

Monitoring Research of the Romaversitas Foundation

Final study

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INTRODUCTION

The monitoring research of the Romaversitas Foundation requested by the Roma Education Fund (REF) was carried out by the Kurt Lewin Foundation. The research was conducted between October 2010 and January 2011.¹

The Romaversitas Foundation is an institution that provides financial and professional support for Roma students in higher education: the organization offers training and scholarship program for its participants. Since its foundation in 1996, Romaversitas assisted around 200 students in completing their studies. Its program is based on long-term, complex, intensive engagement with the participating students as according to the managers of the organization, it is not enough to provide only financial support for the disadvantaged Roma university or college students, but the provision of circumstances advancing their educational success, developing their skills and self-esteem is also necessary.

During the program, the beneficiaries receive scholarship for the ten months of the academic year as well as textbook allowance. Besides financial benefits, they also participate in professional training, which includes group sessions in the framework of the Open University as well as individual development opportunities based on the personal needs of the students. The organization also provides language courses, community programs and other various services.

The purpose of the present study is the presentation of the findings of the monitoring research about the Romaversitas Foundation. During the research, we employed desk research, in-depth interviews, and focus group methods. Besides, we conducted three case studies based on life story narrative interviews. Through the joint usage of the enumerated qualitative and quantitative methods, we aimed at the most detailed and comprehensive review of the program.

The study discusses – among others – the aims, history, impact, outcomes of the Foundation; the components of the services offered for the participants; the requirements to be completed by the students; the operation of the organization; its financial situation; strengths and weaknesses; main problems and the recommendations for the solution of these problems.

In the following chapters, after presenting the methodology of the research, we first provide a short summary of the educational situation of Hungarian Roma. Following, we present the program based on the documents, written material available; then we summarize the findings of the questionnaires conducted with current and graduate students of the Foundation. After the analysis of the questionnaires, we gain a more comprehensive picture about the program through the in-depth interviews taken with the employees of the organization, contributing experts, and with current and graduate students. Finally, we analyze the topics enumerated above through summarizing the findings of the focus group discussions.

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1. Methodology

We conducted this research by employing a complex methodology that combines qualitative and quantitative research methods: we utilized desk research, in-depth interviews, used focus group and questionnaire techniques and conducted case studies. We employed the different research techniques simultaneously in order to get a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the program of the Romaversitas Foundation. In the following section, we introduce the methodological strategies of the research.

We began the investigation with desk research by analyzing documentation related to the work of the Foundation – such as the deed of foundation, annual reports, grant applications and supportive documentation compiled for the Roma Educational Fund.²

In the questionnaire phase of the research, altogether 80 questionnaires were filled out by 50 current students and 30 graduates. In the questionnaires, we focused on socio-demographic data of the respondents, their preconceptions about the program, their opinion on different components of the program and their evaluation of the outcomes of the program.

During the in-depth interviews, altogether 20 interviews were conducted: 10 with the employees of the Foundation and the contributing experts, and 10 with current and graduate students. Throughout the interviews, we primarily aimed at exploring the interview subjects' views on the goals, the operation, the efficiency and the main problems of the program. The topics discussed in the interviews were particularized through focus group conversations: three sessions were carried out in the focus group section of the research.

As further part of the research, we conducted three case studies; one with a Romaversitas graduate and two with current students. During the case studies, we mostly focused on the life stories of the three students instead of their opinion about the Foundation.³

Our study analyzes the program of the Romaversitas Foundation by processing and summarizing data gathered from the research. Our examination of the efficiency and the success of the Foundation is not based on representative methods, but predominantly on the personal perception of experts and participants. Therefore, the outcomes of the study have to be interpreted with suppositions and expectations in line with the methodology applied.

Terminology of the Study:

Current student: student pursuing higher education, participating in the program of the Romaversitas Foundation at the time of the interview.

Graduate student: student, who at the time of the interview finished the program of the Romaversitas Foundation and completed his or her university/college studies, (i.e. graduated with a higher education degree or fulfilled the requirements of the comprehensive exam - *absolutoria*).

Dropout: student, who, at the time of the interview, did not complete his or her university studies, discontinued the Romaversitas program.

² The documents analyzed in the research were provided by the Romaversitas Foundation and the Roma Educational Fund.

³ For case studies see the Appendix.

2. Introduction of Romaversitas Foundation

Romaversitas aims at reducing the educational deficit of the Hungarian Roma minority, especially by supporting young Roma pursuing higher education degree. In this chapter, we first present the summary of the educational situation of the Roma population, which is followed by an introduction of the program of the Foundation based on available documentation and written records.

2.1. Educational Situation of the Hungarian Roma Minority

The current situation of the Hungarian Roma can be characterized by the high level of unemployment compared to the majority society, with heavy discrimination and exclusion.⁴ The findings of István Kemény's nationally representative research conducted in 2003 revealed that 56 percent of the Roma households belong to the one third of the population with the lowest income.⁵

The educational situation is affected by the deficits experienced in every other field of life; there are significant differences between the Roma and not Roma youth's access to education. The findings of the 2003 study showed that the differences can be traced back to very young age, to the period of kindergarten: while the national average is 88 percent, only 42 percent of the Roma children attend kindergarten.⁶

The successful performance in school is predominantly influenced by the differences experienced in kindergarten. Even though elementary school studies are completed by almost every young Roma, the quality of the education is impacted by the increasing segregation that manifests itself in various forms – segregated schools, classes, Roma children's home schooling as private students and transmission to special schools qualifying them as mentally challenged.

After the completion of elementary school, high school studies are far from being guaranteed for Roma students. "After finishing eighth grade, there is a 9 percent probability that Roma students do not continue their studies, compared to the 1 percent in the case of not Roma students."⁷ 70 percent of the Roma students entering high school "continue their studies in vocational schools or special vocational schools offering much worse financial prospects" – compared to the two-thirds of the not Roma students, who continue their studies in high schools that offer relatively stable perspectives in terms of employment and higher education, and provide them a high school degree.⁸ There is a high rate of dropouts during high school: "On the national level, in 2001 54,5 percent of the 18-year-olds

⁴ For a short summary of the situation of the Hungarian Roma see Kurt Lewin Foundation (2010): A Roma Integráció Évtizede Program által megjelölt célok megvalósulási folyamatának monitoring-vizsgálata Magyarországon a 2005-2009 közötti időszakra vonatkozóan, 2010, pp. 8-16. Available at: http://kla.hu/uploads/media/Decade_of_Roma_Inclusion_HU_fin.pdf.

⁵ Kemény I., Janky B. és Lengyel G (2004) A magyarországi cigánység 1971-2003, Gondolat Kiadó: Budapest, p.135.

⁶ Kemény I., p.134.

⁷ Kertesi G. és Kézdi G. (2009) A roma fiatalok általános iskolai eredményessége, középiskolai továbbtanulása és középiskolai sikeressége.- Zárótanulmány, Budapest: MTA, p. 64, available at: <http://econ.core.hu/file/download/jav/roma608.doc>

⁸ Liskó I. (2005) A roma tanulók középiskolai továbbtanulása, Budapest: Felsőoktatási Kutatóintézet, p. 59. Available at: www.hier.iif.hu/hu/letoltes.php?fid=kutatas_kozben/184

graduated, while 5 percent of the 20-24 year-old age group of the young Roma graduated from high school.”⁹

The rate of Roma students accepted to universities or colleges is even lower than the rate of the high school graduates. According to the findings of the study conducted in 2003, on the national level, 40 percent of the 18-20 year-olds and 1,2 percent of the 20-24 year-old Roma pursue studies in higher education institutes.¹⁰

2.2. Presentation of the Romaversitas Foundation’s Program

In the introductory presentation of Romaversitas Foundation, we summarize the goals and the history of the Foundation, its services offered and requirements prescribed for students, the expenses of the program and its outcomes based on the available documentation.

Goals

Romaversitas represents an educational and scholarship program designed for the young Roma pursuing a degree in higher education; the organization does not only provide financial support but also various professional and community services. The managers of the program believe that providing financial support for disadvantaged Roma university or college students is not enough. In addition to the financial support, they need to be provided with circumstances that increase their academic success and their opportunities for employment, develop their skills, their knowledge, their self-esteem and their Roma identity. The goals of the Foundation are the following:

- Creating equal opportunities for the young Roma studying in higher education;
- Creating an autonomous, intellectual elite with Roma origins, which contributes to the creation of a Roma middle class.
- Training, coaching outstanding Roma students in higher education, talent management, their financial and spiritual support, professional and ethical support of their transition into intellectuals;
- Creating a Roma elite, which shows responsibility for and commitment to the advancement of its own ethnic group.¹¹

The Romaversitas Foundation represents a form of extracurricular education, which intends to provide help on multiple levels: the successful completion of university studies; acquiring competences (languages and other skills); gaining the finest professional knowledge possible through the operation of tutoring systems and other forms of training; dealing with the inner and outer conflicts of becoming a Roma intellectual; the liberation and the recognition of the power of the individual; and the strengthening of the students’ identity.¹²

History

The idea of the Romaversitas Foundation – previously called the Romaversitas Invisible College – was born in 1996, when „Aladár Horváth and Angéla Kóczé decided that within

⁹ Kemény I., p. 134.

¹⁰ Kemény, p. 134.

¹¹ Deed of Foundation, p. 3.

¹² Deed of Foundation, p. 3.

the scope of Roma Fund for Civil Rights they would organize a skills development program of high quality standards for Roma students studying at the university or high school.”¹³

As a first step, summer university courses were organized in the Gandhi Secondary school in 1997. „Parallel to this program, the elaboration of Romaversitas program was ongoing with the collaboration of famous experts.”¹⁴The first semester of the Romaversitas Invisible College was launched in February, 1998.

In 2001, the Romaversitas moved into the Roma Community House in Nefelejcs Street and the Foundation was registered by the Municipal Court, thus becoming a legally independent institute.

In 2003, based on the recommendations of an audit requested by OSI-HESP, „a decision was made to gradually increase the number of Romaversitas students from 34 at that time to 100 during the coming years.”¹⁵ The program was continuously growing and by 2006, the number of students increased to 80. At that time, „skills development seminar as new program element was adopted aiming at enhancing verbal communication and problem-solving skills; assisting in the resolution of inner conflicts and problems with self-esteem.”¹⁶

Due to the financial difficulties developed by November 2007, the future of Romaversitas became uncertain as “REF Board decided to grant half of the amount of grant support compared to the previous year.”¹⁷ After significant steps were taken to cover the remaining part of the budget, the operation of the program was ensured. Still, in the summer of 2008, it became certain that due to lack of sufficient coverage, the program cannot continue unchanged. Therefore, the number of beneficiaries had to be cut from 80 to 50 during the 2008/09 academic year.¹⁸

In 2009, the office of the Romaversitas Foundation moved to the building of no. 39. Ferenc körút. Currently, the program has two full-time employees: Gábor Daróczi director and Ildikó Paskó program manager.

Services

Those students are eligible for applying to the program of the Foundation, who accept their Roma identity, study as full-time student at a Hungarian higher education institution, after successfully completed two semesters. Even though the number of applicants is much more than the available positions, the number of students applying to the program constantly increases, in general 100-150 students apply for the 10-16 available positions.¹⁹ Currently, the number of students participating in the program is 51.

¹³ Application Form Project Code HU 021, p. 15.

¹⁴ Application Form Project Code HU 021, p. 15.

¹⁵ Application Form Project Code HU 029, p. 15

¹⁶ Application Form Project Code HU 029, p. 15

¹⁷ Project Final Evaluation Report September 1, 2007 – 31 August, 2008, p.3.

¹⁸ The financial situation of Romaversitas was also made difficult by the fact that though the “Ministry of Education planned a set of measures connected to the European Structural Funds to establish a network of institutions similar to Romaversitas with creating at least two decentralized “invisible institutions” in the country (TÁMOP 3.3.4)”, the call for the proposal and implementation originally due in spring 2008 has not been announced since. See: Application Form Project Code HU 029, p.3.

¹⁹ See Table 3.

The organization's call for application announced every spring is public. The applicants are required to submit their resume with a cover letter, and participate in a central written examination organized by the Foundation that tests their general knowledge related to the Roma, their logic, and their mathematic and textual competences. In the case of a successful written examination, students are invited to a minimum 30 minutes long oral exam.²⁰

The Foundation offers multiple services: the program includes financial as well as professional elements. The financial support includes a ten-month, 30.000 HUF (110 EUR) monthly scholarship provided throughout the academic year, which can be increased – e.g. in the case of successful language examination – but if the requirements prescribed in advance are not met, it can also be reduced. Additional financial support includes a 20.000 HUF (73 EUR) yearly textbook allowance.²¹

In addition to the financial support, the program also offers language courses: „We enrol all students in a for-profit language school. 90% of the students study English, some of them study German and medical students sometimes study Latin. Romology majors often study Lovári or Beás. In the case of the Romology majors, we encourage them to at least start learning English during their studies.”²²

Individual development is essential part of the professional program of Romaversitas.²³ Students, who need help for specific classes or for passing specific exams, are eligible for *private preparatory teachers*. Students working on their theses or preparing for national or international academic competitions can ask for *tutors*. Additionally, older students *mentor* freshmen by helping them to adjust to the community of Romaversitas and to take advantage of the services provided. While every freshly admitted student is supported by a mentor, students have to apply for private instructors and tutors so that the form of support, the field of study that needs development and the tasks undertaken can be recorded in advance. „Those being awarded are required to fulfil their commitments and to present the outcomes (e.g. thesis, essays submitted for competition, or receiving at least grade 3.0 in the problematic class).”²⁴

In addition to individual development, students participate in the group sessions „of Open University programs once a month, part of which is compulsory and there are also optional components.”²⁵ The expenses of the Open University occasions, which last three full days on weekends are covered by the program.²⁶

²⁰ The admission procedure was modified in the last few years. Earlier, the students were required to submit a paper written in year before the admission, in addition to the resume and the cover letter. However, because of the various academic background of the applicants the evaluation of the papers was extremely difficult.

²¹ 1 EUR = 273 HUF

²² See: <http://www.romaversitas.hu/magyar/program.html>, 18.01.2011.

²³ Individual development is necessary because of the considerable differences in the students' living circumstances, academic background and level, motivations and ambitions.

²⁴ <http://www.romaversitas.hu/magyar/program.html>, 2010.01.18.

²⁵ <http://www.romaversitas.hu/magyar/program.html>, 2010.01.18.

²⁶ The open university sessions in the fall semester 2010 included the following lectures and seminars: presentation techniques, job search training, Roma ethnic studies, alternative pedagogy, public administration and the EU, history of the Roma civil rights movement, equal opportunities in education, literary interpretation, drama class, gypsy dance class, culture of the Hungarian Roma. Students also participated in the British Council's Navigator project designed specifically for Romaversitas, which was developed to

Other forms of support include psychological assistance, help with searching for grants and writing applications (e.g. in the case of study abroad programs); assistance with job search, short-term loans (interest-free financial support provided in case of crisis); and life style coaching. Moreover, Romaversitas organizes international student exchange programs and supports students' participation in conferences. The community programs include orientation camp, film clubs, and discussion groups.²⁷

Expectations and Requirements

In exchange for the services that the program offers, Romaversitas determines specific requirements for the students. The student contracts, laid out at the beginning of the academic year, are specified in personal discussion with the students, and provide basis for the cooperation between the organization and the students. The agreement details the rights and the obligations of the students, their options related to specific educational programs and the system of sanctions and awards.

According to the agreement, the students are obliged to complete all the requirements of their university or college studies, maintain a grade 3.0 average and to participate in mandatory courses.²⁸ Besides, within the framework of individual development (i.e. tutoring, language courses, preparatory program), they commit themselves to completing their educational obligations and „report about their monthly achievements at the end of every month by filling out the form designed for this purpose, and understand that missing the report automatically outcomes in their scholarship for next month being revoked.”²⁹ In case of failing to meet the requirements, the student's scholarship will be reduced or revoked according to the degree of these shortcomings. „The amount of the scholarship depends on the completion of the responsibilities specified in the agreement, and the performance in educational programs according to the conditions defined in advance.”³⁰

Expenses

The permanent employees of the Foundation are Gábor Daróczy, director, and Ildikó Paskó, program manager. The other contributing experts (tutors, private instructors and lecturers) are in contractual relationship with the organization.

According to the calculation of the Foundation, approximately 400.000 – 450.000 HUF (1465 – 1650 EUR) was spent every year in addition to the 300.000 HUF (1100 EUR) scholarship per student. The expenses include: accommodation, meals and transportation on the open university weekends, the salaries of the private instructors and tutors, the cost of master courses organized for musicians, the wage of the psychologist, textbook allowance,

provide „young adults organization development and program management, and to educate trainers for teaching similar trainings in the future.” <http://www.romaversitas.hu/magyar/program.html>

²⁷ According to the public benefit reports of 2008 and 2009, during the open society events, which was formerly held every second weekend, Roma clubs were organized in Friday evenings, which provided opportunity to „the former students to talk about their work, their experiences and their studies”, and international students exchange programs were organized in Budapest, see: Annual Report, 2009, page 2.

²⁸ The introduction of the credit system has a significant impact on the program as well. In the old system of Romaversitas, those who did not complete their studies in time as regulated, dropped out automatically. However, since the academic year 2009/10, the Foundation – after individual consideration – can allow a maximum amount of delay in the completion of the studies as the respective institutions of higher education.

²⁹ Student Contract

³⁰ Education Policy and Regulation

language programs (courses, textbooks and exams) and student awards (in the case of successful language exam or national academic competitions). In summary, the full program provided for one student costs 700.000-750.000 HUF (2565-2750 EUR) a year.

During the last decade, the Roma Educational Fund supported the Foundation in the 2006/07, 2007/08, and 2008/09 academic years. During the 2006/07 academic year, the 145.340 EUR support covered 51% of the program, during the 2007/08 academic year, the 152.000 EUR support covered 63% of the costs and during the 2008/09 academic year the 50.000 EUR support covered 26% of the costs.³¹ The budget for the 2010/11 academic year is 150.711 EUR.³²

Outcomes

During the past years, the number of students completing the program of Romaversitas was around 200. The outcomes of the program are presented by the following indicators.

Table 1: Main indicators of the program³³

Expected results	Reported outcomes in 2006/07	Reported outcomes in 2007/08	Reported outcomes in 2008/2009
All students passing at least the intermediate exam in time for graduation	16 students during the 2006/07 academic year (80 %)	14 students in the 2007/08 academic year (87%)	15 students (126%)
50 RVA students maintain a minimum 3.0 combined average GPA	3.88	3.92	3.88
Graduation rate: 100 % of 5th-year students at university and 4th-year scholars at RVA graduate on-time.	16 out of 20 in 2007 (80%)	13 out of 16 in 2008 (81%)	8 out of 11. (72 %)
After graduating 100% find a job within a year	6 found job out 20 (3 continued their studies) (30%)	12 found job after the graduation (77%)	Out of 11, 8 found a job, 2 continued their studies and 1 is unemployed. (72 %)

To sum up, the outcome indicators of the program are:³⁴

- Graduation rate: over 80%;
- Language exams: over 75% among those who are in their final year;
- Employment rate on year after graduation – 70% according to the alumni database of Romaversitas. Around half of the jobs are in relation with the profession of the graduates.

³¹ See: REF Project Summary Evaluation, p. 1.

³² See: Application Form Project Code HU 048, p. 1.

³³ For the data see: REF Project Summary Evaluation

³⁴ See: REF Project Summary Evaluation, p.1.

3. Findings of the Questionnaire Research

As part of the monitoring research, we conducted anonymous questionnaires involving 50 students and 30 students already graduated. Thus, in the case of current students, with the exception of one student, all participants of the Romaversitas program were approached. However, in the case of graduate students, our sample cannot be regarded representative, therefore only limited conclusions can be drawn. During the questionnaires, we focused on socio-demographic data (such as gender, age, education, place of residence, place of employment, income situation, parents' level of education); preconceptions about the program; opinions about the components of program as well as the impact of the program. The following sections analyze the summarized data according to these categories.³⁵

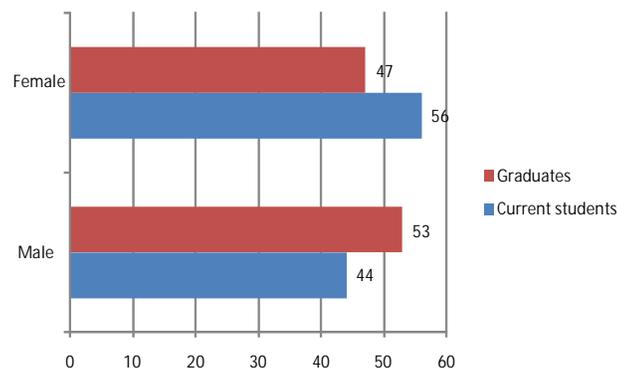
3.1. Socio-demographic Features

Among socio-demographic features, first we present gender rate, average age, then educational level (university, major), and in the case of graduate students, current employment.

Gender and Age

More than the half of the current students were girls (56%), while the majority of the graduates were boys (53%). The average age of the current students was 23.2 years, most frequently they were 21 years old; while the graduates, on average, were older (28.2 years) and 26-years-olds were represented by the greatest number (20%) in the sample.

Figure 1.: Gender rate among current and graduate students (%)



Education, employment

Regarding their education, the current students show a diverse picture as one given major is represented by one student in most cases. Among the 44 students giving a valid answer to this question, the majors of social work (5 students), teacher (4 students) and lawyer (3 students) appeared more times, and more students attended different majors connected to economics and music. However, in the case of graduate students, the strong presence of

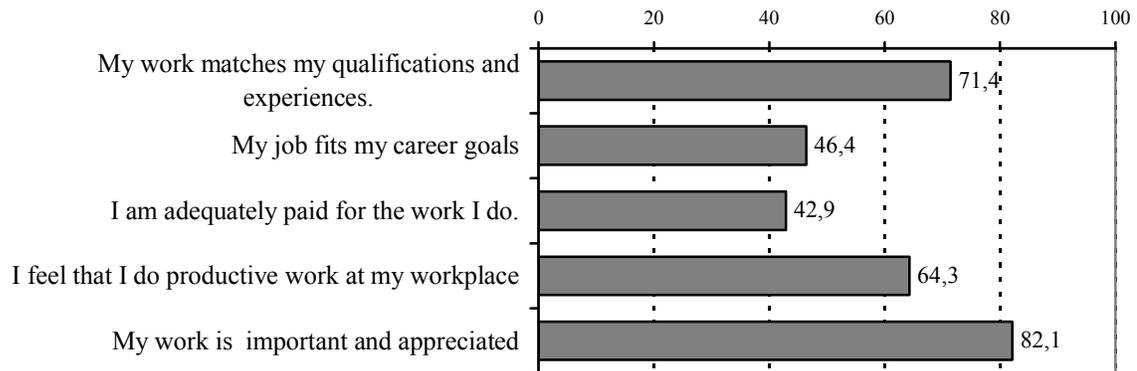
³⁵ For the tables on the data analyzed in this chapter, see Appendix 2.

social science was to be found: in total 14 out of the 30 graduates had studied sociology, social policy, social pedagogy or social work. Regarding the institutions of higher education, in the group of current students, in total 18 institutions were represented. However, current students attended three universities in higher numbers: Eötvös Loránd Science University (ELTE) 7 students, Miskolc University (ME) 7 students, Pécs Science University (PTE) 9 students. The graduate students had attended 11 institutions in total, here the number of students of Eötvös Loránd Science University (10 graduates) and Pécs Science University (8 students) was also higher.

