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THE EDUCATION OF GYPSY/ROMA CHILHOOD IN EUROPE

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0. ABSTRACT

The name given to the project *The education¹ of Gypsy childhood in Europe* is OPRE ROMA, which from the Gypsy language Romany, could be translated as LONG LIVE THE GYPSIES. The research was carried out in three European countries: Spain, France and Italy, from March 2000 to March 2003 and incorporated ethnographic research in Portugal (the city of Evora) and in Bosnia.

Its main objective was to provide a diagnosis on the education and socialisation processes of Gypsy/Roma children for policy makers at European level and those in the state administrations of the countries involved, and for the academic community and European society in general. It is the first transnational research project carried out in this field of study to take an interdisciplinary perspective and employ various methodological approaches. The ethnographic research in both rural and urban settings has given us an insiders' perspective of the various Gypsy/Roma groups, while at the same time, we have been able to accurately analyse the socio-educational dynamics occurring in the school through the ethnographic study of this context. The sociological investigations carried out in the three countries have enabled us to obtain, from a macroscopic perspective, a general picture of the social, political, economic and educational dynamics that affect Gypsy/Roma children and their processes of interaction with the school. Data obtained from surveys carried out into teacher perception of the educational reality experienced by the Gypsy/Roma child have complemented these analyses to provide a full overview.

The confirmation and quantification of the socio-educational disadvantage faced by the majority of Gypsy/Roma children in the contexts studied might be considered as one of the most significant findings of the OPRE ROMA project. This disadvantage is shaped by various factors, such as negative school performance, high rates of irregular attendance and the difficulties in social and cultural interaction faced by the Gypsy/Roma child in the school. Taking the school context as our starting point, we have explored the political, socio-economic, cultural and ideological causes underlying the relations of the Gypsy/Roma child in the school. Our investigations have focused not so much on the specific situation of the school context, but rather on the analysis of the processes involved in the various factors that interact to make up this reality.

In the countries studied, the Gypsy/Roma child responds to a complex structural situation in which political, socio-economic, cultural and ideological factors all interact. This complexity is increased by the fact that many of the dynamics of this interaction are informal and latent. Racist and xenophobic attitudes, shaped through the stereotypes, prejudices and negative representations projected, both about the Gypsy/Roma child and the Gypsy/Roma community in general, have a highly negative influence on socio-educational interaction. These social representations are just one of the factors that go a long way to determining the situation of the Gypsy child's schooling. In this sense, the Gypsy child's situation, and his or her relations with the school must be conceived of as a product of the multi-factor interaction we have analysed in depth throughout the OPRE ROMA project.

¹ The term "education" in the title of the project is used in its broadest sense to cover not only the formal teaching-learning process in the classroom, but also the upbringing and instruction the Gypsy/Roma child receives in the family context. (Translator's note)

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The main objective of the OPRE ROMA project was to provide a diagnosis of the situation of the education of Gypsy/Roma children in three European Union member countries: Spain, France and Italy. We have examined both the socialisation processes of the Gypsy/Roma child in family and social contexts, and schooling within the formal education system. From an interdisciplinary perspective, the ethnographic and sociological studies carried out have enabled us to conclude that the failure of the education system to provide for the Gypsy/Roma child is due to the complex interaction of political, socio-economic, ideological, cultural and institutional factors, all of which have a dynamic nature that changes depending on the which context is being dealt with. These factors make up the structure on which the models for interaction between the education system and the Gypsy/Roma child are based, and as such, are of paramount importance.

The **political factor** is one of the most significant factors in the dynamic of the relations between the Gypsy/Roma child and the school context. The failure of education policies to develop in terms of their interaction with the Gypsy/Roma child is an example of a series of structural malfunctions in the education systems studied. Our findings have revealed the fundamental policy malfunction in the lack of coherence between the theoretical model set down in education legislation and its practical application. Thus, as a matter of urgency, the processes of evaluation and follow-up of education policies must be augmented, and evaluation instruments must be improved so as to stimulate the various structures within the education systems to ensure that the objectives established by local and/or national legislation are co-ordinated and fulfilled.

The practical application of education policies often leads to Gypsy/Roma children being segregated through both official and unofficial processes in the various education systems studied. Education policies must be urgently directed to preventing the segregation of groups of Gypsy/Roma children and to encourage inter-ethnic educational contexts both in the school as a whole and in the classroom. In order to achieve this, education policies must be implemented that guarantee Gypsy/Roma families a free choice of school, thereby avoiding the unofficial or official exclusion processes practised by schools and education departments that are justified or endorsed by the administration or the authorities. In general, the offer of available schools must be increased to give families a real opportunity to choose, thereby preventing the concentration of Gypsy/Roma pupils.

Socio-educational policies aimed at the most disadvantaged groups of Gypsy/Roma children must set out to guarantee their basic rights, and in particular, their right to an education based on criteria of workability and efficiency. To this end, the comprehensive development of both national and European legislation on educational and cultural issues referring to ethnic minorities, together with their workable and coherent application, must be given priority. In order for this to occur, it is vital to encourage the coordination between education and social policies formulated on criteria of transnationality, comprehensiveness and flexibility. Education policies designed for the itinerant communities of the European Union should be promoted, to coordinate infrastructures that enable the educational interaction of Gypsy/Roma children to take place in ordinary schools.

The study of the **institutional factor** reveals the intense network of factors that interact in the education processes. However, it is beyond doubt that the school as an institution is the most significant of these factors, since it is here that the whole dynamic of interaction between this multitude of factors is expressed. Its role as an agency for coordination and interrelation, both vertically, between the administration and the community, and horizontally, amongst the various

social groups and classes, places the school in a strategic position. The school's function as an educational institution cannot be separated from its function as an instrument of socialisation. While for the majority of school pupils these functions work positively together, we have verified that in the case of the Gypsy/Roma child, there are specific nuances at work that will be dealt with in depth in this report. The presence of Gypsy/Roma children in the school is adversely affected by their lack of academic results, the irregularity of their attendance and high drop out rate, together with a lack of communication between school and family. These factors, along with those previously mentioned, give rise to processes of socio-educational segregation and exclusion. Much of the Gypsy/Roma school population in the contexts studied are educated in ordinary schools in which this dynamic can be observed. However, neither do institutional initiatives advanced through specific structures for the Gypsy/Roma pupil, such as caravan schools, special education units, compensatory classes and so on, contribute to solving the structural situation of educational disadvantage suffered by this group, but rather they only mitigate immediate situations in schools that require definitive solutions in the form of an ordinary educational model within the framework of state administrations that take on a transnational perspective. For this reason, priority must be given to ensuring the right to a choice of school for the whole population, and to the coordination of practical measures to prevent the concentration of Gypsy/Roma pupils and to encourage their inclusion in ordinary schools and classes, thereby avoiding their exclusion and segregation in these specific structures. Within the institutional system, the main priority must be to improve the educational level of the Gypsy/Roma child. Furthermore, the segregation processes implemented quite clearly do not lead to the success at school they set out to achieve. The most fitting alternative to guarantee this success is to strengthen inter-ethnic educational contexts, to reduce the teacher/pupil ratio (1:10) and above all, to formulate educational models based on cooperative learning.

Present education systems clearly demonstrate that education is neither neutral nor objective, but rather it creates an awareness of legitimacy, and reproduces the dominant ideology and culture of mainstream society. Hence, teacher recognition of Gypsy/Roma culture is one of the key factors to understanding the extent to which Gypsy/Roma pupils are integrated at school. Knowledge of their culture, in a school whose cultural parameters differ from the Gypsy/Roma socio-cultural environment, fosters a movement, through socio-educational relationships, towards the values, norms, attitudes, feelings and customs with which the Gypsy/Roma pupil identifies. Education policies do not encourage cultural recognition of the Gypsy/Roma child in the school environment. This lack of recognition is expressed throughout the different levels of the education systems. In the university context, the absence of multi-disciplinary research into these areas is evident, along with the lack of dissemination through syllabuses or academic courses on Gypsy/Roma culture, language or history. This in turn, affects teacher training programmes and the training of other education professionals. Likewise, in the school environment, this lack of recognition is demonstrated through the absence of specific content on the Gypsy/Roma community in material designed as part of the general school curriculum for all pupils. In general, it is evident that Gypsy/Roma culture as a positive and enriching point of reference is systematically made invisible to the school's student community. In this vein, education policies should be directed towards expanding channels for family participation in the school, based on criteria of flexibility and socio-educational adaptation, encouraging positive inter-ethnic coexistence and awareness of Gypsy culture. At the same time, teacher training should promote the incorporation of material on Gypsy language, history and culture into the school curriculum, in order to guarantee the rights of Gypsy/Roma children and their families to a democratic education that takes their cultural and linguistic reality into account.

In addition, the scarcity of material and human resources are structural factors to which must be added the dispersion and lack of coordination of education policies on Gypsy/Roma

children at both regional and local levels. This lack of coordination contributes to an increase in the malfunctioning of these policies. These absences or scarcities are even worse where education policies on the Gypsy/Roma child population from Eastern European countries are concerned, groups in which lack of schooling, absence of socio-educational integration, together with disturbing levels of exclusion, precariousness and degradation. In general, a lack of education policies aimed at Gypsy/Roma groups in specific situations related to itinerancy can be observed, as is the case of groups of Gypsy/Roma casual agricultural labourers or fairground workers, or other types of forced movement such as that affecting the Gypsy/Roma refugee.

The **socio-economic factor** has a decisive influence on the interaction of Gypsy/Roma children in the school. Relations between Gypsy/Roma children with an itinerant lifestyle and the school are severely affected by the lack of infrastructures (caravan sites or camps) near schools. Although, in theory, European legislations guarantee the right of movement to all citizens, in practice, these rights are restricted, on occasions by coercive practices justified by outdated legislation, but in the main, by the fact that the infrastructures necessary to be able to exercise this right simply do not exist. This constitutes the most critical factor in this context. The assurance that the rights of this sector of the population are protected, and the establishment of policies on infrastructures to guarantee access to schools for Gypsy/Roma families must therefore be regarded as a priority.

The processes leading to urban concentrations of Gypsy/Roma populations analysed in various European settings have a major influence on negative interaction shown by Gypsy/Roma children in the school. This dynamic of urban segregation contributes to the concentration of Gypsy/Roma children being reinforced in certain schools, which in practice, become ghettos. Priority measures should be taken to avoid this concentration and consequent segregation of Gypsy/Roma children in the school environment, through policies that guarantee Gypsy/Roma families the freedom to choose schools, with the aim of encouraging inter-ethnic schools. In the same vein, there is an urgent need for urban planning policies at a European level that take this situation into account and that would expand the possibilities for Gypsy/Roma families to choose the location of the social housing they occupy, as this very often determines whether or not their children have access to inter-ethnic schools. The development of these policies would prevent both the concentration and the segregation of the Gypsy/Roma community.

The **ideological factor** in the education system is fundamental in the interaction of all school children. As a microcosm of society, the school reproduces its social representations. Within the social contexts studied, the social representation of the Gypsy/Roma community is of a highly negative nature in which racist prejudices, stereotypes and negative images abound. The education system reproduces identical models that are manifested in the school. This has given rise to an urgent need for transnational socio-pedagogical intervention models designed to improve inter-ethnic relations in the context of education, to combat prejudices, stereotypes and negative social representation of the Gypsy/Roma community. However, ethnic prejudice is not only expressed in a linear way, but also transversally in many other ideological aspects. The ideology of the school, both through its practices and through its discourses, encourages the “myth of pupil homogeneity”, attributing a notion of “equality” amongst all pupils which is often confused with the concept of equal rights. Education systems also transmit, either formally or informally, often through what is known as the hidden curriculum, values and world views with a hierarchical cultural orientation pertaining to the class structure of the dominant society. The groups of Gypsy/Roma children are negatively affected by this dynamic, which either directly or indirectly promotes a cultural homogeneity amongst pupils, and thus renders invisible less powerful minority cultural groups, including Gypsy/Roma pupils. The ideological perspectives described within the education systems contribute to the segregation of the pupil who does not “adapt” to this model. The Gypsy/Roma child who does not form a part of the ideological

dynamics contemplated in the school suffers from segregation processes that push him or her into certain classes and certain schools. These segregation processes, justified by various arguments, such as being behind academically and/or the need for socio-educational “adaptation measures”, are particularly damaging when they materialise through informal dynamics, very often contrary to the spirit of education policies. As mentioned above, in this environment there is an urgent need to foster alternative educational models that guarantee positive pupil coexistence in inter-ethnic educational settings, together with pedagogical practices designed to combat prejudices and negative social representations and ideologies.

These processes should be developed within the framework of a thorough overhaul of the teacher training system. Within this area, education policies should particularly address the promotion of university and interdisciplinary teacher training and the extension of curricula content to include issues related to the Gypsy/Roma community, bringing together the theoretical and practical training they receive and in the same way, promoting European parity of both theoretical and practical exams taken in order to safeguard training standards. In this vein, it is particularly important to encourage in-service teacher training and encourage transnational training networks that enable retraining to take place through the sharing of experiences and the dissemination of good teaching methods that have produced successful results. Crucially, the approach to be followed must be to provide interdisciplinary training for all teaching staff, thereby avoiding the creation of “specific” groups of teachers for Gypsy/Roma pupils. A sound interdisciplinary training for all teachers is the surest way to guarantee that they will be able to tackle the malfunctions occurring in the educational context as a result of ideological factors that intervene in the schooling of Gypsy/Roma children. The recommendation that these training processes be aimed at all teachers is based on the findings of our research which confirm that when teachers are trained as Gypsy/Roma “specialists”, a series of harmful dynamics comes into play such as the reification of the Gypsy/Roma pupil as mentally deficient, and the stigmatisation process that takes the “specialist” teachers out of the mainstream education system to place them in groups of “Gypsy/Roma teachers” who, over time, experience a process of exclusion parallel to that of their pupils.

Our research confirms that teachers find themselves involved in a series of diverse education systems and bureaucratic structures that condition their role and their capacity to act. The serious lack of training necessary to deal positively with the area of Gypsy/Roma children’s schooling is blatantly apparent. In addition, the bureaucratic and practical limitations that tie them up in rigid regulatory structures prevent them from being able to carry out their teaching work with the flexibility they need. These factors, together with all manner of structural deficiencies in human resources, materials and infrastructures, negatively condition their ability to get on with their job. The ideological aspects of the teacher’s role, influenced by negative social representations of the Gypsy/Roma pupil, the lack of expectations regarding the pupils’ school performance, together with the malfunctioning socio-pedagogical dynamics established in the classroom, and the numerous manifestations of segregation and stigmatisation facing the Gypsy/Roma child give rise to a harmful dynamic of the institutionalisation of failure, perceived by teachers to be a rooted, immovable reality.

Our work reveals that the relations between Gypsy/Roma and non-Gypsy/Gage (the Romany term used in to refer to non-Gypsies) pupils generally mirror the opposing relations in wider society. Through the socialisation process, children learn the negative social representations and mutual prejudices that impede healthy social relations between the two groups, and at the same time strengthen intra-ethnic bonds. To a great extent, the deficiency in, or absence of socio-affective relationships between Gypsy/Roma and non-Gypsy/Gage children affects the socio-pedagogical relationship, as Gypsy/Roma children do not regard the school as a positive social space in which emotional bonds are developed. This situation, together with the

above-mentioned factors, leads to social disconnection that encourages absenteeism, missed classes and as a consequence, failure at school.

The relations between the Gypsy/Roma family and the school are conditioned by the complex web of factors we have analysed. The diversity of contexts and the gradation of situations in which these factors arise must be borne in mind when considering these relations. At all socio-economic levels, the relations between the Gypsy/Roma family and the school are adversely affected by the negative social representation of their ethnicity. Prejudice is often an obstacle to positive contact being established between Gypsy/Roma families and teachers, and hinders communication between them. Communication is further hindered as a result of the ideological, socio-economic and institutional factors outlined above. In most of the contexts studied, the channels of communication between the families and the teaching staff are practically nonexistent, or highly deficient. Consequently, the formation of coordinated and efficient socio-educational policies must be given priority in order to encourage the participation of the Gypsy/Roma family in the school community.

The **cultural factor** is basic to the Gypsy/Roma child's socio-educational interaction. Gypsy/Roma culture is an intellectual construct that the Gypsy/Roma as a group has developed over centuries and which has allowed them to adapt to their ecological, social and political environment. The result of these adaptations to a variety of contexts is seen in the huge diversity of forms their cultural takes on. As Gypsy/Roma, we share a common language and identity. In each context, the norms and traditions, the different interpretations of the world and of life, concepts of time and space, of childhood and maturity to mention but a few, form part of this cultural factor and without doubt, affect the processes of education and the relations between the Gypsy/Roma child and the school. A knowledge of this culture, of its values and norms, its traditions, its kinship patterns and social networks, and a whole set of aspects that make up the Gypsy/Roma world view is an essential factor in interaction with the school. However, as we will see, one thing is the Gypsy/Roma culture; how it is represented socially and the use that is made of it is quite another matter.

The cultural factor is adversely affected by the interactive relationships the Gypsy/Roma communities maintain with their social and cultural environment. This situation introduces a wide variety of subtleties, moulded by the processes of enculturation between the group and the dominant society, into Gypsy/Roma culture. The Gypsy/Roma world is not just one world, but is "a world of worlds" (Piasere 2002) and the image disseminated of Gypsy/Roma homogeneity is just one representation to emerge from prejudice, invention and ignorance. Our research reports extensively on this diversity. The Gypsy/Roma communities have been immersed in specific contexts and share their culture with those contexts, a culture that is Gypsy/Roma, but at the same time Spanish, French and Italian, and even more so, it is from Valencia or Turin, from Melfi or Avila, from Montpellier or Palencia, from Dijon or Jerez de la Frontera. They are Gypsy/Roma but they also share the culture of their social context. These subtleties within the cultural factor are by no means gratuitous. On the contrary, they reveal one of the contradictions facing the Gypsy/Roma child in the school. They feel², and they are, just as much French, Spanish or Italian as Gypsy, but they are labelled as "strangers" or "foreigners". Their exoticism is a fabrication, magnified and constructed day after day in the interaction at school through the label "Gypsy/Roma". This gives rise to a supposed need for specific structures, specific classes, specific teachers, specific mediators. They are no longer children, girls and boys, but come to represent what is considered to be Gypsy/Roma and the Gypsy/Roma culture. They are said to have a culture, which of course is true, but their culture is not the mythical, exotic fabrication

² In terms of these feelings of belonging to a country, there is also a great diversity of situations that are closely related to the interaction of Gypsy/Roma communities in different contexts

created by society. The Gypsy/Roma culture is not the reification that society has made of it. This process has catastrophic consequences for Gypsy/Roma children, leading to suffering and hardship at school. The representation of their ethnicity thereby becomes a sinister wall that separates them from “normality” and leads to stigma and invention. Paradoxically, Gypsy/Roma children are directed towards an educational “specificity” even though on a daily basis, they are just as much a part of the towns and cities in which they live as the next child. Their city’s norms and habits, its customs and traditions, the streets and squares of their town, the school playground and their games; all these elements are shared with their non-Gypsy/Gage classmates

The paradox is that while the Gypsy/Roma culture, the language, literature, history and all the positive and enriching aspects that make up their world becomes invisible, the fabricated negative social representation of what is Gypsy/Roma, that which is not desirable in the eyes of the school, the institution that legitimises culture, continues to evolve. It is thus of prime importance that education policies take this situation into account and formulate a series of coordinated and efficient measures to include Gypsy history, language and culture in school curricula and at all levels of education as a basic strategy to combat ethnic prejudice and stereotypes.

The situation of Gypsy/Roma children’s education in the countries studied is the product of the multiple interaction of the factors described that make up what we have called the multifactorial dynamic. The interaction of these factors, a dynamic and mutable interaction whose evolution is inextricably linked with each particular context, generates a multitude of malfunctions that require political, institutional, socio-economic, cultural and ideological intervention of a structural character within a transnational framework.

2. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

Since the publication of the *Report on Schooling for Gypsies’ and Travellers’ Children* coordinated by Prof. Jean Pierre Liegeois of the Centre for Gypsy Research by the Commission of the European Communities in 1988, no further research into this area had been carried out on a transnational scale. The study was undertaken in 1984 and 1985 in ten Community member states. Ten monographic studies were carried out in Belgium, Luxembourg, Denmark, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, the German Federal Republic and the United Kingdom. An appendix to this research was carried out in Spain and Portugal in 1988.

One of the most notable aspects of this document is the series of practical recommendations set out in the final chapter addressed to education institutions, both within the European framework and at national and local levels. The strength of these recommendations is upheld by a series of facts that we considered to be of great relevance to the development of our research project. We detail some of the most pertinent information below, although it should be borne in mind that the report was published in 1986.

- Gypsy/Roma and Travellers are present in all member states and account for a population of over one million people. With a history of more than five hundred years behind them, their language and culture now form part of the Community’s cultural and linguistic heritage.
- The schooling of Gypsy/Roma children is an essential part of the cultural, social and economic future of the Gypsy/Roma communities, who in turn are increasingly aware of its importance.
- In the member states of the Community, between 30% and 40% of Gypsy/Roma children attend primary school with certain regularity. Half of them have received no schooling. Only a very small percentage reach secondary education. It is also of note that illiteracy rates of over 50% are frequent; in some states and communities, this figure reaches between 90% and 100%.

This affects over 500,000 children and adolescents, although it should be borne in mind that this figure must be constantly revised, as the Gypsy/Roma population is extremely young, with 50% under 16 years old.

- Following centuries of neglect and denial, the general picture of Gypsy/Roma children's schooling is now seriously impoverished. Rejection in a variety of forms is still a prevailing element in the relations between the Gypsy/Roma communities and the dominant society. Tensions tend to turn into antagonism and conflict very quickly, particularly during periods of economic hardship. It is clear that given the situations described in the previous point, the school should play a vital role in the education of the various communities, through an approach aimed at mutual recognition and respect.
- "If the information provided in this report is significant, then particularly so are the reflections set out at the end: research activity must be intensified, coordinated and systematic in the various aspects concerning the education of Gypsy/Roma children. Research enables us to propose the most suitable measures. Not only through the evaluation of measures that have already been put into effect, but also through comparative analyses, can the repetition of measures that have already been improved upon be avoided. Before intervention takes place, it is appropriate that the chance to find out about the situation is available. The opening up of perspectives that research brings likewise allows innovation to occur in the best possible conditions" (Liégeois, 1988: 89)

As a result of the technical quality of the report, the wide range of its documentary sources and the practical strength of the recommendations it puts forward from a realistic and pragmatic perspective, this work has become a point of reference, since many of its conclusions and most of its recommendations remain valid today.

A further key argument in the background to this project lies in the numerous intervention programmes being undertaken with the financial support of the European Commission. Although it is not easy to carry out a systematic appraisal of these socio-educational intervention programmes, we consider that they lack a general framework of knowledge on the current situation of Gypsy/Roma children. Clearly, the research we have undertaken has allowed us to prioritise fields of action, to define areas for preferential action and methodological strategies, and also to improve both the design and the effectiveness of the socio-educational intervention projects being developed in the European environment.

The main objective of this project was to carry out a study into the current situation of the education of Gypsy/Roma children in three European Union countries: France, Spain and Italy. The concept of '*education*', in its broadest sense, is by no means arbitrary, since it is related to the epistemological approach of the project, given that our objective was to study both the socialisation processes affecting the Gypsy/Roma child and the interaction processes established in the school environment. In addition, our objective was to study the situation of the Gypsy/Roma child as an integral part of the education systems, along with Gypsy/Roma population groups that fall outside the system. This question has clearly complicated the development of the project, but we consider it to be a priority in our research for several reasons. In various national studies, we have found that the available information focused on sectors of the Gypsy/Roma population with official documentation, citizenship and integration in the education system. In contrast, the reliable data available on other groups was very scarce and marginal. Examples of these groups include casual agricultural labourers or hawkers in Spain, displaced immigrant Gypsy/Roma groups from the former Yugoslavia particularly in Italy, immigrant Gypsy/Roma populations from Eastern Europe, nomadic groups who travel on international circuits within the Union, such as those known as "the great travellers" from the South of France, Gypsy/Roma groups without legal documentation and in general, immigrants whose situation with regard to the state is irregular. Within this context, we have examined the

situation of Gypsy/Roma groups from Kosovo and Bosnia and carried out follow up work with these groups.

The detailed information gathered on the socio-educational situation has enabled us to make recommendations to both national and European administrations. These practical and realistic recommendations could form the basis for education policies over the next decade, and in particular, avoid the marginalisation and exclusion of Gypsy/Roma children from groups that are at particular risk as a result of their social characteristics.

To a large extent, the specific objectives designed have been met through the study of the situation of Gypsy/Roma children from three different disciplinary approaches that we regard as complementary. Ethnographic studies of the school have been carried out using social anthropological methodology, with a micro analytical emphasis in order to carry out a comparative study of Gypsy/Roma groups and their processes of interaction with the school. To this end, the dynamics of socialisation and schooling of the Gypsy/Roma child have been studied, by analysing family/school interaction together with the social variables that have an influence on the educational environment (integration-segregation, job situation, habitat etc.). We have been able to diagnose the basic malfunctions that occur in the system. Starting from a thorough empirical analysis, we have studied situations of exclusion and marginalisation in the adult and particularly the child Gypsy/Roma population. These objectives have been worked towards using qualitative methodology, with an emphasis on cultural and mental questions that affect the interaction between the Gypsy/Roma and the dominant society, and in particular, those affecting the Gypsy/Roma child in his or her relation with the school environment.

The second objective of the project, to carry out sociological investigations from a macro perspective, has led us to study both qualitative and quantitative aspects of the Gypsy/Roma population working as casual agricultural labourers. This situation is especially common in Spain and France, in the regions of Andalusia, Extremadura and French Catalonia. Within these groups, we have fulfilled our objective of studying the Gypsy/Roma child in these groups. Within this framework, our research had to be extended into the Alentejo region of Portugal, where Gypsy/Roma groups of casual labourers moving between Spain and Portugal were detected. In this case, an urban ethnography of the Portuguese city of Evora was carried out. With this aim, we have undertaken field work investigations of both a qualitative and quantitative nature to study the Gypsy/Roma population from the former Yugoslavia and Eastern European countries. We regarded the study and collection of reliable, up-to-date data on this situation to be one of the prime objectives of the research, and although we consider that the work carried out should be extended and looked at in greater depth, we believe that the information we have been able to obtain is of major importance.

