few successful role models from their own communities, Roma can easily reduce their professional aspirations to the point where survival on social welfare is an acceptable option (UNDP, 2006: 103).

In addition to the poverty, underdevelopment and social exclusion faced by the Roma people, they also suffer from discrimination levelled against them by the majority society in all walks of life which necessitates the promotion of anti-discrimination laws. However, according to the findings of a previous UNDP report, again regarding the situation of Roma people in Southeast Europe (2002), discrimination is both a cause and consequence of inadequate development opportunities; as the enforcement of anti-discriminatory legislation is an obligation, but not adequate condition for addressing the difficulties faced by the Roma people (UNDP, 2002: 1-2). Therefore, promoting development opportunities for the Roma people by focusing on employment and education in the long-run appears as the most significant solutions. The participation of the Roma children at all levels of education in general, and of the Roma youth in higher education in particular should be promoted by the relevant state bodies; local governments; and Roma and non-Roma

NGOs through addressing all forms of discrimination first, to achieve a socially just education for children of different ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. As discussed by Lorna Roberts, the role played by teachers countering discrimination can at most be only part of the solution; in order to eliminate all forms of discrimination in the school environment, first the social processes through which the discrimination is generated should be identified (Lorna Roberts, 2007). Moreover, the teachers and teacher trainees at universities can be offered the chance to have courses and seminars dealing with the Roma culture as soon as it is possible. Furthermore, in schools with a large number of Roma pupils, there may be some adults belonging to the Roma ethnic group among the staff members, who can mediate between the families and the school (Andras T. Hegedüs, 1999: 37). Last but not least, genuine initiatives in education, in terms of desegregation of schools, more resources and reform of educational curricula, administration and finance are needed to increase the educational opportunities for the Roma children in the long-run (UNDP, 2006: 104).

Consequently, in order to promote the Roma university students' integration rather than assimilation into the majority society which has a first-rate importance for the empowerment of the Roma communities in Turkey when the lack of positive male and female role models among the Roma people is concerned; their participation in higher education can be promoted through introduction of positive discrimination programmes aiming at increasing Roma youngsters' representation at higher-education like the *Romaversitas* programme launched by the Open Society Institute in 2001 which was based upon the Hungarian model. As stated by Angela Kocze, the Hungarian model was created in 1996 in order to support Roma students attending higher education institutions. One of the aims of the programme was to foster a strong identity for Roma intellectuals and young leaders within the newly emerging "civil society" on the basis of the assumption that without significant numbers of well-educated Roma graduates, Roma would not have a real structural change in the society and many initiatives, without the participation of Roma in the policy- and decision-making, would remain superficial and serve the existing power structures (Angela Kocze, 2000/2001: 4-5). Thus, through introduction of such a positive discrimination programme in Turkey either by the relevant state bodies or civil society organizations, accompanied by 'equality before the law' as a non-

discrimination principle; both the representation of the Roma youth at higher education - as demonstrating agency is not enough when the vicious cycle of exclusion threatening Roma people is taken into consideration - and the number of *Roma intellectuals* can be increased.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE FORMS (ENGLISH)

Semi-structured Questionnaire Form:

Socio-Economic and Demographic Characteristics

Name of the Respondent:

Date of Interview:

1. Sex: Female () Male ()
2. Age:
3. Place of Birth:
4. Marital Status:
5. If married;
 - a)Date of marriage:
 - b)Type of marriage:
6. What is the name of your school?
7. What is your grade?
8. What is the name of your place of residence? (Province/district/neighbourhood)
9. How long have you been living there?
10. What is the socio-economic status of your neighbourhood? (Low-class/ middle-class/ upper-class)
11. Would you like to move to another neighbourhood, if you had a chance?
12. Is your father alive?
13. Is your mother alive?
14. What is your father's educational attainment?
15. What is your mother's educational attainment?
16. What is your mother's job?
17. What is your father's job?
18. Does your father or mother have a social security coverage?
19. Are you living with your parents?
20. What kind of a family you have? (Nuclear, extended...etc.)
21. How many sisters and brothers have you got?
22. What is your household size?
23. Who works in the family to maintain the household living?
24. What is your average monthly household income?
25. Are you a house-owner?
26. How many rooms does your house include?
27. Do you have your own room?
28. Do you have a wardrobe, a separate bed and a closet to put your personal belongings?
29. Can you or your family make savings?
30. If you can, what is your saving option? (Foreign currency, gold...etc)
31. What do you spend most on with your income?
() Food ()Rent ()Clothes ()Electricity-water bills ()Telephone bills ()Health
()Household goods ()Books ()Others
32. To which social class do you belong to?(Low-Middle-Upper)
33. Which of them do you have in your house?

Television Washing Machine Dishwasher Flash Heater Vacuum Cleaner Sewing Machine Telephone Mobile Phone Computer Heater Sofa Set Bedroom Set Iron

34. Are your furnitures and white goods brand new or second-hand?
35. How often do you go shopping?

Unstructured Questionnaire Form:

Early Childhood and Family Background

1. Can you mention your childhood?
2. Can you mention your relationship with your parents?
3. Can you mention your relationship with your sisters and brothers?
4. Who is the decision-maker in your family?
5. How is your parents relationship with each other; when and how they got married?
6. Do your parents support your education?
7. Have your parents helped you with your lessons, attended to the parents' meeting at school and done their best to meet your school expenses?

Neighbourhood Relations:

8. How is your relationship with your neighbours?
9. Do you have friends in your neighbourhood?
10. How is the relationship of the residents of your neighbourhood with each other?