Almost three-fourth (73%) of the graduates successfully completed their college or university degree. Those students who have not graduated yet, have already gained their *absolutoria*; they only need to take the necessary language exams or write their thesis to receive their diploma. Thus they have already finished their university education and left the program of *Romaversitas* as graduates. Most of the graduates are currently employed; more than three-fourth of them work full-time (8 hours), there were just two students who were currently unemployed and looking for employment. Nearly all of the graduates with jobs – except of two students – were in non-managerial positions; one student was self-employed and one was in managerial position. 86% of the graduates worked as professionals, while 11% had physical jobs. The majority of the ex-students (57%) were employed by the government, one-fourth of them worked in the non-profit sector and 10% were hired in the corporate world.

We also asked the graduate students about their satisfaction with their current employment. In terms of job satisfaction, we found that the majority of the graduate respondents agreed most with statement that their work was appreciated (71%) and they had suitable jobs matching their qualifications (82%). Similarly, there was a relatively high rate of graduates who felt that their work was productive. They were least satisfied with their salaries. Altogether, 43% of them agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I am adequately paid for the work I do.” (32% of them partly agreed and partly disagreed). We noticed a lower level of satisfaction in the compatibility of their present jobs with their future career goals. Altogether, 47% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “My job fits my career goals” (25% of the respondents partly agreed and partly disagreed).

Figure 2: Rate of graduates agreeing or strongly agreeing with the specific statements related to work³⁶ (%)



Residency prior to entering higher education

We were interested in the residency situation of current and graduate students before entering and in the case of graduates after finishing their higher education.

Prior to entering higher education, most of the current students (nearly 30%) lived in Borsod County. Budapest was the second (13%), and Szabolcs- Szatmár-Bereg County was the third place, where 11% of the students came from. The rest of the students came from different counties.

In the case of the graduates, the rank showed a slight difference; most of the graduates had lived in Baranya County (20 %) before they entered higher education, Borsod County was the second (13 % of the graduates), Budapest and Tolna County were tied for the third place, here 10-10% of the students had been residents.

All in all, it can be concluded that the current Romaversitas students and Romaversitas graduates hailed from almost every region of the country; they came from 12 different counties and the capital.

In terms of the type of settlement, prior to entering higher education one-third of the current students lived in cities, nearly one-fourth in towns and nearly almost one-fifth in villages. In case of the graduates, their distribution indicated differences; most of them had lived in county seat cities (37%) before they began their university/college studies and more than one-fourth of the graduates had lived in villages and one-fourth in cities. Both in the case of graduates and current students, there is an approximate 10-10% ratio of students who had lived in the capital, before they started their undergraduate studies and none of them had lived in a farm.

Nearly two-thirds of the graduates lived in a county or a settlement different from the one where they lived before entering higher education. Based on this data, we can conclude that finishing higher education has a great impact on the mobilization of Romaversitas students;

³⁶ We used a five-point scale for the evaluation of the actual statements: 1=completely disagree, 5= strongly agree

the employment of graduates in most cases does not happen in their previous place of residency.

Marital Status

While 84% of the current students were single and 12% of them lived with their partners, in case of the graduates the rate of singles was lower (47%), and rate of living with a partner was higher (40%). Only a small number of both the graduates and the current students were married.

Living in one household

While 30% of the graduates lived alone and 26% of them lived in households of two, only two of the current students lived alone and 10% of them lived with another person in one household. Nearly 75% of the current students lived in a household of three, four or five, while in the case of the graduates this rate was only 44%. While 14% of the current graduates lived in household of six or seven, none of the graduates had the same background.

In summary, it can be concluded that current students generally lived in households of four and the graduates usually lived in a household of two. However, graduates also used to live in households of four before they entered higher education.

Parents' level of education, income status

Both among the graduates and among the current students, the father's or foster father's highest level of education was mostly 8 years of primary education or vocational school (current students: 35-37%, graduates: 52-54%). In the case of the education of the mother/foster mother, we found slightly different outcomes: 42% of the current students' mother had 8 years primary education as their highest level of education and 25% of them completed vocational school. 40% of the graduates' mother's highest level of education was 8 years primary education; however 26% of the mothers had less than 8 years primary education. There were only a small number of students both among the current students and the graduates whose parents held higher education degrees.

In terms of the income status of the students' families, we discovered that the current students' financial circumstances according to the self-estimation of the respondents were poorer than average, while the graduates were from families with average income status.³⁷ Based on this data, we can assume that finishing higher has a positive impact on the income status of our respondents.

³⁷ We used a ten-point scale for the evaluation of the families' income situation: 1 stands for extremely poor and 10 stands for extremely rich. Among the current students the average grade was 3,38, among the graduates it was 4,63.

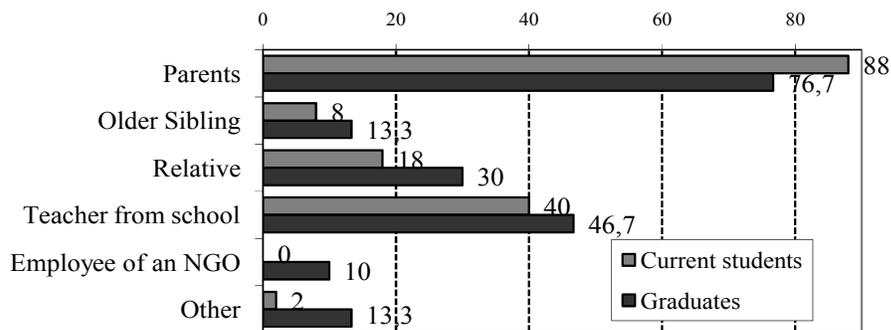
3.2. Preconceptions about the Program, Curricular Record

Regarding preconceptions about Romaversitas and curricular record, we found it important to as who and in what form supported the education of the respondents prior to the program, and what were their aims and expectations when applying.

Support of Studies during Childhood

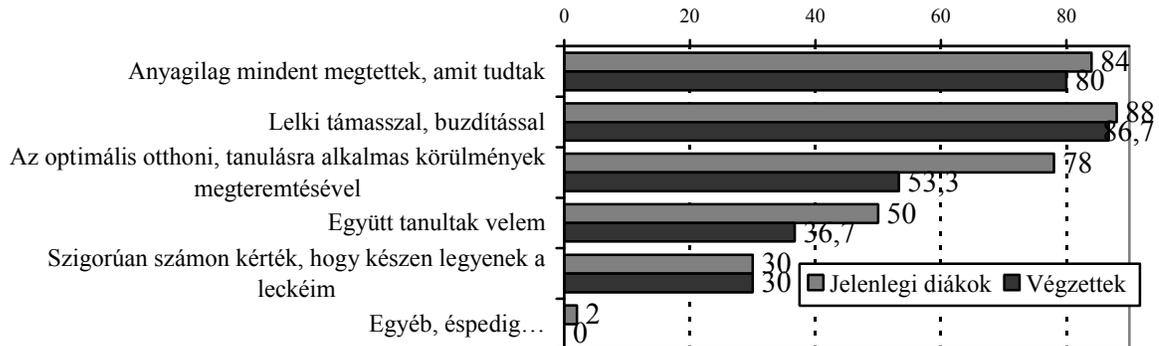
Almost all of the graduates and the current students (generally, 90% or 87 %) were supported in their studies by someone during their childhood. Similar outcomes were reported by the current students and by the graduates in response to the question “Who supported your studies during your childhood” that allowed several possible answers. Both in the case of graduates and that of current students, their studies were mostly supported by their parents (approximately 80%). Teachers from school received the second highest rating: according to their statements 40% of the current students and 47% of the graduates were (also) motivated by an educator to continue their studies. Other relatives received the third highest rating: 18% of the current students and 30 % of the graduates received support from other family members. The support provided by older siblings and third civil organizations was experienced less considerable.

Figure 3: Rate of responses by current students and graduates to the question “Who supported your studies during your childhood” (%)



In terms of the nature of the support, most of the students received financial and moral support: more than 80% of both graduates and current students indicated that “all financial support possible was provided” by their supporters, and they also received moral support and encouragement. The third most frequently reported type of support was “providing the appropriate circumstances at home, which contribute to optimal learning performance,” however there was a considerable difference between the experiences of the current students and that of the graduates. While 80% of the current students felt that their studies were supported by the creation of appropriate circumstances, which contribute to optimal learning performances, only 53% of the graduates agreed.

Figure 4: Rate of responses by current students and graduates to the question “If supported, which way and how?” (%)



The respondents were asked to rank the statements above in order of their importance. “Moral support, encouragement” received the highest rate from both the current students and the graduates. Second and the third most commonly, the options of “all financial support possible was provided” and “providing circumstances at home which contribute to optimal learning performances” were ranked as first most important. Most frequently, the three above mentioned answers – financial, moral support and the providing of circumstances at home, which contribute to optional learning circumstances – were ranked as second most important.

In summary, it can be concluded that the current students believed that moral support was the most and the second most important type of support, and the financial support was the third most important. For the graduates, the moral factor was also the most important type of support, however they believed that financial support was second most important and providing of circumstances at home which contribute to optional learning performances was the third most important (however financial support was ranked slightly less important).

The Road to Romaversitas

Most of the students (30% of the current students and 47% of the graduates) first heard about the Romaversitas Program from friends and acquaintances. There were different outcomes between the current students and the graduates in terms of the second and third most commonly reported routes to Romaversitas: for the current students, ETR,³⁸ for the graduates, relatives were the second most important: 14% of the current students heard first about Romaversitas via ETR, 17% of the graduates from relatives. Other communication channels (Roma Minority Self-Government - CKÖ, media, other civil organizations) played less significant role in directing students to Romaversitas. (Among the other answers listed, MACIKA³⁹ was reported most frequently; some of the students were informed about the Romaversitas program by the Roma Education Fund, by the Department of Romology, by other Romaversitas student or other civil organizations). The organization advertises its program on a wide scale of channels of communication and according to the data gathered, potential applicants found out about the program via all channels

³⁸ The online administrative system for students of higher education

³⁹ Public Foundation for Hungarian Roma, an institution that supports among others the education of Roma.

Table 2: Rate of responses given by current students and graduates to the question “How did you first hear about the scholarship program of Romaversitas?”

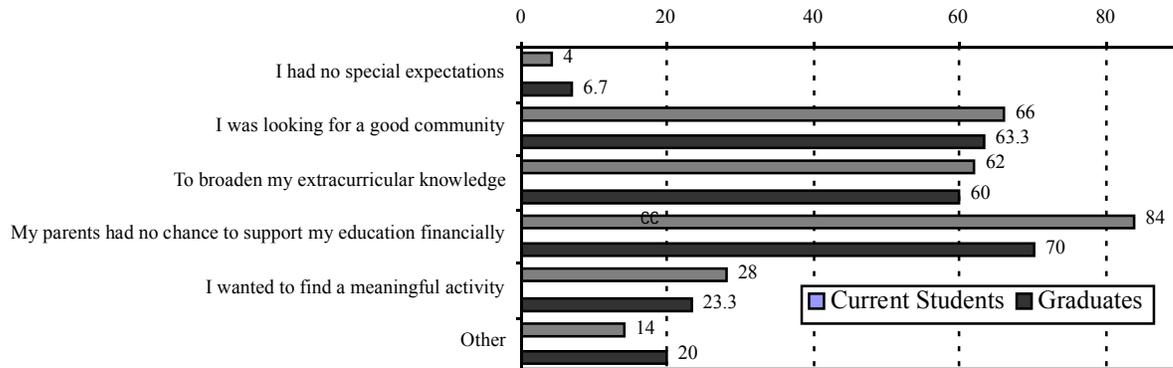
	CURRENT STUDENTS		GRADUATES	
	N	%	N	%
Via CKÖ	1	2,0	0	0,0
Via written/electronic media	2	4,0	2	6,7
Noticed as a rejected applicant of other civil organizations (?)	1	2,0	0	0,0
Via ETR	7	14,0	1	3,3
Via a friend, acquaintance	15	30,0	14	46,7
Saw the call on Roma-related web page	2	4,0	2	6,7
Via the Student Record Office	2	4,0	0	0,0
Via relatives	3	6,0	5	16,7
Other	17	34,0	6	20,0
Altogether	50	100,0	30	100,0

Reasons for Joining the Romaversitas Program

Slightly more than the half of the current students (54%) and more than three-fourth of the graduates (77%) had clear preconceptions about the exact opportunities that Romaversitas offers.

Students predominantly entered the Romaversitas program because of their parents' inability to provide financial support. In this case, there was a considerable difference between the current students and the graduates: while 84% of the formers, 70% of the latter expected financial support from Romaversitas, given the lack of opportunity of the parents to support their children's education financially. Secondly, nearly two-thirds of the current students and the graduates applied to the program of Romaversitas in order to belong to a community. In the third place, about 60% of the students expected the program to allow them to broaden their knowledge. There were only a few students without any special expectations toward the program.

Figure 5: Rate of answers given by current students and graduates in response to the question „ What was your purpose when joining the program? What were your expectations in the beginning?” (%)



3.3. Evaluation of the Program

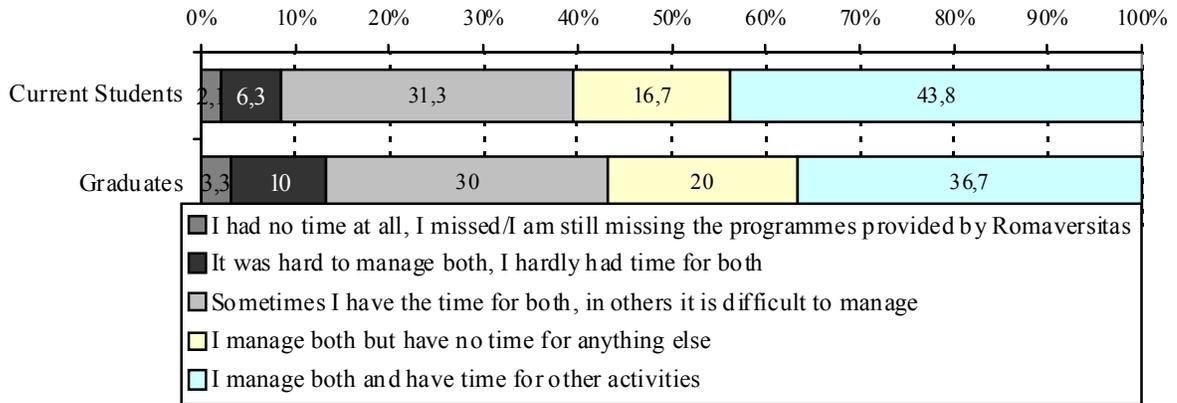
During the evaluation of the program, we found it important to ask how the respondents felt about the entrance exam, how much time their participation consumed and how they evaluate the different program components.

Nearly 60% of the 39 current students answering the question found the entrance examination rather easy or easy. One-third of the students found it rather difficult and 8% of the students found it difficult, mostly because of the math test and in some cases because of text understanding or questions about public life).⁴⁰

We did not discover significant differences between the responses of current students and that of the graduates to the question whether they had time for the program of the Foundation while also having to complete their studies. Generally, most of the students (around 40%) responded that “I manage both and have time for other activities.” Similarly, nearly one-third of the students stated that “Sometimes I have time for both, in others it is difficult to manage” the programs provided by the Foundation and their university/college studies. Closely one-fifth of the students found that they could participate in the programs of Romaversitas but had no time for anything else apart from their studies. Only a small number of students found no or hardly any time to participate in the programs provided by the Foundation.

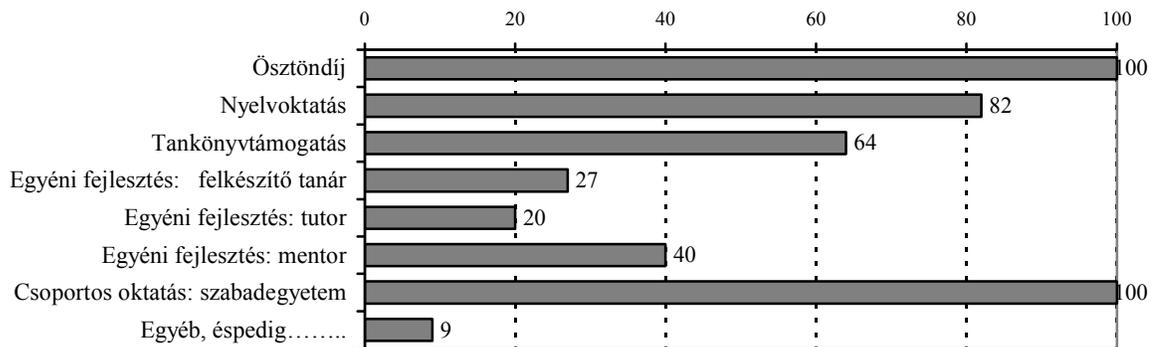
⁴⁰ A four-grade scale was used for the evaluation of the actual statements: 1= difficult, 2= rather difficult, 3= rather easy, 4= easy

Figure 6: Rate of answers given by current students and graduates in response to the question “Did you have time for the programs provided by the Foundation apart from your studies in tertial education?” (%)



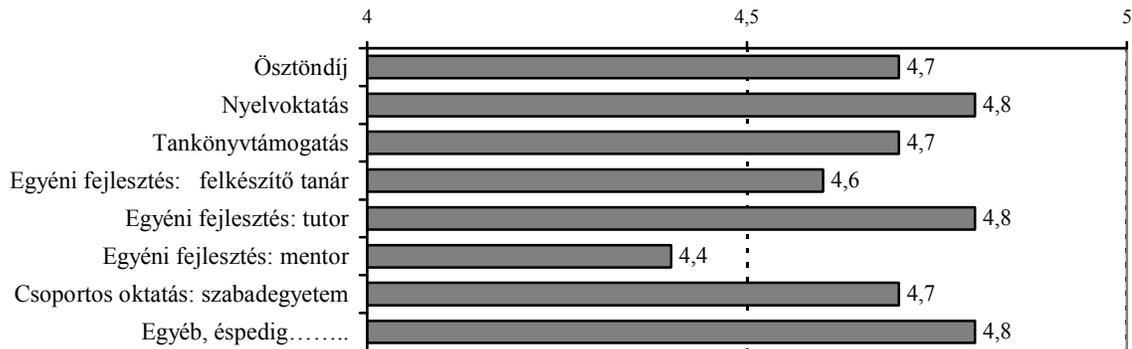
All of the current students were awarded scholarships and attended Open University programs. More than 80% of the students also benefited from language courses and two-thirds of the students made use of the textbook allowances. Less than the half of the students took advantage of other forms of services; the least frequently used type of support were the tutoring and private instructor services.

Figure 7: Rate of students participating in different types of services offered by Romaversitas (%)



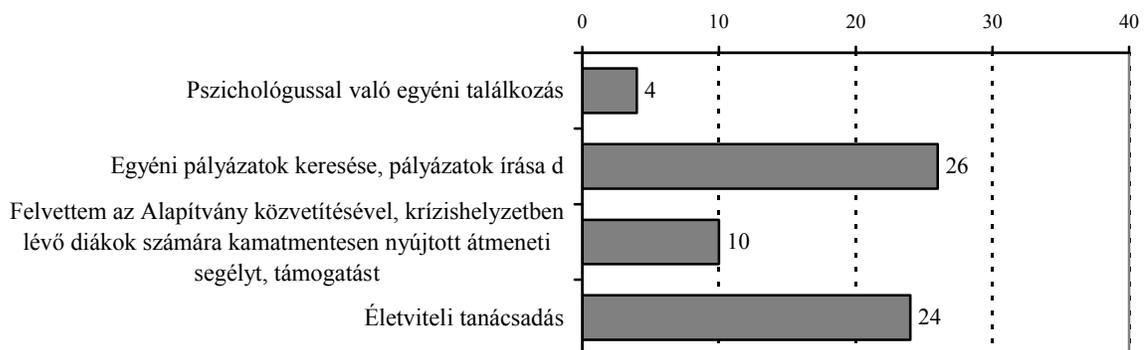
The students were asked to evaluate the types of services they used on a five-point scale. All types of services received a higher average than 4.4; the respondents were most satisfied with the language courses and the tutoring system and least satisfied with the mentoring system.

Figure 8: Average scores given by current students evaluating the services provided by Romaversitas⁴¹



Less than 30% of the students made use of other forms of support provided by the Foundation. About one-fourth of the students took advantage of the following forms of support: searching for grants, preparing applications and lifestyle coaching. However, students attending these services were completely satisfied, evaluating the opportunities higher than 4.5 on a five-point scale.

Figure 9: Rate of students making use of other types of support offered by Romaversitas (%)



While evaluating the services provided by Romaversitas, the graduate students were asked to list those elements of the program, which proved most significant for them – since students of different years might value different program components. Most commonly – by one-third of the graduates – language courses were ranked as first, program components second most frequently ranked as first included scholarships and the Open University lectures (17%). Other program components (such as specific seminars, identity building programs, community programs, study abroad programs, tutoring, mentoring) were most important only for few students. Graduates found specific seminars, scholarships and Open University lectures second most important in a tie (usually 20% of the graduates ranked

⁴¹ five-point scale used for evaluation; 1=not satisfied, 5=completely satisfied

these these program components as second most important). Language courses were the third most important most frequently – according to the 30% of the graduates.

28% of the current students and more than the half of the graduates (53%) experienced problems with completing assignments required by the Foundation in advance. In most of these cases, as a consequence, their scholarship was withdrawn or reduced, or after discussing the case a new deadline was assigned.

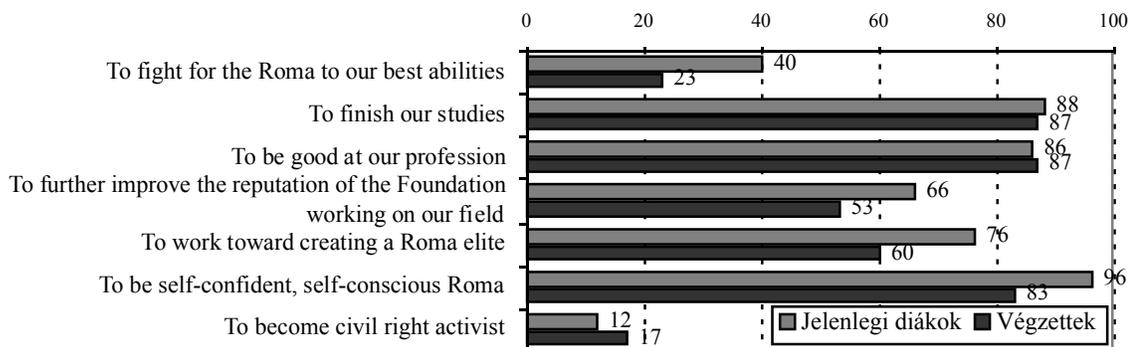
3.4. Impact of the Program

While discussing the impact of the program, we analyzed the expectations towards the students, the role of the program in the personal lives of the respondents, and the future relationship planned with the Foundation.

In terms of the expectations toward current students, the following outcomes were reported. In connection with the program of Romaversitas, most of the students (96%) felt the expectation of being self-confident, self-conscious Romas, which was experienced less by the graduates (83%). Considerable number of both the current students and the graduates (more than 85%) felt that the Foundation expected them to complete their studies and to succeed professionally. Three-fourth of the current students – only 60% of the graduates – addressed the expectation towards them of working towards the creation of a Roma elite with the assistance of Romaversitas, and also greater number of the students (two-thirds of the current students and half of the graduates) felt that they were expected to enhance the reputation of the Foundation by working in their professional fields.