A sociological survey designed for teachers in the three countries studied formed part of the third objective of our research. The aim of the survey was to detect certain variables related to the school environment by analysing a large sample of the population. These variables included integration and segregation levels at school, absenteeism, levels of training, school success/failure rate and socio-educational interaction. The emphasis of this work was quantitative, and the analysis of this data has provided us with a general overview of the situation encountered by Gypsy/Roma children in terms of rates of absenteeism, school performance, interaction between the family and the school environments, socio-educational relations and the interaction between teachers and pupils.

The outcome of the work undertaken to achieve these objectives has taken the form of a series of ethnographic and sociological reports which testify to the efforts made by the research team and to the progress made in terms of the knowledge available on the situation of the education of Gypsy/Roma children in the countries studied.

3. SCIENTIFIC DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT RESULTS AND METHODOLOGY.

PART I. The Gypsy/Roma people. Historical, ecological and socio-economic contexts.

0. Introduction

This report on the education of Gypsy/Roma³ children in Europe refers to three European Union states, Spain, France and Italy, together with two ethnographic studies carried out in Portugal and Bosnia. However, it must be born in mind that in the countries studied we also find communities of Gypsy/Roma people from elsewhere, both from Eastern Europe and the European Union, as a result of the various migratory processes that have taken place in Europe as a whole over the course of history.

Given that in this report it would be impossible to cover in detail all the research carried out during the OPRE ROMA project, I intend to provide a general diagnosis of the situation of Gypsy/Roma children on the basis of certain premises that should be clarified.

Firstly, although the objectives set out in our research have been thoroughly met, this in no way signifies that the field of study has been exhausted. The unquestionable advances in the knowledge we have gained have enabled us to define new areas for study, to confirm that the investigations undertaken need to be taken further and developed in depth. In sum, it only remains for me to stress the importance of continuity in research into Gypsy/Roma childhood.

Secondly, it is important to highlight the fact that the theoretical and methodological approach of our research project is based on an inter-disciplinary perspective, and that the diversity of Gypsy/Roma groups is considered primordial to the research. While it is obviously true that the Gypsy/Roma have a common language and certain shared cultural features, it must be clearly pointed out that the diversity of historical, geographical, religious and social circumstances have led to a great heterogeneity in the different Gypsy/Roma groups, a heterogeneity that must be thoroughly demonstrated in order to provide a rigorous account of their situation. It is therefore vital to take into account the various contexts in which these groups find themselves. Throughout this report, we will examine the urban and rural contexts, together with historical and linguistic, social and human contexts.

I believe that the emphasis of the research on the context of Gypsy/Roma groups is essential in order to understand the situation of Gypsy/Roma children, the socialisation processes they undergo in the family environment and their relations with the education systems in the countries studied. The aim of this study cannot be isolated from these contexts, and as a

³ Because of the diversity of names used in Europe to refer to the Gypsy/Roma by both outsiders and members of the Gypsy community themselves, the Spanish author has opted for the generic term by which they are known, i.e. Gitanos, Tsiganes, Zingari, together with the term Roma (Gypsy) taken from the Romany language in the following way: Gitano/Roma. Where the Gypsy/Roma use names to identify themselves that are recognised within the group such as Sinti, Zingaro, Hungaro, Manoush, Calé, Giostrai etc., the same criterion is used, in such a way that the specific term appears in the text followed by the term Roma (Sinti/Roma, Manoush/Roma). This criterion aims to show the diversity of the Gypsy/Roma peoples without obscuring the fact that they do share a common language, certain cultural aspects and above all, a similar social position. The Spanish author also uses similar forms to refer to non-Gypsies, called by various names in different parts of Europe such as Payos, Senhores, Gage, Gazé. The English translation has attempted to follow the same criteria throughout, with the term Gypsy/Roma used to refer to the Gypsy people, and the English spelling of the Romany term Gage to refer to non-Gypsies. Given the frequency with which Romany terms are used throughout the text, the italics commonly employed to denote words borrowed from other languages have been avoided.

consequence, they have been the object of a major research effort, and a large part of this report will be devoted to them.

Finally, I feel that at least one of the biases of this research should be pointed out, which is due both to its applied approach and to decisions taken by each one of the European research teams. The reason for this bias lies in the selection of Gypsy/Roma groups studied, which to a great extent were from the most marginalised socio-economic contexts, and as a result, has led to a limited view of what is really a much broader reality.

My intention here is to highlight this issue in order to point out that Gypsy/Roma children who successfully finish their education at all levels with good results do exist. By making them invisible, we are effectively denying their existence. Gypsy/Roma is not a synonym for problems and school failure, but social, and often academic prejudice is part of the reason why this stigma takes on these aspects which can often turn it into a virtual reality.

1. Gypsy/Roma groups in the urban context.

The comparison of the urban ethnography of different European cities is a very recent focus of paramount importance.⁴ This research project takes on board the study of Gypsy/Roma groups in various urban contexts, some in smaller cities such as Evora (Portugal), Melfi (Italy), Montpellier (France), and others in large cities such as the Gypsy/Roma in Valencia and Seville in Spain, and in Italy, the Gypsy/Roma from Bosnia in the city of Turin. The comparative analysis of these ethnographies allow certain lines of interpretation to be drawn which, based on the ethnographic and ethno-historical data gathered, provide us with a series of sequences within which highly significant parallels can be found.

From the 1950s onwards an important socio-structural change took place in the urban contexts studied that affected the whole of European society, including the Gypsy/Roma community. The main consequence for the Gypsy/Roma was the process of settling, a decisive factor that brought with it major changes in their social and lifestyle strategies. We therefore set out to study the various ecological, social and economic contexts from a diachronic perspective in order to obtain a holistic and integrated view of their present reality.

In southern Italy, the ethnographic studies carried out in the city of Melfi (Pontrandolfo, 2002), confirm the presence of the Rom/Roma in that area since the end of the 15th century. For economic reasons, their lifestyle was historically semi-nomadic, their main activities being horse dealing and the production and sale of metal goods. This was complemented by secondary activities such as fortune telling and the sale of small manufactured goods. The Cigano/Roma in Evora and the Portuguese region of Alentejo (Sama, 2001) and the Gitano/Roma of the city of Avila in Spain shared the same occupations and lifestyles (Giménez, 1994).

Historical documentation confirms that the Cigana/Roma community has been present in the Portuguese region of Alentejo since the 16th century, and states their origins as Andalusia and other regions of southern Spain. In the city of Evora, the first accounts of the Cigano/Roma are

⁴ One of the earliest experiences in this field are the ethnographies of Avila (1988) and Evora (2002) conducted by María Cátedra. To the work carried out by María Cátedra (1988) and her research team, further specific research projects can be added, an example of which is that carried out on the Gypsy/Roma (Giménez 1994) that demonstrates how the city is a most fitting context within which to analyse the interaction processes of Gypsy/Roma groups with society.

María Cátedra has initiated comparative urban ethnographies in the Iberian Peninsula in the two cities of Avila, in Spain and Evora in Portugal. Sara Sama (2000-2002) participated in the latter with a study of the Gypsy/Roma group in Evora. These studies open the door to ethno-historical research and demonstrate the importance of focusing on the diachronic perspective to study and improve understanding of current socio-cultural processes.

found in 1535 when the Courts of Evora approved a new law, reaffirming prohibition of entry to the city by the Cigano/Roma and laying down punishments of expulsion and whippings for those who disobeyed the order. Other historical documents provide evidence of the Cigano/Roma's occupations as horse and mule traders, basket makers and fortune tellers as well as begging (Sama, 2002). This group essentially lived in rural locations. The region of Alentejo was characterised by its large estates where the wealth was concentrated in the hands of the land-owning oligarchy. It is only after the 1950s that a period of steady modernisation began to take place, the effects of which were seen in the gradual mechanisation of agriculture. This process also took place at the same time in Melfi and Avila. These changes resulted in the migration of unemployed populations from the country to the city, and the consequent growth of the latter. These structural changes took place in a social context of general illiteracy amongst the population, in which school attendance was a privilege enjoyed by only the better-off classes of Alentejo society.

In the same way as in Alentejo, the Rom/Roma groups in southern Italy were also semi-nomadic within a regional area. Their itineraries were cyclical and restricted to specific territories. Their travels, broken by stays of varying length in different towns, took place over most of the year. In winter, they spent more sedentary periods in some of the towns and villages along their route (Pontraldolfo, 2002). This pattern was also followed by the communities of Alentejo and southern Portugal. It is clearly of fundamental importance to highlight the fact that as well as following a nomadic and semi-nomadic lifestyle, there is evidence that sedentary Gypsy/Roma groups have existed for generations. Sara Sama points out that in Portugal, family groups have been settled in certain towns since the beginning of the 20th century. These families, whose older members as known as "donos", owned their own fields where they bred horses and cultivated on a small scale. In this way, they had a fixed residence, but their lifestyle continued to be linked to regular periods of travelling, as the men would often travel to animal fairs and even whole families would spend periods of time in other towns and villages (Sama, 2002).

In France, a similar socio-economic context is found in the groups studied in the city of Montpellier. As a result of its geographical location, this region became particularly attractive to the Tsiganes/Roma groups who moved around the French Pyrenean regions and the Spanish-French border areas. These groups also earned their living by horse dealing and small time trading, but also provided entertainment as jugglers, acrobats and tightrope walkers and some owned their own small puppet theatres. All these activities were associated with the travelling lifestyle, once again linked in with the fairs and celebrations held in the different towns and cities of the region (Faure, 2002).

Travelling and the sedentary lifestyle are the two extremes on a broad scale of situations and lifestyles, and are particularly evident in the communities of Evora and Avila. In both these cities, life histories provide us with information on family groups with sedentary, semi-sedentary and nomadic lifestyles, the latter with a variety of circuits and routes ranging from those on an international scale to others covering more limited regional areas. In the south of Portugal, the most common routes included the following towns: Evora, Mora, Portele, Estremoz, Elvas and villages such as Redondo, Cuba or Vila Vizosa (Sama, 2002)

In the case of the city of Melfi, the ecological and economic context of the group takes on particular significance in the way the Zingari/Roma itineraries were constituted. Their routes were confined to the region of Vulture-Melfese, and were especially appropriate to their activities. Since the 16th century, Melfi has been one of the few urban settlements in southern Italy. The city enjoyed a strategic geographical location between the three regions of Basilicata, Campania and Puglia, which gave it a privileged position for trade and exchange. In addition, as it was sited on the only inland route to link Naples with Taranto, the most important port to the Ionian sea, it became a vital trading point for the region.

The strategic importance of Montpellier as a trading and exchange area should also be highlighted. Despite periods of repressive legislation, our studies confirm that historically, the Spanish-French border was always relatively easy to cross, thereby enabling both commercial and social exchange to be maintained between the Gypsy/Roma of both countries. In the 18th century, the ease of movement granted by Spanish legislation allowed the circulation of Gypsy/Roma groups between Catalonia and the Roussillon area to intensify. These circumstances are covered in documents (Leblon, B. 1994) that report on the arrival of Gitano/Roma from Barcelona in Perpignan. Like other groups, the Gypsy/Roma groups of this area had a semi-sedentary lifestyle, and settled on the outskirts of the local towns and cities. This lifestyle with its associated travelling activity suffered various legislative restrictions throughout the 19th century. War and proscriptions on movement were instrumental in forcing Gypsy/Roma groups of the area into a sedentary lifestyle towards the end of the 1950s (Faure, 2002).

In both Montpellier and among the groups studied in the Iberian Peninsula in the cities of Avila and Evora, fairs were an important meeting point for traders, animal dealers and entertainers. These activities were an essential element of the Gypsy/Roma economy in the region of Montpellier and at the same time enabled them to establish and consolidate social networks with other nomadic groups. At the end of the 1950s, the move towards a sedentary lifestyle was becoming increasingly evident in the city of Montpellier. Groups settled in various areas of the city, in the old quarter and on the outskirts where slums grew up and in which living conditions were very precarious (Faure, 2002).

In general, Gypsy/Roma mobility and consequent dispersion within the non-Gypsy/Gage communities guaranteed the economic survival of the group and strengthened its internal cohesion. Their immersion in the essentially rural Europe of the first half of the 20th century occurred through their social and occupational vocation associated with an essential element of the agricultural economy: the horse. This gave them a strategic position in the socio-economic context, defined by the interdependence of the Gypsy/Roma group and their social environment.

Available data on the ethnographies of the cities of Evora and Melfi reveal that similar processes took place with regard to the economic strategies of the Gypsy/Roma groups and their travelling way of life. The same patterns are also observed in the ethnography of Avila. This indicates the importance of the socio-economic context in which the Gypsy/Roma were engaged and reveals how similar contexts gave rise to the development of the same social, economic and cultural strategies.

The economic strategies of the groups operated in accordance with their surroundings, as the breeding and sale of horses and mules was an essential pursuit in the rural environment. The Gypsy/Roma communities in these three cities underwent critical structural changes in the same period. In all three areas, the gradual mechanisation of agriculture led to the decline and eventual cessation of the use of animals for working the land. The introduction of agricultural machinery not only caused the destabilisation of the Gypsy/Roma economic niche, but also had far-reaching repercussions on the world of the agricultural worker, who was left with no alternative but to move to the cities. The urban centres saw the arrival of large numbers of migrants from the country during these decades of exodus.

Mechanisation of agriculture not only led a cycle of recession for the horse and mule dealer, but at the same time, labour surpluses propelled streams of migrants towards the city. Both Gypsy/Roma and non-Gypsy/Gage rural dwellers were forced by these circumstances to readapt to their new urban setting. In the Iberian Peninsula, the better-off Gypsy/Roma groups became itinerant traders while the poorest were forced towards the cities in search of a living (Sama, 2002). This migration to the city represented a serious crisis. The Gypsy/Roma, together

with the non-Gypsy/Gage peasants, went to live in the worst housing in the poorest neighbourhoods of the city's least desirable areas.

In this sense, the areas inhabited by the Gypsy/Roma in the cities studied had certain parallel features. In Melfi, the Rom/Roma lived in the most rundown housing, in areas badly hit by earthquakes. A similar situation is found in Avila where the Gypsy/Roma were concentrated in the abandoned houses of the San Esteban neighbourhood, and the pattern is repeated in the Portuguese city of Evora. The Gypsy/Roma community coming to settle in these cities could only gain access to the cheapest housing in the poorest and most marginalised neighbourhoods. This circumstance led to their being concentrated in certain neighbourhoods which gradually became ghettos and whose names allude to the ethnicity of their inhabitants: "quartiere degli Zingari" in Melfi (Pontrandolfo, 2002), or "barrio de los Gitanos" in Avila (Giménez, 1994). This, together with the fact that these neighbourhoods were located in the old Jewish quarters, constitutes a remarkable coincidence between the parallel situation of the cities and their inhabitant groups. Clearly, marginalisation goes back much further than it might appear at first glance. This comparative urban ethnographic perspective reveals parallels which, if confirmed in other locations, would denote an important advance in the construction of our knowledge of the various European Gypsy/Roma communities, and at the same time, of the processes of segregation that they, and other minority groups throughout history, have suffered and continue to suffer.

The same marginalisation of the area inhabited by the Gypsy/Roma groups is also seen in Montpellier. In the 19th century, the neighbourhood of Figuerolles was a semi-rural area on the edge of the city and was settled by both immigrants and the poor leaving the rural areas on their arrival to the city, all factors leading to its marginalisation. As in other cities (Avila, Melfi, Evora) the neighbourhood of Figuerolles became known as the "le quartier des Gitans", (Faure, 2002).

The symbolic importance of the Gypsy/Roma groups' location and its significance with regard to interaction with the city and the non-Gypsy/non-Roma majority is of note. Today, the Gypsy/Roma in both Evora and Avila inhabit areas outside the city walls on the edge of the city (Sama, 2002), (Giménez 1994).

Over the last fifty years, the Gypsy/Roma population in Melfi has left the ghetto to settle in other areas throughout the city⁵. This process of dispersion is a key indicator in the investigation of the Gypsy/Roma socio-urban inclusion process. The case of Melfi is a very significant exception that gives us an idea of the heterogeneity of situations that can be encountered. The Gypsy/Roma frequently inhabit areas on the outskirts and periphery of the city, the most run down and least desirable areas. Social exclusion, racism and xenophobia are expressed in this way on the map of the city.

The Gypsy/Roma community studied in Montpellier show new patterns of occupancy of the urban area. A group of Catalan Gypsy/Roma inhabit the centre of the city in one storey housing, while the Spanish and other Gypsy/Roma groups live on the periphery in slums or high-rise accommodation, usually in a state of dilapidation. The fact that the Catalan group live in this area is of particular significance if we consider that in the Spanish Catalonia from whence they come, their social and employment integration in the Payo/Gage community has traditionally been very positively developed. However, in recent decades, the city has witnessed a process of

⁵ The case of Melfi is particularly significant in that the dispersion of the group from the ghetto neighbourhood to other city locations symbolises a major improvement in their socio-economic interaction, reflected, amongst other indicators, in the high level of integration of Gypsy/Roma children in the education system and frequent cases of Gypsy/Roma with university qualifications.

exclusion from the central district. Their relocation on the edge of the city once again represents a tendency that is echoed in many other cities (Faure, 2002).

This settlement on the outskirts of the city is one of the pertinent findings confirmed in most of the towns and cities studied in the project. In walled cities, the Gypsy/Roma inhabit the areas outside the wall. The processes of settlement in the urban area, and specifically, the concentration and ghettoisation of Gypsy/Roma groups in the marginal run-down areas of the cities studied make up a fundamental variable in our research, because of the repercussions this has on the processes leading to a concentration of Gypsy/Roma children in certain schools.

1.1. Gypsy/Roma groups in large cities.

Evora, Melfi and Avila, the three cities compared above, share certain common demographic, economic and structural characteristics. They represent comparable ethnographic cases in so far as the urban context of the groups is similar. However, it should be stressed that the diversity of Gypsy/Roma groups is as great as the variety of contexts in which they live. The magnitude of this diversity can be clearly seen in the ethnographic studies carried out in the cities of Valencia and Seville (Spain) and Turin (Italy).

The Gypsy/Roma groups in these cities provide an excellent representation of the social heterogeneity to be found in the large city. The social, economic and cultural map of the large city, a consequence of the massive surge of immigration, results in a diversity that is impossible to deal with holistically from an ethnographic perspective. For this reason, we selected two antithetic groups in an attempt to demonstrate precisely the diversity that often exists between the different groups.

The area we studied in Valencia was a long-established settlement with a Gypsy/Roma community whose structural position was defined by a certain social and economic integration in the city's social networks.

In the Italian city of Turin, we selected a group of Gypsy/Roma immigrants who had recently arrived from Bosnia. In this case, the community had not established any social or economic networks and faced a particularly marginalised and underprivileged structural position. These cases represent the two extremes of the enormous diversity of structural positions to be found in the large city.

The analysis in the city of Valencia was carried out as a neighbourhood study, a classic approach within the field of urban ethnography, but without losing sight of the broader context. The comparative perspective, with the additional application of a diachronic viewpoint, allows us to consider the neighbourhood not as a closed unit in isolation from the rest of the city, but rather to highlight the perspective of the neighbourhood analysis as a dynamic, changing entity that interacts within the context of the city.

The Gypsy/Roma in the Valencian neighbourhood constitute a "thoroughly urban" group. Their presence in the city goes back over various generations and they enjoy a long tradition of coexistence and interaction with the non-Gypsy/Gage population. Some of the group is bilingual (Castilian and Catalan), although the use of Castilian predominates. In general, cordial relationships between neighbours have always been maintained. Some of the families come from towns and villages in the Valencian Region or Catalonia, but this positive interaction with the city is seen throughout the whole Gypsy/Roma community.

We were prompted to select this particular group because of its cultural context, and in particular, because of the framework of positive intercultural relationships it enjoyed, with a

certain expectation that we would find positive school performance within the socio-educational context. As will be revealed below, this was not to be the case.

The social and cultural reality of the Gypsy/Roma in the city of Valencia can only be explained by its diversity in terms of socio-economic classes, the neighbourhoods they live in, the type of housing and the diversity of language and place of origin. The diversity of Gypsy/Roma groups settled in Valencia ranges from the well-off, with a good standard of living and a relatively stable economic situation, to the totally marginalised groups living in filthy shanty towns with absolutely no service provision.

During the 1950s, a large group of Gypsy/Roma families were living in the old historical centre of the city, to a certain extent, a similar situation to that of Montpellier. Some of these families were of Catalan origin, but the majority had lived in the city for generations. Most had Valencian ancestors, and while in some cases they came from towns and villages in the province, they had generally maintained positive relationships of coexistence with the non-Gypsy/Gage in their towns of origin, in homes scattered throughout the towns.

In the city, some of the Valencian Gypsy/Roma owned their own homes, particularly in the Carmen district. This neighbourhood, in the old centre of the city, was inhabited by the poorer classes and showed signs of inner city decay both in terms of housing and infrastructure, chiefly due to the lack of interest in the area shown by Valencia's middle and upper classes. The neglect of these urban areas by local government is evidenced by the way that both urban infrastructure and housing are allowed to fall into a state of dilapidation and disrepair. This is accompanied by a gradual drop in rents and the consequent attraction to the area of social groups in a precarious situation, which in turn speeds up the ghettoisation process, and leads to further social and urban decay. The Carmen district is a clear example of this process.⁶

In the 1950s, the expansion of the city stimulated the demand for urban building land and led to a symbolic appreciation in prices in the old central quarter. This, together with a growing interest from the wealthier classes and commercial groups and traders fostered a growth in speculation. The city's historical centre, run down, inhabited by the poorer classes and with low rents, became a desirable area for the city's more powerful sectors (banking, commerce etc.) whose socio-political lobbying aimed to rid the historical centre, especially the Carmen neighbourhood, of its resident population. This strategy is repeated in many of the European towns and cities studied. In the case of Valencia, the natural disaster of 1957 when the River Turia burst its banks marked the turning point in the deterioration of the old quarter. Urban transformation was set in motion with the onset of gentrification that saw the expulsion of the most underprivileged section of the population to the outskirts of the city.

The displaced population was rehoused in new developments on the edge of the city, built in the horticultural areas located on the boundary between the country and the city. They were occupied by the weakest sectors of the Valencian population: working class families, wage earners, old age pensioners and groups of Gypsy/Roma. The influx of immigrants from other areas of Spain, attracted by the booming economy in Valencia, also settled in this area (García 2002).

The Gypsy/Roma groups, together with their non-Gypsy/Gage neighbours from the centre of the city, moved out to live on the outskirts in neighbourhoods similar to those we have studied, which were made up of cheap public housing known as "*viviendas protegidas*".⁷ Following the same pattern, the poorest and most underprivileged families inhabited the most

⁶ This situation can be observed in many of the towns and cities studied. However, we only highlight two typical examples, the cases of the Poligono Sur in Seville, and the district of Hostafranchs in Barcelona.

⁷ Type of housing administered by either national or regional government with a guaranteed maximum cost.

dilapidated neighbourhoods. Most of the Gypsy/Roma were concentrated in the following areas: Benicalap, Rascanya, Zaidía, Olivereta, Quatre Carreres, Camins al Grau and Poblat Marítim (Nazaret and Cabanyal). What had been a population with a dispersed settlement pattern in the city centre was now concentrated in these districts, and followed social and economic criteria. The better-off settled in the best areas, while the poorest resided in neighbourhoods which were later to become inhuman ghettos.

While this was the experience of certain groups of the Gypsy/Roma population in Valencia, others continued to arrive in the city along with groups of Payo/Gage, in the migration flows of the 1950s and 60s. The city of Valencia saw an influx of migrants from all over Spain, particularly from Andalusia, Extremadura, Castile and Aragon, who were attracted by the big city and the new economic opportunities being offered. This migration, as in other contexts studied, was accentuated by the far-reaching transformations occurring in rural Spain, specifically as a result of the Spanish policy of economic development during the 60s. Many of the Gypsy/Roma arrived in conditions of extreme poverty, and settled in the shanty towns on the edge of the city, side by side with the equally impoverished non-Gypsy/Gage population. Other groups inhabited modest dwellings in better conditions, and the most fortunate gained access to social housing. We thus find Gypsy/Roma groups from a wide range of locations, each with their own traditions and different economic, social and employment circumstances. Gypsy/Roma migration often followed patterns set by the family network. When large families moved, they would attract other groups of the same kinship network and form closed communities that had little contact with other Gypsy/Roma groups in the city. Economic expansion in the city generated new urban development and major changes that gave rise to substantial rehousing projects. These affected the Gypsy/Roma population in that they became concentrated in large ghetto districts in marginalised areas of the city, which in turn were to generate serious social conflict over a period of decades. The end result of this tendency towards concentration was the emergence of the ghetto, authentic dens of exclusion in which the Gypsy/Roma family subsisted.

This process clearly shows one of the trends most commonly repeated in the urban context, the concentration of the Gypsy/Roma population in districts outside the city in specific locations, brought about by a multitude of socio-urban dynamics caused both by speculation of and the social value attributed to certain areas of the city. These dynamics unofficially led to the underprivileged population being driven out of the centre of the city when the land value of these districts began to rise. Complex processes of financial speculation in urban building land lie behind the origin of this destructive dynamic. The Gypsy/Roma, one of the weakest socio-economic groups, became systematically concentrated in the least desirable areas of the city. This process became particularly evident during periods of urban growth, in which marginal areas were gradually transformed and integrated with the rest of the city, and provided with good communication networks, parks and gardens to become desirable urban locations.

When the ghetto ceased to be defined as such, and instead became ripe for speculation by urban managers who saw it as cheap land surrounded by urban areas undergoing transformation, the Gypsy/Roma were driven out of one ghetto only to end up in another, further away and with poorer communications, but out of sight of the city. This process has been confirmed time and again, from La Coruña to Bolzano, from Seville to Strasbourg, from Valencia to Turin.