Ethnic-Identity Information:

11. Are all your friends Roma or non-Roma?
12. Can you define the difference between a Roma and a non-Roma?
13. Do you hide your ethnic identity among non-Roma people or express it openly when you are asked about?
14. Have you ever wished not to be born as a Roma?
15. What are the basic problems of the Roma people?
16. What can they do to overcome these problems?
17. Are you a member of a Roma-led advocacy association?

Future Expectations:

18. Do you make plans for your future?
19. What/where would you like to be five years later?
20. How can you define yourself?

APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE FORMS (TURKISH)

Yarı-yapılandırılmış Görüşme Formu:

Sosyo-Ekonomik ve Demografik Özellikler

Katılımcının İsmi:

Görüşme Tarihi:

1. Cinsiyetiniz? Kadın () Erkek ()
2. Yaşınız?
3. Doğum Yeriniz?
4. Medeni Durumunuz? Evli () Bekar ()
5. a)Evlisenez, ne zaman evlendiniz?
b)Evlilik biçiminiz, nasıl evlendiniz?
6. Hangi okula gidiyorsunuz?
7. Okulda kaçınıcı sınıftasınız?
8. Nerede yaşıyorsunuz ? (İl/semte/mahalle)
9. Ne kadar süredir mevcut ikametgâhınızda yaşıyorsunuz?
10. Yaşadığınız semti/mahalleyi nasıl değerlendiriyorsunuz? (Alt/Orta/Üst)
11. İmkânınız olsa yaşadığınız semtten taşınır mısınız?
12. Babanız yaşıyor mu?
13. Anneniz yaşıyor mu?
14. Babanızın eğitim düzeyi nedir?
15. Annenizin eğitim düzeyi nedir?
16. Anneniz ne iş yapıyor?
17. Babanız ne iş yapıyor?
18. Babanız veya anneniz herhangi bir sosyal güvenlik kurumundan faydalaniyor mu?
19. Anne ve babanızla aynı evde mi yaşıyorsunuz?
20. Ne tür bir ailesiniz?
21. Kaç kardeşiniz?
22. Hane nüfusunuz?
23. Ailenizde kimler çalışıp, aile bütçesine katkıda bulunuyor?
24. Aylık hane geliriniz nedir?
25. Oturduğunuz ev size mi ait?
26. Evinizin kaç odası var?
27. Kendinize ait, yalnız kalabileceğiniz bir odanız var mı?
28. Kendinize ait bir giysi dolabınız, yatağınız, özel eşyalarınızı koyabileceğiniz bir dolabınız var mı?
29. Siz veya aileniz tasarruf yapıyor musunuz?
30. Yapıyorsanız, tasarruf aracınız nedir? (Döviz, altın...)
31. Gelirinizi en çok hangi alanlarda harcarsınız?
() Gıda ()Kira ()Giyim ()Elektirik-su ()İletişim ()Sağlık ()Ev eşyası ()Kitap
()Diğer
32. Kendinizi hangi sosyal tabakada görüyorsunuz? (Alt-Orta-Üst)
33. Evinizde aşağıdakilerden hangileri var?

- () Televizyon ()Çamaşır Makinesi ()Bulaşık Makinesi () Şofben ()Elektrik Süpürgesi ()Dikiş Makinesi ()Telefon ()Cep telefonu ()Bilgisayar ()Soba ()Koltuk Takımı () Yatak Odası Takımı ()Ütü
34. Mobilyalarınız ve beyaz ev aletleri ikinci el mi yoksa birinci el mi?
35. Ne sıklıkla alışveriş yaparsınız?

Yapılandırılmamış Görüşme Formu:

Erken Çocukluk Yılları ve Aile Geçmişi

1. Çocukluğunuzdan bahseder misiniz?
2. Anne-babanızla olan ilişkinizden bahseder misiniz?
3. Kardeşlerinizle olan ilişkinizden bahseder misiniz?
4. Evde annenizin mi babanızın mı sözü geçer?
5. Anne ve babanızın ilişkisi nasıldır, kaç yaşında evlenmişler ve nasıl evlenmişler?
6. Eğitiminizi aileniz destekledi mi?
7. Anne veya babanız ders çalıştırdı mı, veli toplantılarınıza düzenli geldi mi, eğitiminiz için gerekli maddi fedakarlıkları yaptılar mı?

Mahalle İlişkileri

8. Aynı mahallede oturduğunuz komşularınızla aranınız nasıl?
9. Mahallede kendinize ait bir arkadaş grubunuz var mı?
10. Mahalle sakinlerinin birbirleriyle olan ilişkileri nasıl?

Etnik Kimliğe Dair Bilgiler

11. Arkadaşlarınızın hepsi Roman mı yoksa Roman olmayan arkadaşlarınız da var mı?
12. Roman olmayanların sizden farklı özellikleri nelerdir, tanımlar mısınız?
13. Roman olmayanlarla birlikteyken kimliğinizi gizler misiniz yoksa yeri geldiğinde açıkça belirtir misiniz?
14. Hiç içinizden keşke “Roman olmasaydım” diye geçirdiğiniz oluyor mu?
15. Sizce Romanların ana sorunları nelerdir?
16. Sorunların çözümü için Romanların ne yapması gerekiyor?
17. Herhangi bir Roman derneğine üye misiniz?

Gelecekte Beklentiler

18. Gelecek için plan yapıyor musunuz?
19. Bundan beş yıl sonra kendinizi nerede görmek isterdiniz?
20. Kendinizi nasıl biri olarak tanımlıyorsunuz?