In summary, it might be concluded that current students were more concerned about the expectations they face than the graduates, particularly with regard to the expectations related to Roma identity – such as “fighting for the Roma to our best abilities,” “working towards creating a Roma elite,” “being a self confident, self-conscious Roma” – where generally higher rates were experienced both among the current students and the graduates.

Figure 10: Rate of answering “yes” in response to the question “Which expectations were you faced with from Romaversitas during the program?” by current students and graduates (%)

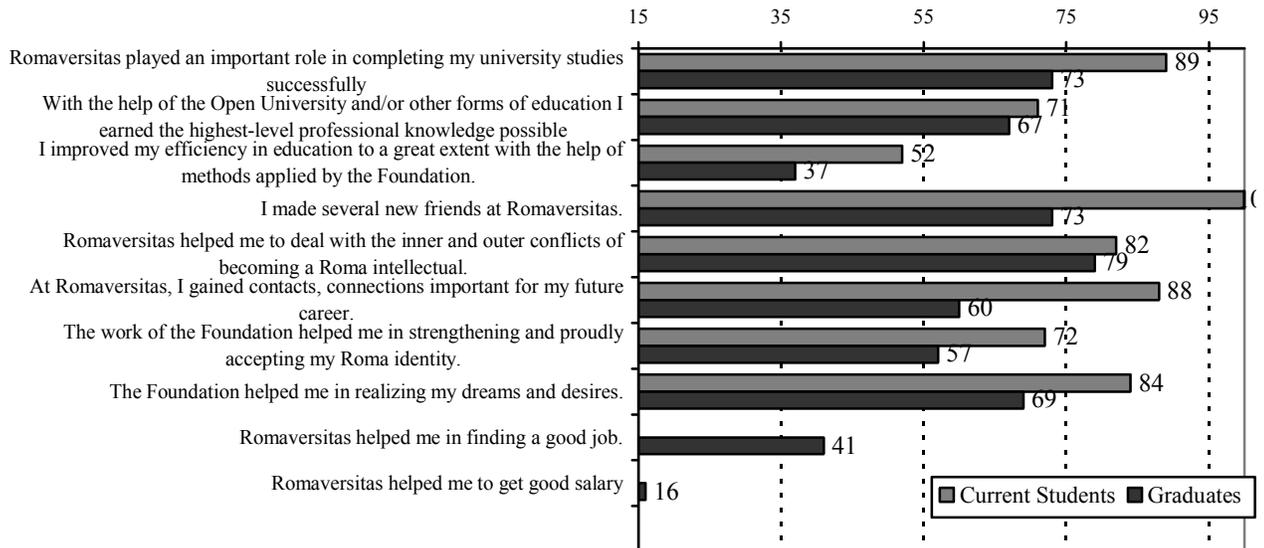


Usually current students were more likely to agree and strongly agree with the responses to the question “What kind of effects did Romaversitas have on your personal life?” than graduates did (in average, 80% of the current students and 57% of the graduates agree with the statements). This indicates that more current students positively experienced the support of the Foundation than graduates.

Analyzing the statements, we discovered that the Foundation provided the most support for the current students in building friendships and establishing connections important for their careers. Moreover, the Foundation significantly contributed to the successful completion of their studies and helped to deal with the conflicts of becoming a Roma intellectual (generally more than 80% agreed or strongly agreed with these statements). Three-fourth of the current students agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that they gained the finest professional knowledge possible through Romaversitas, and that the Foundation had a significant role in strengthening their Roma identities. The current students agreed the least (50%) that they improved their learning abilities with the help of Romaversitas.

Most graduates (79%) believed that Romaversitas helped them the most to deal with the conflicts of becoming a Roma intellectual. About 70% of the graduates agreed or strongly agreed that through the Foundation they gained the best professional knowledge possible and made several new friends, and that Romaversitas had an important part in successfully completing their university studies and realizing their goals and dreams. However, the majority of graduates do not agree with the statement that through Romaversitas they are able to find a good job. The least of them – 16% of the graduates – agree that Romaversitas helped them to get good salaries.

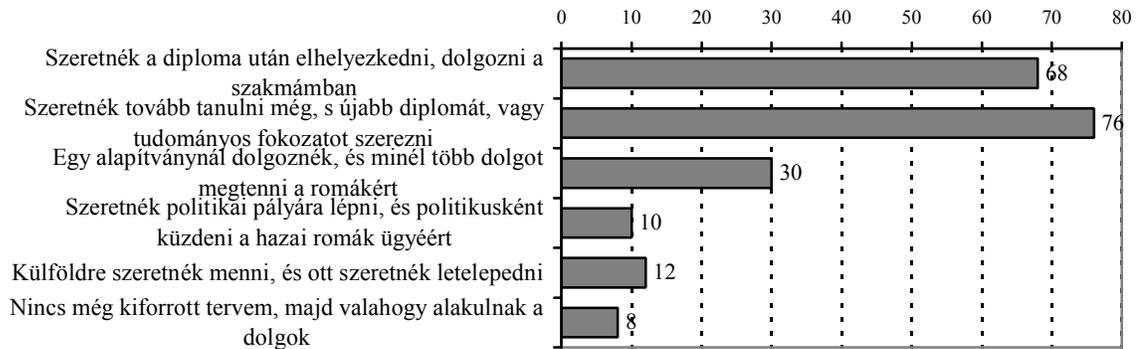
Figure 11: Rate of agreeing and strongly agreeing with the responses to the question “What kind of positive effects did Romaversitas have on your personal life?” by current students and graduates (%)⁴²



⁴² A five-point scale was used for the evaluation of the statements: 1= completely disagree 5=strongly agree

We also asked the current students about their plans for the future. Three-fourth of the current students would like to continue on with their studies, acquiring another degree or applying to post-graduate programs. Slightly less of them – two-thirds of the students – would like to find a job of their profession after graduation. One-third of the students would like to work for civil organizations, working for the Roma. The fewest of the students, about one-tenth of them, intend to get involved in politics and advocate Roma rights or look for employment abroad. There are only very few students without any exact plans for the future (“things will work out anyway”).

Figure 12: Rate of respondents answering “yes” to the segments of the question “How do you envision your future?”(%)



All of the current students plan to support the work of Romaversitas after graduation. Most of them – 90% of the students – would promote the work done by the Foundation on every possible occasion. Three-fourth of the current students indicated that they would support the work of Romaversitas by meeting students in person, encouraging and helping them and two-thirds of the students indicated that they would participate in the programs and trainings of Romaversitas. The fewest of them – half of the students – would support the work of the Foundation by donating money.

Currently 57% of the graduates contribute to the work of the Foundation. Most of the supporting graduates (82,4%) assist Romaversitas through verbally promoting the Foundation. The second most frequent type of support (41,2%) is “meeting students in person, encouraging and helping them.” Participating in the work of Romaversitas and in their educational programs as modes of support received the third and fourth highest rating.

All of the current students and the graduates would recommend the Romaversitas Foundation to others.

Summary

Concerning the socio-demographic data of the respondents we can state the following: The gender rate of the current and graduate students of Romaversitas was close to equal. The educational level of the parents can be regarded low among both current and graduate students, the supreme majority the students are first generation intellectuals. Before entering higher education, the majority of the students (almost two-thirds of the respondents) had

lived in cities, county seat cities or the capital.⁴³ Currently almost two-third of the graduates does no longer live in the settlement they used to prior to higher education. Concerning income status, the current students evaluate it as lower than average, while the graduates as close to average. The data gained about the present place of residency of graduates and the income status of both groups can lead us to the conclusion that the completion of university studies has a mobilizing impact both regarding residency and income.

Regarding their studies, the students show a diverse picture, the importance of social studies apparent among the graduates can no longer be found among current students. Concerning employment data, almost all graduates are currently working, the supreme majority as professionals, most cases in the state or civil sector. The majority of the graduate students feel that their work is appreciated and they have suitable jobs matching their qualifications. They are the least satisfied with their salaries and the compatibility of their present jobs with their future career goals.⁴⁴

Prior to the program, almost all respondents were supported by someone in their studies, they most frequently emphasized the support of parents, and second most commonly the support of a teacher. The students regarded moral support the most important, after which financial support and the provision of circumstances at home which contribute to optimal learning performances were stressed.

When applying, the majority of respondents expected financial support primarily, and good community secondly, while broadening their scope of knowledge was also important for them. For almost two-thirds of the students the entrance examination did not prove to be difficult.

For the majority of the respondents, the program did/does not consume very much time and energy. However, it happened to almost half of graduates and one-fourth of current students before that they did not complete the requirements agreed in advance.

The specific program components (scholarship, language courses, textbook allowance, preparatory teacher, tutor, mentor, Open University) were evaluated by the current students with very good grades, the listed services all received an average score of more than 4.4 in a 5.0 grade scale. For the graduates, the most important program components proved to be the language courses, the scholarship and the Open University.

Regarding the impact of Romaversitas, the students mostly experienced becoming self-confident, self-conscious Roma and completing their studies and succeeding professionally as expectations towards them. Current students were more concerned about the expectations they face than the graduates, particularly with regard to the expectations related to Roma identity

According to the answers given the the question “What kind of impact did Romaversitas have on your personal life?”, current students are mostly supported feel that the Foundation supports them mostly in: in building friendships, the successful completion of their studies; establishing connections important for their careers, realizing their dreams and desires and

⁴³ For data about the housing situation of Hungarian Roma, see: Kemény I., pp.13-20.

⁴⁴ According to data from 2003, 28 percent of Roma men and 15 percent of Roma women in the age group 15-74 was employed. Out of the employed Roma, only 8 % worked as professionals (white-collar workers), see: Kemény I., pp. 96-131.

dealing with the conflicts of becoming a Roma intellectual According to graduates, the program proved to be important in dealing with the conflicts of becoming a Roma intellectual, the successful completion of their studies and realizing their dreams and desires. However, the majority of the graduates does not feel that Romaversitas contributed to them having a good job and good salary. Concerning the various questions, current students felt in higher numbers than graduates that the Foundation helped them.

The current students would like to support the work of the Foundation in the future, half of the graduates does support the organization in some form presently. Both the current and graduate students would recommend the program to others.

4. Findings of the In-Depth Interviews

During the current research, 20 in-depth interviews were conducted: 10 interviews were carried out involving former and current employees, experts attached to the Foundation – including Gábor Daróczi (D.G.), the director of the Foundation and Ildikó Paskó (P.I.) program manager; but we also had conversation with the members of the board of trustees, the founder of the Foundation and contributing experts (i.e. tutors and instructors). In addition, 10 in-depth interviews were conducted involving graduates and current students.⁴⁵ The interviewers carried out the interviews according to interview outlines, which included questions on relevant issues of the Foundation, such as the goals of the Foundation, the professional program, important program components, community life, operation, main problems and impact. In the following section, we provide a picture about the Romaversitas Foundation based on the findings of the interviews, and the information gathered regarding these categories.

4.1. Goals of the Romaversitas Foundation

Most of the interview subjects agreed on the goals of the Romaversitas Foundation. Accordingly, the organization was established in order to support Roma students in higher education in completing their studies: *„Romaversitas was established in 1996 by the Roma Civil Rights Foundation in order to support Roma students pursuing higher education. Before Romaversitas, there were no effective programs focusing on quality education of the students.”* (Contributing Expert)

According to the report of the interview subjects, the goals of the Foundation determined at its establishment have not changed significantly. The program provides professional and financial support to talented young Roma in higher education. *„Your knowledge is supposed to be improved by the time you finish the university, and the fact that you are a Roma man – because you are a Roma – does not matter anymore, because you become a professional.”* (Romaversitas Graduate)

The organization does not only aim at supporting students with their university studies but also guides them through the process of becoming an intellectual and throughout their integration. *„To help and support these young people in becoming an intellectual and with their integration. Make them to feel to be valuable members of the society and able to do something for the others”* (Contributing Expert)

In addition to the professional and financial support, Romaversitas intends to rework the students problems related to their identity, and their psychological worries that originate in their disadvantaged background: *„Romaversitas helps dealing with the change and the transition of becoming an intellectual, since the families of the students mostly never had a university graduate before, and it is not natural for them. We should not consider ourselves heroes and we should not look down on the community.”* (Romaversitas Graduate)

The managers of the program intend to develop the identity of the participating students, but not by providing them unambiguous answers to the question; what does it mean to be a

⁴⁵ During the research, we secured the anonymity of the interview subjects – with the exception of Gábor Daróczi, director and Ildikó Paskó program manager, both responsible for the operation of the Foundation.

Roma. *„Either the questions will be answered or they are prepared to find their own answers. We try to improve those skills, which enable them to find their answers”* (D.G.)

Most of the interview subjects believe that the students need the program to develop their identity and help them to deal with their psychological problems, since they usually have difficulties with these issues when entering the program: *„They carry something that they are not aware of... something even they don't know how to deal with, namely their Roma identity”* (Contributing Expert)

Through the support of the participating students, the program seeks to accomplish extensive goals, to create a Roma middle-class: *„They try to create a Roma elite, who represents their Roma identity responsibly.”* (Contributing Expert)

In terms of the general goals of the Foundation, during the years a disagreement has arisen on the political role of the organization, between those who propagate the Foundation's active participation in the Roma civil rights movement and those who emphasize professional quality. *“Romaversitas always had difficulties in identifying itself. It might identify itself as a participant in the civil rights movement producing proud and uncompromising young people, who will represent the interest of the Roma after returning to their communities. Or being an accepted member of their professional or academic field, they do not do anything else than concentrate on their own achievements and exemplify that the Roma are as good as anybody else.”* (Contributing Expert)

The current management prefers the approach that emphasizes professionalism: *“Romaversitas does not intend to train Roma activists, or civil rights activists or youth involved in Roma public life and politics, but intellectuals attending universities or colleges ... or to be more precise, it intends to contribute (to their education).”* (Contributing Expert)

4.2. The Program of the Romaversitas Foundation

Students get accepted to the Romaversitas program through the admission procedure described before. Accordingly, after submitting their resume and a cover letter, the applicants are required to complete a central written examination that tests their basic competences. The director of the Foundation finds the evaluation of the test particularly permissive – based on the outcomes of the written test, usually only 15-20 percent of the applicants are not invited to the oral exam.

The oral exam, where the employees of the Foundation, long-term cooperating experts, members of the board of trustees and the current students of the program are also invited, lasts minimum half an hour per applicant. During the interview, the interviewers ask the applicants about their family and social background, about their previous studies, future plans, ambitions; their opinion about participating in a group and about their notion of Roma identity. They also ask the applicants about their preference among the services that the program offers. *“This way we can figure out to what extent they looked up and researched the Foundation, because all the important information can be found on our website.”* (D.G.)

Typically, great number of students applies to the Romaversitas Foundation: while more students apply to the program from year to year, the management can only accept students

to the vacant positions of the previous year's graduates.⁴⁶ In 2010, from the 177 applicants they could secure positions for 18 students, however, more of them deserved to be admitted: *"Another 50 of them could have been easily admitted"* (P.I.). As selection is necessary, the most important principles of selecting the applicants include the students' performance on the admission exams, previous academic performance, determination and social status.

Most of the current students and the graduates interviewed had pleasant memories about the admission procedure; they did not find it too demanding, only few students indicated difficulties. Some of them had minor troubles completing the math test, others were not familiar with the answers to the questions concerning public affairs. *„If I had known in advance, I would have looked up the public figures."* (Current Student)

After the summer admission, the new students are invited to an orientation camp in September in order to familiarize them with the Foundation, and introduce them to the other students. *"We declare during the admission interview that we accept only those applicants who can participate in the orientation camp, participation is mandatory to both new and old students"*⁴⁷ (D.G). The orientation camp focuses on team-building, community programs, but the instructors of the Open University lectures also come and give rehearsal classes. These help the students to decide which seminars they will enroll in later.

Typically, the student respondents expressed their positive opinion about the orientation camp, and they attributed an important role to it. One of the students specifically mentioned that the cancellation of the orientation camp in the year she was accepted outcomeed in her taking much longer to get to know her fellow students. Others experienced it as a great community event: *"I only had good memories about it, I can only say good things about the orientation camp."* (Current Students)

Services

We introduced the services provided by Romaversitas Foundation in the second chapter: in addition to financial support – in form of the scholarship and textbook allowance – professional support also has a significant role. The professional programs include personal and group sessions. The group sessions include Open University lectures, the opportunities of personal services include tutoring, mentoring and private preparatory teachers.⁴⁸

While all freshmen are eligible for a mentor – i.e. senior students advising freshmen, – they need to personally apply to the tutoring and preparatory programs by indicating the timeframe and the purpose in their applications. There is a long-term cooperation with the tutors, who assist students along the completion of their theses or prepare them for academic competitions, therefore students are required to submit their applications at the beginning of the fall semester, and the tutors are hired from October until April. Within the current financial circumstances, after the evaluation of the applications submitted at the beginning of the fall semester 2010, the tutoring program has been started. However, by the time of the interviews, the payments to the tutors were not transferred, the managers of the Foundation asked for the patience of the contributing experts.

⁴⁶ For the number of applicants and admitted students see Table 3.

⁴⁷ However, if students have serious reasons for not attending the orientation camp, they will be excused. It affects 3-4 students every year.

⁴⁸ The services also include language courses and other forms of support, such as searching for grants or having sessions with a psychologist, see page 10.

Students experiencing difficulties with their studies might request a private preparatory instructor for a specific, but mostly a shorter period. Those students, who at the time of the interviews already started seeing a private instructor are supported by the Foundation, however, they could not afford to finance this service for more students in the near future.⁴⁹

Group sessions are held as part of the Open University events that take up one weekend every month (from Friday afternoon until Sunday), and the attendance is mandatory.⁵⁰ During the events, some seminars designed for improving professional knowledge and skills development take place. *“The professional seminars are devoted to the improvement of professional knowledge.”* (P.I.) In this way, students gain knowledge different from that they are taught within university education, and they can select among the seminars according to their major, or personal interest. The principle of skills development seminars is the following; *“students coming from middle-class families acquire certain basic skills, while students raised in poverty need help to learn them. (These trainings) improve those skills, which are essential for studying, working or strengthening their identity.”* (P.I.)

The management organizes the program of the Open University weekends according to the students’ needs, with the agreement of the instructors.⁵¹ However, it also depends on the financial situation of the Foundation; which type of instructors and classes they can afford. *“We are completely determined by the money.”*⁵² (D.G.)

Most of the interview subjects valued the professional programs. *“Our students are the same as any other students. It can sometimes happen that one is not prepared for a seminar or would prefer to be somewhere else. But mostly I discovered that they enjoyed these lectures”* (Contributing Expert)

Most of the students we interviewed found the professional programs beneficial, sometimes exhausting, but mostly interesting. *“I cannot recall any unnecessary program.”* (Current Student)

Some of them mentioned that even if they found a seminar unnecessary, they discussed it with the employees of the organization, who in most cases modified the program accordingly. However, there was an interview subject who seriously critiqued the content of the professional programs. *“I don’t think there is any consistency (in the professional program).”*(Contributing Expert)

Requirements and Obligations

In exchange for the services, students are required to meet certain expectations and requirements. Accordingly, being late, failing to sign the attendance sheet, missing mandatory programs or a decline in one’s academic performance and any failure in fulfilling the requirements defined in the student agreement has consequences. *„Missing the*

⁴⁹ The interviews were conducted in October and November 2010.

⁵⁰ There is a significant change compared to the previous system, in which students were free to choose between the Open University lectures and the personal development programs, while today their attendance at group sessions is compulsory. In the previous system many of the students did not know each other, now there are no problems like that. There is also a change in the frequency of the courses, earlier they were held at every second weekend, today, Open University weekends are organized only once a month.

⁵¹ The needs of the students are surveyed at the end of the academic year, so that the freshmen do not have influence on it.

⁵² The restriction of the textbook allowance system also illustrates the financial situation of the Foundation.

Open University lectures might outcome in the decrease of our scholarship.” (Current Student)

According to the director of the Foundation, the reduction of the scholarship and – in the case of good academic performance — its increase, are fundamental to the proper operation of the program. *“It is not about the money, we try to prepare them for the adult life.” (D.G.)*

Some interview subject believe that this way, students accepted to the program are motivated to take the program seriously: *“There were another 150 students applying (to this program), in some sense, you represent them too, so put yourself together, appreciate your situation, keep yourself busy, make friends, study, be tough, be a good professional and be a good person.” (Contributing Expert)*

The students are mostly able to meet the requirements and do not consider them too demanding. *“People usually fulfill these (requirements). Usually there are no problems ... obviously, it is one’s own interest to go to a language school.” (Current Student)*

Dropping out

During the interviews, the subjects did not report high number of dropouts. According to the director of the program, the number of students dropping out of the program is 1-2 every year. Those students, who completed their absolutoria, but take the language examination in the next semester, are not qualified as dropouts. Neither are those, who could stay but terminate their contract due to personal reasons (most likely they cannot fulfill the requirements related to the Open University weekends).

“Dropping out of the university is very rare, it almost never happens. If somebody is very close to completely failing his or her studies, every possible step will be made to keep him or her in.” (Contributing Expert)

Important Program Components

Last year, a survey was conducted among their students asking their opinion about the important and less important program components. According to the outcomes, the 10-month scholarship and the Open University lectures are the most important.

Several interview subjects believed that every program component is equally important and the different services cannot be ranked, because different students might find different services beneficial. *„It is a structure, in which every single element has a particular function. If there is no Table tennis, no dance classes, if we don’t play situation games, we cannot entirely empathize with the subject we talked about for hours. These elements are built on each other. They were designed this way.” (Contributing Expert)*

Other interview subjects emphasized the importance of the Open University lectures, the language courses, the scholarship and the textbook allowance. They also mentioned the study abroad and the exchange programs: *“It is getting more and more common. I do not know who contributes to this but many students go abroad.”(Contributing Expert)*

Most of the interview subjects highlighted the role of the community, which was considered the greatest advantage of the program by many: *“Familial, friendly atmosphere, one can get*

help with private problems – I believe this is the greatest advantage of the entire (program); scholarships can be found elsewhere too.” (Contributing Expert)

4.3. Relationship with the Students, Community

The supreme majority of the interview subjects predominantly valued the community life of Romaversitas. Most of them considered this community life the most important outcome of the program. *“Without the (community life) Romaversitas does not exist. We do not list it among the services, it is not written down.” (P.I.)* According to Ildikó Paskó’s opinion, the safety that the program and the community offer is extremely important for the students, since several students struggle with financial, academic and family problems, and consequently psychological issues.

The students we interviewed also found the sense of community essential.