While the city of Valencia is Spain's third most populated regional capital, Seville, capital of the Andalusia autonomous region, is the fourth with a population of 684,633. The city has a long tradition of Gypsy/Roma settlement, going back to the 15th century. Historical documents reveal that Gypsy/Roma communities possibly lived in the central area of the city, in the district now known as Santa Catalina, but this did not last for very long, and the Gypsy/Roma soon moved to the neighbourhood of Triana.

The outlying quarter of Triana has been in existence since Seville was founded and is the neighbourhood with the longest history and the largest population. Located on the far bank of the River Guadalquivir, for centuries it was connected to the city by a pontoon bridge, which gives an indication of the marginal nature of the quarter. The fact that it is situated next to the rural area of Aljarafe, and that it had been settled by the Moors point to its marginal location, its rural character and its occupation by minority groups throughout history, features which are found in certain marginalised urban areas and that have repeatedly been observed in the other European cities described above.

The Gypsy/Roma families settled in Triana, a zone of transit between the city and the country. They worked in a variety of occupations, as innkeepers and tavern owners, horse dealers and also as agricultural labourers. However, they most commonly made a living as blacksmiths. The famous blacksmiths' forges of Triana were family businesses handed down from father to son. Their quality craftsmanship was highly sought after and this gave the Gypsy/Roma families employment stability and a certain economic freedom which in part fostered the myth of "the rich Gypsy/Roma". The Gypsy/Roma blacksmiths enjoyed their most successful period between the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century. This situation lasted to a greater or lesser degree until the middle of the 20th century, when circumstances began to change. The mechanisation of agriculture and the disappearance of beasts of burden and technological innovations in the blacksmiths' forges signified a grave crisis for the city's Gypsy/Roma community. The structural decline of the forge meant that the employment situation of the Gypsy/Roma family became very insecure, and as a result, the search began for new economic niches in the labour market, such as in the world of bullfighting or flamenco. This series of events coincides with the experience of the Gypsy/Roma groups in Avila, Evora and Melfi, with the only exception being the higher income and social status attained by the Seville Gypsy/Roma as a result of their specialised occupation.

During the period of economic growth in the 1950s, the city underwent a rapid process of expansion and major symbolic and development changes that led to the recovery of the old central quarter, in the same way as in Valencia, or in the traditional neighbourhoods such as Triana. Until that moment, Triana had been a run down and abandoned area of the city. Made up of small industrial workshops, low rent housing and typical patios shared by neighbours, it was a working class district, inhabited by wage earners and pensioners who lived side by side with the Gypsy/Roma families. However, when the city began to cast its eye around for building development potential, Triana, until then forgotten, became the focus of its interest.

As we have already seen in the case of other cities, the strategy behind the financial speculation in urban land for development consisted of allowing the existing housing to fall into a state of decay, together with pressure on tenants in low rent accommodation to leave their houses and the progressive selling off of both business and residential properties. The process culminated in the eviction of the resident population, Gypsy/Roma groups included.

Those with a certain degree of purchasing power or homeowners were able to sell their property and buy again on the outskirts of the city. The incipient appreciation of house prices in the centre put them out of the reach of most people and the best option in many cases was social housing. Families either went into subsidised government-built housing or properties bought on the open market in districts such as la Macarena, Torreblanca or Polígono Sur. The most impoverished who were unable to buy a property were rehoused in temporary, often prefabricated housing, while they waited for social housing to become available. The local authorities selected the cheapest urban land to build this housing, which was far from the centre, with bad communication links, and almost always isolated and set apart. This was the beginning of the present day neighbourhoods of Polígono norte, Polígono sur, Polígono de San Pablo and Torreblanca. The most excluded and marginalised were left there with no choice but to build

their own shanty town on the furthest edges of the city, which were to become the new slums of the 21st century.

These districts began to emerge in the 1970s, isolated, often in the middle of nowhere, far away from the city and with no physical or social communication network. They gradually turned into ghettos, but the continuing economic growth led to further urban expansion and the resulting demand for building land meant that they were irrevocably swallowed up by the city. The case of Polígono Sur is particularly outstanding. An isolated ghetto beyond the edge of the city, it gradually became an island of urban decay (with no public transport, council services, waste collection or policing) in the middle of a sea of urban land that was steadily increasing in value. Following the same pattern as that observed in other cities, the pressure for development is increasing in the area, and in all likelihood, the Gypsy/Roma community will be evicted, the existing buildings demolished and a new residential area will be built on the ruins. This will probably take the form of a middle class non-Gypsy/Gage suburb of semi-detached houses with all the facilities of a new development: good road links, the University and other public buildings. The Gypsy/Roma will yet again be rehoused in other out-lying ghettos. The origin of the conflict lies precisely in their expulsion from the ghetto.

Although the aim of our research is obviously to study the education of Gypsy/Roma children, I feel it is important to highlight the dramatic influence these processes of ghettoisation have on the schooling received by this group, both in Seville and the other settings covered by the research. Of the 870 children in school in the Polígono Sur district, almost half (400), attend ghetto schools. The condition of these ghetto schools is just as dilapidated as the neighbourhoods in which the Gypsy/Roma children live. Without an appreciation of their social and cultural habitat, it is not possible to understand the situation these children face in the school environment.

The Polígono Sur is just one example, but reams could be written on the subject of the relationship between the Gypsy/Roma and the city in which they live or have lived in similar circumstances, such as the shanty town of Peña Moya in the city of La Coruña, the Mina or Can Tunis districts of Barcelona, the now disappeared shanty town of Los Focos in Madrid, the Mil Viviendas district in Alicante, López Mezquita in the city of Avila, Carrechiquilla in Palencia, San Lorenzo in Castellón and countless others, blighted dens of exclusion and misery where Gypsy/Roma children are brought up, not only denied an education, but also basic human dignity.

The city of Seville, like so many other European cities, clearly demonstrates the marginality of the urban areas inhabited by the Gypsy/Roma population, but also, is an explicit illustration of the social and economic diversity of both the communities and the urban areas they inhabit. This diversity is firmly rooted in the strategic occupational niches traditionally held by certain groups in Seville. The city's Gypsy/Roma population is consequently extremely diverse, and family groups with a wide range of social and economic circumstances are to be found there. These range from upper middle class groups that for generations have been integrated in a socio-economic environment of extensive social networks operating amongst both Gypsy/Roma and non-Gypsy/Gage. At the other extreme are the most destitute who exist in deplorable subhuman conditions in shanty towns with no type of services whatsoever.

From this wide range of circumstances, that of the most underprivileged is of greatest interest to us, due to the ramifications it has for Gypsy/Roma children and their relationship with the school. The tendency for Gypsy/Roma communities to be concentrated in specific areas of the city, the fact that these areas are located outside the city limits, the physical and social deterioration of the districts inhabited by the most impoverished members of the population and the consequences these circumstances have on the day-to-day life of their children are issues

which are part of a general context and that we consider to be of paramount importance. In general, the social and economic context is a decisive conditioning factor, but this does not detract from the fact that problems of communication between Gypsy/Roma children and the school environment also arise amongst the more prosperous groups.

The Gypsy/Roma communities analysed in the cities of Seville and Valencia have been settled in their respective cities for centuries. At the other end of the scale of the different models of Gypsy/Roma interaction with the urban environment, we now turn to the Bosnian Gypsy/Roma in the city of Turin (Italy).

The migration of Gypsy/Roma from the former Yugoslavia occurred in two stages (Brunelklo, 1996) the first in the 1970s and the second, mainly of Bosnian Gypsy/Roma, in the 1990s. The historical background to immigration to Italy should be explained. In many Bosnian cities, the traditional occupation of the Gypsy/Roma was horse and scrap metal dealing. They generally lived in precarious conditions on the outskirts of the cities. While the oldest members of the communities continued to work with horses in the rural areas, and their lifestyle was to a certain extent itinerant, the younger generations broadened their work experience, some of them taking jobs in factories. Policies introduced under the rule of Tito led to many Gypsy/Roma being integrated in the social system. Policies of integration in both employment and educational fields were fostered which resulted in many children also reaching secondary school (Saletti, 2002). Many Gypsy/Roma became homeowners and enjoyed a certain economic stability which came to an abrupt end with the outbreak of war. Migration to Italy, where many families already had trading connections, was their only way out.

Different communities of Gypsy/Roma from Bosnia are to be found in Turin, most of whom are Romá/Roma, Xoraxané/Roma and Kañaria/Roma. Together, they live in caravans, on a site located on the edge of the city, provided exclusively for the Gypsy/Roma population. The location of the sites for these groups within the area of the city was conditioned by a varied social and economic rationale. They had to be located on land where camping was possible, but also relatively near to the city centre so as to be able to work (flower selling, handcrafts, scrap metal collection, begging etc). At the same time, they had to be far enough away from other family groups that might be regarded as competitors for the scarce living to be made in the city. The scarcity of sites often compelled Gypsy/Roma families to move onto any available space, above all in the 1970s, in such a way that the occupation of houses and empty plots, sometimes in very unsuitable locations, led to popular discontent and social tension in the city.

In 1982, the city council attempted to normalise the situation through the setting up of *L'Ufficio Stranieri e Nomadi*, an agency to coordinate intervention in issues involving the Gypsy/Roma population. By creating official sites on which to house this section of the population, the agency contributed, to a certain extent, to institutionalising the situation of the Nomad/Gypsy/Roma and the Nomad/foreigner, and at the same time, to its definition as a social category (Saletti, 2002).

The location of Gypsy/Roma families on these official sites had important social and economic consequences, specifically in the child-school relationship (Saletti 2002). In fact, residence permits were issued authorising families to stay on the sites, which, for a period of over six months, conferred certain rights such as health care and access to certain official documents, but at the same time, imposed the obligation on parents to send their Gypsy/Roma children to school. If the Gypsy/Roma families did not fulfil their obligation, they could be penalised by having their permits withdrawn. Compulsory school attendance was thus strengthened by site normalisation in 1991.

The site studied is located on the edge Turin and was hurriedly set up in 1985 to provide space for family groups who were illegally occupying a privately owned plot (Saletti, 2002). It

was designed as a provisional measure, a pattern we have repeatedly come across in many other cities. The planning of rehousing and the construction of housing developments or sites by the various public administrations is often carried out as a matter of “urgency” and is considered to be “provisional”. The very nature of these initiatives brings a precariousness in its wake which drags on for decades in spite of the negative social effect it has on the city, and in particular on the Gypsy/Roma families who have to endure the degradation that this situation implies.

The various stages of migration experienced by the Bosnian Gypsy/Roma population show very different interaction patterns. At the beginning of the 1970s, economically motivated migration was based on the trading strategies of Gypsy/Roma families who made sporadic trips to Italy. Given the instability of the situation in Bosnia, these sojourns gradually became longer to the point where many family groups were living and working in Italy for a major part of each year. These family groups became increasingly unified, while to a certain extent, family ties with Bosnia began to break up, as their trips back home became more and more infrequent. In contrast, the refugees arriving in the 1990s presented a completely different migration pattern. They were the “newcomers”, and in the collective social image, represented the stereotype of the “nomad” and the “foreigner”.

The war in the region generated a deep-rooted economic and human crisis that affected the whole population, but as always, the most impoverished groups were the most severely affected. The massive number of both non-Gypsy/Gage and Gypsy/Roma fleeing from the conflict had serious repercussions in Italy. The arrival of this wave of immigrants with no resources and in a situation of extreme human and economic instability generated serious conflicts and malfunctions not only in the host country, but also within the group, with effects on their own relationships. In contrast to the marginal situation faced by the Bosnian Gypsy/Roma groups already settled in Italy, the refugee status of the new arrivals granted them a certain socio-political position in relation to the rest of society. The Gypsy/Roma refugee families were able to obtain residence permits and social assistance either from the local authority or private institutions in order to help them settle in the city.

Whatever their case, all the Bosnian Gypsy/Roma who live on sites endure situations of generalised poverty, employment instability and extreme social marginalisation.

In addition to the complex socio-structural position of these Gypsy/Roma groups, their status as refugees and victims of a war also bring their own difficulties. The severe rupture with their social and economic environment plunged them into a situation of extreme marginalisation. The case of the Bosnian Gypsy/Roma in Turin illustrates the processes of social and physical exclusion within the urban context. The stigma of their ethnic status is added to the stigma of their status as foreign immigrants. The precariousness of their economic, social and human situation and their structural position in the city trigger exclusion processes which have been described in relation to other cities. The foreign Gypsy/Roma is literally placed on the edge of the city and of society.

The study of the caravan site in the city of Turin forms part of a much larger reality. The investigations we carried out in Italy reveal how the foreign Gypsy/Roma population is scattered throughout the whole of the country. Although their situation takes many forms, we have focussed our research on the population living on official or non-official sites, and have not looked at the groups living in either public or private housing (Monasta, 2002). We do not seek to provide an exhaustive survey of the sites and their occupants, due to the methodological problems involved as a result of the mobility of these communities. Our investigations on this site provide a general picture of the distribution of the foreign Gypsy/Roma population. We identified 155 settlements in which approximately 18,000 foreign Gypsy/Roma live, according to indications from secondary sources. They are found in all the Italian regions, from the north

through to Sicily and come, in the main, from Eastern Europe. The origins of these groups are diverse, with 28% coming from Bosnia, 21% from Serbia, while the remaining 50% come from a other countries: Kosova, Macedonia, Croatia, Romania, Montenegro, Albania and Poland (Monasta,2002)

2. Gypsy/Roma groups. Mobility and itinerancy

One of the critical findings of our research is related to the fact that the lifestyle of the Gypsy/Roma group in terms of the way they occupy their habitat (sedentary/semi-nomadic) has a major effect on relations between the Gypsy/Roma child and the school. Widespread absence from school and in many cases, intermittent attendance is determined by the family's movements. This conditions many factors, ranging from general aspects such as the Gypsy/Roma child's overall perception of the school to much more specific aspects such as school performance, learning and expectations of the school.

The different ways in which the Gypsy/Roma occupy their habitat have an influence on the type of home they live in (houses, caravans, shanty towns) and at the same time, on their location in marginalised, decaying areas of the towns and cities. But above all, the lifestyle of these groups and their location in certain areas is determined by the country's social and planning policies. We are clearly looking at one of the factors that most negatively affects the schooling of Gypsy/Roma children. The marginalisation and decay of the urban or semi-urban areas in which they live (in shacks, tents or caravans) establishes a deep-seated barrier of non-communication and social distance between the group and society that particularly affects the children.

These urban barriers help to reinforce negative social representations, prejudices and mutual stereotypes, together with negative images of "the other"; but above all, a deep-seated mistrust, even animosity, separates the Gypsy/Roma groups from society. This cultural barrier has its roots in the long historical process defined by harsh repression and all manner of persecution suffered by the Gypsy/Roma and which now forms part of the collective image that most groups pass on from one generation to the next. In any case, we must always bear in mind that although the history of the group is important, their life today, their social and economic relationships and their processes of segregation and integration in the present all have a major impact on the relationships that operate between the group and their social environment, which in turn, determine the relationship between the child and the school.

Taking the arguments outlined above on lifestyle and occupation of habitat as our guiding idea, we studied a wide gradation of situations in the various groups and countries selected. The Gypsy/Roma nomad or migrant groups move around and travel for a wide range of cultural, social and ecological reasons, which are in fact extremely diverse. Essentially, we found two basic factors behind this lifestyle: economic and ecological factors. They travel because their economic model is bound up with travelling, and because they have no viable alternatives. They also travel because infrastructure options are not available in terms of organised sites or the possibility of obtaining the temporary housing that would allow them to extend their stay and make their routes more flexible. It is clear that these factors vary, and have a greater or lesser influence according to the group and the context, but they do have an intense effect on mobility patterns.

Gypsy/Roma mobility follows very diverse patterns, from those groups with a long-established sedentary history in towns and cities, to the other extreme of groups who are practically always on the road. Between these two extremes, a wide range of situations reveal a diversity of circumstances and habitats, amongst which we also find situations that have a far-reaching effect on the Gypsy/Roma child.

Case studies that illustrate this diversity are those that investigate the Sinti Tedeschi/Roma from the Tyrol, the Húngaro/Roma in Spain, the Sinti Giostrai/Roma in Italy, the Cigano/Roma or the Gitano/Roma casual agricultural labourers, and also the Portuguese Cigano/Roma nomads. A further case is that of the non-Gypsy/non-Payo nomadic group, the Sicilian Caminanti, whose structural position is of particular interest.

2.1. Casual agricultural labourers

The casual agricultural labourers are Europe's itinerants, and follow a tradition that has been in existence for decades. While this territorial mobility enables them to obtain an income and carry out an important socio-economic function, it is at the same time, the cause of a multitude of socio-educational disadvantages that particularly affect the children and adolescents of this group.

Some of the European routes followed by the Gypsy/Roma casual labourer group that we have recorded go from Spain to France and Switzerland, and also between Spain and Portugal.

We discovered concentrations of casual labourers along the Spanish-Portuguese border in Andalusia, Extremadura, Castile and Galicia. However, Portuguese Gypsy/Roma groups are also to be found travelling much longer routes that take them to other Spanish regions. These groups have a mixed economy and in addition to seasonal agricultural work, they also carry out activities such as begging, playing music or sporadic one-off jobs.

A huge diversity of circumstances and socio-economic levels are found among the Portuguese Gypsy/Roma. What is certain is that the children from the most underprivileged groups have hardly any contact with the school. This situation occurs as a result of extreme poverty, family mobility, social rejection and the complex bureaucracy of the Spanish institutional education system that they face on registering children in school for short periods.

In Spain, where our research has been carried out in this field, concentrations of casual labourer groups have been found in the following areas. In Catalonia, 6,000 workers gather in the province of Lerida in the fruit-picking season. This is a traditional area of work for the Catalan and Aragonese Gitano/Roma and also for Gypsy/Roma casual labourers from other regions who do various agricultural jobs throughout the whole annual cycle.

In Extremadura, the tobacco and asparagus harvests attract the greatest numbers of casual labourers. In the area of Vegas Bajas del Guadiana the workforce is totally made up of immigrant Gypsy/Roma from Portugal. This massive movement of Portuguese Cigano/Roma began in the 1970s as a result of the economic depression. The Gypsy/Roma casual labour workforce comes from all the border regions, but especially from the district of Portalegre.

The Portuguese Gypsy/Roma casual labour population travels in large family groups that include children of all ages and follows the established tradition of setting up camps along river banks and on the outskirts of towns and villages, or on or near the farms where they work. They live in deplorable subhuman conditions and they run the risk of employer exploitation as their contracts take the form of verbal agreements and they are paid on a piecework basis, according to the amount they pick.

The situation of the Gypsy/Roma casual labourers in the Valle del Tietar is similar. The number of workers taken on illegally is high, although reliable estimations are impossible to calculate due as the very situation facing this group leads to them being dispersed and invisible. These groups also work in harvests in Barcelona, Murcia and areas of Castilla.

No type of continuity, monitoring or support in the schooling of the children and adolescents from these groups is provided by the local authorities. Likewise, their living

conditions are deplorable and inhuman, their employment situation is precarious as contracts take the form of verbal agreements and they are paid on a piecework basis. In Las Vegas, the pattern of mobility is cyclical, between Spain and Portugal. The routes they take are recurrent, leaving Portugal in the middle of July, and staying in Extremadura until the middle or end of September. The areas the casual labourers stop in and the routes they follow are almost always the same.

Over the last decade, studies into casual work patterns in the area have been extended, especially in the Valle del Jerte and Campo Arañuelo regions, where large numbers of casual labourers gather for the fruit harvests.

The Portuguese and Spanish Gypsy/Roma casual agricultural labourers are the most underprivileged groups in this sector. The numerous aspects of their precarious economic situation, lack of resources and the vulnerability they face particularly affect the children and young people in these groups. The illegal participation of the Gypsy/Roma under-16 age group in agricultural work, the high school drop out rates and almost permanent absence from school means that this group experiences a serious process of exclusion from the education system, with the likely result that the situation of socio-educational marginalisation in which they are trapped will be perpetuated.

The inevitable mobility that goes hand in hand with casual agricultural work across the whole of Spain (Catalonia, Murcia, Extremadura, Andalusia, etc) represents an enormous obstacle to children attending school on a regular basis. The various models of casual agricultural work often followed by whole families, whether it be on a local, regional or countrywide scale, leads to a deep-seated separation of children from the education system. This, together with the absence of any social policies addressing the education of these children increment the difficulties related to their schooling.

The most extreme situations occur on international routes followed by casual labourers, especially between Portugal and Spain. Along the entire border, groups of Portuguese families travelling to Spain frequently find themselves in situations of irregularity which in turn leads them to working illegally and at the same time, hides the extreme situation of Gypsy/Roma children in these families.

2.1.1. Andalusia and the Algarve. A case study

In order to examine the international character of casual agricultural labour we studied the area between western Andalusia – the province of Huelva- and southern Portugal – the Algarve and Alentejo regions. Its effect on the Gypsy/Roma family groups working in this area is crucial to gaining an understanding of the difficult relations facing the children of these workers with the school. In general, this situation does not only affect the children of Gypsy/Roma families, but also the rest of the population carrying out this type of work. Our research in the area presents a picture of a complex set of circumstances that are further adversely affected by the cross-border mobility of the casual agricultural workforce. A large proportion of this workforce is made up of both Spanish and Portuguese Gypsy/Roma families who work under the most precarious conditions. Their circumstances led us to determine the strategic importance of the region in the understanding of a socio-economic situation about which very little is known, despite its crucial importance: the close link between the Gypsy/Roma and seasonal agricultural employment, and the repercussions this has on the schooling of their children..

The Andalusian labourer, both non-Gypsy/Gage and Gypsy/Roma, has a very specific socio-economic and cultural profile. They are agricultural workers who do not normally own their own land, and when they do, it is too small to provide a living to support their families.

These families are practically illiterate, or at best, we suspect that the minimum formal education they claim to have received serves only as an excuse to conceal the true effects of illiteracy they suffer at a practical level. In the mid 1990s, 36% of the labourers working in Huelva had not finished primary school education (i.e., compulsory education up to the age of 14). Their level of general knowledge is low, a high percentage (16%) of labourers is illiterate and in general, they lack any type of employment qualifications that would enable them to work in other economic sectors. This is not, as might be expected, due to the advanced age of the group: 68.24% of the labourers in this region were under 30 years old⁸. Their employment situation is characterised by its precariousness, underemployment, exploitation and mobility, essential features that run through the subject under analysis.

The issue of women workers in this sector is a major factor in our study. In the region of Huelva, women account for 40% of those working in agriculture. This leads us to another point of even greater relevance to the analysis set out below: that this mobility of casual labour involves the whole family, which travels as a unit to the fields and each member of the family carries out an important function in the socio-labour process. The average size of the Andalusian labouring family is around 4.7 members, one point above the Spanish average.

While this mobility is essential in order to guarantee economic survival, it noticeably reduces the chances of the children from these families acquiring an average education under present educational conditions. The difficulties of measuring this mobility are obvious, although we were fortunate in that local studies had already been carried out (Índelo, 1994) that enabled us to understand the magnitude of the issue. 51% of the casual workforce in Huelva, from a total of 45,000, had been travelling from their place of origin for between 1 and 5 years, 17.59% between 6 and 10 years and 8.22%, between 11 and 15 years. However, this percentage rose to 21.03% in the case of those with more than 15 years experience travelling from their home towns.

A further significant factor is the young age range of this group. Almost 69% of labourers were under 30 years old. In the above-mentioned study carried out by the Grupo Índelo, 38% of labourers were between 18 and 25 years old and the average age of the group was 28.7%. There is however, a small but significant 2.5% of boys and adolescents under 16 who define themselves as agricultural workers, and half of this group work with their families under provisional contracts (Índelo, 1994:).

The continuous growth in the movement of families to the province of Huelva and the young age of this sector of casual labourers are two key factors that enable us to appreciate the parallel increase in the presence of children and adolescents amongst those carrying out this type of casual agricultural work.

The chief risks facing the children and young people in this socio-economic context are fundamentally poverty, instability and precariousness, together with the enforced mobility intrinsic to this type of work. It is precisely this territorial mobility that contributes to the creation of a context of absence of academic schooling and illiteracy. In addition, the fact that children are incorporated into the working family unit prevents them from joining the school system in any formalised way.

In western Andalusia, large numbers of casual labourers have found work in the cultivation of strawberries over the last few decades. It is estimated that in the 1990-91 season, more than 40,000 labourers were employed in the province of Huelva, 35,000 of whom obtained the state agricultural benefit (Índelo 1994). A decade later, in the 2001-2002 harvest, official

⁸ Grupo INDELO: *Campesinos sin tierra y territorio jornalero en Andalusia*. Coordinated by Juan A. Márquez Domínguez.

Administration estimates indicate that 50,000 labourers worked in the strawberry fields. The dramatic increase in the fruit production sector, especially of strawberries and oranges, has meant that the area has become a major destination for the casual agricultural labourer from Spain, Portugal, Morocco and certain Eastern European and Latin American countries.

At least two groups of casual agricultural labourers can be identified amongst those concentrated in Andalusia and the south of Portugal. The first is made up of local workers from the province of Huelva or the surrounding areas, including both areas of Portugal and Spain. These workers travel to work on a daily basis, covering a varying range of distances. The second group are comprised of those either from abroad (Europe, Africa or America) or from further afield in Spain and Portugal, who travel to the area during the planting and harvesting seasons. Within this second group, we can distinguish between workers who have moved from their own areas to settle in Spain and Portugal, and those who come for the duration of the season, returning to their own areas or countries when the work is over.

Two extremes can also be identified on a scale of the professional skills offered by the casual labourers. Those working exclusively in this sector enjoy a higher professional status and higher income. At the other extreme is the financial precariousness of those workers who supplement their extremely impoverished household economy by carrying out agricultural work. The greatest numbers of Gypsy/Roma families are found in this latter group, which subsists on the edge of this seasonal work pattern.

A wide diversity is found amongst these different groups of casual labourers as a result of the huge differences in their social and economic circumstances. Our research focussed on the groups working sporadically in agriculture and in other jobs, and the groups that move around with their families. Gypsy/Roma agricultural labourers are found in all these groups, although in some groups of Gypsy/Roma casual labourers, only the adults move away to work, leaving the children at home, and thus able to continue attending school. However, when the whole family move together to the region where work is available, the children are taken out of school for the months the seasonal work lasts.

Official reports published by both national and regional administrations and institutions provide specific figures of casual agricultural labourers in Andalusia. In the 2002 season, this figure stood at 50,000 agricultural labourers. We consider that the figures should only be taken as rough estimates, in the light of the deep-rooted underground economy in the region, and also because of the number of foreign workers settled there whose situation has not been regularised. This is the case of immigrant workers who have arrived over the last few years, particularly from North Africa, and who do not have work permits. Groups of Portuguese workers also fall into this category. For these reasons, data on the casual worker population in the area should only be taken as a general indication.

The seasonal nature of agricultural work and the dispersion of workers across rural areas are also major obstacles to quantifying the exact numbers of Gypsy/Roma in our fieldwork. This is also further complicated by the fact that the region shares a border with Portugal. Here we are dealing with groups in an irregular situation, working illegally as casual agricultural labourers, who understandably adopt an attitude of self-protection, and seek to draw as little attention to themselves as possible.

However, as a result of the quantitative research carried out as part of this project, we have reliable statistical data that allows us to make an approximate estimate of the number of Gypsy/Roma children, which at the end of the day, is the focus of the project. Among the Gypsy/Roma casual agricultural worker population, we have identified a range of groups from those coming from traditional Andalusian casual labourer communities, to groups of Gypsy/Roma families from large cities, almost always from the ghettos, in a very precarious

financial situation who use this type of work to supplement their economy and achieve a certain stability.

2.1.2 Schooling of casual labourer Gypsy/Roma children

During the 2001-2002 school year, a total of 50,845 children were registered in primary and secondary schools in the province of Huelva. Our research team's findings on the schooling of children in Andalusia indicate that 4% of those in school were Gypsy/Roma children. This data has been confirmed in the final analysis carried out for that year by the administration. Given the high reliability of the data, we can confirm that at least 2,500 Gypsy/Roma children attended school in province of Huelva. This figure represents the Gypsy/Roma pupils who attended throughout the whole school year, and does not include children of casual labourers from other areas who also attended Huelva schools. The local education administration calculates that 5% of casual labourers' children (estimated for 2000) attending school during the agricultural season were Gypsy/Roma.

On examining the casual labourers' situation it must be borne in mind that children from this group do receive schooling, but various ethnographic sources reveal that there is an undefined number of Gypsy/Roma children who do not go to school. Many groups of casual workers live with their families on sites or in the strawberry fields, which therefore indicates that the numbers of people living away from their permanent base is much higher. There are no reliable data available on the precise number of Gypsy/Roma casual agricultural labourers, for a variety of reasons, including the fact that most Portuguese and Spanish Gypsy/Roma families do not have work permits, they live in temporary sites and move around according to where the work is to be found, and they are often involved in an underground economy in which the border location favours frequent and intermittent journeys between Alentejo, the Algarve and Huelva. Finally, the size of the Gypsy/Roma family group varies according to the supply and demand for work, and thus there is a constant movement of the Gypsy/Roma population from one side of the Spanish-Portuguese border to the other.

On the whole, the Gypsy/Roma casual labourer family faces major difficulties when it comes to ensuring that their children receive a normal education. In fact our province-based statistical analyses of schools point to the movement of their families to other provinces or regions as the third cause of absence from school amongst Gypsy/Roma children. 16% of the teachers surveyed state that the cause of Gypsy/Roma pupil absences from school is the seasonality of agricultural and service industry jobs, and 27.8% indicate that absences are related to this situation. Thus, according to teachers, the rates of irregular attendance, which reach 48.9%, are directly or indirectly related to the seasonal nature of agricultural work.

The mobility of the casual labourer family is the economic factor that underlies the irregularity in school attendance of these Gypsy/Roma children. However, our findings show that when a child leaves school to travel to another province or region, very rarely does any follow-up work take place. Likewise, we have observed that there is no coordination whatsoever between the school the child leaves, and the one he or she next registers with. Although this is a pattern which is repeated year after year, in practise there is no administrative body concerned with pupil follow-up, and these children are simply considered as absentees. Consequently, in the schools attended by children from casual labourer families, high rates of lack of schooling, drop out rates and chronic absenteeism are detected amongst these children.

The various ethnographic studies confirm that children from Gypsy/Roma casual labourer families are dispersed in the most unlikely living conditions. These could range from huts or farm outbuildings in the fields where their families are working, to improvised camps in the middle of nowhere or abandoned houses in the country.

Situations typical of schools with high rates of irregular attendance are to be found in the schools attended by the children of casual workers. Very often they do not have adequate school material or textbooks. In addition, the standard of teaching they receive tends to be very heterogeneous, and their behaviour is frequently perceived as problematic, as the teaching staff find it difficult to attend to a group of new pupils who are trying to come to terms with new circumstances.

When Gypsy/Roma children from casual labourer families arrive at a new school, they are generally placed in classes with spare places. This might happen at any time during the school year. They often find the process of adjustment difficult, both from an emotional and an educational point of view. Their level of knowledge is different from, and usually lower than that of their classmates, a situation which has nothing to do with their potential intellectual development, but rather as a result of their frequent absence from school. In many ways, their presence disrupts the dynamic of the class, as they require adaptations to be made to the school curriculum and specific material, which represents a problem of organisation and requires additional effort from the teaching staff.

Difficulties often arise in terms of their socio-educational integration. These children come from very diverse backgrounds: they may have arrived from a big city ghetto area or a small village. Their experience, and therefore their perception of school is too heterogeneous for them to be able to adapt to and settle into a new school in the normal way, unless the school is particularly aware of these factors. It is in this aspect that we have come across a lack of coordination between one school and another, and the scarce or total lack of follow-up of these pupils by the schools involved in their education.

As the seasonal agricultural work is carried out intermittently throughout the whole year, time is also against the children of these labourers, as they do not enjoy the stability required to adapt at school. Teachers are faced with a set of circumstances that they are unable to tackle positively, since they do not have the actual time to ensure that these pupils adapt to the pace of the class, and generally take the option of giving the class newcomers parallel and often individual activities to do. The fundamental problem in this socio-educational situation is the absence of any effective coordination between the school that the pupil leaves and the new one he or she then goes to.

The relationship between the school's permanent pupils and the casual labourers' children is also a difficult one. The children already settled in the school frequently ostracise the newcomers, a fairly common dynamic as the newcomers are poorer than they are, with a lower level of knowledge. This situation leads to an increase in prejudice against and negative stereotyping of the newcomers, and sets off social exclusion mechanisms within the school. Their socio-affective relations deteriorate still further due to the lack of expectations of the children's school performance held by a large proportion of the teaching staff. All these factors contribute to a fairly bleak educational outlook for the Gypsy/Roma child from a casual labourer family, and given that not all these families are Gypsy/Roma, we believe that it also explains to a great extent, the illiteracy rates amongst the casual labourer sector as a whole.

In general, the situation deteriorates further when no places are available in the permanent classes, and other classes have to be specially set up to accommodate the incoming pupils. The new staff taken on to teach the new groups are temporary teachers, often with little teaching experience, and who will be expected to deal with a very diverse group of children, both in terms of their education and their attitude to school.

2.2. Itinerant and Migrant Gypsy/Roma groups

The social position held by one of the groups studied in Italy, the Sinti Giostrai, is structurally similar to other groups going through a phases of structural transformation for whom, as we have already seen, mobility plays a major economic role. This group has been present in the regions of Emilia Romagna, Lombardy and Veneto since the end of the 19th century XIX (Trevisan, 2002). Historically, they have followed routes around the regions of northern and central Italy. The group studied is located in Reggio Emilia and identifies closely with the area, so much so that they refer to themselves as the Reggio Emilia Sinti, and likewise, the Sinti/Roma who live in the province call themselves Sinti Reggianos or Sinti Emilianos (Trevisan, 2000). This identification with the region has grown stronger throughout the period of semi-sedentary settlement there, which began in the 1950s with the group settling in Reggio Emilia for the winter season.

The Reggio Emilia Sinti are Sinti Giostrai, a term taken from Romany, the Gypsy/Roma language, meaning carousel (fairground attraction). Given that the city of Reggio Emilia has a history of the manufacture of fairground attractions, their semi-sedentary background in the region is directly linked to their professional activity in the fairground sector. As with many other groups, their travelling routes did not see much in the way of change until the 1950s, when urban development brought about major transformation. Previous to that time, the circuits travelled by the group followed the calendar of local fairs, festivals in celebration of the Patron Saints and other important festivities in the towns and villages, and they were thus occupied throughout the whole year. The exodus from rural areas and the increase in urban development mean that from the 1960s onwards, more economic opportunities were available in the cities than in the country. As a result, the Sinti Giostrai changed their circuits and adopted a semi-nomadic strategy, settling in Reggio Emilia during the winter months. This semi-nomadic lifestyle has become more established since the 1970s, when they took up a new strategy: the acquisition of their own land located in a broad area surrounding the city (Paola Trevisan, 2002). This new approach of buying land and also on occasions, houses in the countryside, provided the group with a place to install the caravans in which they lived. This tendency saw its most important growth through the 1980s and 90s.

Their structural situation had a direct effect on the schooling processes. Before the 1960s, practically no children received a formal education. However, in 1965, the Lacio Drom School was opened on the initiative of the Catholic Church to take in the Gypsy/Roma children from the sites. It followed a model of segregated education and continued operation until the beginning of the 1980s (Trevisan, 2002).

The study of the various ecological and economic contexts in which the different Gypsy/Roma groups live in the countries covered by the project reveals a situation that is fundamental to the understanding of the education processes of their children. The importance of travelling as a way of life until the middle of the 20th century and the seasonal or annual mobility associated with a diverse range of employment activities has negatively conditioned the schooling of the Gypsy/Roma child in such a way that only a small percentage of children from groups that are almost always sedentary and generally enjoy a stable socio-economic base have had a positive relationship with the school. In effect, most groups were excluded from the school and formal education systems until the beginning of the 1960s.

Another of the groups studied is the Sinti Tedeschi/Roma, from the area of northern Italy around the towns of Bolzano, Tiento, Udine and Lana (Tauber 2002), in the south of the Tyrolean region. Many families from this geographical area belong to the group known as the Sinti Tedeschi/Roma, meaning German Sinti, as they have spent long periods in German speaking areas. References explaining the relation of the Sinti/Roma child with the school can be

found in this group's history (Tauber 2002). The Sinti Tedeschi/Roma lived and moved around in Austria until 1918, where they attended school, and possibly also received some schooling in the southern states of Germany.

At the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries their itineraries went from Vienna to Bolzano and Verona, and from Villach to Ljubljana and Trieste. As with the other aforementioned groups, it is highly likely that their patterns of mobility also included some sedentary periods (Tauber 2002).

In the 19th century, the education policies in certain German states had a specific ideology, based on "forced education" (Tauber 2002). The idea that the Gypsy/Roma were "possible subjects for education" gradually came to be held. The underlying notion behind the concept of "education" was that the Sinti/Roma children should be taken into orphanages, separated from their parents and brought up by the public administrations in order to turn them into "Christian workers" (Tauber 2002). As a result of this policy, newly born babies were taken from their mothers and fathers and placed in different locations where they would be completely isolated from their family environment. The result of these Draconian measures was obviously not so much that the children from these families received an education, but rather, they ended up driving the groups out of their territory, as families sought to protect themselves by abandoning the administrative regions in which these policies were applied (Tauber, 2002).

During the 19th century, the debate over "the possibility of educating" the Gypsy/Roma child oscillated from optimistic attitudes to the most sceptical. Although "forced education" was applied to a greater or lesser extent during different periods, it remains certain that the ideology behind it is still with us.

After the Second World War, the routes followed by the various groups throughout the areas of Austria, Germany and Italy involved frequent interaction with the rural community, and once again, the pattern observed in other groups studied is repeated: functional routes evolved around a particular cycle. These routes developed around certain points where the Gypsy/Roma families were well received, land was available for them to stay on, and where social networks with other peasant farmer families provided them with a certain infrastructure and security (Tauber, 2002)

The case of the Sinti Tedeschi/Roma is paradigmatic as a result of the suffering they experienced during the Second World War. Their persecution and imprisonment in the concentration camps consolidated a deep-seated sense of distrust and rejection of non-Gypsy/Gage society and the school, which are indisputably reinforced by the exclusion processes they continue to experience today.

The Sinti Tedeschi/Roma group studied live on a caravan site in Bolzano, located in a marginal district of the city, following the pattern observed in other cases. Other family groups opted to take up residence in social housing provided by the city's local government, located in marginal districts on the edge of the city, where significantly, we also found a street known as "Gypsy street", associated with other minority groups such as the Moroccan community (Pontrandolfo, 2002. Giménez 1994. Sama, 2002).

In 1995, the local authorities decided to set up an official site for the families that had no house. The proposal put forward by the Sinti/Roma families to build several site areas for each one of the extended families was rejected by the local authority (Tauber, 2002,). Once more, we have a clear example of the dynamics of urban concentration that occur in all the areas studied and involve the process of ghettoisation that gives rise to a serious deterioration in both intra-group relations and in the communication between the city and their location. This process obviously has a profound effect on the relations of the Sinti/Roma child and the school.

The Sinti Tedeschi/Roma are undergoing a process of transition between a nomadic and a sedentary home life symbolised by their moving into permanent houses. The position of the Spanish Húngaros, another of the groups studied, differs in terms of their background, but shows significant similarities in terms of their mobility and interaction process in the city.

The case of the Húngaro groups in Spain is one of double marginalisation and exclusion, on one hand by the Gypsy/Roma and on the other by the non-Gypsy/Gage community. The Hungarians live in caravans and follow a semi-sedentary lifestyle defined by cyclical routes with various stop-off points in which they may stay for several days, or months if they are given the opportunity. However, their sporadic and intermittent residence in social housing in the cities can also be observed.

Many of these Húngaro/Roma groups come from other European countries, chiefly from Eastern Europe, and arrived in Spain between 1900 and 1920 when they fled from the conflict of the First World War. They established their travelling routes in Spain where they traditionally worked in fairs and circuses. These groups were originally circus people who gradually took up positions in travelling fairs or worked as street musicians following the economic decline of the circus. Nowadays, the Húngaro/Roma make a living as street musicians and in other casual work, as lorry drivers, drivers or casual agricultural labourers. In general, their economic situation is precarious primarily because of the lack of official sites on which to install the caravans in which they live, and the policy of systematic expulsion from non-official sites in force under Spanish legislation.

In Spain it is not illegal to be a nomad, but in truth, the practicalities of following this lifestyle make it virtually impossible. Legislation prohibits camping in the vicinity of towns and cities, or at best, a limit of 72 hours is set. It is absolutely impossible to obtain permission to stay for an extended period in one place, and when permits are granted, they are generally only for 15 days, or at most, one month. The Civil Guard and the local authorities are responsible for ensuring that these regulations are complied with and for pressurising families to leave, even when they have the permission of the landowner. The regulation applied by the Civil Guard to carry out these expulsions is the Ministry of Information and Tourism Order 28/7/1966, which came into force before the present constitution was approved, but is still used today (Chulvi, 2002).

It is thus practically impossible to find a place to install a caravan and stay for a reasonable length of time. This situation means that the children from these groups are unable to attend school and have therefore received practically no schooling. Children from these families live outside the school system, although this does not necessarily prevent them from being officially registered in one or other of the schools along their habitual route. In many cases, they were registered in a school by the social services department of one of the towns they passed through, but never attended regularly. The most fortunate have attended school for part of the school year when their families have managed to settle in a town or city for a period of a few months.

The legislation prohibiting the setting up of camps, together with the lack of official sites gives rise to the mobility of these groups. Only in cases when the opportunity has arisen for the Húngaro/Roma to obtain a reliable site for their caravan have their children been able to maintain certain stability in their relations with the school. But most of these children have received no schooling and their situation can only be described as genuinely precarious.

In recent years, other itinerant groups from Eastern European countries have become part of the Spanish scene. The mobility patterns of these Gypsy/Roma groups are so extensive that international routes can be traced from France to Spain and Portugal. Some of these groups use the Iberian Peninsula as a bridge between Europe and the Americas, especially the USA. They exist in extreme poverty and generally do not have a regularised legal situation. These

circumstances are the main reason for their transnational mobility in search of resources and often running away from the authorities that prevent them from staying for long periods in shanty towns and sub-standard housing.

The context of these itinerant groups has given rise to a situation in which most Gypsy/Roma have no tradition of schooling whatsoever, which in turn, has major implications for the perception of the school held by the families in general and the Gypsy/Roma adults in particular. This perception is the psychosocial base which is instrumental in forming relations with the school that in many cases are far from positive. Of course it must be stated that European Gypsy/Roma families hold an extremely wide range of social images of the institution of the school. However, certain common aspects that go to make up this perception can be demonstrated. The feeling of social distance from the dominant society is accentuated in nomadic groups and is often linked to the fear of the school as part of an alien cultural, with different values, norms and worldview. This turns into concern on the part of the families that their children might not find the welfare, security and happiness that they enjoy in their own environment. In addition, the limited practical application that the school has had for the Gypsy/Roma as a result of the segregation traditionally suffered continues to present a hurdle to the perception of the school as a positive useful tool in their integration into socio-cultural and employment areas of the dominant society. Finally, the intense awareness amongst Gypsy/Roma families of the rejection and racism frequently suffered by their children on a daily basis in the school environment leads to a negative social image of the school being formed within the group. The dynamic of socio-educational exclusion in which they are steeped encourages the reinforcement of their own stereotypes of the dominant society which leads to them closing the door on that group.

In France, mobility is also integral to the lifestyle of many Gypsy/Roma groups such as the Manouches/Roma, Sinti/Roma and Rom/Roma, who may follow various routes of either long or short distances.

Most journeys are usually made for employment or economic reasons, although family relations or religious and cultural events are also possible causes (Repair, Bruggeman, 2002). In this vein, it should be pointed out that mobility in turn depends on the availability of sites on which to camp in towns or cities. The importance of this fact is demonstrated by figures estimated by the French authorities, which state that in the north of the country, 30,000 places for caravans should be made available, while the actual figure is 8,000 on official sites (Repair, Bruggeman, 2002).

This precarious situation has worsened since the 1980s with the arrival of Roma groups from the former Yugoslavia and other Eastern European countries. These groups have fled their own countries for a variety of reasons including war, ethnic cleansing and widespread persecution. This displaced population has been forced into a nomadic lifestyle, and although their situation is common to that of other nomadic groups, they do not essentially share the same characteristics.

Contrary to common belief, the migration of Rom/Roma families from the East to the West of Europe is not a recent phenomenon. One wave of migration took place at the end of the 19th century when slavery was legally abolished. The migration of Rom/Roma to Western Europe intensified from the 1950s onwards when communist regimes were established in the East, and during the 1960s, these international scale migrations further increased, often in the form of labour immigration encouraged by companies taking on unskilled Rom/Roma labour (Kirilova, Tare 2002). These groups settled in Austria, Germany and Italy, and to a lesser extent, in France and Belgium. Integration in these new countries was not easy, and their economic circumstances deteriorated as many of them took on precarious or illegal jobs, or resorted to begging.

During the 1980s, Rom/Roma migrations from Eastern Europe notably increased. At the beginning of this period, migrations from Yugoslavia and Romania were foremost, whereas during the 1990s, an increase was seen in migrations from the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Kosovo. This migration was induced by war and racist violence, and the Rom/Roma were effectively escaping or fleeing from their countries. The case of Kosovo is particularly extreme, with numerous Rom/Roma groups being affected by ethnic cleansing, rape and widespread murder.

The socio-economic situation of the Gypsy/Roma community is extremely diverse. The variety of professional qualifications and social and education profiles they held in their countries of origin laid down a heterogeneity that remains today. In addition, the variety of legal situations they go through in the countries they settle in (regularity/irregularity) adds to the precariousness of their socio-economic and educational situations both in France and other EU countries (Repair, Bruggeman, 2002).

We have been able to confirm how the children of the various Gypsy/Roma groups fall outside the school system. This lack of schooling particularly affects Gypsy/Roma with an itinerant lifestyle, especially when this mobility occurs in a cross-border context. When the countries involved are members of the European Union, as in the case of Spain and Portugal, we have further confirmed the complete absence of intervention projects, either at national or European level. Intervention projects for the development of depressed regions are not aimed at Gypsy/Roma groups and as a result, a process occurs by which the situation facing the Gypsy child is made invisible, with far-reaching consequences. Both the absence of motivation on the part of the authorities, together with a lack of information and resources, result in a situation where no socio-educational intervention is carried out in the schooling of these groups of children. The legal situation of the Portuguese Cigano children is a factor with decisive implications. Their families are foreigners in Spain, and often their legal position is irregular. This case shows how the legal situation and actual situation are completely out of tune with each other. We consider that it is essential to establish a European legal framework, with the accent on seasonal flexibility, to prioritise the schooling of groups of children living in this context of cross-border mobility, whether they be inside or outside the EU.

Eastern European Gypsy/Roma groups are also acutely affected by the lack of schooling. Their situation is already conditioned by serious exclusion processes and all manner of precariousness. This, together with the fact that they are foreigners, often in an irregular legal situation, frequently leads to their children being excluded from the school system. It is our belief that an in-depth reflection into the articulation of intervention processes both within the legal framework and at a practical level is essential if we are to protect the basic rights of these groups of Gypsy/Roma children.

However, it is not only in cross-border and migratory contexts that this lack of schooling for these groups of children is witnessed. In all the contexts studied, we have seen an appalling lack of schooling and school drop out rates. The Gitano/Roma, Rom/Roma, Sinti/Roma and Manouche/Roma in France, the migrant groups from Eastern Europe, and the Sinti/Roma and Rom/Roma from the various Italian groups. The Cigano/Roma in Portugal and Spain, the Húngaro/Roma and the Gitano/Roma casual agricultural labourers and shanty town dwellers in the large cities experience this lack of schooling on a daily basis.

The quantification of this situation is truly complex for obvious reasons of dispersion, invisibility and irregularity in the situation of these groups. In spite of these problems, our research teams have studied the school and family contexts in which the extent of the Gypsy/Roma children's contact with school is absolutely non-existent. These groups should be

made a priority for integral policies to address both schooling and the improvement of living conditions within the family context.

2.3. Beyond exclusion: Caminanti and other groups in the school.

During our research into Gypsy/Roma children and their education processes, we have come across a series of other groups throughout Europe who are often incorrectly identified as Gypsy/Roma. These include the Quinquillero/Gage in Spain, the Yenish/Gage in France, the Tendeiro/Gage in Portugal and the Caminanti/Gage in Italy. Some of these groups share the tradition of a nomadic past with the Gypsy/Roma, while others, such as the group studied in Sicilian still maintain an itinerant lifestyle. Their precarious socio-economic situation and the socio-educational exclusion suffered by their children prompted us to include a brief study of the Sicilian Caminanti. We can verify that the structural position of all these groups is similar in the various European contexts.

As with groups such as the Tendeiros or the Quinquilleros, the Caminanti are identified by Sicilian society as “Zanni” which in local dialect means Zingari/Roma (Sidoti, 2003). They also hold similar jobs (tinkers and umbrella sellers) that provide them with most of their income, although this is occasionally supplemented by financial assistance from Social Services.

The Sicilian Caminanti follow an itinerant lifestyle, as do the Yenish in France and as the Spanish Quinquilleros or Mercheros did in the past. The Caminanti alternate periods on the road with others in towns or cities. Their presence in Noto, a town in which they live in a ghetto district, is particularly important (Sidoti, 2003). These aspects combine to form a very similar structural position to that of the Gypsy/Roma. A further parallel is in their use of their own dialect, known as *Baccagghiu*, which is comparable to the Gypsy/Roma use of Romany. It is essentially a private channel of communication employing codified language which is incomprehensible to most people.

The case of the Caminanti presents the intricate complexity of groups located on social borders. They are non-Gypsy/Gage identified as Gypsy/Roma, their lifestyle swings between itinerant and sedentary periods and they suffer from rejection and social exclusion. The structural position of the Caminanti falls between the Gypsy/Roma and the non-Gypsy/Gage.

A useful concept to explain this position is that of “ethnic determinism”. This ideological perspective explains through ethnicity, all aspects related to the social class of the Gypsy/Roma groups, their niche in the labour market, the models of interaction between Gypsy/Roma and non-Gypsy/Gage, their physical-social environment and their ecological environment. These discourses are articulated as follows: they are poor because they are Gypsy/Roma, they are itinerant because they are Gypsy/Roma, they are violent because they are Gypsy/Roma, they fail at school because they are Gypsy/Roma. And they are Gypsy/Roma for all these reasons. Ethnic determinism is a fruitless dialectic and an ideological barrier that, by means of invention, hides the reality of these groups.

The ethnic component does not exist in the case of the Caminanti. However, by means of the aforementioned dialectic, their itinerant lifestyle, the particular jobs they do, the distinctiveness of their language, the particular way in which they express their traditions and values are all perceived by the dominant society as symbols of an invented ethnic identity that, for the most part, has been constructed from the Gypsy/Roma references they know.

The Caminanti demonstrate how ethnicity and its ethnic components are not in fact essential elements that measure social interaction. If we take a look at the groups that are situated on the edge of society (Caminanti, Quinquilleros, Tendeiros, Yenish) it becomes blatantly obvious that ethnicity is a social invention constructed on the basis of social representations

about “the other”. This perverse fabrication is the key factor that determines social perception of the of these groups.

The Caminanti are oppressed by the invention of their ethnicity, in the same way that the Gypsy/Roma are also victims of this process. The reinvention of Gypsy/Roma ethnicity is expressed in numerous forms; the disabilities of their children, their affective deficiency, the social personality of the group, gender construction, and concerning the Gypsy/Roma pupil, his or her bad behaviour, the cause of failure at school and so on. Ethnicity is used through subtle ideological forms, unconscious prejudices and social representations. The final result is the reinvention of a negative Gypsy/Roma ethnicity that is fashioned into nebulous mechanisms of exclusion and segregation that materialise in every environment and context.