“I feel there is a company of friends who accept me entirely.” (Current Student)

„What I received here, cannot be measured by the money or the knowledge, these are all minor things compare to what I received as a human, I had people here, who were my friends, I had psychologicality I never experienced elsewhere, I found a community, in which I felt at home. I became a better man, and the others too. Without (the program) I would not stand here, my life would be different and the others’ too.” (Romaversitas Graduate)

Some of the interview subjects valued the role that the community played in accepting their identity: *„it brings the people together, and offers them values that they respect throughout their lives and they might pass them over within their professional field. For instance, many people have difficulties in accepting that they are Roma, and here they learn to deal with it. Plus, belonging to a community completely changes this feeling, they accept it and discover its advantages. It enables positive identification.” (Romaversitas Graduate)*

Some interview subjects indicated that they were not completely satisfied with the community life. There were some recently accepted students, who did not feel they found their place. *„Many consider Romaversitas their second family. I have never felt that way. However, it’s a place I like to come for these three days.” (Currents Student)*

The contributing experts reported good relationships with the students, they felt they have close connections with them. *“There is an obvious distance in every student-teacher relationship, here, this distance is less significant.” (Contributing Expert)*

The students we interviewed mostly had positive opinions about their relationship with their teachers. Some of them mentioned specific teachers who they were fond of. *“They listen to us and respect our ideas about the classes.” (Current Student)*

Moreover, the students expressed their positive opinion about the management of the Foundation: *„It happens many times that you enter an office and they are not willing to talk to you... they are not willing to give you a scholarship... here it was different, I always felt welcome, when I showed up at the office. I was always asked about myself, about my*

boyfriend, my family, ... what I had for breakfast ... we are really cared for. I was always surprised.” (Current Student)

Follow-up and Maintaining Contact with Graduates

The modes of maintaining contact with graduates have not been worked out yet. The managers of the Foundation attribute this to the financial difficulties. The follow-up system has been recently developed; they had an expert to design a database, in which the personal information of the students can be easily stored. Last year, questionnaires were sent out to current students and graduates, which were sent back by 130-140 people. However, the foundation has not had the capacity yet to process them. They plan to activate the system in the next semester and they aim at including the data of graduates in accordance with privacy regulations in one year.

Currently, the contact with a certain percentage of the graduates is solved, as former students often participate in Romaversitas events, and the alumni mailing list is also in operation. The idea of an alumni meeting has also come up, but it has been never realized due to lack of funding. *“During the last 14 years, almost 200 students graduated, some of them keep contact with us, some of them drifted away and some of them refuse to keep in touch.” (P.I.)*

4.4. Operation of the Organization

Presently, the daily work of the Foundation is carried out by the two permanent employees Gábor Daróczy, director and Ildikó Paskó, program manager, whose work is supervised by the board of trustees. The director of the Foundation is responsible for the representation of the organization and for fundraising; the program manager organizes and supervises the professional program. During the daily operation of the Foundation, the tasks are not strictly separated. *“We discuss every problem that arises” (P.I.)*

In addition to the two permanent employees, three current students assist the work of the Foundation; one of them coordinates the language courses, the other helps with the technical administration and the third – with respect to the financial situation – is responsible for acquiring financial resources: assistance in applying for grants, fundraising and PR. They receive additional scholarship in exchange for their work. Besides, the Foundation relies on the voluntary work of current and former students – they are not paid for their work; some of them help with the website, others with translations, one of them edits the monthly newsletter, and the international student exchange programs are also coordinated by a graduate volunteer.⁵³

The Foundation is an independent, non-profit organization, which is mostly financed by grants. The majority of the expenses are covered by few main supporters; the scholarship program of the Roma Educational Fund – which has not supported the Foundation last year – secures the scholarship of 30 students. The Open Society Institute mostly finances the administrative expenses of the Foundation. TEVA Hungary Ltd, as part of a three-years agreement, covers the total expenses of the Open University lectures and part of the

⁵³ The number of the employees is relatively low compared to the previous years due to the unfavorable financial situation.

expenses of the language courses and scholarships.⁵⁴ In addition, less significant supporters complete the budget of the organization, sometimes by participating in the Patron Partner Program (PPP).⁵⁵ Furthermore, there is the practice of the 51st Student, where Romaversitas graduates financially contribute to the scholarship of a current student.

Some of the supporters contribute to the finances of the Foundation not with funds but through discounts. For example, in Sport Hotel Buda, where the Open University lectures since the beginning of the academic year have taken place, the Foundation can use the services at cost price (65 per cent discount), therefore the cost of the accommodation, the meals and the rent of the suites are significantly less expensive than before.

In addition to the supporters, the Foundation is the partner of other organizations, such as the Vislovszky Henrik College (a Roma college in Pécs), the Polytechnic Institute in Economics or the Kesztyűgyár Community Center, and they also developed good relationship with the British Council running the navigator project.⁵⁶

The expenses of the maintenance are further reduced by the contributing experts' willingness to volunteer or work for lower salaries. *„All of us who teach or provide trainings there do it as contributors for very low salaries. No one does it for making good money.”* (Contributing Expert)

The financial situation of the Foundation has not been solved. According to its managers, the Foundation needs a serious long-term supporting partner, or grants designed specifically to support the operation of the Foundation, which it has not taken place yet. *„It is impossible to raise 40-50 million a year without a significant supporter or specific grants”* (D.G.)

4.5. Main problems and Recommended Changes

Most of the interview subject defined the unfortunate financial situation as the main problem the Foundation faces. *„Basically, we live a month-to-month existence”*(D.G.). According to the director, if just one from the total three main financial items (scholarship, services, and the maintenance of the office and salaries) were secured, it would be considerably easier to find funds for the other two. In order to achieve financial security, one interview subject suggested more focus on researching potential supporters – specifically market actors.

The financial difficulties have been constant problems throughout the history of the Foundation.⁵⁷ The Foundation provides numerous services, which are mostly purchased on

⁵⁴ In 2010, the supporters of Romaversitas included: Embassy of the United States Budapest, Hungary, Szerencsejáték Zrt., the Municipality of Budapest, Kogart Foundation, other small-sized companies.

⁵⁵ Within the framework of this new form of support a patron or a group of patrons contribute to the support of the studies of specific students. See: <http://www.romaversitas.hu/magyar/felveteli.html>

⁵⁶ For the list of funders and partners, see: <http://www.romaversitas.hu/magyar/tamogatoink.html>

⁵⁷ In 2007, a crisis has been emerged in the life of the Foundation. The main donor had previously requested the foundation to increase the number of the participants from 35 to 100. The Foundation fulfilled the requirement. After reaching the maximum number of 88 students, the Foundation was not able to continue the increase, on the contrary, they had to lay off some students, when they figured out that the volume of the financial support did not increase, while the expenses of the operation did. *„It generated extreme tensions*

market prices. *„It is an expensive program, I have to say. It is not cheap to provide quality services for the young Roma with difficult social background pursuing their studies in higher education. However, some of the expenses of the program return. Even if it cannot be calculated in money and not for the Foundation, but for the Roma and for the entire Hungarian society.”* (Contributing Expert)

Besides the financial difficulties, several interview subjects did not discover other weaknesses: *„I do not see weaknesses and problems related to the realization of the program’s content.”* (Contributing Expert)

In terms of the professional contents, Ildikó Paskó reported their constant intention to bring about smaller changes, but she found the methodology fundamentally effective. *„I wouldn’t change the methodology, everything I would change is related to the finances.”*(P.I.)

Some of the experts pointed out the problems of the Open University lectures held once a month: *„I did not find the meetings once a month frequent enough; meetings every second week had more perspective, I could give assignments to the students and test them, and the connection was maintained. With the once-a-month meetings, too much depends on the (students’) independent work. We lack the background and the preparation, which makes the independent work effective. That is (the skill) we should teach them. I believe this is the main point. The subject of the classes can be changed or developed.”* (Contributing Expert)

Some of the current students would revise the Open University lectures: *“Sometimes we talk too much about the same topic for a long time.”* This student agreed on the infrequency of the Open University lectures too. The questions that a lecture might bring up will be forgotten by the next session.

Some students would increase the amount of the scholarship, others pointed out the importance of the summer breaks, since it is exactly the summer period when students figure out whether they can start the next academic year or not. They suggested meetings during the summer at least once a month, and added financial support (scholarship).

One interview subject emphasized the importance of researching students prior to their higher education studies, and that of the follow-ups. The subject addressed the need for searching for students already at the beginning of their high school studies, since that is the time when it turns out who will study at higher education. Several students were not satisfied with the quality of the website, they believed the opportunities that the Internet offers should be taken advantage of to a greater extent.

One interview subject suggested the further development of the students’ language skills, and the importance of organizing more international programs, as they are advantageous for the students. *„Studying abroad means more to them than to others.”* (Contributing Experts)

One interviewee emphasized the significance of practical trainings: *“I would organize lots of practical trainings and professional trainings that build on connections. The knowledge can be acquired, but the proper approach has to be taught. If I gain influence on these (decisions) and we can secure the necessary financial background, I will initiate lots of*

within the Foundation including personal conflicts that took more than a year to be reconciled. That was the period, when it was questioned who takes the program seriously at all.” (Contributing Expert)

pragmatic studies on exact cases of discrimination and segregation exploring the social background, the legal perspectives, the media representation of the cases, I will organize complex trainings focusing on the learning mechanisms in order to reveal (for the students) the procedures and the directions we take.” (Contributing Experts)

One subject contributing to the program in previous years adapted a highly critical approach to the organization, and in response to the question what should be changed, the following answer was given: *„Everything. All, which aims at maintaining professional quality. It should really be turned into an elite institution, and it should be more cost effective.”* (Contributing Expert) The subject also recommended an increase in the requirements that students have to fulfill, and stated that transparency and the development of communication with the teachers participating in the program and with the contributing experts is also necessary.

Several subjects pointed out that the number of students accepted to the program should also be increased and similar programs should be initiated in other towns. *“In Hungary, it would be enough to initiate programs in three or four college towns”* (Contributing Experts)

4.6. Impact of Romeversitas

The interview subjects mostly described the Romaversitas program as effective and successful. According to one contributing expert the Foundation is able to realize its goals.: *„Romaversitas is the only program that combines quality education with motivation, the financial support of the students, and the importance of building and accepting identity”* According to him, other government or civil programs only provide financial support and have no feedback about the use of support or information about changes in the students’ lives. *„Romaversitas not only assure this (feedback) but also expects it. They observe the personal development of the students and generate specific expectations, which are recorded in written form.”*

Most of the students also found the program effective; it helped them a great deal completing their studies and accepting their identities. *„Romaversitas helped me to accept that I am a Roma, but an educated one. I am not less than others with different origins. I am worth the same.”* (Romaversitas Graduate)

According to one interview subject, the students can simultaneously accept their Roma identity and be proud of their professional achievements that the subject regards as a great accomplishment: *„The students developed a healthy Roma consciousness, which has been missing from the Roma public life for a long time. It is a completely new quality of Roma identity.”*(Contributing Expert)

According to the director of the program, it is difficult to analyze the outcomes of the program. Undoubtedly, many graduates work at important places and in high positions that he considers a significant achievement, therefore he continues to work toward building an opinionated community at Romaversitas: *„We need a community that is able to address Roma-related subjects, to write articles, and sign them”* (D.G.)

More interview subjects mentioned that they were informed that many of the graduates have good jobs and work in high positions, therefore they consider the program of the Foundation

effective. *“I think (the work) what the Foundation does is very important. I was informed that the students were hired for political, and public administration positions. If the students reach such positions, it must be effective”*(Contributing Expert)

One interview subject believed that the program realizes its goals in terms of creating an intellectual elite, and undoing the problems that originate in the students’ knowledge deficit and in their Roma origins: *„because it provides something intensive that they would not receive anywhere else.”* (Contributing Expert)

One interview subject values Romaversitas because of its role in providing scholarships and supporting students with their studies. However, the subject pointed out the difficulties of measuring the extent to which the positive outcomes of the program feed back into the Roma community. *“I am sure it has positive effects, even if it is a small program”* (Contributing Expert)

Most of the interview subjects found the preservation of the organization necessary: *“I find it extremely important to preserve the Foundation and to keep it sustainable.”* (Contributing Expert)

5. Findings of the Focus Group Research

During the focus group research we had three group sessions; one with the experts, one with the current students and one with graduates. The group session with the current students was held on December 16, 2010, we had a discussion with the experts on January 5, 2011 and with the former students on January 6. Four of the current students participated in the research, six of the experts and five of the graduates showed up at the sessions. We conducted the focus group study so that through the comparison of specific approaches and perceptions we develop a deeper understanding of Romaversitas' operation.

5.1. Findings of the Focus Group Sessions Involving Current and Former Students

During the analysis of the sessions conducted with current and graduate students, we discuss the following topics: the first impressions about Romaversitas, personal connection, the strengths and weaknesses of the program and recommendations for change.

Coming into Contact with Romaversitas, First Impressions

The current and graduate students both learned about the Romaversitas program through similar routes: through close friends, parents, siblings, former Romaversitas students, the mailing system of the university's admission office, the social worker in school or through MACIKA.

Some of the students indicated that first they were not familiar with the operation of the program, but they were motivated to apply, because of the scholarships, the language courses and the opportunity to discover their Roma origins. The students' uncertainties were cleared after the first meeting and the oral exam for admission.

Initially, one of the students had considered the conversation as a job interview – he was determined to fit in – but as the conversation started his primary preconceptions changed. He found the interview completely pleasant, which was confirmed by the others: *“The director approached me and offered me to call him by his first name. His gesture indicated a sense of community and I immediately felt to be the part of it.”*

At the very beginning of the relationship, the students applying to the program already recognized the familial atmosphere and the supportive attitude among the management, the employees and the students. *„Usually the Roma intellectuals I met before were all full of themselves. Here, everybody was Roma, but nobody was snooty and the atmosphere reminded me of elementary schools – in a positive sense – where everyone can be relaxed, and while expressing an opinion, we can be true to ourselves and be intellectuals simultaneously.”*

Personal connections to the Foundation

Both group conversations indicated the students' great appreciation towards the Foundation. The scholarship meant a significant financial relief and many of them explained that they would have not been able to complete their university studies without the scholarship, as they could not expect any financial support from their parents. Besides, the Foundation also provided additional connection to their identity that they would not have been able to realize

by studying at a university. „It is not just that I recognize, but – so to speak – I can accept it from my heart that, yes, I am Roma. I believe, it is extremely important for someone like me, who does not live in a Roma community, only when I visit my grandparents during the summer breaks... I can identify with this statement more than before.”

Many of them emphasized the opportunity to attend courses that helped them to discover their own culture and history, and contributed to the improvement of their communication skills and broadening their perspectives. The community formed within the Foundation helped the students to recognize that they were not alone with their problems:

„At Romaversitas I met young people, who felt the same way, who faced the same problems and had a life story similar to mine. And I felt fortified by the knowledge that I was not alone – being part of a community is very important.”

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Program

Among the **strengths of the program**, the current students mentioned the benefits of the seminars that enabled them to develop their personalities, they emphasized the language courses, the textbook allowance, the opportunity of being tutored along the completion of their thesis, and the importance of the private preparatory teachers.

The students also talked about the significance of the connections they established while participating in the program, which might help them to find employment. One of the students mentioned that having indicated in his resume that he was a Romaversitas student jump-started his career. Still, several students critiqued the Foundation’s lack of properly established connections. However, the contacts of the Foundation still helped them a lot, as they did not have a family background that would have provided them such support.

The former students emphasized the support they provided for each other as well as the humanity and the familial atmosphere of the community, in which their teachers were proud of them. „I recall love. I didn’t understand, how come everyone cares for each other here. First, I found it fake, I thought it was unimaginable.”

Besides, they emphasized the high professional quality of the management, the instructors and the tutors and the high standards of work that the management required from the students. The students do not recall unreasonable strictness; on the contrary, they experienced flexibility and understanding, for example in terms of the deadlines.

It was also important that the students could express their wishes and the management showed consideration for their opinions: „We were always told that they do not run Romaversitas, but we do.”

According to their report, it was not always this way, but today students’ opinion is respected even if they say no: „I also learnt there to say no. I was not locked down by the system. One does not always need to work on everything. I learnt the limits of my responsibility.”

Several students were able to establish good connections, on which they still can rely. Nevertheless, the financial support that the program offered was considered a remarkably

positive aspect of the program. The students believe that the Foundation was able to provide them financial stability.

Regarding difficulties and weaknesses, both groups mentioned first the financial background and its instability – and the fact that the amount of the scholarship had not increased for a while. They also referred to the problems with limited capacity of the organization, because of the increasing number of applications: *“We are the lucky minority within the minority.”* This perception originates in the lack of financial funding, the decrease in the number of the students and the reduction of the amount of the textbook allowances.

The students also experience problems with communication, they believed the organization does not make use of the opportunities that the media and the Internet offer: *“If people are not familiar with this organization, if they are not aware of this specific stratum of the Roma society, then the resources will not increase and the connections will not be established, through which the Foundation is able to gain more money.”*

They suggest that the Foundation needs a good PR or marketing team dealing with these issues, which would also bring relief for the overworked current employees.

The negative aspects of the program mainly originate in the lack of funding: *“we often have to show up at representative events and speak out precisely because of the financing.”*

Solutions Recommended to the Problems

The students also made suggestions for preventing the problems. In addition, they had already started initiatives, such as participation in the daily operation of the office, or the promotion of the Foundation in the radio: *It works on a voluntary basis. The students would like to help many times. I agree, if I received so much support, I would like to help too. What I can do is showing up in the office and help with the work. Others can help with looking for grants and there are some people who have nice voice and they can help by doing the voice over for the radio spot. “*

„Why not having an organization, where we are employed, especially those of us who have political ambitions, productive views and want to work in this field in the future?”

Several students emphasized the importance of elaborating long and short-term strategies and the necessity to improve the promotion of the organization. Additionally, they indicated that the program needed to remain interdependent of political authorities and views, and the Romaversitas graduates needed to work toward a change in the public opinion about the Roma.

In summary, it can be concluded that the young Romas need the Foundation not only because of the scholarship, but:

„Being a Roma university student is itself a political statement, and it is an important goal of Romaversitas to change this. It shouldn't be a big deal if a Roma gets accepted to a university. Becoming a workman or becoming a professional should be a personal decision of the individual.”

5.2. Findings of the Focus Group Discussion Involving Contributing Experts

While summarizing the sessions with contributing experts, we discuss the aims, strengths and weaknesses of the program.

Aims of the program

During the conversation with the experts, we asked them about the aims of the program. We received mostly similar responses to this question: providing scholarship for young Romas pursuing their university or college education – *“in one weekend a month they receive three things; support for their studies, building community and Roma cultural identity.”* They all agreed that each goal is extremely important and necessary, however some of the experts emphasized the importance of strengthening Roma identity:

„I do not think that Romaversitas aims at producing university students without strengthening their connections. Because we almost would not do anything then. It is done by thousands (other organizations).

Few years ago there were disagreements about the necessity of having to choose between highly qualified experts and the need for strengthening identity, which, according to their report, has been solved since then. Although there are occasional disagreements on the personal level, they all agreed on the importance of accomplishing each single goal.

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Program and Reactions to the Weaknesses

Determined teachers, determined experts, marketable education, diversity and complexity were emphasized in the first place by the participants of the discussions: *„By these, I mean that we not only offer scholarship, personal development and group trainings but all of them simultaneously. So the list of services we provide is very-very long.”*

According to the opinions of the participants of the session, due to the extended services, the Foundation gained good reputation, which is confirmed by the high number of applicants – many times more than the available places. The experts stressed that it is not their intention to accept students based exclusively on the best grade point average. *„We also accept D-students, even if we know we have to spend a lot of money on their preparatory courses.”*

Specific atmosphere and close relationship with the students were created, due to the openness and their tendency to let the students get involved in various aspects of the organization: *„Sometimes I feel they are aware that somebody is proud of them here ... they do not experience it at the university, and they tell about their achievements and they know that the teacher will be proud of them.”*

Thus, according to the experts, the students are aware of the personal connection: *“Using their words – when we ask them why they like to come here, they tell us that they feel at home here.”*

There is an opportunity to establish a connection between generations that means more than the relationships usually formed at the university: *„During last year, an active, internal*

communication developed among the students. The usual daily email exchanges are between fifty and one hundred”.

„I am always amused by the lively communication in Romaversitas. I really believe that good people exchange their thoughts there, which is very rare. I do not think that life at the university can provide this.”

It is also important to note, that there are certain rituals of Romaversitas, such as the welcome ceremony, summer camps, commencement ceremony, which contribute to:
„(There is a) Romaversitas identity. Not just a Roma identity.”

Concerning the **weaknesses**, the participants reported difficulties similar to those of the students: *“Not only is the amount of the resources frustrating, I am more frustrated by their incalculability. It never happened to me that I could plan for more than four months in advance. Well... Five.”*

This instability determines the amounts of money that the students can take out and it also makes the maintenance of the quality particularly difficult; for example, they could not afford to increase the amount of the scholarship for nearly 8 years. These are the consequences of the fact that it is an expensive program – as most of the students are from the countryside, it increases the expenses of the Foundation – making it even more difficult to secure long-term contracts.

The participants considered the frequency of the Open University weekends a weakness, since they believe the time between the monthly meetings is not used effectively. On the other hand, they found the Open University weekends too intensive.

While they mentioned the reputation of the foundation as positive, the issues of increasing promotion and acceptance repeatedly arose. Several steps have been made, for example the webpage has been rebuilt, now they just have to increase the frequency of its usage.

In order to develop their financial background they introduced two different programs: *„One of them called the 51st Student. We expect financial contribution from those who we supported to complete their university degree. We should work on searching for, finding and asking them to participate. The other is a patron partnership program, within which we request groups of individuals or companies to finance the scholarship of specific students. Both of them are in use, and we monthly receive money from both. But it could be much more.”* Additionally, they employ student volunteers and initiated projects to secure international grants.

Some of the participants suggested the alteration of the Foundation into a formalized school, in order to avoid its integration into a university and the loss of its independence. On the other hand, they recommended the creation of new profiles and marketable new services in Romaversitas.

CONCLUSIONS

The present study summarizes the findings of the monitoring research about the Romaversitas Foundation. During the research, we employed desk research, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions as well as questionnaire methods, and we also conducted three case studies based on life story narrative interviews. We approached the employees of the Foundation, contributing experts, and current and graduate students of the program.

In the study, we examined – among others – the aims, history, impact, services, requirements, operation, financial situation, strengths and weaknesses of the Foundation, and the recommendations for the solution of its problems.

According to the findings of the questionnaire phase of the research, the majority of current and graduate students of Romaversitas are first generation intellectuals. Regarding their studies, the students present a diverse picture, the domination of social studies typical among graduates is no longer apparent among current students. Almost all graduates included in our sample is currently employed, their supreme majority works as professionals, in most cases in the public or non-profit sector.

Concerning income status, the current students evaluate it as lower than average, while the graduates as close to average. Before entering higher education, the majority of the students had lived in cities, county seat cities or the capital; currently almost two-third of the graduates does not live in the settlement they used to prior to higher education. The data gained about the present place of residency of graduates and the income status of both groups can lead us to the conclusion that the completion of university studies has a mobilizing impact on the students of Romaversitas both regarding residency and income.

The aim of Romaversitas is the provision of financial and professional support for the talented Roma students in higher education in order to complete their studies successfully; as well as the decrease of problems connected to their identity and psychological problems stemming from their disadvantageous background. Through the support of the participating students, the wider aim of the program is the creation of a Roma middle-class.

Regarding its operation, the Foundation is an independent, non-profit organization which is mostly sustained by grants. Currently, two full-time employees manage the Foundation, and current and graduate students also assist its work. The majority of the costs are covered by a few main donors, and other funders also contribute to the budget of the Foundation with smaller amounts, in some cases offering discounts. The costs of operation are also decreased by the fact that the contributing experts often work for free or for small amounts of money. Still, the financial situation of the Foundation is not secured.

In order to accomplish its aims, Romaversitas operates a complex, long-term, intensely engaging program. Besides the financial benefits – such as scholarship and textbook allowance; the program also includes language courses and individual and group level professional services. The group level services take place in the framework of the monthly Open University sessions, while individual development opportunities comprise of the assistance of mentors, tutors and private preparatory teachers.

The participants of the research mostly had positive opinions about the services provided by the organization. The various program components (scholarship, language courses, textbook allowance, preparatory teacher, tutor, mentor, Open University) were graded high by current students. For the graduates, the most important program components were the language courses, the scholarship and the Open University.

In return for the services, the students need to complete certain requirements – such as 3.0 grade average, participation in compulsory programs or undertakings regarding the requested individual development services. Failing the completion of requirements has its consequences, such as the reduction or suspension of scholarship. The program was not regarded too demanding by most students, they complete the required tasks in most cases, and do not regard the requirements too strict. However, one-fourth of the current students and the half of graduates had experienced problems before with completing assignments required by the Foundation in advance. Dropping-out is not characteristic to the program, the number of drop-outs is one or two per year.

According to the interviews and focus group discussions, the community life of Romaversitas is crucial for the participants. In most cases, they reported good relationships with students, contributing experts as well as the managers of the Foundation.

The respondents regarded the program of Romaversitas efficient and successful in most cases. According to current students, the Foundation supported them a great deal in building friendships, establishing connections important for their careers, completing their studies successfully and in dealing with the conflicts of becoming a Roma intellectual. For most graduates, Romaversitas proved helpful in dealing with the conflicts of becoming a Roma intellectual, successfully completing university studies, building friendships and realizing their goals and dreams. However, the majority of graduates do not think that Romaversitas helped them in gaining good salaries and good employment.

All of the current students plan to support the work of Romaversitas after graduation. Presently, more than half of the graduates participating in our research contribute to the work of the Foundation. All of the current students and the graduates would recommend the program to others.

As the main problem of the program, the supreme majority of the respondents emphasized its financial situation, which followed the history of the organization continuously. According to its managers, the program needs a serious long-term supporting partner, or grants designed specifically to support the operation of the Foundation, which have not taken place yet. Besides financial instability, the participants of the research highlighted – among others – the following points for change, recommendations:

- Increase of the scholarship as its amount has not changed for years;
- Due to educational problems arising from the fact that Open University sessions are held monthly, more frequent meetings;
- Development of second language training, organization of more international programs;

- Continuous connection with students in the summer period as well, as this is the time when they find out whether they can continue their studies. Therefore, some participants recommended monthly meetings and continuous financial support in the summer months as well;
- Proper connection with graduates, the more organized provision of follow-up is necessary;
- Modernization of the webpage, the utilization of the opportunities of the world wide web;
- In order to solve the communicational problems and utilizing the opportunities given by the internet and the media, a good PR or marketing team should be established;
- Development of long-term and short-term strategy;
- Increasing the number of participants of the program and launching more programs operating on the same principles in other cities.

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Education Policy and Regulation

Project Final Evaluation Report September 1, 2007 – 31 August, 2008.

REF Project Summary Evaluation

Student Contract

Appendix

Appendix 1: Case Studies⁵⁸

CASE STUDY NO. I

CHAPTERS IN THE LIFE OF THE INTERVIEW SUBJECT

Our subject divided his life into chapters according his studies. During his years **in kindergarten** he lived in a large family, which had a positive impact on his life, and despite the regular fighting, the family members stuck together. They lived a day-to-day existence in the small village due to constant financial difficulties: the five children and the two parents – his father was on disability allowance, his mother was a public worker – lived in a one-and-a-half room apartment.

In kindergarten he established good relationships with both his educators and his peers. His worst memories from this period of life were all connected to poverty, for instance to the lack of Christmas presents. In spite of all, he declared: *“Even then I was thinking about how good it will be years later, to remember all the good times we all spent together ... it felt good to be together and it is still good to go home.”*

He considered **elementary school** the first challenging period of his life – something he needed to “survive.” He was a mediocre student until the sixth grade, but after the seventh grade he has turned himself into an outstanding student. *„It was hard because I did not know whether I will become somebody or all I had were just hopes.”* He considered his Roma origins the main challenge of this period: *“It wasn’t me who realized my Roma origins, it was the others who made me realize it and it felt bad... plus, as we became older we recognized the differences in how people lived, who was rich and who was poor.”* His worst memory was also connected to his Roma origin: when his younger brother entered elementary school, he got beaten by an older boy. He protected his younger brother and slapped the attacker on the face, but his teacher reacted in a negative way: *“how come that me – a dark-skinned boy – slap the other. ”*

In spite of the bad memories he reportedly established strong relationships during elementary school, where he found his best friends among his classmates. He also established good relationships with his teachers; he was encouraged to continue with his studies. His parents also supported him in his studies: *„my father always told me that I do it for myself and I still remember, it was true. I was never ordered to sit down and study*

⁵⁸ In the the case studies, we introduce the life stories of two current Romaversitas students and that of one Romaversitas graduate based on the information gathered from life story narrative interviews. In the first case study, we present the life story of 24 years old boy coming form a small village and currently studying at Corvinus University of Budapest. In the second case study we present the life of a 22 years old boy, also coming from a small village, currently studying information technology at Eötvös Loránd University. Finally, in the third case study we introduce the story of 27 years old social politics graduate girl. By relying on a previously designed interview outline, throughout the three interviews we focused on the following subjects: challenges, the best and the worst memories, positive and negative impacts, living circumstances during different periods of their lives, relationships (the most significant, close relationships with parents, teachers and peers), studies, evaluation of Romaversitas, the greatest challenges of their lives, key events (prime time memories, turning-points, lowest points), future plans. We present the three life histories, – which all have a common character due to their connection to Romaversitas – according to these categories.

otherwise I will get beaten. I think this was the best motivation...”

In elementary school he certainly began to realize the worth of studying. For example, when he won a grant they spent it on food with the family: *„it felt good to be able to give something.*” His best memory was related to his admission to high school (he chose the best school in the neighborhood), since only four students got accepted to the elite educational institute.

During his years in **high school**, our interview subject considered pursuing his education a difficult issue, however, being an outstanding student he never had problems with his studies. He commuted from home every day, however, every time he got away from home, he worried how he could get home quickly if something bad happened there. It was also challenging for him to succeed in this new situation among new teachers and students.

In high school he never experienced any atrocities because of his Roma origin. There were only five Roma students in the school; one girl was in his class. He considered his relationships positive: *„I felt people sympathized with me.*” He felt confident during his high school years, however, he never discussed his random problems with his parents, for instance, he rather talked about his studies with his classmates than with his parents.

He considered his success in school a positive impact on his life – he succeeded his language examination at first attempt, he ranked fourth in a national academic competition (in economics). He felt encouraged to continue his studies mostly by his history and economics teacher.

He experienced the perceived social differences as negative impacts: some of the students wore expensive clothes, drove a car and worked in the family business. His bad feeling about the social differences has not changed until the present day. In response to the question about the extent he could deal with these, he answered: “It is hard. I always reminded myself that I must study and then it might be easier later, that was the only thing I could do then.”

Even in high school he was determined to continue on with his studies at a university. His parents preferred that he study in Miskolc instead of Budapest, but he was aware that Miskolc offered fewer opportunities. Finally, without telling about it anyone, he changed his application on the Internet, indicating Budapest in the first place instead of Miskolc.

He considers his years at **the university** the most difficult period of his life. When he first came to Budapest, after one week he moved back home. *“I wonder where I would be if I didn’t come back to Budapest. I made the right decision then. In situations like this, there is no one to give advice, one needs to decide alone what to do. Completely unfamiliar place, no one I knew, I was considering moving back home and looking for jobs with a high school degree. My mother cried and asked me to go home and look for jobs there. Then I thought it was a waste of time studying so much. And then I came back to Budapest.”* He only experienced the first few months as negative, and as he made more friends he easily got accustomed to the life in the capital. He never had problems with his studies. In the meantime, he worked as a trainee, he could support himself and send money home. Moreover, being accepted in the Romaversitas program meant a significant financial relief.

His best memories during his university years were connected to his friends and family: he formed long-lasting friendships and he was delighted to have his parents at his graduation

ceremony. He had the same relationship with his professors as the other students: the usual student-teacher relationship.

Currently, he has two majors simultaneously, which are so challenging for him that he does not have time to have private life. He needs to start thinking about where to live after graduation, whether he will be able to find a job, and he needs to start saving money in advance in case he will not.

His worst memory was connected to the death of his grandmother. On the other hand, there is *“my responsibility for my family. In fact, my brothers cannot plan for the future. I must support them and my father is already turning 63, what if he passes away... it can happen ... what will come along for me. Therefore, I cannot take it easy and just have fun. It is not enough to get a B, I need scholarships and things like that.”* He fears defecting to abroad and losing his family. Earlier he had the opportunity to study English in Ireland for three months. *“I didn’t go. I was afraid of breaking away from my family ... what am I going to do then. I regret it now.”* He still regards it a little bit of a failure.

ROMAVERSITAS

He discovered his **Roma identity** during high school. *“Back then I started to think about the situation of the Roma, and I started to realize the problems, because I believe there are problems.”* For example, one of his negative experiences related to his Roma identity was, when they wanted to go out after high school graduation, he was not allowed to enter the club because he lacked a membership card, while others were not required to present such document. It was clear that the entry was denied because they were Roma. *“It would’ve been nice to party a little, I passed the final exams, I got accepted to college, a little celebration would’ve been nice, but no. Then I wondered whether it was worth to study, that I would always be measured by my Roma origin and not by things I have done so far. My parents say that I remain a Roma whatever I do. I agree.”* One of his positive experiences related to his Roma identity was forming more friendships with other Roma, who he would have never meet if they were not Roma, and additionally there was Romaversitas. He adds that he experienced more disadvantages than advantages of being Roma. Recently, he is not aware of his Roma identity, only if he attends the Open University lectures of Romaversitas or if he goes home. Usually he does not realize it at the University or in the dorm.

He first got informed about **Romaversitas** via the Internet. He applied because of the scholarship, but after he got accepted, he realized that the program offered much more than a scholarship: he was cared for when he needed it, he was helped to find a trainee position, he could go to a psychologist, he was continuously supported and encouraged. He enjoys being the students of Romaversitas. He appreciates the familial atmosphere; one can share private problems and later benefit from the relationships established here. The people attending Romaversitas are similar to him, smart, sympathetic and friendly. He is critical about the low number of employees; the frequent financial difficulties the Foundation has to deal with, and the low number of managers. However he does not blame the Foundation for these. He would change the strict requirements students need to meet, for example in the case of missed classes. There have been several changes since he got accepted to Romaversitas; today they have a specific language coordinator as well as an administrator responsible for billing.

RELATIONSHIPS

Since childhood he has developed good relationship with his **parents**. They talk on the phone every day, he visits them once a month. His mother cries every time he leaves for Budapest, she would like him to stay home and she has a hard time letting him go. He tries to handle the situation better since they can contact via phone and Internet. They do not have mutual programs and he does not discuss his problems with his parents.

He has a good relationship with his **siblings**, who did not move away from the village and he feels responsible for them. However, sometimes he is frustrated by them; he encourages them to move to Budapest, since they can at best be public workers at home, there are no opportunities there. But they are strongly attached to the small village and do not intend to move away.

He does not have close relationship with **other relatives**, he only sees them occasionally (at Christmas or on funerals). Even though he has relatives in Budapest, he never visits them or asks for help: *“I have always been so independent.”*

He had one **previous relationship**, but it did not last long. Currently, he is not in a relationship, but he does not care, since he does not have time to concentrate on multiple things simultaneously.

The **most important people** of his life are his mother, his siblings and his goddaughter. He has the closest relationship with his roommates. They have a positive influence on him and they motivate each other with their studies – *“we push each other.”*

KEY EVENTS

He considered his graduation ceremony the **best experience** of his life; he was excited to have his parents at the ceremony. He hit **the bottom** during his first week in Budapest, when he was consistently considering the options of staying or moving back. He considered his first job as the **turning point** of his life, it felt like being an adult: he worked all day, studied at night and he believed he was on the right track. *“I was proud of myself, I might have a better life this way than staying in the village.”*

CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS

He described the greatest challenge of his life as follows: *“It is complicated. (I want) to complete the finance and accountancy program. To find employment in a bank, to have a condo and to be like the others at my workplace, to get hired not because I am Roma. This is a great challenge.”* He is determined to succeed, however, he believes it also depends on his luck. His current problem is passing his exams. He does not have any other problems.

FUTURE PLANS

He would like to find employment and rent an apartment together with his former roommates. He expects the start to be difficult. *“I am sure things will work out if I am*

really determined, I could have gotten lost before. Nobody looked after me, I could have gotten involved in bad company and who knows where I would stand by now, but I always knew what need to do and what I shouldn't." He would like to have two children, to settle down in Budapest and when he grows older – around 40 – to move to a nearby village.

CASE STUDY NO. II

CHAPTERS IN THE LIFE OF THE INTERVIEW SUBJECT

The subject did not divide his life into different chapters; typically, he started to talk about the present and after the leading question moved to the periods of his life related to his studies.

He does not have many memories from **kindergarten**; he only remembers that he was a very lively child. He played a lot, he usually tore the toys apart and never put them together. He was raised by his parents in a small village close to Eger. As a child he had a few friends, his siblings and his parents played the most important role in his life. His Roma parents – his mother a homemaker and his father a builder – always loved each other and lived in a good relationship. They were poor, but did not live a day-to-day existence. They lived in a relatively large house, first he shared a room with his younger sister and his younger brother (in order to save money on heating), later his younger sister moved to a single room and he shared his room with his younger brother. They could not afford to travel, but the family stuck together.

He was a very introverted child during **elementary school**, he had a few, close friends, but hardly interacted with the others. He was frustrated when almost half of his class left for a six-years high school in seventh grade, since it felt that *“those who were left behind will never make a name for themselves.”* However, in the last years of elementary school, recognizing his talent for information technology, his teachers encouraged him to continue on with his studies. During elementary school he also found pleasure in drawing, but later he gave it up, as he felt that he should *“rather realize himself in his ambition for programming.”*

He formed a strong relationship with one of his cousins, who he competed with during elementary school for being a better student. Then he recognized his ambition for studying and his interest in information technology.

He got accepted **to high school** in Eger specialized in information technology. He chose this particular school because of the high quality of education it provided. He stated that *“these years passed by without any particular good or bad event.”* His class was the most phlegmatic, therefore the teachers did not really like them. As he daily commuted to Eger from his village, he did not have enough time to rest, consequently: *“I always lacked concentration.”* His class was divided into cliques – the rich and the poor – however, he never belonged to any of those cliques and mostly hung out only with few friends. He was not bullied by them and he did not detest them either, there was simply no connection between them. He only missed girls from school. He believes having more girls in the class would have significantly contributed to his socialization. His relationship with his parents did not change during this period; they continued to support him in his studies. He cannot recall any particular good or bad memories during his high school years.

He spent his **university years** in Budapest. After graduating from high school, first he planned to go to Debrecen, because it had a nice university. Later he learned from a friend that the Eötvös Loránd University also offered information technology programs, therefore he applied to ELTE instead. He was overwhelmed by the great number of exams and he had

the tendency to get involved in other activities, have social life and spend time with his girlfriend. Nevertheless, he was able to pull himself together and concentrate on his studies. He was not able to recall any worst or best memories from this period of his life.

RELATIONSHIPS

He currently maintains good relationship with his parents, he can discuss his problems with them. He visits home every second week. They do not have mutual family programs – “*we are typically a laid back family.*”

Even though he rarely sees his siblings, he has good relationship with them. His sister is in high school and his brother attends a college in Eger, also majoring in information technology.

He considers his parents the most important people in his life, whom he can rely on and from whom he always received support. Secondly, he mentions his brothers and sisters, and finally his former girlfriend – they broke up half a year ago after a three-year relationship – whose company he appreciated because “*she is smart and makes reasonable observations.*”

He formed the closest relationship with his roommates, with whom he goes out and has interesting conversations.

ROMAVERSITAS

During his years in elementary school he recognized his Roma identity due to the teachers’ discriminating approach. They made distinctions between Roma and non-Roma, considering Roma student phlegmatic and less motivated. The interview subject expressed his belief that if one is constantly considered less motivated than he really becomes less motivated with time. In high school he felt less distinguished and he did not experience any discrimination at the university at all. His classmates were surprised when he told them about his Roma origin, as they had never recognized it before (he believes this to be the outcome of the increasing ethnic diversity of university students).

He accidentally learned about Romaversitas via ETR. He applied to Romaversitas because he liked the sense of community and the program that he discovered on the Internet. In addition, he found the opportunities offered by Romaversitas particularly attractive, especially the scholarships, the language courses, the organization and the communal programs. He expected this community to contribute to his intellectual renewal. He could establish important connections, meet people with similar views, moreover, he meet his current girlfriend through Romaversitas.

He enjoys being a Romaversitas student. He appreciates the program except for the coordination. He mentioned as an example that the projector was never on when the courses started – the constant setbacks like this made the program unorganized. He would make changes in the coordination.

KEY EVENTS

He could not recall any outstanding key events of his life. During the semester he mostly feels confident and he is able to keep his life well-organized.

He could not mention any low-points in his life, even though he experienced difficult times, such as a recent period with financial difficulties. The weeks of the finals are always more demanding, when he is extremely overwhelmed, lacks time and organization and he feels losing his stability.

Being admitted to the Romaversitas program meant a turning-point of his life.

CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS

Currently, he sees the Analysis exam and the other exams as considerable challenges he needs to deal with. Moreover, in terms of his entire life, he considers the development of his communication skills as the greatest challenge of his life. He has worked on it, but he still needs improvement.

FUTURE PLANS

After completing his bachelor degree, he would like to apply to a master program and plans to go to doctoral school. He does not have exact plans for the further future but he can envision himself working for a university. He would like to have a family later and he would like to settle in Budapest.

CASE STUDY NO. III

CHAPTERS IN THE LIFE OF THE INTERVIEW SUBJECT

The interview subject separated different sections of her life according to her studies. She attended both **nursery school and kindergarten**, because her parents worked. She experienced the move from the Roma neighbourhood to the village at the age of one and a half as a positive memory. Her parents could only afford to purchase a partly burnt-down house that they later renovated. Even though they faced constant financial difficulties, she had everything she needed. She has one younger brother. She was popular in kindergarten, she had several Roma friends; being Roma did not matter there.

During the junior years in **elementary school** she got involved in constant conflicts with her teacher, mostly because she received lower grades even if she performed well. While there were three Roma students in her class at the beginning of their first grade, by the time they got to fourth grade many of them dropped out and went to a special school. Her teacher did not like Roma students. In first grade, the Roma students were ordered to stand up. That was the first time when she realized her Roma origin. And that was the time when her father was diagnosed with cancer. Later she was encouraged and supported with her studies by her teachers. Her Hungarian grammar and literature teacher suggested to her to continue her studies and apply to high school. However, when the opportunity arose to apply to the Gandhi Secondary School, her parents objected. *“It was very interesting. My parents always supported me with my studies, but they didn’t want me to go to a Roma school and they didn’t want me to break away from home at the age of 12, so they didn’t let me go to Gandhi.”*

She participated in a camp organized that inspired her to definitely continue on with her studies at a high school in Pécs. She wanted to become a lawyer. Since she had excellent grades, she was accepted to high school with good reputation.

Financing her **high school** studies at the beginning of the semester put an extreme financial pressure on the family; even though her mother even worked as a day laborer in order to cover the expenses, they could not afford her textbooks. They applied for financial aid to pay for the textbooks, but they received the money much later. Finally, she was given the textbook in advance by the school, so that she could start her first year. She considers this memory a particularly negative experience.

She was accepted to the school’s dorm. Despite the low accommodation fee, her parents could not afford it and by the end of her freshman first year they suggested her to move home and continue her studies in another school. Although she had always been an excellent student, by the end of the first year her academic performance declined significantly. That was when Collegium Martineum was established, where she applied to and she lived there from her junior year. She loved to live there. She considers these times the period of looking for her identity.

In high school, in her class of 32, there were only three students of Roma origins. She did not experience the disadvantages of her origin, however her roommates often talked about their experiences with being called Roma by their teachers and classmates. In her junior year, she developed an interest in a social science preparatory program. She attended the

program for a year. She visited home every week and worked during the summer breaks.

She considers her **years at the university** the most positive period of her life. She majored in social politics; she was accepted with nearly the maximum points, she was completely prepared. All students attending the preparatory courses were admitted. She was an excellent student during her university years. The atmosphere was inviting, and she felt secure within the community she formed with the other students from the preparatory program.

Her greatest concern was her financial situation. Even though she was eligible for scholarships, she never received them in September. She took many different jobs in order to support herself. Her parents could not afford to support her financially; she only received moral support from them. She visited home once a month and she spent the summer breaks at home. She formed several friendships, with whom she is still in contact.

ROMAVERSITAS

She applied to the **Romaversitas** program at the end of her freshman year, but she was not accepted. Later she figured out why. *“I thought a good academic performance would be enough, but now I am sure one needs some additional support, which I did not have.”* She considers her ties to a community the most positive aspect of the program. She applied predominantly because of the money. She liked to be the part of the program, in spite of the tensions she experienced within Romaversitas at that time.

She experienced favoritism as a negative. *“There are favorites everywhere. Just like here. Always the same people received the opportunity to fly abroad.”* She considers this offensive. She finds that the distribution of information needs to be changed. There is no communication with the former students and she only knows who the director of Romaversitas is, because she teaches at a university and the information reaches her. She would suggest to have coordinators in the rural areas and the employment the former Romaversitas students as coordinators establishing a link between the current and the former students.

RELATIONSHIPS

She had good relationship with her **parents** during her childhood and she still maintains. She broke away from home at the age of 14, and moved to a dorm. She visits home every second week.

She has good relationship with her **brother**, he is one and a half year younger than her.

The **most important person** of her life is her husband and her family. She has several friends with whom she maintains close contact.

KEY EVENTS

The **best memories** of her life are when she was accepted to high school and afterward to

university, and when she got permanently employed at the university. In terms of her private life, her dearest memories are about the day when she first meet her partner and when they purchased their apartment in Pécs financed by loan.

CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS

She considers the period after her graduation the worst time of her life; after graduation she was not able to a find a job and when she did “I was a secretary with a university degree.” This period lasted for six months.

She has constantly faced financial difficulties throughout her life. Today she does not only support herself but also her husband and her husband’s parents.