3. Gypsy/Roma groups in the rural context

While the rural setting plays a part in the lives of some nomadic groups on their travels through countryside areas, groups are also to be found that have lived for generations in small towns and villages in all the countries studied. In Spain, Gitano/Roma groups are scattered all over the country from Galicia to Andalusia and from Extremadura to Catalonia. They make a living in a variety of ways, from horse and mule dealing to agricultural work, as traders or casual agricultural labourers and professionals in various areas. They have settled in such a way that they are scattered over a range of towns or villages, each extended family based in one town or region, where they generally enjoy a good level of social and educational integration. Similar patterns are found in the regions of Alentejo and the Algarve in Portugal, as well as in Italy and France.

As previously explained however, other groups are also found amongst those who have been living in the Spanish rural areas for generations; groups whose mobility is a result of economic precariousness: the casual agricultural labourers. Their lifestyle is an aspect of the social and cultural context of the Spanish countryside of which the Gypsy/Roma form a part. Our investigations in the rural environment were carried out using fieldwork methodology in an initial total of 244 towns and villages in the Autonomous Region of Andalusia, from which we obtained detailed information from 167 municipalities.

Regarding the size of the municipalities studied, 22.16% had fewer than 2,500 inhabitants and 24.55%, from 2,500 to 5,000 inhabitants. This gave us a sample of small towns of nearly 48%. In the intermediate category, 34.13% had between 5,000 and 15,000 inhabitants, and large municipalities of between 15,000 and 30,000 inhabitants accounted for 13.17%. Finally, 5.9% had in excess of 30,000 inhabitants. The predominance of the small-sized category (48%) of all the municipalities studied reflects the population distribution in the six provinces covered, where 67% of the municipalities have fewer than 5,000 inhabitants.

These 167 municipalities account for 1,715,983 residents, who make up 30.7% of the total population in the six provinces. In Almería and Cádiz, this percentage rises to 46.59% and 41.72% respectively. It should be borne in mind that this study did not include the six provincial capitals, which alone account for 30% of the population. When this information is taken into account, we have a sample population in the sociological study that covers a total of almost 44% of the population residing outside one of the six provincial capitals in the area studied.

These percentages varied considerably according to how scattered the population was. In the case of the province of Jaén, the study covered 69% of the population living outside the capital and in the province of Córdoba, 64 %. Cádiz represents the average, and Granada, Jaén and Seville 33%.

Of the 167 municipalities studied, 132 claimed to be aware of the presence of Gypsy/Roma school children, a total of 81% of those studied if we look at the global figures. The percentage of municipalities with Gypsy/Roma pupils varied from one province to another, from 100% in Almería to 45% in Jaén, and 63% in Cádiz. In order to explain this variation, research would have to be carried out into the historical dimension of the dynamics of Gypsy/Roma settlement in all its complexity, together with the social, economic and political factors that have shaped the present situation of the Gypsy/Roma community over the last five centuries. There is a significant direct correlation between population size and the presence of Gypsy/Roma pupils: the larger the population, the greater the presence of Gypsy/Roma pupils.

This correlation allows us to put forward a supposition when these figures are extrapolated to the total number of municipalities in the six provinces: if we bear in mind that the census of municipalities in these provinces reveals that the proportion of small municipalities (67%) is greater than those in the sample studied (48%) we can suppose that the true percentage of municipalities with Gypsy/Roma pupils may be lower than the 81.4%.

The sociological research carried out in the 132 municipalities that declared the presence of Gypsy/Roma pupils in their schools would have represented 3,320 pupils in primary schools, out of a total of 78,286 pupils. In this case, we are able to state that if the available information were correct, Gypsy/Roma pupils would make up 4.24% of the total number of pupils in these towns.

These data, both absolute values and percentages that indicate a relative weighting, must always be considered cautiously in the light of the difficulties, expressed by many of the teachers, encountered in differentiating between Gypsy/Roma children and those who are not of the same ethnic group. While council staff, and in some cases head teachers of the schools consulted, found little difficulty in confirming the presence of Gypsy/Roma pupils in the school, they hesitated considerably when asked about the exact number.

The sociological research carried out in the municipalities informed us of the number of Gypsy/Roma families residing in the town or village, and it is precisely the comparison of this variable with the variable of the number of children that points to the invisibility of Gypsy/Roma children. In the 167 municipalities studied, 1,689 families were identified. If we assign an average of four children per family (Gamella, J.F. 1996), we should find a population of 6,756 school age children. If we subtract the 3,320 children identified in the schools of these municipalities, we are left with the figure of 3,434 Gypsy/Roma children who remain “invisible” to the education system in these towns.

This analysis leads us straight to the controversial question of the demographic census of the Gypsy/Roma population, as there are no reliable data available on the number of Gypsy/Roma family members living in the rural areas. However, the reality of this invisibility is a fact, especially in the Andalusian rural context. The causes of this invisibility are diverse: from the lack of schooling to the impossibility of, or lack of interest in, identifying this section of the school population. The former leads to a problem of inequality in access to the right to an education, while the latter results in a violation of the right to cultural difference. We do not know whether this violation is consented to or not by those affected. We have verified that social and economic integration in many of the municipalities has developed positively, to the extent that the difference between ethnic categories has become blurred. The Gypsy/Roma “cease to be Gypsy/Roma” and take on the role of workmate, friend or neighbour. This occurs particularly in small and medium sized municipalities where there is a much more developed coexistence between Gypsy/Roma and non-Gypsy/Gage, and therefore, the level of integration is much higher (Giménez, 1994).

If we isolate the data on the “visible” Gypsy/Roma pupils, it can be appreciated how the presence of this minority in schools also varies from one municipality to another. In 40% of the municipalities studied, the Gypsy/Roma school population does not reach 1% of the total, in 23% it accounts for between 1% and 2%, in 22 % it is over 2% but under 4%, in 10 % it falls between 4% and 6%, and in 5% of the municipalities studied, the figure is between 13% and 14%.

In sum, 63% of the Gypsy/Roma children attending school in the municipalities studied find themselves in an overtly minority situation, forming part of less than 2% of the total school population. From this, we can assume that spontaneous processes involving a consideration of their culture are far less likely to arise as a result simply of their presence in the class. It could even be supposed that it will lead to practical difficulties when culturally related questions come from the teaching staff themselves.

A further question of interest is the degree to which the Gypsy/Roma pupils are dispersed or concentrated within the schools. One of the variables studied in our investigations enables us to explore this aspect in greater depth: the number of schools in the municipality that claim to have Gypsy/Roma pupils.

We can confirm that in 67% of the municipalities studied, all the schools in the town or village have Gypsy/Roma children registered, although as we will expand on below, 64% of these municipalities only have one school. 4.13% of these towns or villages registered Gypsy/Roma pupils in most of their schools (over 75%) although there may be a school in the municipality with no Gypsy/Roma pupils. In 13.22% of the towns, the Gypsy/Roma children are found in half the schools, with no Gypsy/Roma pupils in the other half. Finally, in 4 % of the municipalities, the presence of Gypsy/Roma pupils is concentrated in a quarter of the schools or even less.

From these data, we can conclude that in 17% of the towns studied, a situation of “ghettoisation” can be said to occur amongst the school population, since the Gypsy/Roma population is concentrated in less than half the schools (13.22%) or in a quarter of the schools (4.13%). The dynamics of how the Gypsy/Roma pupils are distributed amongst the various schools of the municipalities considered are complex and do not conform to one single pattern.

The correlation between the number of schools in the town and the degree of dispersion or concentration of the Gypsy/Roma pupils amongst them is highly significant: the greater the number of schools in the municipality, the greater the concentration of Gypsy/Roma pupils in fewer schools. This is related to the well-known concentration of Gypsy/Roma communities in certain districts of the town, or at least the “visible” section of these communities, assuming that the invisibility and dispersion amongst the non-Gypsy/Roma community are both factors that exist simultaneously. As we have seen, when the positive data is observed indicating the presence of Gypsy/Roma children in all the schools, in 64% of the cases, these municipalities only have one school, in 22%, they are towns with between 2 and 4 schools, in 3% with 5 to 7 schools, and only in 1% are we dealing with towns of 8 or more schools.

One of the areas that has received most attention in the context of the education of Gypsy/Roma children is that of absenteeism. In dealing with this issue, our study attempted to verify the information on absenteeism available in the various municipal institutions on general rates of school absenteeism and that related to the Gypsy/Roma school population. One of the first and most outstanding aspects we encountered was the disparate availability of information on school absenteeism.

Of the 167 towns and villages studied, 127 stated that no data on general absenteeism rates in the school-age population were available. This figure represents 76%, clearly a very high percentage.

This percentage drops substantially (to 37%) when the issue is that of Gypsy/Roma absenteeism: of the 132 municipalities with a presence of Gypsy/Roma pupils, only 44 did not have available data on absenteeism (33 %) and only 5 (4%) had data on general absenteeism, but not on the specific rates of the Gypsy/Roma children. In other words, the curious situation arises that some 63 municipalities, 48% of those that have Gypsy/Roma pupils, are able to evaluate the rate of absenteeism amongst the Gypsy/Roma pupils without knowing the overall figures.

This indicates the extent to which the problem of the education of the Gypsy/Roma minority tends to be centred on the problem of school absenteeism. Obviously, absenteeism is one of the chief problems, but these data equally enable us to confirm how absenteeism has turned into prejudice, in the sense that it is a guiding factor behind any investigation into and knowledge of the circumstances surrounding the education of the Gypsy/Roma minority. If this were not the case, how else can we explain the fact that the rate of absenteeism amongst the Gypsy/Roma is known, yet the same information is not available for the school population as a whole?

No doubt it could be argued that only data on Gypsy/Roma absenteeism is available because absenteeism in general is not a problem, and only merits consideration in relation to this group. This position, although probably a fair reflection of the true situation, still introduces an important bias into the analysis of the problematics of Gypsy/Roma absenteeism, as it is assumed from the very beginning, and this is precisely what we know as prejudice, that the causes of absenteeism are “inherent” to the minority itself, and completely removed from the general context in which they live.

The average rate of school absenteeism in the 40 towns with this data is 4%. 27.5% maintain that there is no absenteeism, and in 32.5% of the cases, it is lower than 1%. We can therefore state that for 60% of the towns and villages, school absenteeism seems not to be a problem.

In the 83 towns and villages where we know the absenteeism rates for the Gypsy/Roma pupils, and given that we also know the number of Gypsy/Roma pupils, we can quantify the number of absentee pupils. In these 83 municipalities, 1,488 Gypsy/Roma children attend school, of whom 477 have been classified as absentees, i.e., 32%.

By focusing our analysis on the range of municipalities, we see that the average rate of absenteeism amongst Gypsy/Roma pupils in the towns and villages studied is 25%, but the real situation varies greatly from one town to the next. 51% of the municipalities with Gypsy/Roma pupils have no problem of absenteeism, and 2% in which absenteeism is approximately the same as that occurring in the whole school population, that is to say, under 5%. We can therefore state that in 53% of the towns and villages studied with Gypsy/Roma pupils, absenteeism is not a problem. However, for the remaining 46%, absenteeism represents a very serious problem, since it affects exceptionally high percentages of the Gypsy/Roma school age population.

Only 7% of the municipalities are located in the intermediate bracket, with rates over 5% but under 30%. Most towns or villages (22%) with a problem of absenteeism amongst their Gypsy/Roma pupils have rates of between 30% and 50%, and a minority (17%) of municipalities have far worse rates of over 50% and reaching even one hundred percent of their pupils.

We can clearly see from this data that there is no middle ground: the towns and villages studied either have no significant problem of absenteeism or they experience very serious problems. This data strengthens the hypothesis that the problem of absenteeism amongst the

Gypsy/Roma population is very much related to socio-economic factors, and not so much to a cultural peculiarity inherent in the minority group itself.

This sociological research work does not allow us to go much further into which socio-economic factors might predict a higher risk of absenteeism. However, this matter is thoroughly explored in other sections of the study, namely those dealing with casual agricultural labour. Nevertheless, one of the variables considered in this study does enable us to continue exploring this hypothesis: that referring to the size of the municipality.

If we analyse the average rate of absenteeism from the point of view of population size, we can see how this variable does not affect the Gypsy/Roma minority and the population as a whole in the same way. While in the case of Gypsy/Roma pupils, the rate of absenteeism increases in proportion to the size of the town where they live, i.e. the bigger the town, the higher the rate of absenteeism, the opposite is true for the non-Gypsy/Gage majority across the whole school-age population, i.e., the smaller the town, the higher the rate of absenteeism and vice versa. This information is clearly of great interest, as such a clear inverse tendency points to structural causes that are often ignored when the analysis focuses on cultural peculiarities.

The first explanation for this result, and clearly a hypothesis that would be worth testing in future studies, might be found in the extent of female employment amongst the non-Gypsy/Gage majority, and would indicate that when mothers are not bound by any employment obligations, a more widespread tendency in villages and small towns than in larger towns, children have more days off school, especially at pre-school and primary levels, for reasons such as illnesses or bad weather.

According to this working hypothesis, the tendency to “protect the child from the school” when he or she is not feeling well, a tendency so often attributed to the Gypsy/Roma minority, also occurs amongst the non-Gypsy/Gage rural community where the mother is not bound by her working hours in a job outside the home. This tendency would only disappear when the mother has to go to work, and in the absence of neighbouring grandmothers, both circumstances that are much more widespread in large towns and cities than in smaller towns and villages.

In contrast, this tendency is reversed amongst Gypsy/Roma families: in small towns and villages absenteeism is lower, but increases with the town size. It has been verified that the levels of marginalisation and the precarious housing situation endured by the Gypsy/Roma minority are much greater in cities than in the small towns and villages in country areas, and that, as we all know, the relationship between absenteeism and precarious housing is particularly strong.

An additional factor that may explain lower absenteeism rates in smaller municipalities is that the knowledge the Gypsy/Roma family has of the school and accessibility to the teaching staff is much greater in a village with a population of fewer than 1,000 than in a city of over 30,000 inhabitants.

It is obvious that absenteeism, regardless of population size, is always higher amongst the Gypsy/Roma minority than amongst the population in general, but this is a well known aspect of the situation that is often explained by the greater “maternal protectiveness of the child from the school”, which in implicit theories or the commonly held view of the non-Gypsy/Gage majority, is always interpreted as disinterest on the part of the Gypsy/Roma family. What is of interest is that this phenomena is not so far removed from the experience of the non-Gypsy/Gage majority living in small towns and villages, and may be related to socio-economic aspects or housing conditions.

The rate of absenteeism amongst Gypsy/Roma pupils bears no significant relation to the extent to which they are dispersed or concentrated in the town's schools. This indicates that although the dispersion-concentration variable is seen to be significant when analysing other

factors in the education process, it is not so much so in the analysis of the problem of absenteeism.

The case study of the rural environment in Andalusia can to a certain extent be extrapolated to other contexts, and it most certainly provides an illustration of Gypsy/Roma presence in small rural settlements. Of particular importance is the notable presence of the Gypsy/Roma family and their dispersion throughout the towns and villages studied, a pattern that is also reproduced in the areas of French Catalonia and Southern Italy covered by this project, and in all likelihood, in many other areas. At the same time, we are able to confirm how the interaction of Gypsy/Roma children with the school reveals difficulties associated with the socio-economic context and the internal dynamics of the education systems that are analysed in depth in the second part of this report.

PART II. The Gypsy/Roma child in the School.

1. The school past and present.

1.1. A look at the past.

Throughout the histories of the countries studied, there have been groups of Gypsy/Roma children who have attended school, achieved good school results and gone on to gain higher academic qualifications. There is however, a marked tendency in various social and also academic circles to make these achievements invisible, thereby creating a distortion that becomes a part of the socio-educational background of the groups and in the contexts we have analysed.

The historical progression of the schooling of Gypsy/Roma children in the four countries studied, including the work carried out in the Portuguese city of Evora, consists of various phases. Until the 1950s, only a minority of Gypsy/Roma groups enjoyed normal schooling while the vast majority did not attend school. The segregation of Gypsy/Roma families in a variety of social contexts, together with the nomadic or semi-nomadic lifestyle their economic situation drove them into are the main causes of the distance from and lack of interaction with the school.

The major structural changes in European society during the 1950s and 1960s considerably affected the Gypsy/Roma community. As a result, the transformation towards a sedentary lifestyle experienced by certain Gypsy/Roma groups, both nomadic and semi-sedentary, led to their gradual settling in cities. This movement in turn encouraged new educational structures to be set in motion, specifically aimed at this sector of the population. In Spain these took the form of the so-called "Bridge schools", in Italy, the "Lacio Drom schools" and in France, "caravan schools" were set up which were attached to ASET (Aide a la Scolaritation des Enfants Tsiganes). All these schools were linked in one way or another to the Catholic Church, which, following the Second Vatican Council, played a vital role in social works aimed at Gypsy/Roma groups and in particular, at the schooling of their children.⁹

The city of Melfi (Italy) provides an example of the above. Here, ethno-historical studies into the schooling of Gypsy/Roma children involving rigorous archive analysis show a progressive increase in the schooling of Gypsy/Roma children throughout the 20th century. Prior to the 1950s, the data reflect a lack of schooling amongst the Gypsy/Roma groups, whereas from

⁹ Significantly, in Spain, France and Italy, three Catholic priests José María García Díez, André Barthelemy and Bruno Nicolini had a major effect in the field of Catholic evangelical work, and also in social and educational areas. Groups of priests, nuns and laypersons connected with the church developed the system of segregated education in the three countries.

the 1970s onwards, a tendency towards the integration of the same groups in the school is observed. In this case, due to their long-standing presence and interaction in the city, the Gypsy/Roma children of Melfi all received a complete primary school education in the decade of the 1980s (Pontrandolfo,2002).

Although the processes of schooling for the Gypsy/Roma population began simultaneously, their continuity varied according to the different situations in the countries studied.

In Spain, the history of the schooling process can be broken down into the following stages. First, during the 1960s and up to the end of the 70s, two parallel educational structures coexisted. Most Gypsy/Roma children, usually the most underprivileged, were taken in by the so-called bridge schools. The essential aim of these institutions was to facilitate the adaptation of the Gypsy/Roma child to the school system, in preparation for subsequent enrolment in the ordinary state school. Initially financed by the Catholic Church, and later by the Ministry for Education, these schools never successfully achieved their objective, and most of the Gypsy/Roma pupils stayed in the bridge schools until their gradual disappearance in the 1980s.

A similar process took place in Italy through the schools known as Lacio Drom, also linked to the Catholic Church, which were segregated and specifically aimed at Gypsy/Roma pupils. As in Spain, the Gypsy/Roma children went into ordinary schools with their disappearance in the 1980s.

In France however, the Antennes Scolaires Mobiles (ASM) mobile schools set up by the Catholic Church to attend to the needs of nomadic pupils are still in force today. They are funded by the Catholic Church and their state registered teaching staff are paid by the French Ministry of Education. At the same time, special schools for Gypsy/Roma pupils are in operation on the caravan sites where the families live. Data provided by this project confirm the existence of 40 Antennes Scolaires Mobiles spread over the whole of the country.

Segregation and exclusivity are the two characteristics of this type of school system common to the three countries studied. In practice, the education they provide is of a very basic standard, and in most cases, is not designed to allow Gypsy/Roma pupils continuity of study in other areas of training or higher education.

In all three countries, we find that Gypsy/Roma pupils were gradually being educated in ordinary schools during the third stage, after the 1980s. This steady incorporation into the education system occurred at the same time as specific structures were being set up for disadvantaged children and those with socio-educational difficulties. These structures were given different names in each country: compensatory education, special education, reception arrangements, specialised structures, nomad laboratories etc., and amongst all the children taken into these structures, the presence of Gypsy/Roma children was always prominent. Once again, Gypsy/Roma pupils were being treated specifically, and in a high percentage of cases, “ghetto classes” were created within the very schools in which these children fall prey to the consequences of the negative school stigmatisation process. In this sense, some of the teaching staff considered this arrangement in the school as a “necessary evil”, a bridging period for the Gypsy/Roma pupils to adapt to the school. This opinion is particularly widespread amongst teachers working with population groups with specific ecological and social characteristics, such as the case of the French teachers working in special structures who are responsible for the education of children from itinerant families (Bruggeman and Repair, 2002).

The fallacy of “provisional or temporary segregation” runs through the history of the Gypsy/Roma schooling process. This consists of accepting the informal segregation model in the school environment backed by the argument that it is a transitory, necessary process, which in

the case of the Gypsy/Roma is justified by alluding to the specific nature of the group. The arguments are very varied, and refer to the ecological, (nomadic lifestyle), the social (poverty, exclusion), and even the mental (cultural, lack of intellectual ability). Whatever the case, stereotypical representations underlie all of these arguments. These representations of the groups are by no stretch of the imagination related to their supposed specificity. Negative stereotypes of the Gypsy/Roma child population are frequently found in the school environment and are essentially linked to the racism, exclusion and long-standing ingrained discrimination to which most Gypsy/Roma groups have been and are still subjected by society, a society in which government administrations are not exempt from charges of institutional racism.

1.2 The modern school. Typology of the school today.

A wide variety of organigrams and denominations are to be found in the Spanish education system, which evidently has repercussions for those designed for the Gypsy/Roma child. This is essentially due to the fact that, although a common legislative framework, the LOCE, Organic Law for Quality in Education, has been in force since 2003, its development and administration is carried out independently in each of the 17 autonomous regions, by means of decrees, orders and resolutions which have shaped a variety of models and regulations specific to each region.

In general, Spanish Gypsy/Roma pupils attend ordinary schools and classes. Hence, they can be found in primary schools throughout the whole range of stages and cycles of the system together with their non-Gypsy/Roma classmates. In addition, the Spanish education system provides help for pupils whose level of knowledge falls behind that of their peers, in the form of “support” which may either be internal, i.e., given in the class, or external. This support consists of educational back up in the subjects in which the children face learning difficulties. This back up is provided by teaching staff who are guided by the school’s psycho-pedagogical team, which designs a personal curriculum for these pupils known as the ACI, *adaptación curricular individualizada* (personalised curricular adaptation). The target of this adaptation is to provide a response to pupils’ individual differences so that they might achieve their aims with a higher level of participation within the general class dynamic.

When the gap in a pupil’s knowledge is deemed to be equal to or more than one education cycle (two school years), his or her situation is diagnosed by the psycho-pedagogical team and placed within the sphere of what is known as pupils with special education needs. This type of attention is intended for all pupils, non-Gypsy/Roma and Gypsy/Roma, and hence there are no structures designed specifically for the latter group, even though they tend to be present in large numbers. In general, special education is also intended for the handicapped pupil. Once these pupils have been diagnosed, they are assigned a personalised curricular adaptation defined as significant, or more simply known as “significant ACI”.

In Spain and France, Gypsy/Roma pupils can be found in both state and private schools, whereas in Italy attendance of Gypsy/Roma pupils in private schools has not been detected. In Spain and France, a high percentage of Gypsy/Roma pupils attend state schools, 58.2% in Spain, and 84% in France. This significant difference in attendance in private schools is due to the existence of a network of state-subsidised schools in Spain. These schools are subsidised by public funds and no costs are borne by the families of pupils attending them. The presence of Gypsy/Roma pupils in these schools is so small as to be significant (3.8%).

In all the contexts studied, Gypsy/Roma pupils, whether sedentary or nomadic, attend the school determined by their place of residence and the aim of the education authorities is to encourage assistance in ordinary schools in classes corresponding to their age group. In France schools have what is known as the *dispositif spécifique* (specific measure) for children with difficulties at school. These take two forms, the first model providing educational back up

outside the classroom, for children who need to improve their educational level, and the second model, for non-French-speaking children who need to learn the language and are known as CLIN and/or CLA. In addition, the French system also includes the so-called *structures spécialisés* (specialised structures) for children with physical, psychological or sensory disabilities who require support and specially adapted curricula as a result. The education of these pupils is coordinated by AIS, *Adaptation et Intégration Scolaires*.

Different measures are found in secondary education, such as the SEPGA, *Sections d'Enseignement Général et Professionnel Adapté*, and which are an integral part of the ordinary school designed to provide professional training for young people who experience serious difficulties in adapting to normal classes.

Another model of specific school for Gypsy/Roma and Yenish/Gage nomads, amongst others, are located on the official sites, as provided for in the Besson Law of 1990. These schools are coordinated within the framework of the French Ministry for Education and are particularly aimed at sites with more than 5,000 people. They are exclusively aimed at Gypsy/Roma and nomadic pupils, and currently there are 15 schools of this type in France. The Gypsy/Roma pupils attending these schools are from a wide range of groups, from Manoush/Roma or Gitan/Roma, and also from Rom/Roma or Sinti/Roma groups. Pupils attending these schools are from official sites but children from unofficial sites are also admitted. Within this diverse group of pupils, major differences in educational levels are found, which means that the work done in class is with heterogeneous groups of children whose educational backgrounds may be highly disparate. They present a great diversity of educational situations, from twelve-year-olds who have had no schooling, to others with an average educational level, but whatever the case, the education received by these pupils is cause for concern as they rarely reach the average education targets for their age. It is particularly significant that the number of children who are unable to read or write is estimated at an alarming 70%.

A further specific structure is that of the Antennes Scolaires Mobiles, caravan-schools that carry out their work on the sites. They are intended to prepare Gypsy/Roma children for subsequent schooling in ordinary schools. The importance of distance learning in France run by the *Centre National d'Enseignement à Distance* should also be mentioned, which is a public body under the auspices of the National Ministry of Education. Its importance is reflected in the number of pupils registered, some 420,000 distributed over eight secondary schools. The flexibility granted by distance learning, in that Gypsy/Roma pupils can continue studying without attending class has certain disadvantages, such as the difficulties faced by teachers in providing follow-up or assessment of Gypsy/Roma children's progress. Teaching staff in the Rouen school, for instance, affirm that progress made and consequently, the results achieved by Gypsy/Roma pupils are very irregular.¹⁰

In general, similar tendencies and structures can be observed in all the contexts studied. Schooling of Gypsy/Roma pupils takes place in either normal state or state-subsidised private schools in almost all contexts. The predominance of inter-ethnic contexts and both the political and institutional will to achieve full integration of Gypsy/Roma pupils, at least on a physical level, can be appreciated. Yet in spite of this, we have come across specific classes for Gypsy/Roma pupils as part of the day-to-day practice in all the contexts studied. At an unofficial

¹⁰ Despite the fact that this type of education does not involve classroom attendance, and as such, favours continuity of study for nomadic Gypsy/Roma pupils, the very mobility of their families impedes regular contact, generally carried out by post, with the schools, and consists of teaching and assessment material being sent to the pupils enrolled. The diversity of family economic and ecological situations also presents a further obstacle.

level, we have identified a variety of strategies aimed at concentrating Gypsy/Roma children together and separating them from the rest of the pupils. These strategies are justified in a multitude of ways: from the teaching point of view, by the difference in academic level or for linguistic reasons, to justifications related to psychological diagnoses or therapeutic educational practices. Officially segregated education structures, whether in the form of schools or classes, enjoy neither institutional nor legislative support. Yet in practice, sporadic cases of segregational structures are still found in the countries studied, with high percentages of Gypsy/Roma pupils in attendance. In some cases, attempts are made to justify this segregation through the arguments outlined above, but the truth of the matter is that the lack of adequate infrastructures and practical teaching models leads to the socio-educational ghettoisation of these groups of Gypsy/Roma children.

It is very clear that the existence of these specific structures is designed to partly, and in many cases inefficiently, patch over a series of malfunctions in the education systems. In general, whether they be caravan-schools or camp-based schools in France, specific classes in Italian schools or summer schools in Spain, all these specific education structures intended for Gypsy/Roma pupils are initiatives designed to palliate the grave situation of educational inequality and lack of schooling amongst Gypsy/Roma children. Without doubt, they provide a token opportunity for the most disadvantaged groups of Gypsy/Roma children to come into contact with school, and as such, they fulfil an important role, but in most cases, these structures are overwhelmingly defeated by the reality of failure, irregular attendance and drop out, and in the end, by the lack of any academic result.

One very obvious conclusion drawn from the findings of this project is that specific structures for Gypsy/Roma pupils do not come anywhere near to resolving the chaotic socio-educational situation they face. The only contribution they make is to palliate the malfunctions of the different educational systems, which can only be resolved within the framework of each state administration, and with a clear transnational perspective.

1.3. Education systems. Dynamics and contexts

Only by understanding the underlying ecological and economic factors can the situation of the Gypsy/Roma pupil in the school be explained. The poverty and mobility of the groups are two key influences on the situation of Gypsy/Roma children in Europe, but they are not the only factors. Children from the poorest Gypsy/Roma groups face greater difficulties of integration in the school system, and this disadvantage is heightened further in the case of groups with an itinerant lifestyle. At the bottom of the social pyramid are the groups of children of all ages with no schooling, for whom the mere fact of attending school is a privilege. The most disadvantaged children are those from the shanty towns and sub-standard housing of the large cities, immigrants from Eastern Europe and itinerant groups whose movements are linked to their specific employment, such as casual agricultural labourers and fairground workers. It is obvious that the Gypsy/Roma children from these groups should be a priority objective for socio-educational intervention policies.

Yet it is equally important to illustrate the general framework of the educational situation of the Gypsy/Roma child. Here, we are concerned with placing the most disadvantaged groups within the general educational context in an attempt to both avoid prejudice at an academic level, and to approach an understanding of what is clearly a diverse reality. In order to do this, an analysis must be made of both the formal and informal internal dynamics of the education system that affect all children in school. The incentive for this analysis is based on the following basic reason. The situation of exclusion and marginalisation faced by Gypsy/Roma children, their poor school results and early school drop-out rates, together with other social and cultural

factors, are not explained by simply examining the socio-economic and ecological variables that lie outside the school. The variables within the education system that influence the situation of the Gypsy/Roma child in relation to the school must also be analysed (Alfageme, 2002).

Throughout this section, we will analyse in detail some of the internal factors within the education systems studied that negatively condition Gypsy/Roma pupil interaction in the school system.

Quantitative data available on Spanish Gypsy/Roma pupils attending school during the 2001/2 school year indicate that Gypsy/Roma children attend almost 50% of the existing schools in both the state and private sectors. The magnitude of these nationwide figures is a guide to the diverse range of situations to be found within the European context. In effect, in all the contexts studied, we found situations ranging from Gypsy/Roma pupils with a successful school record and good academic results, to children with no schooling whatsoever.

In general, the experience of European Gypsy/Roma pupils is one of a climate of exclusion and segregation within the schools themselves. As explained previously, this does not usually take the form of explicit ethnic segregation, but rather, it is expressed as a type of segregation justified by a variety of arguments of an academic, pedagogical, linguistic, ecological or social nature. The stigmatisation of the Gypsy/Roma child is a constant, as the only thing the schools do is reproduce the already existing widespread social and cultural dynamics found in the societies in which the children are immersed. In the European countries studied, failure at school is explained by a multitude of internal factors: rejection and prejudice on the part of the education communities, the absence of education policies aimed at combating ethnic prejudice, the lack of projects designed to improve socio-educational relations and also the lack of training and support for teachers.

On this matter, we have verified how, in all contexts, whether urban or rural, or involving itinerant or sedentary groups, the various education systems do not take into account the cultural angle of the Gypsy/Roma child's situation in the school. This ideological perspective leads to a malfunction in how reality is perceived. The most direct consequence of the invisibility of Gypsy/Roma culture, language and worldview is the social and emotional distancing of Gypsy/Roma pupils from the school environment. It is clearly the case that this psychosocial situation should be considered as a key factor in European education policy. The positive transformation of Gypsy/Roma social reality through the school could be seen as utopian, but the school as an educational institution should be a basic instrument in its improvement, and should take on board, without delay, Gypsy/Roma culture as a strategy to establish the social and emotional links that are vital in the educational development of Gypsy/Roma pupils. (Alfageme, Martínez 2002). Gypsy/Roma culture, in the school as opposed to the family environment, is rarely considered as a factor that gives children a certain dignity. In the same way, a discourse that encourages self-esteem and the positive valuation of ethnicity are seldom encountered. As a consequence, Gypsy/Roma culture in the school is not positively recognised.

In the school contexts where initiatives have been taken to introduce both pupils and teachers to Gypsy/Roma culture, through programmes or other types of intervention, we have seen that, paradoxically, they have the opposite effect.

We believe this process is linked to the perverse determinist discourse that considers ethnicity, the fact of being Gypsy/Roma, as the cause of school failure. The dynamic is as follows. When Gypsy/Roma culture is made visible in this way, an indirect emphasis is placed on cultural difference and distinct values from those held by the school. In most school contexts there is already an a priori association between ethnicity (being Gypsy/Roma) and failure at school. The teachers for whom this information on values, worldview, gender construction etc. is designed, interpret it in their own way. As they now have more information on Gypsy/Roma

culture, they use it as further argument to justify the prejudiced views they hold on Gypsy/Roma children. In sum, the teachers themselves construct a further wall of prejudices from behind which, frequently through erudite discourse, they reify the stereotype of Gypsy/Roma culture. As an illustration, the way teachers interpret the onset of menstruation in Gypsy/Roma adolescents is based on the sexual control of women, and as such, they consider it to be the cause of dropping out of school.

The recognition of this perversity by no means implies that we should give up insisting that Gypsy/Roma culture must, as an absolute necessity, be made visible and regarded as a source of dignity in the school context. We do however believe that the content of these interventions should particularly take into account the psychosocial dynamics that construct inter-ethnic prejudice and that doubtless hinder socio-pedagogical relations amongst teaching staff, pupils and families.

Cultural recognition in the school curriculum is long overdue in the countries studied. In France, it is significant that the concept of cultural or ethnic minority is not recognised in constitutional law (Repair and Bruggeman, 2002). The same is true of both Italy and Spain. In recent years, certain official recognition of the group as an ethnic minority has been made in Spain, but in practice, the repercussions are hardly felt by the Gypsy/Roma citizen. It is certainly true that in general, legal contradictions are frequent. One particularly outstanding example of this is that the three countries in our study, Spain, France and Italy all signed the 1992 European Charter on regional and minority languages. This pledge is contradicted by the lack of any practical action on its development, as can be seen, for instance, in the failure to implement clause eight of the Charter which provides for the teaching of these languages, including the language of the Gypsy/Roma, Romany, at all levels of the education system. Despite this provision, we have not been able to discover one state school in which Romany is taught to its pupils. What is more, in Spain, most schools are unaware of the existence of a Gypsy/Roma language. As pointed out by Repair and Bruggeman (2002), only odd cases are found, and these are put into practise on a voluntary basis by teachers with a certain knowledge of Romany vocabulary. The same holds true in Spain and Italy.

1.4. Demography and distribution of the Gypsy/Roma school population

According to official sources, 16,789 primary and secondary schools were open during the 2001/02 school year in Spain. We have detected the presence of Gypsy/Roma pupils in almost half of them (49%). In general, our data indicate that of the total population of Spanish children in school, the proportion of Gypsy/Roma children accounts for 2.23%.

In the total number of schools with Gypsy/Roma pupils in attendance, their distribution is very significant. Fewer than 10 Gypsy/Roma are enrolled in 32% of these schools, while a greater number are concentrated in just 15%. This tendency towards concentration corroborates the existence of ghetto schools, in which more than 50% of the school population is Gypsy/Roma. Quantitatively, these schools represent a tiny proportion (1.7%) of the total number of schools, but in absolute terms, these schools account for 300 examples of socio-educational segregation.

In terms of absolute demographic data, a rigorous quantification of the number of Gypsy/Roma pupils in school in Spain is clearly a complex task to be taken on. Through research in the schools studied, our estimates indicate a total of 119,339 pupils enrolled in infant, primary and secondary levels, 2.21% of the total number of children in school in Spain. The highest presence of Gypsy/Roma pupils is detected in primary education, which according to our estimates amounts to a total of 69,078 Gypsy/Roma pupils (2.81%). An alarming drop is seen in secondary education, where the presence of Gypsy/Roma pupils totals a mere 22,442 (1.22%).

Findings on the distribution of Gypsy/Roma pupils in different types of schools (private, state or state-subsidised) reveal that Gypsy/Roma pupils are present in all categories of schools, although in highly varied proportions and concentration trends that should be examined more closely.

58% of Gypsy/Roma pupils attend state schools, while 34.4% are registered with state-subsidised schools and only 3.8% go to private schools. The Spanish case shows a high presence of pupils in state-subsidised schools, as these receive subsidies from the public administrations and the families of children attending them bear no financial costs.

In France, the majority, 84%, of the schools represented in the sample are state schools, of which 78% correspond to primary level. It is a significant detail that of the 45% of schools that provide general education in addition to primary level education, a high percentage, 34%, also have specialised classes with pupils from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds (Bruggeman and Repair 2002). Schools that define themselves as “ordinary structure” schools account for 67.5% of the sample. At the same time, it should be taken into account that the specific education structures are the 15 schools on the caravan sites, and the 40 Antennes Scolaires, caravan-schools which are constantly moving between the various sites.

In Italy, 268 elementary and 55 middle schools were identified, giving a total of 323 schools. Some 800 Gypsy/Roma pupils were identified in these schools, (together with the 323 interviewed,) which account for almost 10% of the Italian Gypsy/Roma school population.

2. Upbringing and schooling

The concept of “education” has been employed in its broadest sense throughout the research project, and essentially incorporates two major focuses; on one hand, the education processes affecting Gypsy/Roma pupils in schools, and on the other, a particular interest in the socialisation processes experienced by the children in the Gypsy/Roma family and social environment, in other words, their upbringing. The two processes cannot be understood in isolation and thus have been considered together. Our research findings show how ecological, social and cultural aspects that influence the process of educational interaction also exist in their socialisation processes, and as a result, we have taken particular interest in investigating these aspects.

2.1. Upbringing, values and socialisation patterns

The way children are brought up in the Gypsy/Roma family has an acutely pervasive influence on their social relation strategies.

Family upbringing is often considered in a different light from the formal education offered by the school. The Gypsy/Roma generally consider school education as the situation in which instrumental skills are learnt, while in the family the teaching of values and norms is considered to be essential. Contrary to what is claimed by many prejudiced discourses, it is not usual to find families who openly and explicitly reject the contribution made by the school, not even in those families whose children present high rates of irregular school attendance or who never go to school. What is true however, is that acceptance of the school is often expressed in terms of a desire, or an inclination which is not frequently put into practice (Tauber, 2002, 127). This frustrated desire tends to come out in maturity, as adults express their regret at having left school early or at not having been able to prevent the same pattern being repeated in their own children. These discourses, frequently repeated in many of the groups studied, point to a potential change in expectations as regards the school and school education. Nonetheless, we cannot obviate the cultural and mental opposition that underlies many other discourses in the

Gypsy/Roma groups studied. In her ethnographic study of the Sinti/Roma, Elisabeth Tauber shows how the school is the outcome of centuries of development and of manifestations of a specific form of thought. This thought is known by the non-Gypsy/non-Roma as “culture” and is dubbed *Gagengro sero* (Gage thought) by the Sinti/Roma, or in other words, the Gage way of thinking. In this way, opposition between non-Gypsy/Gage and Gypsy/Roma is also articulated in the school, and in particular, through *sero* or thought, and the different ways in which life and the world are conceived. Significantly, this discourse on thought alludes to the opposition between two cultural worlds, the non-Gypsy/Gage and the Gypsy/Roma, and implicitly refers to the exclusion and marginalisation processes suffered by the various Gypsy/Roma groups

If we consider that for all children, school is a point of transition to the outside world and the community outside the family, we must not forget that for the Gypsy/Roma child, going to school involves leaving the Gypsy/Roma cultural environment to enter a world that, for the moment, is still fundamentally non-Gypsy/Gage. The school could denote support and continuity in the child’s education, but it might possibly introduce contradictions, ruptures or distortions with regard to the process of instruction that has already been initiated in the family. The Gypsy/Roma fear that the cultural discourses of the school and the values and norms expressed there might give rise to contradictions that would have a negative effect on the socialisation processes that develop between the school and the family.

It is highly significant that in some Gypsy/Roma groups, particularly in those within an inter-ethnic social context, the parents’ initial expectation of the school is that it will provide a way up the social ladder and an escape from social exclusion for their children. The socio-educational expectations of the Gypsy/Roma family are directly proportionate to their actual possibilities of educational success. Amongst the most privileged groups this success is transformed into real options for integration in the job market, and as a consequence, a move up the social scale. However, it must not be forgotten that amongst the most underprivileged groups, and especially in those who live in a segregated community with no inter-ethnic contact, this is a minority discourse. Not without reason, these groups regard upward social mobility as impossible, or at best, a remote possibility. The Gypsy/Roma family does not make any link between learning, success at school and upward social mobility. These social representations have major repercussions on the image they have, and on their expectations of the school.

From the point of view of the dominant society, an analysis of the Gypsy/Roma’s situation of social exclusion has hardly ever been taken as a starting point for the integration of these groups into mainstream society. Any experience of exclusion, whatever its form, has such a pervasive effect that it cannot be obviated. Yet this frequently happens when the institution of the school is considered as part of the process of social integration. The Gypsy/Roma are extremely aware of having suffered rejection and discrimination at the hands of the dominant culture throughout history. In sum, the ideological perceptions held by the Gypsy/Roma and by the school with regard to social and educational exclusion establish deeply rooted ideological boundaries between the two parties.

In order to leave marginalisation behind and get on the ladder of social mobility, integration in the school is crucial. But the way the Gypsy/Roma view the institution of the school is so deeply scarred by stigma that they find it overwhelming.

2.1.1. Childhood and Maturity. Biological age and social age

From the moment they are born, Gypsy/Roma children share in all the activities of the adult world. They are continually present in the family group, and there is no space or time from which they are excluded. This conception of childhood has major implications for their upbringing, as a vast amount of codes, values and social strategies are learnt flexibly and

“naturally” within the family environment. The process of learning through constantly being in adult company and continued interaction with the adult world gives them a type of specific upbringing model that differs in certain aspects from that of the non-Gypsy/non-Roma/Gage child. In many of the contexts studied, the precocity and maturity shown by Gypsy/Roma children is one of the aspects of the family model that contrasts with the school system. They are often regarded by teachers as “little adults” and to a great extent this is the case, since the Gypsy/Roma model of upbringing encourages aspects such as early maturity, independence and autonomy.

It is far from easy to convey the depth of the socio-educational aspects amongst the Gypsy/Roma without falling into abstract generalisations that so often hide the true diversity of the groups. The following examples are provided to help put them in context. In some groups, boys as young as seven can drive a car. Others help their parents on the markets or beg alongside their family from a very early age. In other groups, girls of seven are quite capable of looking after a baby and at ten or eleven, even take on the responsibility of cooking for the family, dealing with all the housework and caring for their younger siblings. All these experiences show the substratum of the Gypsy/Roma upbringing that, through useful and practical training, stimulates precocity and social maturity in the child. This upbringing reflects the worldview on childhood held by the family and by the same token, the breach between the family milieu and the school environment. This breach centres on the diversity of meaning given to the concept of childhood and maturity between the two socio-educational spheres. Within the family, childhood is considered as an experimental learning phase in which duties are rewarded with affection and respect for individuality and the autonomy that the children enjoy as they take on their responsibilities.

2.1.2. Protection and autonomy

The Gypsy/Roma children of the groups studied are brought up in an environment in which freedom and autonomy are accompanied by parental protection. The way the family is structured by age groups constitutes a continuum on which inter-generational relationships encourage an intense interaction that fosters cooperation and at the same time, strengthens emotional and human bonds. While this reality of the family is frequently found in most cultures, the peculiarity it takes on amongst the Gypsy/Roma lies in its economic and socio-political dimension. Gypsy/Roma family relationships do not disappear with the onset of adulthood, but rather, they expand progressively to take in new members. For the Gypsy/Roma child, the family group represents an environment of protection in which emotional bonds generate feelings of self-esteem and security, feelings that are associated with personal and ethnic identity. The stigmatisation of the Gypsy/Roma child in the school often leads to an emotional conflict that goes hand in hand with the loss of security and protection provided by the family.

The Gypsy/Roma family is structured according to age groups: childhood, youth, maturity and old age. Each group maintains a certain autonomy: in the case of the children, with respect to the youth, adult and elderly groups. This kinship dynamic encourages both protection of and autonomy for children. Autonomy is stimulated through cooperation in family responsibilities and the role of apprentice to the adult in the nucleus of the family, which encourages early maturity. Child independence and autonomy are gradually stimulated within this age group structure that simultaneously encourages self-esteem and emotional security.

The age group dynamic gives children both a great deal of autonomy and freedom and at the same time, adult social control, which might seem to be opposing values, but in practice, are highly workable. The adults guarantee children their security and welfare, while the children

play, almost always together in a group, and accompany them in their routine activities while participating in day-to-day family life.

As previously stated, we must always take into account the diversity of contexts in which the Gypsy/Roma groups live, as this factor will introduce notable variations in childhood socialisation processes. Considerable differences can be observed according to the group's socio-economic status, its traditions, ecological medium and lifestyle.

2.1.3. Socio-affective bonds.

The Gypsy/Roma family is the basic socio-educational structure from which an individual receives his or her personal and cultural identity. Here, he or she learns to live as and to be a Gypsy/Roma. What is learnt at home is the fundamental educational base. In the Gypsy/Roma family, moral and cultural values, norms of behaviour and all useful life skills are learnt as a result of the immense affective input bestowed on children by their relations and members of the community as a whole. This affective support is spread from the family to its youngest members. The social group is unified by the love shown by its members towards each other and in the same way, their human relationships are strengthened, both within and outside the group. There is a transfer of love from the family towards the outside world where it becomes of sociological interest. In the context of social interaction, it is often the factor that intervenes and encourages day-to-day coexistence between those involved.

The socio-affective bond forms the framework that supports the process in which the youngest members learn from the adults of the group. The authority of adults to instruct or teach is based on the knowledge they have gained through their greater experience of life. The meaning of life is learnt through daily experience and is passed on through example.

Within the school context, the teachers' positive affectivity towards the pupils is one of the keys to understanding the appraisal of school education by Gypsy/Roma children and their families. Studies previously carried out by this research team¹¹ found that the affectivity shown by the teacher towards Gypsy/Roma children had positive effects on their attendance, performance and school behaviour. These findings were confirmed by ethnographic studies carried out in the school (García, Sama 2002).

The quantitative findings in Spain showed that practically all teachers regarded emotions as an important mediating variable in the relationships with pupils in general, and with Gypsy/Roma pupils in particular. 76.6% of male teachers and 82.1% of female teachers stated that the fostering of affective relationships with all pupils was of maximum importance, while in relationships with Gypsy/Roma pupils these figures remained practically the same (77%) amongst male teachers, but dropped to 74.8% for female teachers. Spanish teacher valuations indicate that the value or importance given to affectivity as a way of relating to pupils in general is very high, but the decrease in this valuation with regard to Gypsy/Roma pupils reflects their lack of awareness of the importance of socio-affective relations in lightening the burden of ethnic pressure that Gypsy/Roma pupils are subject to.

2.2. The effects of ethnic pressure

2.2.1. The ethnic self-concept

¹¹ Prospección de la Escolarización Infantil Gitana/romni en diversas Poblaciones de Andalucía (Giménez Adelantado, 1998)

The child becomes aware of his or her identity as Gypsy/Roma as opposed to non-Gypsy/Gage within the family, and assumes this identity with dignity and pride. From an early age, they learn who the non-Gypsy/Gage are and discover the existence of two worlds, their own and that of the non-Gypsy/Gage, although they generally do not meet non-Gypsy/Gage until they go to school. However, within the school environment, away from the family and in contact with the non-Gypsy/Gage world, the discovery of this difference is often traumatic. The distinction between the two is no longer positive, and the fact of being Gypsy/Roma becomes an insult. Pride in their identity begins to disappear, and the discovery of the difference is often accompanied by a profound emotional crisis. The social settings in which prejudice is reinforced and the contrast between non-Gypsy and Gypsy/Roma are many: the school, in shops, on the television, in bars, in films, in the press, to name just a few. In certain social and educational contexts, especially in the most underprivileged environments, Gypsy/Roma children are so aware of the significance of the stigma attached to Gypsy/Roma that their response is expressed in a desire “to be non-Gypsy/Gage”. This tragic conflict of identity often begins to show itself from the age of three in groups of children attending school, and increases in the most underprivileged and marginalised sectors (Sama, 2002, García 2002).

The socialisation of the Gypsy/Roma child in the groups studied is articulated through the construction of opposing and ethnocentric relations towards the non-Gypsy/non-Roma/Gage. Basically, it amounts to a response to exclusion and the processes of marginalisation. Nonetheless, the opposing relations between the Gypsy/Roma and the non-Gypsy/Gage are neither rigid nor permanent, and are highly diverse, depending on the group and the extent of its exclusion from and/or inclusion in mainstream society. In other words, when there is a more fluent inter-ethnic relationship and the level of social integration is higher, the child’s socialisation processes are articulated around understanding and communication, and the discourse of opposition between the group and the majority is diffused.

The relations of opposition involving feelings of fear, rejection and anguish are also projected onto the Gypsy/Roma child through the family’s protection of the child. Aware of the exclusion suffered by their children, families strengthen their defensive and protection strategies. However, these strategies also are present in many forms, depending on the structural position of the group, its lifestyle and its relations within the social and cultural context. In general, the Gypsy/Roma regard the welfare of the child as an absolute principle in the upbringing process.

2.2.2. Ethnic pressure

Within the school context, as well as the lack of recognition of Gypsy/Roma culture, we must add a further fundamental reality that goes towards explaining the Gypsy/Roma child’s relations with the school, which we have termed “ethnic pressure”. This is defined as the psycho-social relation established between the majority and, in this case, the Gypsy/Roma minority, and is shaped through negative social control, which includes attitudes such as rejection, exclusion, fear and confrontation, oriented towards processes of segregation. A priori, it must be pointed out that the way the concept of ethnic pressure will be used here is explained within the framework of “ethnicisation” processes as a classification for the benefit of the hierarchy. In the relationships we are concerned with between the non-Gypsy/Gage majority and the Gypsy/Roma minority, ethnic pressure is a two-way process, and is articulated and directed both between and against the two groups. Nonetheless, it must be taken into account that the efficacy of this ethnic pressure, in other words its ability to exclude and segregate “the other”, is directly related to the power held by the majority group.

In most of the school contexts studied, we have verified the effect of what we term ethnic pressure on the Gypsy/Roma pupils, which is defined by the articulation of prejudices, stereotypes and stigmatisation processes used by the non-Gypsy/Gage majority to exclude and segregate Gypsy/Roma children. The ultimate causes of this dynamic of exclusion, as pointed out by Berta Chulvi (2003) are rooted in the deep psychosocial relations between the majority and the marginalised minority. Ethnic pressure is revealed in both verbal and non-verbal communication, in the educational and recreational activities in the school, in the use of space and in general, it increases in any activity within the school environment in which inter-ethnic communication takes place. However it should be pointed out that precisely this “non-communication”, with its implied segregation and the expression of this segregation through the ghetto, is at the same time an indicator of maximum inter-ethnic pressure. Obviously, ethnic pressure is greater in integrated school contexts attended by both Gypsy/Roma and non-Gypsy/Gage pupils, but segregated contexts are not exempt from this reality, although in this case ethnic pressure takes on a subtle difference in the form of intra-ethnic pressure between different Gypsy/Roma groups. One of the consequences of ethnic pressure and of the network of prejudices, stereotypes and stigmas associated with it is the deterioration in the self-concept the Gypsy/Roma child has of him or herself. When faced with social rejection, feelings of incapability and intellectual inferiority develop that have drastic effects on their instrumental learning processes and their social relationships with the school.