FUTURE PLANS

In her private life, she desires having a child. In her professional career, she primarily wants to pass her language exam and complete her PhD. After 15-20 years she intends to secure her living circumstances. “*Children, house, job, car.*”

Appendix 2: Tables and Figures

*Table 3: Statistics on the application procedure of Romaversitas 1997-2011. (incomplete)
(N)*

Application	Applied	Accepted	Surplus
For the 1997-1998 academic year	22	11	2
For the 1998-1999 academic year	?	?	?
For the 1999-2000 academic year	?	?	?
For the 2000-2001 academic year	15	?	?
For the 2001-2002 academic year	32	13	2,5
For the 2002-2003 academic year	31	11	2,8
For the 2003-2004 academic year	44	11	4,0
For the 2004-2005 academic year	52	27	1,9
For the 2005-2006 academic year	95	29	3,3
For the 2006-2007 academic year	65	27	2,4
For the 2008-2009 academic year	88	10	8,8
For the 2009-2010 academic year	102	16	6,4
For the 2010-2011 academic year	177	18	9,8
Total	701	162	

Table 4: Gender and Age of Current and Graduate Students

	Gender rate (%)		Age (year)	
	Male	Female	Mean	Mode
Current students	44	56	23,2	21
Graduate students	53	47	28,2	26

Table 5: The number and rate of those successfully completing their university studies among graduate students

	N	%
Yes	22	73,3
No	8	26,7
Total	30	100,0

Table 6: The number and rate of employed graduate students

	N	%
Full time (8 hours a day)	22	75,9
Part-time (less than 8 hours a day)	5	17,3
Unemployed/Looking for a job	2	6,8
All respondents	29	100,0
DK/NA	1	
Total	30	

Table 7: The number and rate of currently working graduate students according to type of work

	N	%
Physical work (employee)	3	10,7
Professional (employee)	23	82,1
Professional (self-employed, entrepreneur)	1	3,6
Top manager	1	3,6
Total	28	100,0

Table 8: The number and rate of currently working graduate students according to sector

	N	%
for-profit sector	3	10,7
public/state sector	16	57,1
non-profit sector	7	25,0
other	2	7,1
Total	28	100,0

Table 9: The number and rate of place of residence before beginning university studies according to counties among current and graduate students

	Current students			Graduate students	
	N	%	Valid %	N	%
Budapest	6	12,0	13,3	3	10,0
Pest county	1	2,0	2,2	1	3,3
Bács-Kiskun county	2	4,0	4,4	2	6,7
Baranya county	4	8,0	8,9	6	20,0
Békés county	2	4,0	4,4	1	3,3
Borsod county	12	24,0	26,7	4	13,3
Csongrád county	2	4,0	4,4	1	3,3
Fejér county	0	0	0	2	6,7
Győr-Sopron county	0	0	0	0	0
Hajdú-Bihar county	0	0	0	1	3,3
Heves county	0	0	0	2	6,7
Szolnok county	2	4,0	4,4	0	0
Komárom county	3	6,0	6,7	0	0
Somogy county	2	4,0	4,4	2	6,7
Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county	5	10,0	11,1	2	6,7
Tolna county	2	4,0	4,4	3	10,0
Vas county	0	0	0	0	0
Veszprém county	0	0	0	0	0
Zala county	2	4,0	4,4	0	0
Total	45	90,0	100,0	30	100,0
Missing ⁵⁹	5	10,0		0	0
Total	50	100,0		30	100,0

⁵⁹ Not asked during the five trial questionnaires.

Table 10: The number and rate of place of residence before beginning university studies according to types of settlement among current and graduate students

	Current students			Graduate students	
	N	%	Valid %	N	%
capital	6	12,0	13,3	3	10,0
county seat city	6	12,0	13,3	11	36,7
city	15	30,0	33,3	6	20,0
town	10	20,0	22,2	2	6,7
village	8	16,0	17,8	8	26,7
farm	0	0	0	0	0
Total	45	90,0	100,0	30	100,0
Missing	5	10,0		0	0
Total	50	100,0		30	100,0

Table 11: The number and rate of the answers to the questions “Do you live in the same county where you lived before starting tertiary education?” among graduate students

	N	%
Yes	11	36,7
No	19	63,3
Total	30	100,0

Table 12: The number and rate of the answers to the question Do you live in the same settlement where you lived before starting tertiary education? among graduate students

	N	%
Yes	11	36,7
No	19	63,3
Total	30	100,0

Table 13: The number and rate of those living together with the respondent in the same household (sharing the expenses) among current and graduate students

	Current students		Graduate students	
	N	%	N	%
I am living on my own.	2	4,0	9	30,0
The 2 of us	5	10,0	8	26,7
The 3 of us	11	22,0	6	20,0
The 4 of us	12	24,0	5	16,7
The 5 of us	13	26,0	2	6,7
The 6 of us	3	6,0	0	0
The 7 of us	4	8,0	0	0
The 8 of us	0	0	0	0
More than 8 of us.	0	0	0	0
Total	50	100,0	30	100,0

Table 14: The number and rate of those living together with the respondent in the same household (sharing the expenses) prior to entering higher education among graduate students

	N	%
I was living on my own.	4	13,3
The 2 of us	2	6,7
The 3 of us	5	16,7
The 4 of us	9	30,0
The 5 of us	3	10,0
The 6 of us	4	13,3
The 7 of us	2	6,7
The 8 of us	0	0
More than 8 of us.	1	3,3
Total	30	100,0

Table 15: Marital status among current and graduate students

	Current students		Graduate students	
	N	%	N	%
married	2	4,0	3	10,0
divorced	0	0	0	0
single	42	84,0	14	46,7
widowed	0	0	1	3,3
unmarried partners	6	12,0	12	40,0
Total	50	100,0	30	100,0

Table 16: The educational level of parents among current and graduate students

	Father/ foster father				Mother/ foster mother			
	Current students		Graduate students		Current students		Graduate students	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
less than 8 years of primary education	6	13,0	0	0,0	6	12,5	7	25,9
8 years of primary education (previously 4 years of state civil school and 4 years of secondary school)	16	34,8	13	52,0	20	41,7	12	44,4
vocational training completed (vocational certificate)	17	37,0	6	24,0	12	25,0	3	11,1
technical college graduation	1	2,2	0	0,0	2	4,2	1	3,7
secondary grammar-school graduation	2	4,3	2	8,0	1	2,1	0	0,0
vocational technical school requiring graduation (after graduation)	1	2,2	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0
qualification of higher education requiring graduation (courses of higher education providing qualifications of that level but not a degree)	2	4,3	2	8,0	1	2,1	2	7,4
college degree	0	0,0	2	8,0	4	8,3	0	0,0
university degree	1	2,2	0	0,0	2	4,2	2	7,4
Total	46	100	25	100	48	100,0	27	100,0

Table 17: The income status of current and graduate students (scale from 1 to 10, 1= extremely poor, 10=extremely rich)

	Current students		Graduate students	
	N	%	N	%
1	1	2,0	0	0
2	5	10,0	1	3,3
3	18	36,0	4	13,3
4	17	34,0	6	20,0
5	6	12,0	14	46,7
6	1	2,0	4	13,3
7	0	0	1	3,3
8	0	0	0	0
DK/NA	2	4,0	0	0
Total	50	100,0	30	100,0

Table 18: The number and rate of those supporting the education of the respondents in their childhood

	Current students		Graduate students	
	N	%	N	%
Supported	45	90,0	26	86,7
Not supported	5	10,0	4	13,3
Total	50	100,0	30	100,0

Table 19: The number and rate of answers to the question Were the objectives of the program clear in advance? among current and graduate students

	Current students		Graduate students	
	N	%	N	%
Yes	27	54,0	23	76,7
No	23	46,0	7	23,3
Total	50	100,0	30	100,0

Table 20: the evaluation of the entrance examination among current students

	N	%	Valid %
Difficult	3	6,0	7,7
Rather difficult	13	26,0	33,3
Rather easy	14	28,0	35,9
Easy	9	18,0	23,1
Total	39	78,0	100,0
DK/NA	11	22,0	
Total	50	100,0	

Table 21: The number and rate of those failing to complete or to complete fully the tasks agreed on with the Foundation in advance among current and graduate students

	Current students		Graduate students	
	N	%	N	%
Yes	14	28,0	16	53,3
No	36	72,0	13	43,3
DK/NA	0	0	1	3,3
Total	50	100,0	30	100,0

Table 22: The number and rate of the most important program components among graduates

	1 st place		2 nd place		3 rd place	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
one specific seminar	2	6,7	6	20,0	3	10,0
strengthening identity	1	3,3	0	0	0	0
community	2	6,7	0	0	3	10,0
international study trip	1	3,3	0	0	0	0
mentor	1	3,3	2	6,7	2	6,7
language courses	10	33,3	4	13,3	9	30,0
scholarship	5	16,7	6	20,0	4	13,3
open university	5	16,7	6	20,0	3	10
tutor	3	10,0	2	6,7	0	0
computer courses	0	0	2	6,7	1	3,3
community programs	0	0	1	3,3	0	0
student exchange program	0	0	0	0	1	3,3
textbook allowance	0	0	0	0	2	6,7
NA	0	0	1	3,3	2	6,7
Total	30	100,0	30	100,0	30	100,0

Table 23: The number and rate of graduate students supporting the Foundation

	N	%
Yes	17	56,7
No	13	43,3
Total	30	100,0

Figure 13: Average rating of the different types of support among current students

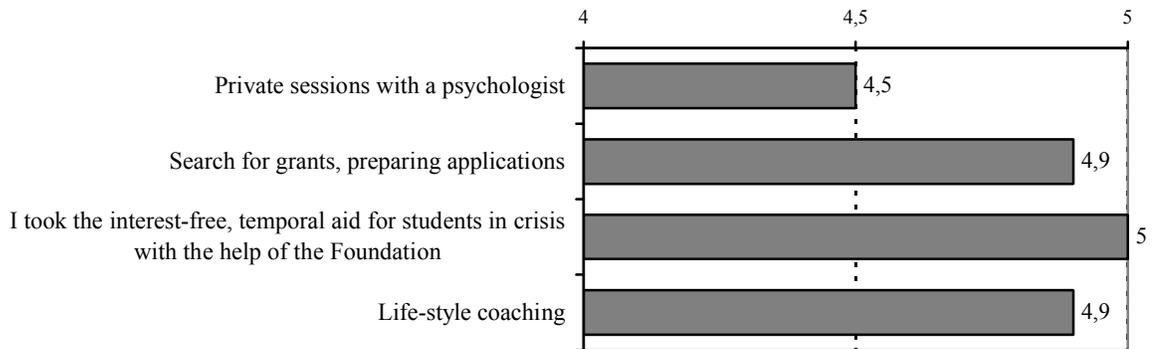


Figure 14: The planned types of supporting the Foundation in the future among current students

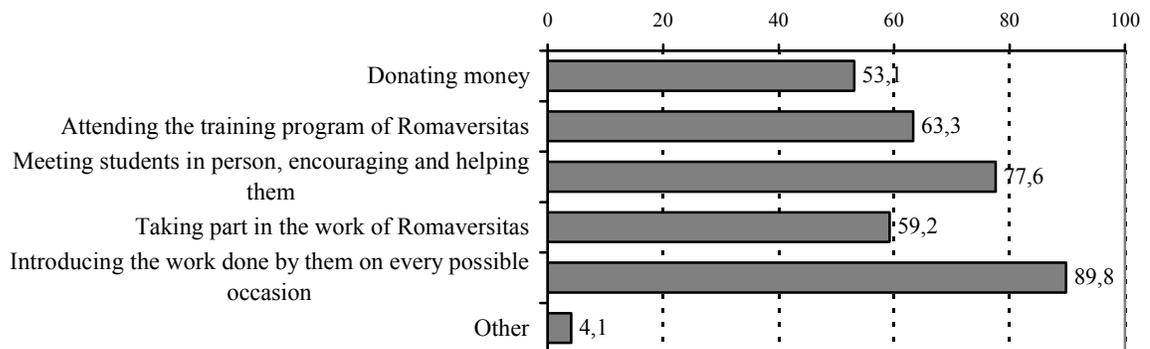
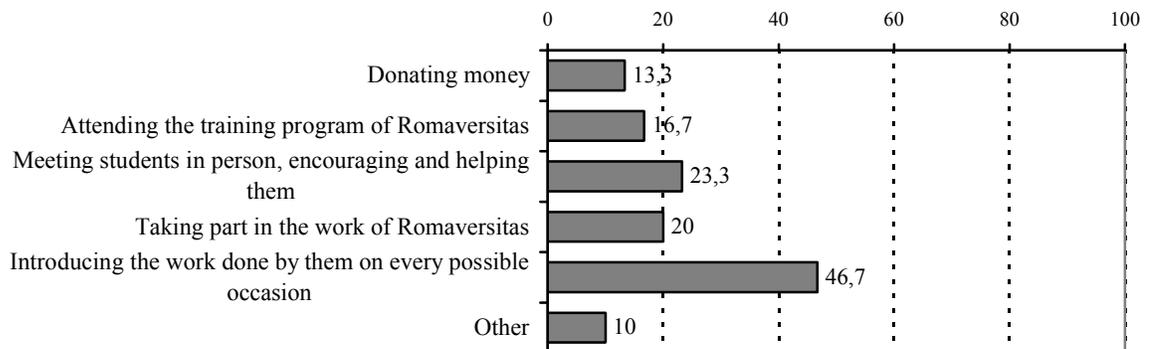


Figure 15: The types of support of the Foundation among graduates



Appendix 3: Research Tools

QUESTIONNAIRES FOR CURRENT STUDENTS

Number of the Questionnaire: <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Date of the interview: <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> 2010.
Interview Start Time: hour <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> minute <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Interview End Time: hour <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> minute <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Interviewer Code: <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>

INTRODUCTION – INTRODUCING THE RESEARCH

Good morning/afternoon, I am....., employee of the Kurt Lewin Foundation. I would like to mention some things about our organization in advance: Kurt Lewin Foundation is an independent, civil organization of public utility. In a close co-operation with our partners we seek to strengthen the democratic society and support the liable social investments.

This survey aims at mapping the **Roma integration and education efforts of the Romaversitas Foundation**. The impact assessment research is carried out on behalf of the Roma Education Fund.

Participation in the survey is anonym; personal data of the respondents will be coupled with the answers. Outcomes will only be presented aggregated; reports will not include any data that refers to any individual.

Participation in the research is voluntary. During the interview you are free to indicate if you are not willing to answer a question anytime. However, it is very important for us to learn as much of your answers as possible.

Questioning will **last for** approximately **half an hour**. Thank you for helping us in our work by filling this questionnaire.

I. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

SD1. Report the participant's gender (INTERVIEWER: MARK WITHOUT ASKING!)

1. male
2. female

SD2. Would you please tell me in which year you were born? (INTERVIEWER: ENTER THE YEAR IN 4 DIGITS!)

I was born in

SD3. Would you please tell me what sort of education are you currently in? In case you are attending more than one school, please enumerate each of them. (INTERVIEWER: READ THEM ONE BY ONE. ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER GIVEN! MORE THAN ONE ANSWER CAN BE GIVEN!)

1. college

2. university

SD4. At which institute of tertiary education, what major, in which year (BA-MA, year), in what type of education (full-time training, part-time training, distance education, correspondent education) do you study? (INTERVIEWER: ENTER THE EXACT NAME OF THE INSTITUTE!)

I.

1. institute:
2. major:.....
3. year:.....
4. type:.....

II.

1. institute:
2. major:.....
3. year:.....
4. type:.....

SD5. Which county did you live in before starting tertiary education studies? (INTERVIEWER: ENTER THE CODE OF COUNTY IN THE BOX WITHOUT READING THE OPTIONS!)

1. Budapest (as separate unit of public administration /to be signed by those living in Budapest/)
2. Pest county
3. Bács-Kiskun county
4. Baranya county
5. Békés county
6. Borsod county
7. Csongrád county
8. Fejér county
9. Győr-Sopron county
10. Hajdú-Bihar county
11. Heves county
12. Szolnok county
13. Komárom county
14. Nógrád county
15. Somogy county
16. Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county
17. Tolna county
18. Vas county

- 19. Veszprém county
- 20. Zala county

SD6. What type of settlement did you live in before starting tertiary education?
(INTERVIEWER: ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER IN THE BOX!)

- 1. capital
- 2. county seat city
- 3. city
- 4. town
- 5. village
- 6. farm

SD7. Could you please tell me your marital status? (INTERVIEWER: READ THE OPTIONS ONE BY ONE! ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER! ONLY ONE ANSWER CAN BE GIVEN!)

- 1. married
- 2. divorced
- 3. single
- 4. widowed
- 5. unmarried partners

SD8. Tell me please, how many of you are living together in the same household (sharing the expenses) including you as well? (INTERVIEWER: TELL THE 'INFO' BEFORE ANSWERING! ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER WITHOUT READING THE OPTIONS! ONLY ONE ANSWER CAN BE GIVEN!)

INFO! TELL THE RESPONDANT THE FOLLOWING:

IN CASE YOU ARE LIVING WITH YOUR FAMILY BASICALLY, BUT DUE TO EDUCATION YOU ARE RENTING A FLAT OR STAYING AT DORMS, THEN CONSIDER EVERYONE (WHOLE FAMILY) LIVING IN THE SAME HOUSEHOLD! IF YOU MOVED AWAY E. G. LIVING ON YOUR OWN OR WITH YOUR GIRLFRIEND/BOYFRIEND, THEN THE NEW SITUATION HAS TO BE TAKEN AS THE POINT OF REFERENCE!

- 1. I am living on my own.
- 2. The 2 of us
- 3. The 3 of us
- 4. The 4 of us
- 5. The 5 of us
- 6. The 6 of us
- 7. The 7 of us
- 8. The 8 of us
- 9. More than 8 of us

TELL THE RESPONDANT THE FOLLOWING:

I WOULD LIKE TO ASK A FEW THINGS ABOUT YOUR PARENTS, FOSTER-PARENTS. WHEN ANSWERING, PLEASE THINK ABOUT THE PERSON YOU ARE LIVING WITH, WITH WHOM YOU FORM A FAMILY, E. G. YOUR PARENTS ARE DIVORCED AND A FOSTER-FATHER IS IN YOUR FAMILY, THEN HE IS THE POINT OF REFERENCE – THE PROCESS IS THE SAME IN CASE OF YOUR MOTHER!

SD9. Please tell me the topmost level of education acquired by your **father or foster-father / mother or foster-mother?** (INTERVIEWER: READ THE OPTIONS! ENTER THE FATHER/FOSTER-FATHER’S DATA FIRST, THEN THE MOTHER/FOSTER-MOTHER’S!)

1. less than 8 years of primary education
2. 8 years of primary education (previously 4 years of state civil school and 4 years of secondary school)
3. unfinished vocational training
4. vocational training completed (vocational certificate)
5. unfinished technical college studies
6. technical college graduation
7. unfinished secondary grammar-school studies
8. secondary grammar-school graduation
9. vocational technical school requiring graduation (after graduation)
10. qualification of higher education requiring graduation (courses of higher education providing qualifications of that level but not a degree)
11. unfinished college studies
12. college degree
13. unfinished university studies
14. university degree
15. university degree + academic degree
16. DK/NA

1. Father/Foster-father
2. Mother/Foster-mother

SD10. **Based on the income status** how would you categorize **your family or household?** According to your estimation where would you place your household on a scale of 1 to 10? 1 stands for extremely poor, 10 stands for extremely rich, the marks between stand for the grades. (INTERVIEWER: PUT A CIRCLE AROUND THE CHOSEN VALUE!)

extremely poor	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	extremely rich
1									10

0 – Does not know /No answer

II. PRECONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE PROGRAM, CURRICULAR RECORD

PRE1. Did anyone support your studies in any way in your childhood?

1. yes → GO TO PRE1.a.
2. no → GO TO PRE1.c.
9. DK/NA → GO TO PRE2.

PRE1.a. Who supported your studies? (INTERVIEWER: READ THE ANSWERS! ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER GIVEN! SEVERAL ANSWERS CAN BE GIVEN!)

1. parents
2. older sibling
3. relatives
4. some teacher from school
5. employee of a civil organization
6. other, please specify:.....
99. DK/NA

<input type="checkbox"/>

PRE1.b. If SUPPORTED, which way and how? I am going to read the options, please choose the appropriate one(s)! (INTERVIEWER: READ AND MARK THE ANSWERS USING AN 'X' SIGN! SEVERAL ANSWERS CAN BE GIVEN! MARK THE RANK OF THE ANSWERS AS WELL, ASK TO PUT THE ANSWERS MARKED IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE!)

IF SUPPORTED (1.a.):		rank
1. all financial support possible was provided		
2. moral support and encouragement		
3. providing the appropriate circumstances at home which are suitable to optimal learning performances		
4. learning together with me		
5. strongly requested to be ready and prepared		
6. other, please specify.....		
9. DK/NA		

PRE1.c. If NOT SUPPORTED, why? I am going to read the options, please choose the appropriate one(s)! (INTERVIEWER: READ AND MARK THE ANSWERS USING AN 'X' SIGN! SEVERAL ANSWERS CAN BE GIVEN! MARK THE RANK OF THE ANSWERS AS WELL, ASK TO PUT THE ANSWERS MARKED IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE!)

IF NOT SUPPORTED (1.b.):		rank
1. had no time to pay attention		
2. my parents were occupied with earning money/their job		
3. because no one was studying in the family, education was not an important aspect		
4. because a 14 year-old child should work in their opinion		
5. because working can lead to better outcomes than studying		
6. other, please specify.....		
9. DK/NA		

➤ ASK AGAIN FROM EVERYONE!

PRE2. Have you ever participated in any kind of educational, cultural, travel, language etc. program supporting the Roma, **before** the start of **college/university studies**?

- 1. yes ➤ GO TO PRE3
- 2. no ➤ GO TO PRE4
- 9. DK/NA ➤ GO TO PRE4

PRE3. In case you **PARTICIPATED**, what programs were these? Would you please summarize them in a few words? (INTERVIEWER: RECORD THE MENTIONED!)

	Program	Short description
1
2
3

➤ ASK AGAIN FROM EVERYONE!

PRE4. Where did you **first** hear about the scholarship program of Romaversitas? (INTERVIEWER: READ THE ANSWERS! ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER GIVEN! ONLY ONE ANSWER CAN BE GIVEN!)

- 1. via CKÖ (Roma Minority Self-Government)
- 2. via written/electronic media
- 3. noticed as a rejected applicant of other civil organization
- 4. via ETR
- 5. via friend, acquaintance
- 6. saw the call on a Roma-related web page
- 7. via the Student Record Office
- 8. via relatives
- 9. other, please specify:.....
- 99. DK/NA

PRE5. Were the objectives of the program clear in advance?

- 1. yes ➤ GO TO PRE6.
- 2. no ➤ GO TO PRE5.a.
- 9. DK/NA ➤ GO TO PRE5.6.

PRE5.a. If NOT, what was not clear, what were you unsure about? What elements were problematic? (INTERVIEWER: RECORD THE MENTIONED!)

.....

PRE6. What has been your purpose when joining the program? What have been your expectations in the **beginning**? (INTERVIEWER: READ THE ANSWERS! ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER! MORE THAN ONE ANSWER CAN BE GIVEN!)

- 1. I had no special expectations ➡ *THIS ANSWER EXCLUDES ALL OTHER ANSWERS!*
- 2. I was looking for a good community
- 3. To broaden my extracurricular knowledge
- 4. My parents had no chance to support my education financially
- 5. I wanted to find a meaningful activity
- 6. other, please specify:.....
- 9. DK/NA ➡ *THIS ANSWER EXCLUDES ALL OTHER ANSWERS!*

PRE7. The entrance examination centrally organized by the Foundation aims to examine general knowledge, logic, and basic competences in maths and reading/text understanding. What was your impression on the entrance examination? (INTERVIEWER: READ THE ANSWERS! ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER GIVEN! ONLY ONE ANSWER CAN BE GIVEN!)

- 1. it was very difficult ➡ *GO TO PRE8*
- 2. it was rather difficult ➡ *GO TO PRE8*
- 3. it was rather easy ➡ *GO TO PRE9*
- 4. it was easy ➡ *GO TO PRE9*
- 9. DK/NA ➡ *GO TO PRE9*

PRE8. If it was difficult, which part of it? Why? (INTERVIEWER: RECORD THE MENTIONED!)

.....

.....

➡ ASK AGAIN FROM EVERYONE!

PRE9. For how many months have you been a participant of the Romaversitas program? (INTERVIEWER: RECORD THE NUMBER OF MONTHS!)