2.2.3. Ethnic pressure in the school context

The gradation shown by this ethnic pressure makes it impossible to establish an exhaustive classification of pupils’ reactions to it. Despite the complexity of analysis involved, our research contributes some significant interpretations in this area. We know that starting school comes as a shock for the children in many of the groups studied (García, Sama, Tauber, 2002), as shown by the ethnographic studies in various contexts. Gypsy/Roma children, particularly those whose families do not maintain healthy relationships with the non-Gypsy/Gage social context, perceive their experience at school as a breaking up of norms and symbols, but above all, they have a clear awareness and perception of the prejudices, stereotypes and negative images projected about them in the school environment by both classmates and teachers. In sum, the Gypsy/Roma is fully aware of ethnic pressure.

In an overview of all the groups, we find Gypsy/Roma children who suffer extreme emotional pressure brought about by this stigmatisation process. Marginalised from “normal school learning” and excluded from the non-Gypsy/Gage social networks of the school, they experience their identity as Gypsy/Roma as a stigma, as the school itself projects it as such and it is thus internalised by the child. Frequently they incorporate the stigma to form a part of their own personal, social and ethnic identity and social representation they have of themselves. The dangerous connotations this has for the learning context and within the framework of a meritocratic institution like the school are obvious.

Once again it must be emphasised that while we are dealing with findings about the Gypsy/Roma child in school, not every one of these children experience ethnic pressure, and when they do, it is not always experienced in the same way, nor with the same intensity. Ethnic pressure becomes visible through the inter-ethnic relationships between the children in the school. Our quantitative analyses therefore examine the frequency and quality of their school relationships.

The quantitative data from the research show similar tendencies and confirm the ethnographic findings on ethnic pressure. In the Spanish context, we explored the frequency and cordiality of the relationships the children established in order to investigate the implicit relations

they maintain and in the exclusion processes they experience, as indicators of ethnic pressure. Our findings were highly significant. Average scores for interaction rates indicate that intra-ethnic relationships (7.4 on a scale of 10) are more frequent and cordial than inter-ethnic relationships (6.5 on a scale of 10). Children have more and better relationships with those of their own ethnic group, and although significant differences in terms of gender were not found, slight differences amongst age groups were detected.

Interaction between Gypsy/Roma and non-Gypsy/Gage children was slightly higher in pre-school groups (3-6 year-olds) and in secondary education. In this vein, it should also be highlighted that these groups show better results in terms of performance and school behaviour. Therefore, the reduction in ethnic pressure implicitly brings with it an improvement in social relations between children which is one of the factors that favours good school performance.

In this sense, the ethnographic studies carried out indicate that in school contexts where positive inter-ethnic relations are favoured, and that involve a framework of fluent communication in which prejudices are reduced, school performance and children's satisfaction levels visibly improve (García 2003). The role of the teacher and his or her attitudes towards the group are decisive in creating a positive relationship, as demonstrated in the work of García (2003) and Tauber (2002) on the role of the teacher. The findings of the quantitative research are similar in this respect, and indicate that Gypsy/Roma pupils obtain higher scores on school behaviour when their teachers accord greater importance to the demonstration of positive affectivity towards Gypsy/Roma pupils in particular (Martínez, 2002)

Furthermore, we are aware that as the socialisation process progresses, children learn to define their cultural differences, prejudices and negative representations of the other group. For this reason, they perceive ethnic pressure more clearly in their relationships from the age of 6 to 8 onwards. In the Spanish context, the secondary school pupil shows signs of easier interaction, as we have already mentioned, but this does not represent a substantial improvement in relationships at school; rather it is due to the huge number of Gypsy/Roma pupils who drop out of school, and the consequent over-representation of positive relationships in the few who do continue studying (Alfageme, Martínez 2002).

The diversity of the Gypsy/Roma child's response to ethnic pressure leads to it being expressed in a whole range of subtly different ways. Certain tendencies point towards what we have termed "double reaction", which is based on the fact that Gypsy/Roma pupils exposed to situations of ethnic pressure react in two contrasting ways within the school context: "invisibility" and "negative hyper-visibility". These reactions are the two extremes of a wide scale of diverse responses.

One of the most frequently found strategies in the various contexts, and especially when the Gypsy/Roma are a minority, or at a clear disadvantage, is the first of these responses, "invisibility". In different ethnographic studies, Gypsy/Roma pupils opt to behave in a chameleonic way in the class. They do not externalise any differences in behaviour or speak their language in school (Tauber 2002) and a prolonged, deep silence is their response to any situation of tension or conflict (García, 2002). This process of ethnic "invisibilisation" is a social interaction strategy within the school. Gypsy/Roma children know that their ethnicity is perceived as conflictive, and for that reason, they hide it. In many contexts, this strategy is strengthened by the attitudes of the teachers, who by denying the diverse ethnic identity of their pupils, make it invisible. On this point, it is highly significant that many Spanish teachers interviewed in the study stated that "*you can't tell they are Gypsies*".

At the other end of the scale of possible Gypsy/Roma pupil responses and strategies to cope with ethnic pressure is "negative hyper-visibility". This is seen in groups of Gypsy/Roma children who respond with disruptive behaviour, hyperactivity, aggression and violent attitudes

towards both their teachers and classmates. The ethnographic studies carried out in different groups (Sama 2002, García 2002, Giménez 1994) show how these pupils respond to ethnic pressure and to the feelings and emotions that it brings by rebelling. They meet aggression with aggression and visibly and intentionally break the rules of the school. Their reaction strategy to ethnic pressure is articulated in terms of the scandal resulting in the school context when the established rules are flagrantly broken. The obstreperous insults, public slights, physical violence or fighting that represent a brutal attack on the teacher's authority (Sama, García 2000) is a reflection of the rebelliousness against the system. The scandal that these reactions prompt in the school reinforce negative representations and decisively contribute to the construction of the negative image of the "Gypsy/Roma pupil", who in turn, responds by increasing his or her strategies of aggression towards the school, all of which forms part of the damaging dynamic of escalating conflict.

This behaviour frequently corresponds to the social expectations held by the education community of the Gypsy/Roma pupil. The rebelliousness and negative attitudes through which it is expressed takes the form of a representative Gypsy/Roma identity that is then used by the Gypsy/Roma pupil to offset the mechanisms activated by ethnic pressure to deny their identity. The hyper-visible pupil becomes a reference for his or her Gypsy/Roma classmates, and is endowed with the quality of leadership derived from their support, and they in turn become his or her silent band of accomplices. The hyper-visible pupil's charisma is sustained precisely through the forcefulness of his or her demand for ethnic visibility through conflict.

Thus, we find at one end of the scale, the Gypsy/Roma child who adopts a mimetic or chameleonic strategy in a hostile setting, who defends him/herself behind a wall of silence and with absolute deference to the school rules: the invisible pupil. At the other extreme, the hyper-visible pupil is characterised by his or her hostile, violent and aggressive behaviour, and challenges ethnic pressure through conflict. The hyper-visible pupil is the archetypal Gypsy/Roma pupil whose socio-educational image is frequently generalised to all Gypsy/Roma.

Invisibility and hyper-visibility are the extremes on a wide scale of school interaction modes adopted by the Gypsy/Roma child. Most bear the burden of ethnic pressure in accordance with the social and cultural resources of their family environment, which in turn are shaped by the vast heterogeneity of ecological and social contexts shared by the groups.

2.2.4. Teachers' perceptions of Gypsy/Roma pupils.

Interaction at school and the implicit effects of ethnic pressure it bears is analysed through an evaluation of Gypsy/Roma pupil behaviour. In relation to this, we are aware that teacher evaluation of their pupils' school behaviour or conduct, although subjective, is an important indicator that reveals their perception of the Gypsy/Roma pupil. An example of this, within the Spanish context, is that Gypsy/Roma pupils in general present a lower average evaluation: 6.1 (on a scale of 0 to 10) than the non-Gypsy/Gage with an average of 7.5. Undoubtedly, these average values of Spanish Gypsy/Roma pupils' conduct are influenced by the evaluation obtained by the children we have defined as "hyper-visible", who present disruptive and even aggressive conducts when faced with a setting they find hostile.

Yet this data on its own does not show the multiplicity of factors and different representations held by teaching staff about Gypsy/Roma and non-Gypsy/Gage pupils. For this reason, we set out to show how teachers' evaluations of their pupils' personal and psychosocial characteristics are classified, and the relation these configurations reveal to certain educational aspects such as school performance, conduct and absenteeism.

The main aim of this type of analysis is to isolate the factors that define the characteristics of Gypsy/Roma pupils and that affect their interaction at school. While it would be possible to

remove the bias in these evaluations, made by the teachers themselves, this subjectivity represents their own perceptions of the pupils, and therefore has a major influence on the type of relationships at work in the classroom. Through factorial analyses, we identified the underlying variables, or factors, that explain the evaluations made by the teachers of their pupils' personal and psychosocial characteristics. The purpose of this was to reduce data from the in-depth evaluation previously carried out (sensitivity, curiosity, extroversion, emotional etc.) on each pupil in order to be able to define pupil profiles. These profiles are obviously not objective realities, but rather, real perceptions. The purpose of this was to determine what type of perception the teaching staff had of Gypsy/Roma pupils and make them visible through quantification (Martínez 2002).

On examining the correlations between the various evaluations made by the teachers on these pupil characteristics, we identified four factors that show four specific pupil profiles which we have termed as follows: positive personality, negative personality, needy personality, charismatic school personality. The most significant data revealed by the analysis of pupil evaluations is that variations in personality profiles are different in Gypsy/Roma pupils and non-Gypsy/Gage pupils.

Of the four profiles defined, two are common to all pupils. The first is that of the positive personality, to which personality and school related factors such as extroversion, good classmate qualities, good performance, emotional nature, etc are associated. When correlations between Gypsy/Roma pupils and certain variables we regard as basic to school interaction are analysed, we confirmed that the positive personality profile in Gypsy/Roma pupils presents better school performance and better behaviours. The second common profile is the needy personality profile, where pupils demonstrate a need for attention, affection and approval.

In contrast, the other two profiles present differences between Gypsy/Roma and non-Gypsy/Gage pupils. One of the most outstanding of these divergences is that the charismatic school personality profile is not detected in Gypsy/Roma pupils. This profile is defined by characteristics such as curiosity, independence and leadership associated with good school performance. A further important variation is that in the case Gypsy/Roma pupils, the negative personality profile, defined by characteristics of aggression, hyperactivity and impulsiveness, also includes the leadership factor. In other words, in contrast to their perceptions of non-Gypsy/Gage, teachers perceive a profile of the negative leader associated with aggression, hyperactivity and disruptive classroom conduct in Gypsy/Roma pupils. These three factors referring to the Gypsy/Roma pupil personality account for 61.5% of the variation observed.

The most significant contrast in the factors obtained to explain the configuration of the teachers' evaluations of their pupils' personalities is in the placing of the "leadership" variable in factors that bring together different personality characteristics according to cultural background. The conceptual configuration of leadership in the class referring to Gypsy/Roma pupils is completely opposite to that referring to the non-Gypsy/Gage. Gypsy/Roma leaders present an aggressive, extrovert, hyperactive and impulsive profile, which we have termed "negative" leadership. In other words, they are popular with their classmates who respect them because of their rebelliousness. In contrast, the non-Gypsy/non-Roma leaders present a profile characterised by curiosity, perfectionism and independence, which we have termed "positive" leadership. These pupils are popular with their classmates who admire them for their school achievements and charisma.

The quantitative data gathered from teacher perceptions of the Gypsy/Roma pupil profile and their inter-ethnic relationships reveal the Gypsy/Roma pupil reaction to ethnic pressure. These dynamics have been confirmed by data from the ethnographic studies of the school carried out in various contexts.

2.3. Processes of ethnic segregation.

If we analyse the Gypsy/Roma interaction processes in the school from a diachronic perspective, we could say that the segregation of Gypsy/Roma pupils is a traditional dynamic. In the school environment, ethnic segregation is often associated with the run down physical condition of the school buildings, with destructureation and malfunction, and in general, with high pupil failure rates. Yet this situation does not always occur, and for this reason, I propose that we analyse the data obtained from the various studies in the project by considering the ethnic segregation in schools within their context, in other words, by considering the internal and external factors that shape what we might call the segregation processes in the school environment. However, whether we are referring to the past or to the present, contextualisation is of utmost importance in order to demonstrate that throughout history, there have always been groups of Gypsy/Roma children who have been through normal school education, and positively coexisted and participated in classes with their non-Gypsy/Gage classmates. On the other hand, the other extreme cannot be denied. In the general context of the countries studied, there are also a minority of ghetto schools, both functional and run down. In this sense, the applied approach of our research highlights how socio-educational segregation is a disturbing process that terminates in the materialisation of the ghetto school.

The history of schools with Gypsy/Roma pupils from the 1950s onwards is centred around a complex dialectic between the processes of segregation and the almost always frustrated attempts at integration. The first to appear in Spain, France and Italy were Gypsy/Roma schools for Gypsy/Roma pupils. This diachronic perspective allows us to consider how the socio-educational integration policies aimed at the Gypsy/Roma child were paradoxically oriented, either formally or informally, towards processes of segregation. On numerous occasions, the ideology of segregation implicitly underlies the education structures that take an integrated approach. An example of this is compensatory education in Spain, designed in the 1980s to compensate for the lack of education in disadvantaged children. Although the model was a priori well-designed, it became distorted and ended up by many compensatory classes, aimed at providing educational support and back up outside the normal classroom, being converting into segregated areas for Gypsy/Roma pupils, non-Gypsy/Gage children with learning difficulties and children with both physical and sensorial disabilities. Similar experiences occurred in the Lacio Drom schools in Italy, a segregated model which continues to function in some areas. In general, the process of segregation in Italy, as in Spain, has taken place in the ordinary schools themselves with the provision of segregated classrooms or special education classes. In some locations studied, such as Turin and Bolzano, stigmatisation associated with disability was found to be present in Bosnian Gypsy/Roma and Sinti/Roma groups (Tauber 2002, Saletti, 2002). In France, the schools located on the sites and the caravan schools, a process of ethnic segregation continues to exist, the nuances of which are analysed in depth below. But also in the ordinary school structures, Gypsy/Roma children attend specific classes known as “traveller children classes”, “integration classes” or “new-reader classes”, or segregated special education classes with disabled or mentally deficient children (Liegeois 1994).

The external causes of the concentration of Gypsy/Roma pupils in specific schools and of the creation of ghetto schools often lie in the processes of urban concentration of the Gypsy/Roma population. In large cities, segregated schools almost naturally form within the ghetto districts (Marcos, 2002), while similar processes also occur in medium sized cities (Sama 2002). Likewise, the itinerant Gypsy/Roma population is concentrated on sites on the edge of the cities or in marginalised areas. These dynamics of urban exclusion foster processes of segregation in the schools.

In Spain, segregation processes are not only found in ghetto schools, but the harmful results of these processes are particularly felt in a high percentage of ordinary schools in which Gypsy/Roma children are concentrated in particular classes. This constitutes a traumatic and worthless experience for many Gypsy/Roma children, as it does not lead to any improvement in their school performance (García 2002). The ideological discourse on segregation is highly sophisticated. The criteria that are repeatedly seen in most of the contexts studied point to the fact that Gypsy/Roma children cannot be considered to have the same educational level as the children in the normal classrooms, or that their age does not correspond to the course they are on, which leads to their feeling undervalued. They fall below the level of what is being taught in the class and cannot make progress (García 2002). These discourses shape the archetype of the Gypsy/Roma child in the school, based on a set of prejudices that determine the expectations of the education community, and finally materialise as such. Educational class segregation is a real catastrophe for Gypsy/Roma children; every day, their self-esteem and dignity are weakened within a context that on its own, represents an appalling aggression towards the Gypsy/Roma child.

The greater the concentration of Gypsy/Roma pupils, the more difficulties they experience. High concentrations of Gypsy/Roma pupils is also directly linked to the run down state of the schools, their marginality and organisational and pedagogical chaos (Chulvi and García 2002). Urban ghettos are the embodiment of the exclusion and racism suffered by the Gypsy/Roma in many of the contexts studied. This exclusion is reproduced in the ghetto school.

The reality of the ghetto school is complex and multifaceted. In some cases, it is the only chance for Gypsy/Roma children to gain any experience of school, and we could even say that, in given circumstances, they could be workable. Hence, we must not lose sight of the criterion of diversity, since the situation, as we will see, contains numerous complexities. For instance, the reports on the fifteen schools located on French sites show that the fact that they are schools with exclusively Gypsy/Roma pupils does not bring about the socio-pedagogical deterioration normally attributed to segregated schools. In this particular case, we believe that other factors play a part in this type of school, one of the most influential of which is that the teachers in these schools choose to work in these site-based schools. Delphine Bruggeman and Virginie Repair point to the fact that 90% of the teaching staff in these schools, termed specific structures in France, choose to work there out of personal and professional interest. Thus, the profile of the especially motivated teacher has a major influence on the fact that although they are segregated schools, the pedagogical and ideological approach they follow means they cannot be labelled as being associated with degradation in the way the ghetto is.

The opposite situation is found in Spain. An important factor with a major influence on the degradation of the ghetto schools is the huge employment instability of their teaching staff. The basic reason for this high staff turnover is that the assignment of teaching posts operates within a closed system based on quantitative evaluation. Because of the great demand for teaching jobs in schools in the provincial capitals, teachers with a lower evaluation who would not otherwise be able to obtain a post in the cities, take up posts in ghetto schools, despite the fact that they are the most disparaged places to work. In this way, they join the teaching staff of the ghetto school on a temporary basis and for purely practical reasons, as the following year they will be entitled to apply for a transfer to a different school. In some Spanish schools, this staff turnover is as high as 100%, which adds to the difficulties facing the ghetto school.

Only a small minority of the teachers stay in the ghettos permanently. In some cases the success of their pupils' results and the positive interaction they establish with the Gypsy/Roma children and their families are a clear example of the importance of the teacher's personal profile.

In this vein, cases of particularly significant Spanish schools are to be found, which we have termed “consolidated ghetto schools”. Some of the teachers in these schools have a very stable employment record and a strong personal and professional commitment to their Gypsy/Roma pupils. In these cases, despite their segregation, relationships with the families are encouraged, and above all, a continuum between the pupil’s socio-cultural environment and the school is fostered.

Without doubt, the typology of the ghetto school is an important matter, but the fundamental issue is that they be perceived as a concrete reality immersed in a much broader socio-structural context in which subtle forms of segregation fomented by ideology are found. A brief analysis of the Spanish situation may contribute some particularly relevant information on the informal segregation processes that arise at a state level, a situation that occurs in spite of the existence of education policies designed to encourage the integration of Gypsy/Roma pupils. The sociological research carried out in Spain enabled us to detect the existence of schools with very high Gypsy/Roma pupil levels and in some cases, where they were the majority presence. We refer to these as “ghetto-schools”, in which the processes leading to their particular conformation are not only caused by the presence of Gypsy/Roma families, but also that of other minority groups that graduate towards social marginalisation (mainly immigrants, for economic reasons). A significant detail that illustrates this issue is that of a random sample of 830 Spanish schools, 1.7% had a majority of Gypsy/Roma pupils¹². If we extrapolate this data, we estimate that approximately 300 schools across the whole country would be ghetto-schools with a majority and in some cases, exclusive presence of Gypsy/Roma pupils. We consider the ghetto to be one of the most reliable reflections of the existence of latent inter-ethnic conflict that begins as a consequence of, but ends up also being a cause of marginalisation and social exclusion. Good quantitative and qualitative reasons for carrying out an analysis of the phenomenon are to be found here.

The processes that lead to the formation of ghetto-schools must be included in broader dynamic of the distribution of Gypsy/Roma pupils in Spanish schools. The distribution of Gypsy/Roma pupils in school, like that of other ethnic minorities, is a good reflection of the general context of social marginalisation. The dynamic however, is far from simple. There appears to be a contradictory double tendency, the tendency towards the exodus of non-Gypsy/Gage pupils, thereby determining the progressive concentration of Gypsy/Roma pupils in these schools. Finally, large cities appear to be the social environment that most encourages the phenomenon of social segregation¹³.

One of the dynamics that fosters the concentration of Gypsy/Roma pupils in certain schools is the resistance to Gypsy/Roma pupil enrolment. These processes take place both subtly and unofficially and in practice, result in Gypsy/Roma families being denied the possibility of choosing which schools they wish their children to attend. The racist prejudices that underlie these attitudes in schools are also justified by the fear that if Gypsy/Roma pupils are accepted into the school, it will trigger the beginning of a non-Gypsy/Gage pupil exodus process. This fear that non-Gypsy/Gage pupils may abandon the school is a variable that must be carefully taken into account in these processes.

¹² Further information on the distribution of Gypsy/Roma pupils in Spanish schools, according to different variables of special theoretical interest, can be found in the report on the socio-educational integration of the Gypsy/Roma child in the school (quantitative sociological survey).

¹³ With this in mind, the research team intends to analyse the socio-educational situation of the Gypsy/Roma and other minorities in the Spanish rural environment, starting from the hypothesis that the greater physical and social proximity encouraged by the rural lifestyle will greatly contribute to higher levels of communication and intercultural recognition, which in turn will lead to a better socio-educational integration in the school environment.

Underlying the non-Gypsy/Gage exodus process are often prejudices and the most extreme racist exclusion, together with the preference for a homogenous school at a distance from the Gypsy/Roma and the negative social representations associated to them. Ethnic prejudices are at times verbalised, but on most occasions, reasons are given around the discourse of the “good school”. In other words, it is argued that the main objective of families taking their children out of a school with Gypsy/Roma pupils is their search for a school that guarantees to meet all the curricula targets established by law for each stage in the education process. It is certainly true that as well as the racist attitudes and prejudices held by the non-Gypsy/Gage families that instigate the move out of the school, there are also cases where the main worry is the standard of education in the school, regardless of whether or not Gypsy/Roma attend that school. In other cases the arguments about education standards are simply a discourse to conceal radical racist attitudes.

The non-Gypsy/Gage pupil exodus can at times take place on a large scale, to such an extent that it may even culminate in the closure of the school, since the numbers of pupils remaining could be so small that the school would have to close its doors for good. However, not infrequently the ghetto school remains open with a very large majority of Gypsy/Roma pupils. They are usually very run down at both an educational and social level, located in marginal districts and considered as the embodiment of the “Gypsy/Roma problem” in the school. The ghetto school in Spain is thus fashioned as the embodiment and most conclusive proof of the Gypsy/Roma stereotype and ethnic determinism, based on the discourse that the association between conflict and the ethnicity of the group, together with a refusal to consider that the situation might improve precisely because they are Gypsy/Roma.

This structure of the school tends to reproduce the social class system, and in this case specifically, the social underclasses¹⁴. From a critical perspective, society hides its objects of shame behind the ghetto walls. It shuts away and labels those who are different, by specifying a type of social deviation from the majority or, what amounts to the same, by presenting what is outside the ghetto as the correct way of doing things¹⁵. This is reflected empirically in the physical degradation of some of the ghetto-schools we have visited¹⁶. These types of conformation appear to correspond particularly to the consolidated ghetto-schools, which have been operating as such for quite some time. Significantly, others that did not have such a desolate appearance soon disappeared. We therefore have good reasons and data to observe the ghetto as an expression of power, and of the exclusive and determinist ideology of Spanish society.

2.4. Irregularity of school attendance.

The irregularity in Gypsy/Roma pupil school attendance in the school contexts studied is perceived as a serious conflict and the main cause of poor or non-adaptation and of the failure in the education process of these children. Our analyses were specifically oriented towards the numerous factors that underlie this “conflict”. As well as being a cause of multiple malfunctions

¹⁴ The term “underclass” has been used, particularly from critical positions, to refer to social sectors that, rather than being placed at the bottom of the social structure but still inside it, are at the same time on the edge and the bottom of the social structure. The concept of social marginalisation put forward by Teresa San Román also includes this idea.

¹⁵ This line of analysis is inspired by the proposals of Michel Foucault on delinquency.

¹⁶ The building of one of these schools had previously been a prison. The playground had not changed very much since its times as a prison yard, and looked onto a wide road. From the pavement nothing could be seen of what was going on inside. On the other side of the school, the entrance from a street of a marginalised district to the building was through a large old wooden door with no windows. We found a very similar entrance in another school, whose playground at one time would have been visible from the street, but now the metallic fence was totally covered in advertisement hoardings.

in their educational relationships, irregularity in Gypsy/Roma pupil attendance is also an effect produced by causes outside the school (employment niches, population mobility, social segregation etc.). We define the non-attendance for reasons other than the wishes of the pupil and the family as “absence”. Non-attendance also occurs for internal reasons such as ideologies, teacher expectation, socio-affective relationships and cultural interactions, amongst others, and in this case, they are classified as absenteeism. This conceptual differentiation is of paramount importance, as will be seen below¹⁷.

Thus, in the various Gypsy/Roma groups studied, we have confirmed that irregularity of school attendance amongst the Gypsy/Roma pupils is related to causes both inside and outside the school. One example from this research is the ethnographic study carried out by Paola Trevisan in the Sinti Giostrai/Roma group, whose main difficulty in the relationship with the school lies in their employment situation and economic activity. This factor has also been confirmed in other studies. This leads to periods of absence amongst the children who attend school, and the dropping out of school by adolescents once they begin working with their families in the activity they have grown up with, in this case the world of the fairground, and in which they have been socialised through active participation alongside the adult members of the group all their lives. Identical conclusions have been reached in the reports on various other Gypsy/Roma groups studied (Giménez 2001, Sidoti, 2003, García 2002, Sama 2002). The opposite situation also arises, such as that described in the urban ethnography of Melfi, in which the process of social, urban and employment integration in the Rom/Roma group has led to a progressive improvement in children’s interaction within the school context.