For months

PRE10. Do you participate in any other **scholarship program** for the Roma?

- 5. yes ➡ *GO TO PRE11*
- 1. no ➡ *GO TO PRG1*
- 9. DK/NA ➡ *GO TO PRG1*

PRE11. I am going to read out scholarship programs. Which one of these did/do you attend?
(INTERVIEWER: READ THE ANSWERS! ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER! SEVERAL ANSWERS CAN BE GIVEN!)

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. FROKK (Romano Kher) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. MACIKA | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. „Roma Oktatási Alap (Roma Education Fund): The Roma Memorial University Scholarship”
Program | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. The scholarship program of the Hungarian National Bank | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. „Expressz” Roma scholarship program | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. other, please specify:..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. other, please specify:..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. DK/NA | <input type="checkbox"/> |

III. EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM

PRG1. Did you have time for the programs provided by the Foundation apart from your studies in tertiary education? (INTERVIEWER: READ THE OPTIONS! ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER! ONLY ONE ANSWER CAN BE GIVEN!)

1. I have no time at all, I missed/I am still missing the programs provided by Romaversitas
2. It is hard to manage both, I hardly have time for both
3. In certain periods I have the time for both, in others it is difficult to manage
4. I manage both but have no time for anything else
5. I manage to take part in both and have time for other activities
9. DK/NA

TELL THE RESPONDANT THE FOLLOWING:

I WOULD LIKE TO ASK ABOUT SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE FOUNDATION, THE PROGRAMS OF 'SZABADEGYETEM' (FREE UNIVERSITY) AND OTHER FORMS OF SUPPORT PRESENTED BY THE ORGANIZATION! WHEN ANSWERING, PLEASE CONSIDER AND ANSWER ONLY RELATED TO THE PROGRAMS YOU PERSONALLY ATTENDED! I WILL MENTION PROGRAM ELEMENTS IN BOTH CASES AND ASK YOU TO TELL ME FIRST IF YOU ATTENDED THAT PARTICULAR PROGRAM. IN EVERY CASE PLEASE ANSWER YES OR NO! FOLLOWING THESE PLEASE EVALUATE EACH SERVICE ON A SCALE OF ONE TO FIVE ACCORDING TO YOUR LIKING AND SATISFACTION. EVALUATION 1 IS USED, IF YOU DID NOT LIKE IT AT ALL BUT 5, IF YOU LIKED IT VERY MUCH.

PRG2. Which forms of services provided by Romaversitas do you participate in/use? (INTERVIEWER: RECORD IF ATTENDED IN EACH ROW, AND ASK THE RESPONDANT TO EVALUATE! PUT A RING AROUND THE ANSWER. ONLY ONE GRADE CAN BE GIVEN BY ROW! IF THE ANSWER IS DK/NA, NO GRADE SHOULD BE GIVEN!)

	Participated? uses?		Does not know if participated DK/NA	Grade 1 to 5
	yes	no		
1. scholarship	1	2	0	
2. language courses	1	2	0	
3. textbook allowance	1	2	0	
4. personal development: <i>private instructor</i>	1	2	0	
5. personal development: <i>tutor</i>	1	2	0	
6. personal development: <i>mentor</i>	1	2	0	
7. education in groups: <i>Open University</i>	1	2	0	
8. other, please specify.....	1	2	0	
9. other, please specify	1	2	0	

PRG3. Which **educational** services provided by **Szabadegyetem** did you attend? (INTERVIEWER: RECORD IF ATTENDED IN EACH ROW, AND ASK THE RESPONDANT TO EVALUATE! PUT A RING AROUND THE ANSWER. ONLY ONE GRADE CAN BE GIVEN BY ROW! IF THE ANSWER IS DK/NA, NO GRADE SHOULD BE GIVEN!)

	Attended?		Does not know if attended	Grade 1 to 5
	yes	no		
1. history of the Roma society	1	2	0	
2. drama pedagogy	1	2	0	
3. CV writing	1	2	0	
4. traditions, modernity, practices	1	2	0	
5. presentation techniques	1	2	0	
6. Knowledge about EU	1	2	0	
7. history of the Roma civil rights movements	1	2	0	
8. qualitative methods	1	2	0	
9. segregation in the education	1	2	0	
10. alternative pedagogy	1	2	0	
11. basic features of media consumption	1	2	0	
12. Navigator training of the British Council	1	2	0	
13. other, please specify:.....	1	2	0	
14. other, please specify:	1	2	0	

PRG4. What **other types of support** did you make use of? (INTERVIEWER: RECORD IF ATTENDED IN EACH ROW, AND ASK THE RESPONDANT TO EVALUATE! PUT A CIRCLE AROUND THE ANSWER. ONLY ONE GRADE CAN BE GIVEN BY ROW! IF THE ANSWER IS DK/NA, NO GRADE SHOULD BE GIVEN!)

	Attended?		Does not know if attended	Grade 1 to 5
	yes	yes		
1. private sessions with a psychologist	1	2	0	
2. tendering, searching for tenders, application (E.g.: events providing performance possibilities for musicians, study visits abroad etc.)	1	2	0	
3. helping the Foundation in volunteer projects	1	2	0	
4. admission of the interest free temporal aid for students in crisis with help of the Foundation	1	2	0	
5. lifestyle coaching	1	2	0	
6. textbook allowance				
7. other, please specify:.....	1	2	0	
8. other, please specify:.....	1	2	0	

PRG5. Have you ever had problems with fulfilling the tasks undertaken as required by the Foundation in advance?

1. yes ➡ GO TO PRG6
2. no ➡ GO TO AFTI
9. DK/NA ➡ GO TO AFTI

PRG6. What were the consequences in these cases? (INTERVIEWER: RECORD THE MENTIONED!)

.....

IV. IMPACT OF THE PROGRAM

AFT1. Did you have to face any of the following expectations from Romaversitas during the program? (INTERVIEWER: READ THE ANSWERS! ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER! MORE THAN ONE ANSWER CAN BE GIVEN!)

1. To fight for the Roma to our best abilities
2. To finish our studies
3. To be good at our profession
4. To further improve the reputation of the Foundation working in our fields
5. To work towards creating a Roma elite
6. To be a self confident, self-conscious Roma
7. To become a civil rights activist
8. Other, please specify:.....
9. DK/NA

KÖZÖLD A VÁLASZADÓVAL A KÖVETKEZŐT:

A KÖVETKEZŐKBEN ÁLLÍTÁSOKAT OLVASOK MAJD FEL. ARRA VAGYOK KÍVÁNCSI, HOGY MELYIK ÁLLÍTÁSSAL ÉRT ÖN EGYET ÉS MILYEN MÉRTÉKBEN?

AFT2. What kind of positive effects did Romaversitas have on your **personal life**? (INTERVIEWER: READ THE ANSWERS ONE BY ONE! PUT A CIRCLE AROUND THE ANSWER GIVEN! ONLY ONE ANSWER CAN BE GIVEN BY ROW!)

		I totally disagree	I disagree	To a certain extent	I agree	I totally agree	Does not know/Does not answer
1	Romaversitas played an important role in completing my university studies successfully.	1	2	3	4	5	0
2	With help of the Open University and/or other forms of education/training I earned the highest-level professional knowledge possible..	1	2	3	4	5	0
3	I improved my efficiency in education to a great extent with the help of the methods applied by the foundation.	1	2	3	4	5	0
4	I made several new friends at Romaversitas.	1	2	3	4	5	0
5	Romaversitas helped me to deal with the inner and outer conflicts of becoming a Roma intellectual.	1	2	3	4	5	0
6	At Romaversitas, I gained contacts, connections important for my future career.	1	2	3	4	5	0
7	The work of the foundation helped me in strengthening and proudly accepting my Roma identity.	1	2	3	4	5	0
8	The Foundation helped me in realizing my dreams and desires.	1	2	3	4	5	0

AFT3. When becoming a graduate, would you support the Foundation as a patron?

1. yes ➔ GO TO AFT4
2. no ➔ GO TO AFT5
9. DK/NA ➔ GO TO AFT5

--

AFT4. If your answer is YES, which way do you think you can best support the activities of Romaversitas? (INTERVIEWER: READ THE ANSWERS! ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER! MORE THAN ONE ANSWER CAN BE GIVEN!)

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. Donating money | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Attending the trainings of Romaversitas | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Meeting students in person, encouraging and helping them | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Taking part in the work of Romaversitas | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Introducing the work done by them on every possible occasion | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. other, please specify:.... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. DK/NA | <input type="checkbox"/> |

➤ ASK AGAIN FROM EVERYONE!

AFT5. Would you recommend the program for someone else?

- | | |
|----------|--------------------------|
| 1. yes | |
| 2. no | |
| 9. DK/NA | <input type="checkbox"/> |

AFT7. How do you envisage **your future**? (INTERVIEWER: READ THE ANSWERS! ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER! MORE THAN ONE ANSWER CAN BE GIVEN!)

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. After acquiring the degree I would like to find a job of my profession | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. I would like to go on with my studies, acquire another degree or attending a postgraduate course | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Working at a Foundation in favour of the Roma | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. I intend to engage in field of politics and fight for the Roma rights as a politician | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. I would like to settle abroad. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. I do not have any exact plans, things will work out anyway. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Other, please specify:.... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. DK/NA | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Thank you for your help in better understanding of the activities of ROMAVERSITAS!

All information provided will be treated according to Data Protection Act; your personal information will not be given to third parties under any circumstances! In case of any further question, remark or opinion, please connect us via e-mail using the address info@kla.hu

Ask one more question: Would you be interested in a focus group discussion about Romaversitas in the coming weeks? If (s)he is, ask for his/her e-mail address and phone number.

(CLOSE THE SURVEY AND SAY GOODBYE!)

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR GRADUATES

Number of the Questionnaire:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Date of the interview:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	2010.
Interview Start Time: hour	<input type="text"/>	minute	<input type="text"/>
Interview End Time: hour	<input type="text"/>	minute	<input type="text"/>
Interviewer Code:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

INTRODUCTION – INTRODUCING THE RESEARCH

Good morning/afternoon, I am....., employee of the Kurt Lewin Foundation. I would like to mention some things about our organization in advance: Kurt Lewin Foundation is an independent, civil organization of public utility. In a close co-operation with our partners we seek to strengthen the democratic society and support the liable social investments.

This survey aims at mapping the **Roma integration and education efforts of the Romaversitas Foundation**. The impact assessment research is carried out on behalf of the Roma Education Fund.

Participation in the survey is anonym; personal data of the respondents will be coupled with the answers. Outcomes will only be presented aggregated; reports will not include any data that refers to any individual.

Participation in the research is voluntary. During the interview you are free to indicate if you are not willing to answer a question anytime. However, it is very important for us to learn as much of your answers as possible.

Questioning will **last for** approximately **half an hour**. Thank you for helping us in our work by filling this questionnaire.

I. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

SD2. Report the participant's gender (INTERVIEWER: MARK WITHOUT ASKING!)

1. male
2. female

SD2. Would you please tell me in which year you were born? (INTERVIEWER: ENTER THE YEAR IN 4 DIGITS!)

I was born in

SD3. Would you please tell me what sort of education were you in? In case you were attending more than one school, please enumerate each of them. (INTERVIEWER: READ THEM ONE BY ONE. ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER GIVEN! MORE THAN ONE ANSWER CAN BE GIVEN!)

1. college
2. university

SD4. Which institute of tertiary education, what major, what type of education (full-time training, part-time training, distance education, correspondent education) did you study? (INTERVIEWER: ENTER THE EXACT NAME OF THE INSTITUTE!)

I.

1. institute:
2. major:
3. type:

II.

1. institute:
2. major:
3. type:

SD5. Did you manage to finish tertiary education successfully?

1. yes ➔ GO TO SD6.
2. no ➔ GO TO SD5a.
9. DK/NA ➔ GO TO A SD6.

SD5a. If you did not finish, what was the reason? (INTERVIEWER: RECORD THE MENTIONED!)

.....

SD6. Do you work? (INTERVIEWER: READ THE ANSWERS ONE BY ONE! ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER! ONLY ONE ANSWER CAN BE GIVEN!)

1. Full time (8 hours a day)
2. Part-time (less than 8 hours a day)
3. Unemployed/Looking for a job
4. Homemaker
5. Student/Pupil
6. Childcare fee/Childcare allowance
9. DK/NA

IF WORKING ➔ GO TO SD6.a

IF NOT WORKING ➔ GO TO SD7.

SD6a. What scope of activities are you responsible for? (INTERVIEWER: READ THE ANSWERS ONE BY ONE! ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER! ONLY ONE ANSWER CAN BE GIVEN!)

1. Physical work (employee)
2. Physical work (self-employed, entrepreneur)
3. Professional (employee)
4. Professional (self-employed, entrepreneur)
5. Manager
6. Top manager
9. DK/NA

SD6b. Which sector do you work in? (INTERVIEWER: READ THE ANSWERS ONE BY ONE! ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER! ONLY ONE ANSWER CAN BE GIVEN!)

1. for-profit sector
2. public sector
3. non-profit sector
4. other, please specify.....
9. DK/NA

SD6c. I AM GOING TO READ STATEMENTS. WHAT I AM CURIOUS ABOUT IS THE FOLLOWING: WHICH STATEMENT **DO YOU AGREE WITH** (1 STANDS FOR TOTALLY DISAGREEING, 5 STANDS FOR TOTALLY AGREEING). (INTERVIEWER: READ THE STATEMENTS ONE BY ONE! PUT A CIRCLE AROUND THE ANSWER GIVEN! ONLY ONE ANSWER CAN BE GIVEN IN EACH ROW!)

		I totally disagree	I disagree	To a certain extent	I agree	I totally agree	Does not know/Does not answer
1	My work matches my qualifications and experiences.	1	2	3	4	5	0
2	My job fits my career goals.	1	2	3	4	5	0
3	I am adequately paid for the work I do.	1	2	3	4	5	0
4	I feel that I do productive work at my workplace.	1	2	3	4	5	0
5	My work is important and appreciated.	1	2	3	4	5	0

SD7. Which county did you live in before starting tertiary education studies?
(INTERVIEWER: ENTER THE CODE OF COUNTY IN THE BOX WITHOUT READING THE OPTIONS!)

1. Budapest (as separate unit of public administration /to be signed by those living in Budapest/)
2. Pest county
3. Bács-Kiskun county
4. Baranya county
5. Békés county
6. Borsod county
7. Csongrád county
8. Fejér county
9. Győr-Sopron county
10. Hajdú-Bihar county
11. Heves county
12. Szolnok county
13. Komárom county
14. Nógrád county
15. Somogy county
16. Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county
17. Tolna county
18. Vas county
19. Veszprém county
20. Zala county

SD8. What type of settlement did you live in before starting tertiary education?
(INTERVIEWER: ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER IN THE BOX!)

1. capital
2. county seat city
3. city
4. town
5. village
6. farm

SD9. Do you live in the same county where you lived before starting tertiary education?
(INTERVIEWER: ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER IN THE BOX!)

1. yes
2. no

SD10. Do you live in the same settlement where you lived before starting tertiary education?
(INTERVIEWER: ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER IN THE BOX!)

1. yes
2. no

SD11. Could you please tell me your marital status? (INTERVIEWER: READ THE OPTIONS ONE BY ONE! ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER! ONLY ONE ANSWER CAN BE GIVEN!)

1. married
2. divorced
3. single
4. widowed
5. unmarried partners

SD12. Tell me please, how many of you are living together in the same household (sharing the expenses) including you as well? (INTERVIEWER: ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER! ONLY ONE ANSWER CAN BE GIVEN!)

1. I am living on my own.
2. The 2 of us
3. The 3 of us
4. The 4 of us
5. The 5 of us
6. The 6 of us
7. The 7 of us
8. The 8 of us
9. More than 8 of us

SD13. Tell me please, how many of you are living together in the same household (sharing the expenses) including you as well before starting your tertiary education studies? (INTERVIEWER: ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER! ONLY ONE ANSWER CAN BE GIVEN!)

1. I was living on my own.
2. The 2 of us
3. The 3 of us
4. The 4 of us
5. The 5 of us
6. The 6 of us
7. The 7 of us
8. The 8 of us
9. More than 8 of us

TELL THE RESPONDENT THE FOLLOWING:

I WOULD LIKE TO ASK A FEW THINGS ABOUT YOUR PARENTS, FOSTER-PARENTS. WHEN ANSWERING, PLEASE THINK ABOUT THE PERSON YOU ARE LIVING WITH, WITH WHOM YOU FORM A FAMILY, E. G. YOUR PARENTS ARE DIVORCED AND A FOSTER-FATHER IS IN YOUR FAMILY, THEN HE IS THE POINT OF REFERENCE – THE PROCESS IS THE SAME IN CASE OF THE MOTHER!

SD14. Please tell me the topmost level of education acquired by your **father or foster-father / mother or foster-mother?** (INTERVIEWER: READ THE OPTIONS! ENTER THE FATHER/FOSTER-FATHER’S DATA FIRST, THEN THE MOTHER/FOSTER-MOTHER’S!)

1. less than 8 years of primary education
2. 8 years of primary education (previously 4 years of state civil school and 4 years of secondary school)
3. unfinished vocational training
4. vocational training completed (vocational certificate)
5. unfinished technical college studies
6. technical college graduation
7. unfinished secondary grammar-school studies
8. secondary grammar-school graduation
9. vocational technical school requiring graduation (after graduation)
10. qualification of higher education requiring graduation (courses of higher education providing qualifications of that level but not a degree)
11. unfinished college studies
12. college degree
13. unfinished university studies
14. university degree
15. university degree + academic degree
16. DK/NA

1. Father/Foster-father
2. Mother/Foster-mother

SD15. Based on the income status how would you categorize your family or household? According to your estimation where would you place your household on a scale of 1 to 10? 1 stands for extremely poor, 10 stands for extremely rich, the marks between stand for the grades. (INTERVIEWER: PUT A CIRCLE AROUND THE CHOSEN VALUE!)

extremely poor	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	extremely rich
1									10

0 – Does not know /No answer

II. PRECONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE PROGRAM, CURRICULAR RECORD

PRE1. Did anyone support your studies in any way in your childhood?

1. yes → GO TO PRE1.a.
2. no → GO TO PRE1.c.
9. DK/NA → GO TO PRE2.

PRE1.a. Who supported your studies? (INTERVIEWER: READ THE ANSWERS! ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER GIVEN! SEVERAL ANSWERS CAN BE GIVEN!)

1. parents
2. older sibling
3. relatives
4. some teacher from school
5. employee of a civil organization
6. other, please specify:.....
99. DK/NA

<input type="checkbox"/>

PRE1.b. If **SUPPORTED**, which way and how? I am going to read the options, please choose the appropriate one(s)! (INTERVIEWER: READ AND MARK THE ANSWERS USING AN 'X' SIGN! SEVERAL ANSWERS CAN BE GIVEN! MARK THE RANK OF THE ANSWERS AS WELL, ASK TO PUT THE ANSWERS MARKED IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE!)

IF SUPPORTED (1.a.):		rank
1. all financial support possible was provided		
2. moral support and encouragement		
3. providing the appropriate circumstances at home which are suitable to optimal learning performances		
4. learning together with me		
5. strongly requested to be ready and prepared		
6. other, please specify.....		
9. DK/NA		

PRE1.c. If **NOT SUPPORTED**, why? I am going to read the options, please choose the appropriate one(s)! (INTERVIEWER: READ AND MARK THE ANSWERS USING AN 'X' SIGN! SEVERAL ANSWERS CAN BE GIVEN! MARK THE RANK OF THE ANSWERS AS WELL, ASK TO PUT THE ANSWERS MARKED IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE!)

IF NOT SUPPORTED (1.b.):		rank
1. had no time to pay attention		
2. my parents were occupied with earning money/their job		
3. because no one was studying in the family, education was not an important aspect		
4. because a 14 year-old child should work in their opinion		
5. because working can lead to better outcomes than studying		
6. other, please specify.....		
9. DK/NA		

⇒ ASK AGAIN FROM EVERYONE!

PRE2. Have you ever participated in any kind of educational, cultural, travel, language etc. program supporting the Roma, **before** the start of **college/university studies**?

- 1. yes ⇒ GO TO PRE3
- 2. no ⇒ GO TO PRE4
- 9. DK/NA ⇒ GO TO PRE4

PRE3. In case you **PARTICIPATED**, what programs were these? Would you please summarize them in a few words? (INTERVIEWER: RECORD THE MENTIONED!)

	Program	Short description
1
2
3

⇒ ASK AGAIN FROM EVERYONE!

PRE4. Where did you **first** hear about the scholarship program of Romaversitas? (INTERVIEWER: READ THE ANSWERS! ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER GIVEN! ONLY ONE ANSWER CAN BE GIVEN!)

- 1. via CKÖ (Roma Minority Self-Government)
- 2. via written/electronic media
- 3. noticed as a rejected applicant of other civil organization
- 4. via ETR
- 5. via friend, acquaintance
- 6. have seen the call on a Roma-related web page
- 7. via the student record office
- 8. via relatives
- 9. other, please specify:.....

99. DK/NA

PRE5. Were the objectives of the program clear in advance?

- 1. yes ⇒ GO TO PRE6.
- 2. no ⇒ GO TO PRE5.a.
- 9. DK/NA ⇒ GO TO PRE5.6.

PRE5.a. If NOT, what was not clear, what were you unsure about? What elements were problematic? (INTERVIEWER: RECORD THE MENTIONED!)

.....

PRE6. What has been your purpose when joining the program? What have been your expectations in the **beginning**? (INTERVIEWER: READ THE ANSWERS! ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER! MORE THAN ONE ANSWER CAN BE GIVEN!)

1. I had no special expectations ➡ *THIS ANSWER EXCLUDES ALL OTHER ANSWERS!*
2. I was looking for a good community
3. To broaden my extracurricular knowledge
4. My parents had no chance to support my education financially
5. I wanted to find a meaningful activity
6. other, please specify:.....
99. DK/NA ➡ *THIS ANSWER EXCLUDES ALL OTHER ANSWERS!*

➡ **ASK AGAIN FROM EVERYONE!**

PRE7. For how many months were you participating in the Romaversitas program? (INTERVIEWER: RECORD THE NUMBER OF MONTHS!)

For months

PRE8. Did you participate in any other **scholarship program** for the Roma?

1. yes ➡ *GO TO PRE9*
2. no ➡ *GO TO PRG1*
9. DK/NA ➡ *GO TO PRG1*

PRE9. I am going to read out scholarship programs. Which one of these did you attend? (INTERVIEWER: READ THE ANSWERS! ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER! SEVERAL ANSWERS CAN BE GIVEN!)

1. FROKK (Romano Kher)
2. MACIKA
3. „Roma Oktatási Alap (Roma Education Fund): The Roma Memorial University Scholarship” Program
4. The scholarship program of the Hungarian National Bank
5. „Expressz” Roma scholarship program
6. other, please specify:.....
7. other, please specify:.....
9. DK/NA

III. EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM

PRG1. Did you have time for the programs provided by the Foundation apart from your studies in tertiary education? (INTERVIEWER: READ THE OPTIONS! ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER! ONLY ONE ANSWER CAN BE GIVEN!)

1. I had no time at all, I missed the programs provided by Romaversitas
2. It was hard to manage both, I hardly had time for both
3. In certain periods I had the time for both, in others it was difficult to manage
4. I managed both but had no time for anything else
5. I managed to take part in both and had time for other activities
9. DK/NA

TELL THE RESPONDENT THE FOLLOWING:

I WOULD LIKE TO ASK ABOUT THE SERVICES AND PROGRAM ELEMENTS PRESENTED BY THE ROMAVERSITAS! WHEN ANSWERING, PLEASE CONSIDER AND ANSWER ONLY RELATED TO THE PROGRAMS YOU PERSONALLY ATTENDED!

PRG2. Name the elements of the Romaversitas program which were the most important for you. Starting from the most important, head to the less important ones. (INTERVIEWER: RECORD EACH PROGRAM ELEMENT ATTENDED IN A ROW IN ORDER OF MENTIONING – SO IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE.)

HELP FOR THE INTERVIEWER: SUCH PROGRAM ELEMENTS CAN BE E.G. TUTOR, MENTOR, “SZABADEGYETEM”(FREE UNIVERSITY), SCHOLARSHIP, LANGUAGE EDUCATION, CAREER PLANNING, LIFE COACHING, STUDY VISIT ABROAD, UNIVERSITY CLUB, STUDENT CENTER, ETC.

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....
- 4.....
- 5.....
- 6.....
- 7.....
- 8.....
- 9.....
- 10.....

PRG3. Have you ever had problems with fulfilling the tasks undertaken as required by the Foundation in advance?

1. yes ➔ *GO TO PRG4*
2. no ➔ *GO TO AFTI*
9. DK/NA ➔ *GO TO AFTI*

PRG4. What were the consequences in these cases? (INTERVIEWER: RECORD THE MENTIONED!)

.....
.....

IV. IMPACT OF THE PROGRAM

AFT1. Did you have to face any of the following expectations from Romaversitas during the program? (INTERVIEWER: READ THE ANSWERS! ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER! MORE THAN ONE ANSWER CAN BE GIVEN!)

1. To fight for the Roma to our best abilities
2. To finish our studies
3. To be good at our profession
4. To further improve the reputation of the Foundation working in our fields
5. To work towards creating a Roma elite
6. To be a self confident, self-conscious Roma
7. To become a civil rights activist
9. DK/NA

TELL THE RESPONDENT THE FOLLOWING:

I AM GOING TO READ STATEMENTS. WHAT I AM CURIOUS ABOUT IS THE FOLLOWING: WHICH STATEMENT **DO YOU AGREE WITH AND TO WHAT EXTENT?**

AFT2. What kind of positive effects did Romaversitas have on your **personal life**? (INTERVIEWER: READ THE ANSWERS ONE BY ONE! PUT A CIRCLE AROUND THE ANSWER GIVEN! ONLY ONE ANSWER CAN BE GIVEN BY ROW!)

		I totally disagree	I disagree	To a certain extent	I agree	I totally agree	Does not know/Does not answer
1	Romaversitas played an important role in completing my university studies successfully.	1	2	3	4	5	0
2	With help of Szabadegyetem (Free University) and/or other forms of education/training I earned the highest-level professional knowledge possible..	1	2	3	4	5	0
3	I improved my efficiency in education developed to a great extent with the help of the methods applied by the foundation.	1	2	3	4	5	0
4	I made several new friends at Romaversitas.	1	2	3	4	5	0
5	Romaversitas helped me to deal with the inner and outer conflicts of becoming a Roma intellectual.	1	2	3	4	5	0
6	At Romaversitas, I gained contacts, connections important for my future career.	1	2	3	4	5	0
7	The work of the foundation helped me in strengthening and proudly accepting my Roma identity.	1	2	3	4	5	0
8	The Foundation helped me in realizing my dreams and desires.	1	2	3	4	5	0
9	Romaversitas helped me in finding a good job.	1	2	3	4	5	0
10	Romaversitas helped me to get good salary.	1	2	3	4	5	0

AFT3. As a graduate, do you support the activities of the Foundation?

1. yes ➔ GO TO AFT4
2. no ➔ GO TO AFT5
9. DK/NA ➔ GO TO AFT5

AFT4. If your answer is YES, which way do you support the activities of Romaversitas?
(INTERVIEWER: READ THE ANSWERS! ENTER THE CODE OF THE ANSWER! MORE THAN ONE ANSWER CAN BE GIVEN!)

1. Donating money
2. Attending the trainings of Romaversitas
3. Meeting students in person, encouraging and helping them
4. Taking part in the work of Romaversitas
5. Introducing the work done by them on every possible occasion
6. other, please specify:.....
9. DK/NA

➔ ASK AGAIN FROM EVERYONE!

AFT5. Would you recommend the program for someone else?

3. yes
4. no
9. DK/NA

Thank you for your help in better understanding of the activities of ROMAVERSITAS!

All information provided will be treated according to Data Protection Act; your personal information will not be given to third parties under any circumstances! In case of any further question, remark or opinion, please connect us via e-mail using the address info@kla.hu

Ask one more question: Would you be interested in a focus group discussion about Romaversitas in the coming weeks? If (s)he is, ask for his/her e-mail address and phone number.

(CLOSE THE SURVEY AND SAY GOODBYE!)

INTERVIEW GUIDE - CURRENT STUDENTS

SOME INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE INTERVIEW

Tell the following at the beginning:

- Good morning/afternoon, I am....., employee/researcher of the Kurt Lewin Foundation. I would like to mention some things about our organization in advance: Kurt Lewin Foundation is an independent, civil organization of public utility. In a close co-operation with our partners we seek to strengthen the democratic society and support the liable social investments.
- This survey aims at mapping the **Roma integration and education efforts of the Romaversitas Foundation**. The impact assessment research is carried out on behalf of the Roma Education Fund.
- **Participation in the survey is anonym**, personal data of the respondents will be coupled with the answers. Outcomes will only be presented aggregated, reports will not include any data that refers to any individual.
- **Participation in the research is voluntary**. During the interview you are free to indicate if you are not willing to answer a question anytime. However, it is very important for us to learn as much of your answers as possible.
- The interview will **last for** approximately **one to one and a half hour**. First we have an interview then I ask for your help in filling a questionnaire.
- Though **I will do an audio recording of our discussion**, when analyzing, all you said will be handled anonymously.

During the interview pay attention to the following:

- Questions in the draft are auxiliary, can be asked differently, but please try to ask in a way that leads to the information appropriate to the question.
- Please try to keep the sequence as in the draft.
- If something said by the interviewee is not clear, ask for specification.
- Relate yourself neutrally to the interviewee.
- Listen to him/her with interest.
- Be careful, that (s)he replies to the question and does not go into detailed description of another topic. If (s)he starts to talk about something else, make his/her thoughts turn back to the original topic, but avoid to be commanding

Present students

Personal information:

1. How old is (s)he? Where does (s)he live? Make him/her tell a few words about his/her family, who does (s)he live with, how many siblings (s)he has, what do his/her parents do, how is their financial status etc.
2. Where did (s)he study previously? How did (s)he feel there? What kind of student was (s)he, were there any problems in the school?
3. Which university did (s)he attend? What was his/her major? Which year? What was the reason of his/her choice? What kind of student does (s)he consider him-/herself to be? Does (s)he have any problems in the school?
4. Does (s)he work as well? How does (s)he make his/her living, to what extent is his/her money enough?

Romaversitas - operation

5. How did (s)he get in touch with Romaversitas? What did (s)he think about that in the beginning?
6. Does (s)he know about other scholarships?
7. Why did (s)he decide to apply? What did (s)he expect from the organization?
8. How was the application process? What were the difficulties, what would (s)he do in a different way?
9. What were the first Romaversitas related experiences/impressions like (e.g. freshman camp)? Does (s)he think (s)he was able to integrate, did (s)he get any assistance?
10. What tasks should be completed in Romaversitas? What obligation does (s)he have? What happens if students do not fulfil their duties?
11. Which program elements does (s)he apply (tutor, mentor, psychologist, scholarship programs abroad etc.)? Which of these help him/her the most? Which are the ones that could be important for other students? Which program elements does (s)he consider to be unnecessary, elements responsible for difficulties for the students?
12. What is the community like? What is his/her relationship to fellow students like?
13. What are the teachers like? How is the professional level? Are the studies useful or (s)he would rather study something else?
14. What is the leadership like? What is his/her relationship to them?

Romaversitas - opinion:

15. How do you feel about Romaversitas? What does this organization mean to you?
16. What are the aims of Romaversitas? Why is such an institution needed? Do they manage to achieve these goals? Does (s)he consider these aims to be important? Should anything else be emphasized beyond or instead of these?
17. What are the main problems and deficiencies related to Romaversitas? What changes would you do?
18. What are the main virtues, values and outcomes of Romaversitas?
19. What are his/her goals? To what extent does Romaversitas help him/her in achieving these? How could it support his/her goals' achievement more?
20. What are his/her present difficulties? To what extent is Romaversitas able to help him/her in coping with these?
21. How important does (s)he consider Romaversitas to be in his/her life? What is the most useful for him/her?
22. What are his/her exact future plans? How would (s)he like to relate to Romaversitas in the future?

+1: Would (s)he be interested in a focus group discussion about Romaversitas in the coming weeks? If (s)he is, ask for his/her e-mail address and phone number (if any of these is missing.)

INTERVIEW GUIDE – GRADUATES

SOME INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE INTERVIEW

Tell the following at the beginning:

- Good morning/afternoon, I am....., employee/researcher of the Kurt Lewin Foundation. I would like to mention some things about our organization in advance: Kurt Lewin Foundation is an independent, civil organization of public utility. In a close co-operation with our partners we seek to strengthen the democratic society and support the liable social investments.
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- The interview will **last for approximately one to one and a half hour**. First we have an interview then I will ask for your help in filling a questionnaire.
- Though **I will do an audio recording of our discussion**, when analyzing, all you said will be handled anonymously.

During the interview pay attention to the following:

- Questions in the draft are auxiliary, can be asked differently, but please try to ask in a way that leads to the information appropriate to the question.
- Please try to keep the sequence as in the draft.
- If something said by the interviewee is not clear, ask for specification.
- Relate yourself neutrally to the interviewee.
- Listen to him/her with interest.
- Be careful, that (s)he replies to the question and does not go into detailed description of another topic. If (s)he starts to talk about something else, make his/her thoughts turn back to the original topic, but avoid to be commanding

Personal information:

1. How old is (s)he? Where does (s)he live? Make him/her tell a few words about his/her family, who does (s)he live with, how many siblings (s)he has, what do his/her parents do, how is their financial status etc.
2. Where did (s)he study previously? How did (s)he feel? What kind of student was (s)he, were there any problems in the school?
3. Which university did (s)he attend? What was his/her major? Which year? What was the reason of his/her choice? Did (s)he manage to finish his/her studies? Did (s)he have any problems in the school?
4. Is (s)he currently working? If yes, what is his/her job? How is the job and how does (s)he feel there? How does (s)he make his/her living, to what extent is his/her money enough?

Romaversitas - operation:

5. How did (s)he get in touch with Romaversitas? What did (s)he think about it in the beginning?
6. Did (s)he know about and make use of any other scholarship?
7. Why did (s)he decide to apply? What did (s)he expect from the organization?
8. How was the application process? What were the difficulties, would (s)he do anything differently?
9. What were the first Romaversitas related experiences/impressions like (e.g. freshman camp)? Does (s)he think (s)he was able to integrate, did (s)he get any assistance?
10. What tasks had to be done in Romaversitas? What obligations did (s)he have? What happened if students did not fulfil their duties?
11. Which program elements did (s)he make use of (tutor, mentor, psychologist, scholarship programs abroad etc.)? Which of these helped him/her the most? Which are the ones that could be important for other students? Which of the program elements did (s)he consider to be unnecessary, elements responsible to cause him/her difficulties?
12. What was the community like? What was his/her relationship to other students like? Are they still in touch with fellow students and teachers?
13. What were the teachers like? How was the professional level? Were the studies useful or (s)he would rather have studied something else?
14. Did Romaversitas help him/her in finding a job afterwards?
15. What was the leadership like? What relationship did (s)he have with them?

Romaversitas - opinion:

16. How did you feel about Romaversitas? What does this organization mean to you?
17. What are the aims of Romaversitas/Why is such an institution needed? Do they manage to achieve these goals? Does (s)he consider these aims to be important? Should anything else be emphasized beyond or instead of these?
18. Earlier, what were the main problems related to Romaversitas, what changes would (s)he have done?
19. What does (s)he know, what changed in its operation? What changes would (s)he do now? What are the main current problems and deficiencies?
20. What are the main virtues, values and outcomes of Romaversitas? What were these earlier?
21. What are his/her plans? To what extent did Romaversitas help him/her in realizing these? How could it provide better support?
22. How important does (s)he consider Romaversitas to be in his/her life? What was the most useful for him/her provided by the Foundation?
23. How does (s)he relate to Romaversitas since (s)he is not a student? How would (s)he like to relate to Romaversitas in the future?
24. What are his/her exact future plans? How would (s)he like to relate to Romaversitas in the future?

+1: Would (s)he be interested in a focus group discussion about Romaversitas in the coming weeks? If (s)he is, ask for his/her e-mail address and phone number (if any of these is missing.)

INTERVIEW GUIDE – EMPLOYEES, PROFESSIONALS

SOME INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE INTERVIEW

Tell the following at the beginning:

- Good morning/afternoon, I am....., employee/researcher of the Kurt Lewin Foundation. I would like to mention some things about our organization in advance: Kurt Lewin Foundation is an independent, civil organization of public utility. In a close co-operation with our partners we seek to strengthen the democratic society and support the liable social investments.
- This survey aims at mapping the **Roma integration and education efforts of the Romaversitas Foundation**. The impact assessment research is carried out on behalf of the Roma Education Fund.
- **Participation in the survey is anonym;** personal data of the respondents will be coupled with the answers. Outcomes will only be presented aggregated; reports will not include any data that refers to any individual.
- **Participation in the research is voluntary.** During the interview you are free to indicate if you are not willing to answer a question anytime. However, it is very important for us to learn as much of your answers as possible.
- The interview will **last for approximately one to one and a half hour**.
- Though **I will do an audio recording of our discussion**, when analyzing, all you said will be handled anonymously.

During the interview pay attention to the following:

- Questions in the draft are auxiliary, can be asked differently, but please try to ask in a way that leads to the information appropriate to the question.
- Please try to keep the sequence as in the draft.
- If something said by the interviewee is not clear, ask for specification.
- Relate neutrally to the interviewee.
- Listen to him/her with interest.
- Be careful, that (s)he replies to the question and does not go into detailed description of another topic. If (s)he starts to talk about something else, make his/her thoughts turn back to the original topic, but avoid to be commanding.

Romaversitas history/personal information:

1. What does she know about how Romaversitas Foundation came to life? Whose idea was that, who started to work on it and why?
2. What were the goals in the beginning and what are the goals now?
3. How did (s)he get in touch with the organization? What did (s)he do in the beginning? For what reason was (s)he interested in the organization?
4. What exactly does (s)he do now? Since when? How has his/her Romaversitas career been? Why? Apart from the organization, what does (s)he do and how does (s)he manage to deal with both?

Romaversitas - operation:

5. Exactly how does the organization operate, who work for the organization? How to imagine a year of operation at Romaversitas? Who does (s)he work with?
6. Which does (s)he consider to be the most important program elements of Romaversitas? Which does (s)he consider to be the most important, the most useful program elements for the students? (e.g. presentations, language education, psychologist, community, etc)
7. What changes were there in the operation of Romaversitas in the recent years? What is his/her opinion about the changes?
8. What does (s)he know about the financial sources to maintain the organization? Is the financial situation smooth or are there any problems?
9. What connections does the organization have? What other organizations is Romaversitas in touch with? (e.g. job, abroad (Romaversitas Macedonia), universities, teachers, other Roma organizations?)
10. How does (s)he consider Romaversitas students to be? What is the average student like? E.g. What are the faculties do the applicants attend? What is their financial status like, are they from rural/urban regions? What university experiences do they report, how do they perform? What are the problems, students face every day?
11. What is his/her relationship with the students like? What student related problems does (s)he face? What is his/her relationship with the students? What problems does (s)he face related to the students? What success does (s)he experience?
12. What obligations have the accepted students to meet, how often? What are the consequences of not meeting these? What is his/her role in that?
13. On what base were the expectations and professional program developed? Is/Was there any needs assessment, feedback? What is his/her work with students based on?
14. Is there any dropout? Why?

15. What feedback do the students give about the organization? How does it help them?
16. What feedback do former students give? What help did it provide them? What jobs do they get? Do they face problems there? How often do they return?

Romaversitas - opinion:

17. How effective does (s)he consider the organization to be (considering either the whole country or the students' situation)?
18. What are the biggest problems, deficiencies of the organization? What difficulties did they have to deal with at the beginning, recently, currently? Does (s)he expect any difficulties in the future?
19. Why is it worth to do, why is it good for him/her? How do they avoid that the Monday to Friday process becomes a "factory"? How does work satisfy him/her?
20. What changes would (s)he suggest?
21. What future plans does (s)he have in connection with the organization?

+1: Would (s)he be interested in a focus group discussion about Romaversitas in the coming weeks? If (s)he is, ask for his/her e-mail address and phone number (if any of these is missing.)

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Life interview - Romaversitas monitoring research

- Questions in the draft are auxiliary, can be asked differently, but please try to ask in a way that leads to the information appropriate to the question.
 - Please try to keep the sequence as in the draft.
 - If something said by the interviewee is not clear, ask for specification.
 - Relate yourself neutrally to the interviewee.
 - Listen to him/her with interest.
-
- Be careful, that (s)he replies to the question and does not go into detailed description of another topic. If (s)he starts to talk about something else, make his/her thoughts turn back to the original topic, but avoid to be commanding. For example you can say the following: „What you mention is very interesting, we may talk about that later, but let us turn back to the original topic please.”
 - Text in the grey field is comment to the interviewer.
 - Texts in italic, small letter format indicate the topic towards which the conversation should head.
 - Small caps, bold style texts should not be red, those are the topics, and the time meant to discuss the topic is shown in parenthesis.
 - Plain text is the question.
 - Bold, plain text is a guide to connect the topics.

I will do an audio recording of our discussion. When analyzing, all you said will be handled anonymously. During the query you are free to indicate if you are not willing to answer a question anytime. However, it is very important for us to learn as much of your answers as possible.

I. CHAPTERS IN THE INTERVIEWEE'S LIFE (20 MIN)

Think of your life as a novel. This novel consists of several chapters and each of them has a title. Please, think of a title for each chapter, and describe briefly what the chapters are about and how a chapter leads to another. This means that you are the story-teller who gives a short summary of the novel, chapter by chapter. The novel may have as many chapters as you want but I suggest a number of 2 to 5 since 20 minutes are available for this topic.

You are free to ask if something may not be clear. Approximately 20 minutes are available for this part. The following should be mentioned regarding each period:

- At that time, how was your life going? (How did you feel?)
- How old were you?
- What did you do?
- Whom did you live with?
- Which were your most important relationships that time? (friend/relatives/teacher etc.)
- Among what circumstances, in what financial situation were you living?
- What challenges did you have to cope with?
- What positive influences did affect you?
- What negative influences did affect you?
- What is your best memory?
- What is your worst memory?

II. Family, relationships (15 min)

1. Now I am going to ask you specifically about you family.

Information related to this topic is likely to be mentioned before. It is important to ask referring to this information without repeating them.

- Tell me about your family. By who were you raised? Which of your relatives were the most important for you in your childhood?
 - Tell me a bit about you parents. What do they do? Where are they from? etc...
 - What circumstances do you live? What difficulties did you have to cope with?
 - In your childhood: How was your relationship with your parents? With your siblings? With other relatives?
 - How is your relationship with your parents? (E.g. Do you live together?; How often do you meet?; What do you do together?; Can you discuss your problems with them?)
 - How is your relationship with your siblings? With other relatives?
2. Who are the two most important people in your life? These may be people who passed away or with whom you are no longer in touch.
- What is/was your relationship to them?
 - What influence do/did they have on your life?
 - Which period of your life are they connected to? (If not to present, how old were you?)
3. Who are the people you are in the closest relationship with? (Greater emphasis should be put on who these people are: relatives, friend, couple etc.)
- Why are they the people you are in the closest relationship with? (E.g. Because of similar lifestyle/living close to each other etc.)
 - How would you describe your relationship? Harmonic/full of conflicts?

III. EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND (10 MIN)

1. Now I am going to ask you about your studies specifically.

Information related to this topic is likely to be mentioned before. It is important to ask referring to this information without repeating them. If answers were already given to these questions skip this part.

- Kindergarten: Did you go to kindergarten? How do you remember? Did you like it? What were the things you disliked? What was your relationship with your kindergarten teachers like? What was your relationship with your peers like?
- Primary school: How do you remember? Did you like to go to school? What were the things you disliked? What was your relationship with your teachers like? What was your relationship with your peers like?
- Secondary school: What was the reason of your choice? How do you remember? Did you like to go to school? What were the things you disliked? What was your relationship with your teachers like? What was your relationship with your peers like?
- Tertiary education: What was the reason of your choice? As a child, what did you want to become? Do you like to attend school/college? What do you dislike about it? What is your relationship with your teachers like? What is your relationship with your peers like?
- Studies in general: Looking back at your studies, who are the people you are the most grateful to? Who supported/supports you in studying?

2. Now I am going to ask you about Romaversitas specifically.

- Romaversitas is an institute to support Roma students in their studies. When did you first realize you are Roma? What experiences are connected to your being Roma?
- Where did you hear about Romaversitas? Why did you apply?
- How do/did you feel about yourself in Romaversitas?
- What do/did you like? What do/did you dislike about it?
- What does/did you get from Romaversitas?
- What changes would you do in the operation of Romaversitas?

Now, I am going to ask you about some particular experiences that are important in people's life usually.

IV. Key events (20 min)

1. What was the peak experience of your life? (An experience that led to a state in which you felt very successful, glad or well balanced.)
2. What was the nadir of your life (your worst experience)? (an experience to be described by strong negative feelings)
3. What was the most important turning-point of your life? Turning-point is an event/happening at which a significant change occurred in your life. Turning-point may be professional or private, as well, and does not equal the above mentioned peak event or nadir.
4. Were there any other happenings important for you in your life, not connected to the previous ones, but leading to a major change?

At question nr 3-4 be careful to not to repeat the peak experience, nadir, turning-point.

Regarding all the questions it is important that each of the answers should be a story told in which the following should be turned out:

- What exactly happened?
- Where did it happen?
- Who participated in it?
- What did you do?
- What did you think?
- What did you feel?
- Did it have any influence on your life or the person you became?

Now challenges and problems will be discussed.

VI. CHALLENGES, PROBLEMS (15 MIN)

1. What was the biggest problem in your life you have ever had to cope with?
(Problem=stress, conflict, difficulty, challenge)

Did you manage to cope with it? If yes, how? If not, why not?

Which period of your life does it relate to (how old were you)?

2. What other problem was there in your life that you think is important to mention?

Did you manage to cope with it? If yes, how? If not, why not?

Which period of your life does it relate to (how old were you)?

3. What are your most important present problems? (2 problems should be discussed, occurring either in two fields e.g. private life and work, or in just one.)

Regarding each problem, the following should be found out:

How did the problem emerge?

Do you have any kind of plan regarding what to do with this problem?

Do you think it will be solved in the future?

We are going to talk about future plans

VII. Plans for the future (5 min)

What do you do? How do you imagine your future life? (What would you like to come true?)

The following should be covered:

Work, private life (family), living circumstances, lifestyle, values