The difficulties facing Gypsy/Roma pupils of groups whose specific employment is closely associated to an itinerant lifestyle, such as the Sinti/Roma fairground workers in Italy, the Gitano/Roma casual agricultural labourers in Spain, the Cigano/Roma in Portugal or the Húngaro/Roma in Spain, are seen in their intermittent absences from school. This discontinuity in their presence at school has serious consequences. Firstly, their school results are not positive. They lag behind educationally and attend classes below those corresponding to their age group. This situation, together with their intermittent attendance is a major obstacle to the consolidation of socio-affective bonds both with their teachers and their classmates. Our quantitative research reveals how these absentee pupils or those who are absent from school during certain periods of the year are particularly rejected by their classmates who regard their presence as an “interruption” to the day-to-day dynamic and to “normality” (Giménez 2002, Eina 2003)

It should also be pointed out that absenteeism and absences occur not only in the case of itinerant groups, but also in a great deal of sedentary groups (García 2003, Sama 2002, Faure 2002) and even in long-established Gypsy/Roma groups, absenteeism and absence rates are very high in comparison to their non-Gypsy/non-Roma peers. This situation produces the same effects as those described above: lower academic results, socio-affective disconnection, increased exclusion and prejudice. As will be described in other sections of the report, our quantitative results reveal a close relation between the irregular school attendance and academic performance. For example, in the Spanish case, teachers’ evaluations of the average performance of the absentee Gypsy/Roma pupil is 4.3 (on a scale of 0 to 10) while the same evaluation of pupils with regular attendance rises to 5.1.

The concept of mobility must be understood in its entire broad spectrum. The fact that a large percentage of Gypsy/Roma groups, whether sedentary or itinerant, work in jobs linked to territorial mobility (trading, casual work, fairground work etc.) considerably conditions the real

¹⁷ Carmen Garriga and Salvador Carrasco, lecturers at the Universidad de Barcelona, have contributed to this research with their advice and encouragement. The nuances on the conceptualisation of irregularity in school attendance are part of their contribution to the research.

possibilities of their children attending school regularly. These children are therefore absent from school for justified reasons and as such, they are not strictly “absentees”. The conceptual difference between “absence” and “absenteeism” lies precisely in whether or not the Gypsy/Roma pupil has a real chance of attending school. This is an important fine distinction which also introduces a certain complexity into the analyses and interpretation in that, together with the “absence” that is interpreted as “absenteeism”, we also come across groups who do have the chance of attending school but do not do so: the real absentees.

We have confirmed how the lack of communication between the family and the school community leads to a highly distorted perception of the Gypsy/Roma family’s social reality. In many cases, the education community misinterprets the causes of absenteeism and of absences, and explains them through generalisations that tell us nothing and are made on the basis of prejudice. For instance, teaching staff interviewed in France pointed to the mobility of the family as the main cause of absenteeism. In the strict sense, this is the case, but the real cause of absenteeism are the social and ecological circumstances that go hand in hand with this mobility: problems of where to park the caravans, the high demand by families for limited caravan places, evictions from camps, the enormous distances away from the schools (Repair, Bruggeman, 2002)

Apart from absences caused by this structural situation, a further series of factors must also be taken into account that have a direct effect on failure at school, which include poor results, the differences in school and family norms, lack of communication between the school and the family and the lack of resources and educational material (Paola Trevisan, 2000). These interconnected factors form a web of causes that lead to failure in the Gypsy/Roma child’s integration in the school.

The regularity of school attendance has proved to be one of the indicators most related to all aspects of socio-educational integration. In the Spanish context, we have generally found that in relation to the differences in school attendance patterns, Gypsy/Roma pupils’ inter-ethnic relationships worsen in the case of children defined as absentees. Also in Spain, relationships between non-Gypsy/Gage classmates and “absent” or “absentee” Gypsy/Roma are more conflictive, whereas relationships within the Gypsy/Roma group are not affected by this. It therefore appears that regular school attendance has a positive effect on the frequency and cordiality of inter-ethnic relationships, and the stability in the relationships improves communication between pupils and helps to overcome inter-ethnic prejudices.

The figures relating to patterns of school attendance and ethnic group in the pupils studied in Spain indicate that irregular school attendance affects the Gypsy/Roma pupils almost exclusively, both in the case of school “absence” (with justifiable cause) and “absenteeism” (without justifiable cause), since non-Gypsy/Gage absenteeism is minimal with only a 10% rate of irregular attendance amongst the whole non-Gypsy/Gage school population. In Spain, just over a third of Gypsy/Roma pupils (37%) present “absence” from school, while the figures for “absenteeism” are slightly lower (26%). This signifies that total of 63% of Spanish Gypsy/Roma pupils attend school irregularly. In France the problem reaches similar proportions: 98% of the teachers interviewed stated that their Gypsy/Roma pupils had irregular school attendance records, while in Italy, 84.3% of pupils are classified as absentees.

In order to gather quantitative data on months in which patterns of absenteeism and absences repeatedly occur, we would have had to keep a daily personal record of school attendance across a large sample of Gypsy/Roma pupils in the countries studied over a period of at least one school year. This was beyond the bounds of possibility in this research project, but we do consider this methodology to be a priority in order to gather reliable information on the extent of irregularity in attendance amongst Gypsy/Roma pupils. Data from case studies and previous research are however available that provide us with regionally based information on

more general aspects of irregularity in attendance amongst Gypsy/Roma pupils. (Eina, 2003). Figures on Gypsy/Roma pupil attendance in the schools studied indicate that highest attendance rates occur at the beginning of the school year, and this pattern continues until the month of December, from which time attendance rates progressively drop throughout the rest of the course. An identical situation is observed in the local investigations carried out in France, where responses from teaching staff and head teachers indicate that attendance amongst Gypsy/Roma pupils is especially high during the first months of the school year, in September, October and November. From December onwards, attendance progressively drops until April. The steep drop in attendance is particularly seen from March onwards, and minimum attendance rates are detected in June (Repair, Bruggeman 2002). Despite this similarity between the two countries, it should be pointed out that greater variability is observed in France, due to the diversity in the groups and their lifestyles, which combine sedentary periods with mobility. In addition, different situations occur in different parts of the country, which gives rise to the situation in which some departments have higher attendance rates in September, while in others, attendance is minimal. Of particular significance in France is the fact that in the winter period, when families lead a more sedentary life, Gypsy/Roma pupils attend school more regularly in certain departments. This circumstance shows the importance of the ecological and socio-economic context in the regularity of school attendance amongst Gypsy/Roma pupils.

The differences in regularity of school attendance according to gender is an area we have investigated in detail. Average scores according to age, sex and ethnic group show little difference in the regularity of Gypsy/Roma girls' and boys' attendance. This information is clearly highly relevant to our research, as it enables us to confirm our understanding that gender in Gypsy/Roma pupils is, in many aspects, of secondary importance when compared with other aspects of an ethnic, ecological or economic nature. In this report we describe the importance of learning the moral values and norms associated with social and sexual control to the socialisation process of Gypsy/Roma girls and adolescents. Our quantitative data show how this worldview of many Gypsy/Roma groups is not a determining factor in the rates of regularity with which Gypsy/Roma girls attend school.

Age, however, does affect the regularity of attendance amongst Gypsy/Roma pupils. Attendance is more regular in the youngest age bracket (non-compulsory infant/pre-school education). As children get older, our data reveal a progressive increase in irregular school attendance rates, in both absentee and absent pupil classifications. Absences of varying lengths are directly related to the initiation of the young persons' working life alongside his or her family, a question we have particularly studied in the case of the casual agricultural labourer (Giménez, 2002) but which doubtlessly affects other groups to a greater or lesser extent.

It is highly relevant that the older Spanish Gypsy/Roma pupil, studying in the secondary education system, shows greater regularity in school attendance, indicating higher levels of socio-educational interaction. According to our data, the Gypsy/Roma pupils who reach this stage of schooling are in a minority, which indicates that a large number of Gypsy/Roma pupils have dropped out of school by this time. Regrettably, no data on the number of pupils attending school at this stage is available as they are not registered as such in the schools, but it is clear that preferential educational intervention programmes should be designed for the under 16 age group. Our investigations in Spain indicate the emergence of a polarisation of the pupil profile at all educational levels which is strongly related to high rates of absenteeism, absences and high drop out rates in one third of Gypsy/Roma pupils compared with the small number of pupils, especially girls, who finish secondary education and go on to study at university.

In Spain our qualitative data indicate that a large proportion of irregularity in school attendance takes the form of absence, particularly amongst the Cigano/Roma casual agricultural labourers who move between Spain and Portugal, or the Húngaro/Roma street musicians

(Chulvi, 2002) who follow regular routes around the various Spanish regions, together with the travelling hawker Gitano/Roma scattered across the whole of the country. Similar cases are found in France. Irregular school attendance is caused by the family's employment activities and seasonal work, to which must be added other cultural or religious reasons. But above all, we have confirmed that the main causes of absence, in these cases completely justifiable non-attendance, are the lack of infrastructures, the difficulties families face in finding places to park caravans on the sites and in getting to schools (Bruggeman and Repair, 2002)

The conceptual distinction between absenteeism and absence is of crucial importance when considering the regularity of school attendance amongst Gypsy/Roma pupils. The concept of absenteeism, referring to non-attendance for non-justifiable reasons, is directly due to the socio-pedagogical processes that occur within the school. Clearly, there are numerous causes, but influencing factors include failure at school, ethnic pressure, discord between school and family norms and values and shortcomings in the socio-affective relationships between the child and the school community. On the other hand, the concept of absence is defined as non-attendance amongst Gypsy/Roma pupils brought about by causes outside the school. The causes of this absence are also multiple: territorial mobility of the groups, economic precariousness, employment niches and social exclusion. It should be remembered that our data shows how absenteeism, caused principally by the internal dynamics of the school, affects attendance regularity amongst Gypsy/Roma pupils to a greater extent than does absence. This conceptual discrimination enables us to take our knowledge of this area further and to recognise the urgency of designing intervention projects in the heart of the school, aimed at palliating the high rates of absenteeism, while not forgetting the need to intervene in the case of groups of pupils with absences from school that are almost always a phase preceding the premature dropping out of school.

In Italy, irregular school attendance presents similar parameters. The diversity of situations and the influence of the various urban contexts studied have an effect on the variability in the data on school attendance amongst Gypsy/Roma children. Only 15.7% attend school regularly. This results in low school performance and lack of socio-educational integration in children from all the different groups (Sorani, 2002).

2.5. Compulsory schooling

In the countries studied, different strategies have been employed in the various education policies aimed at encouraging school attendance amongst Gypsy/Roma pupils. These include social measures in the form of financial help for families, or grants to meet the costs of school lunches or books. These intervention policies have been aimed in particular at the most underprivileged Gypsy/Roma families, in an attempt to palliate serious situations of poverty and marginalisation. The efficacy of this intervention model is questionable at a structural level and this is borne out by our data on attendance irregularity. The various case studies undertaken indicate that these are *ad hoc* measures which on occasions can take on a coercive character, but their failure is due above all to the fact that they do not form part of an integral intervention programme that tackles the problem of irregular school attendance as a cause of many other internal and external conflicts experienced by Gypsy/Roma children in the school. Irregularity is first and foremost an effect of a series of social, economic, cultural and educational factors that cannot be resolved through coercion or financial subsidies of varying amounts.

“Compulsory” attendance at school is a coercive strategy carried out in many of the contexts studied. The most common strategy used is to link the payment of social benefits to the

Gypsy/Roma families to the circumstance of their children attending school. This perverse strategy neither takes account of nor intervenes in the structural position of the families, nor does it form part of a more consistent and prolonged strategy either in the school or in the family environments.

The most serious cases we have observed over the duration of the project took place in Spain where a group of fathers were taken to court over this matter and sentenced to terms of imprisonment and given hefty fines for not sending their children to school. Regrettably, this type of repressive policy leads to serious situations for the most underprivileged families who are unable to defend their rights in court. In addition to the suffering and difficulties involved, these policies have no major impact on the attitudes of the families to the school. The prevailing legislation for the protection of minors in Spain is clearly an important legal instrument, but its application requires a knowledge of the social context and a series of integrated measures that have not been developed.

2.6. The stigma of disability.

Leonardo Piasere writes (1986) that the Gypsy/Roma children in the Italian schools are considered as a “problem” and as pupils who are unable to “adapt”. This statement could be extended to many of the localities studied in our research. Structurally, Gypsy/Roma children in school represent a “problem” for the school, and one of the reasons for this perception is the resistance of the school as an institution to question from a critical perspective its own efficacy and structure, and as a result, it invents, to a certain extent, the stigma of disability. The very education of Gypsy/Roma children in the school leads to conflict for the education system since inevitably, they subtly but visibly question the theoretical and methodological foundations of the institution. If the school is there so that children might learn, and Gypsy/Roma pupils do not learn, then they are the problem. But there is a shadow of doubt floating around the institutional environment that from time to time emerges to put forward the question “...and what if the school were responsible?” This is the origin of the conflict and one of the causes of stigmatisation suffered by Gypsy/Roma children at school.

The disability attributed to Gypsy/Roma children through erudite or popular discourses has a wide range of subtleties, but the emotional consequences are all the same to the children, and are manifested in a deep-felt feeling of failure, low self-esteem and suffering at school. These sentiments and emotions are based on the daily perception of the objective fact that most of them are systematically excluded, marginalised and assaulted symbolically, verbally and non-verbally and even physically.

The arguments for disability present many nuances ranging from “different ways of understanding” and “different cultural styles of learning” (Tauber, 2002), to allusions to their “intellectual incapacity” and “neurological limitations” (García, 2002) (Trevisan, 2002). We could establish a wide range of subtleties in the fabrication of disability. In the educational environment, the cause of this disability lies in “culture” in its abstract form, or more specifically in “socialisation”, or “family influence”. In the context of “socialisation”, explanations revolve around concepts such as “wildness”, “lack of civilisation” “lack of education” “aggression” “violence”. Where intellect is concerned, the arguments employed are based on concepts such as “lack of intellectual resources”, “low intelligence quotas”, “non-existent stimulation”, “incoherence and dispersion”, “no capacity for logic”.

All these nuances in the discourse around the disability of the Gypsy/Roma child amount to an attack on the rights of the Gypsy/Roma child and his or her dignity. The invention of disability as a projection of society’s racist prejudices are particularly scandalous when they occur in educational contexts where it is supposed that professionals should have the technical

training and qualifications in their own discipline. But the situation becomes absurd when the discourse on the supposed intellectual disability of Gypsy/Roma pupils is based on psychological tests and trials with an obvious cultural bias. Before they are even carried out, it is known that the results of these tests will be different if they are applied to children of other cultures, and that when they are indiscriminately applied to Gypsy/Roma children, the results obtained are much lower than the average obtained by their non-Gypsy/non-Roma peers. In this way, the intellectual disability of the Gypsy/Roma pupil is also legitimised¹⁸.

The simple fact that, in many of the contexts studied, children in compensatory education have for decades shared both classrooms and teachers with groups of children with special education needs says a lot about the system. In all the contexts studied we have been able to confirm that Gypsy/Roma children are placed in the same classes as all types of disabled children. It is obvious that this situation, which arises from the ideological framework of the education systems studied, gradually leads to a progressive disabling of the Gypsy/Roma pupils socialised in this setting.

In summary, the consideration of Gypsy/Roma pupils as “disabled” or as a “problem” is part of an ideological construct that runs through all the education systems studied. This ideology encourages a stigmatisation that in turn is linked to prejudices and stereotypical representations that aggravate even further the difficult situation facing Gypsy/Roma children in their process of adapting to the school.

Amongst the research undertaken, that of Paola Trevisan on the Sinti Giostrai/Roma group reveals a social image of their children as pupils associated with shortcomings and problems. Once again, we encounter the situation where cultural difference is tackled through the construction of Gypsy/Roma children as disabled pupils, and as a result, assign them to the schools’ neuro-psychiatric teams. This in turn enables applications to be made for more support teachers for the school (Paola Trevisan, 2002). This whole process requires that the children be certified as disabled and brings to light the obvious perversion of the system. These structures serve to demonstrate the extent of malfunction in the school in its attempts to tackle the reality of Gypsy/Roma pupils. Similar situations arise in the other contexts studied, both in Spain and in France.

2.7. Gender and the school

2.7.1. Gender and age

The family upbringing process is conditioned by the two core concepts of gender and age, on which this process turns. The boys accompany and help their fathers and older brothers when they are working, and the adults pass on their knowledge in a practical context. In the same way, the girls help and imitate their mothers and other young women in the housework and care of the babies.

An adolescent, boy or girl, may be considered as an adult if they show sufficient maturity in a social context, regardless of their biological age. The cultural definition of the concept of

¹⁸ When pseudo-science, endorsed by the educational and political systems, employs scientific instruments as instruments of power with the purpose of “classifying” children in general, whether Gypsy/Roma or non-Gypsy/Roma, it develops damaging processes of stigmatisation that attack the basic principles of ethics and democracy and at the same time constitutes a punishable offence in most European legal systems. Clearly, the care of European children with disabilities should be investigated on a transnational scale by independent experts to rigorously study all quantitative and qualitative aspects affecting the care received by these children, whatever their disability (physical, sensorial or psychological) in European education systems.

maturity is largely what defines an individual's social age. Thus, maturity, as a subjective concept, does not only vary from one person, to another, but also from one culture to another.

The daily routine of many of the Gypsy/Roma groups studied is organised by the allocation of responsibilities (García 2002). In theory, there is a clear distinction and sharing out of masculine and feminine responsibilities. The official discourse allocates a basically domestic role to the woman, but the true situation for most Gypsy/Roma women does not coincide with this discourse, as in practice, most work both in and outside the home, and spaces are not delimited in practice. The men are officially not involved in domestic operations even if they are not in paid work. Although in many of the groups studied, the family's financial situation cannot be said to depend on male earnings, this does not alter the idea, generalised in numerous social contexts, that is officially held about the allocation and division of roles.

Gypsy/Roma women socialise in their community in accordance with the norms and roles attributed to them by the gender system. Through the family, socialisation sets down an order that assures the group's existence, continuity and social reproduction. Our research into the various groups has confirmed that the family is the fundamental socio-economic structure of the Gypsy/Roma community. The women's role is crucial to the family structure, and to the economic, political and socio-cultural milieu, but, as in most European societies, the sexual difference is the biological justification that sets out to legitimate the social order that grants greater power and freedom to men than to women. A whole set of norms, prescriptions and prohibitions on sexuality shape gender inequality and officially place men in positions of power above women (García 2002) (Tauber 2002). These prescriptions and prohibitions affect Gypsy/Roma adolescent girls since, as soon as the group considers them to be women, regardless of their biological age, it imposes strict limits to their social interaction, particularly in spaces considered to be dangerous and polluted, in which their status as "honest women", almost always associated with sexuality, might be questioned. The school is considered to be one of these spaces as it is beyond the bounds of the group's social control. The areas of gender and sexuality in the socialisation of adolescent girls are factors that must be carefully taken into account in socio-educational intervention processes due to their influence on the relationship the family has with the school.

In many socio-educational contexts involving the groups studied, it is often argued from an ethnocentric position that Gypsy/Roma girls leave school before boys to take up domestic tasks, and that girls' dropping out of school is linked to the onset of menstruation. However, our quantitative studies do not indicate any gender differences in school drop out rates amongst Gypsy/Roma pupils, and that differences in terms of absences and absenteeism are practically insignificant. In spite of these findings on attendance, we are aware that the question of gender is an influential factor in the school environment. That its influence does not show up explicitly in our quantitative analyses is due to the fact that other more powerful ecological, social and cultural factors intervene in Gypsy/Roma children's interaction at school. In other words, we cannot quantitatively measure the influence gender has on school relationships because other factors that remain latent have a stronger effect in determining these relationships; factors such as the stigma of disability, ethnic pressure and/or racism and exclusion are so strong that they obscure the issue of gender.

2.7.2. Social representations of gender.

The education community's social representations of Gypsy/Roma girl pupils has a major influence on socio-educational relations. This influence is articulated through the negative academic expectations of girls often held by teachers. It is believed and argued that the fact that they are girls implies that they have an intrinsically disadvantaged academic position compared

to that of their male Gypsy/Roma classmates. It is significant that this discourse is not expressed in the case of non-Gypsy/Gage girls. It thus consists of a gender prejudice but which also contains an ethnic element, and assigns Gypsy/Roma girls greater inequality in gender relationships, and therefore places them at a greater social and educational disadvantage. These discourses are transmitted in the school, but are also entrenched in many social settings and refer not only to Gypsy/Roma girls, but also to adult women.

These social images in which negative stereotypes and expectations are combined affect the educational interaction of Gypsy/Roma girls. The negative expectations held by teachers are based on essentialist viewpoints that assign them a “specific school dynamic” determined by their ethnicity which is often associated to failure at school. Prejudices act as a communication barrier and prevent teachers from perceiving many of the factors that intervene in girls’ school interaction that are not due to immutable cultural and ethnic reasons, but rather simply condition these relations. This perception precludes teachers from encouraging girl pupils towards success at school, or to motivating them to continue studying. Clearly, this has a negative influence on their interaction at school (García,2002).

The broad range of stances taken by Gypsy/Roma families on the issue of continuity in the schooling of girls indicates the diversity of values and norms amongst the various groups. As in mainstream society, amongst the Gypsy/Roma population the values and norms are strongly related to gender construction, sexual control of women and girls’ socialisation. In this vein, extremely varied discourses can be found, from the absolute refusal to allow girls to attend school on the grounds that it is a polluted and dangerous space for the girls’ “honour”, through rhetorical discourses on the possibilities of their attending (Tauber, 2002) to the other extreme involving arguments favouring regular attendance.

In the Gypsy/Roma group studied in Valencia, Begoña García reports a deep-rooted relationship between the attitudes of the Gypsy/Roma families to girls’ education and the cultural processes of female symbolisation. She demonstrates how in this group, a bride’s virginity and the entire process of the sexual socialisation of Gypsy/Roma girls sustains the symbolisation of Gypsy/Roma identity, and as such, takes on a crucial importance for the group. This analysis can be applied to numerous other groups, and would go some way to explaining many of the discourses and attitudes held by the families towards the school. Indeed, the fear felt by Gypsy/Roma towards the continued education of young and adolescent girls (Tini lumli, Tauber, 2002)¹⁹ is closely related to the values, sexuality and socio-cultural reproduction of the group (García 2002).

A brief reflection on the values underlying the sexuality of Gypsy/Roma women is required to better understand their effect on the socialisation of the girls in the group and their relationships with the school. Without going into great detail, which would go beyond the objectives of this report, the sexuality of the Gypsy/Roma woman is bound up with the symbolic concept known as “ladj”²⁰ in Romany and which significantly, all groups recognise and employ to refer to the concept of shame. Shame is a value in itself, but it is linked to respect for the laws and norms of the group. The wide diversity of subtle differences found from one Gypsy/Roma group to another must obviously be borne in mind.

What could be termed a bipolar process is often found in the social construction of sexuality. Some groups make the sexual difference between girls and boys hyper-visible, while they are at the same time socially sexless individuals. Significant examples are found in the

¹⁹ The term “tini lumli” is a term of affection used by the Sinti to refer to girls, and is also used in the same way by the Castilian Gitano/Roma and many other groups in Spain. The Gypsy/Roma refer to girls as “zorrinas” or “zorritas” (little foxes) which also means prostitute.

²⁰ As spelt by Elisabeth Tauber 2002.

descriptions by Sara Sama (2002) and Elisabeth Tauber (2002). Yet when puberty is approached, sexual difference determines the socialisation process, and in the case of the girls, everything related to sex and sexual relations becomes taboo.

The process in which sex is made “invisible” is linked to a strict social control over female sexuality and a deep-seated ritualisation of what is polluted and what is pure, what is prohibited and what is allowed. The “shame” defined in relation to sexuality, what the Gypsy/Roma Calé of Spain, Portugal and France know more specifically as “honour” is placed at risk in spaces considered to be polluted and that cannot be controlled by the internal norms of the group. Thus, school is considered as one of these spaces, and as such, the symbolic danger of the school for adolescent girls gives rise to deep fear in the Gypsy/Roma group. If we link this in with the interpretation given by Begoña García (2002) on the symbolic connections of women’s honour as a symbol of group identity, it explains a great deal more, since we are now dealing with an interactive relationship. The concepts of “having no shame” or “loss of honour” are an attack against the identity of the group and mean “no longer being Gypsy/Roma”. This symbolic connection enables us to recognise the extent to which group fear surrounding the schooling of girls on the edge of adolescence is justified.

To conclude these reflections, the wide spectrum of subtleties and interpretations of these values, both from one Gypsy/Roma group to another and within the group itself must be highlighted. If we lose sight of this diversity, we are directly reifying and distorting an explanation, which should simply be taken as the framework for an explanation, and not as an explanation in itself arbitrarily applied to any individual or group.

Clearly, the values described here form an important part of the cultural construction of gender for the Gypsy/Roma groups and of their understanding of the socialisation of girls and boys within the group. This reality has major consequences in the various social and educational contexts, the first of which is the widespread social myth reproduced in the educational context about the subordinate position of girls in the Gypsy/Roma group.

2.8. Use of language in the school context

Gypsy/Roma pupils in school do not use the Gypsy/Roma language, Romany, frequently out of a wish to protect the integrity of the family, as the vast majority of children realise that their language forms part of the private world and the intimacy of the family. On occasions, Gypsy/Roma children use it amongst themselves as an element of coded conversation to prevent non-Gypsy/non-Roma from understanding them, and hence the language becomes a means of protection for the group. We have observed differences amongst the groups studied in the extent to which Romany is known, from children for whom it is their first language, especially in France and Italy, to others who only remember and use a few words, the vestiges of a lost language. The latter case is particularly common in Spain.

However the analysis of the use made of Romany by Gypsy/Roma pupils in school is only one part of the linguistic context. Other factors have a major influence. Most of the groups studied in Europe use the language of each context in a specific way, since ethnic boundaries are also drawn in the language of each group. This situation is borne out by information from the ethnographic studies undertaken. In the city of Evora, as in other Portuguese contexts, we have seen how Cigano/Roma children speak Portuguese, but to a large extent it is “Gypsy/Roma Portuguese” full of the group’s own idioms, vocabulary and expressions and incomprehensible to the non-Gypsy/non-Roma/Gage. The work of Sara Sama (2003) reports how the Cigano/Roma children of Evora know very little of the Portuguese spoken in the school. A similar situation occurs in France (Canizzo,1996). Linguistic boundaries exist in the school, even when the same language is spoken, and also occur in many groups. Simona Sidoti describes how this

phenomenon is present amongst Italian non-Gypsy/non-Roma/Gage groups such as the Caminanti/Gage. These are dialectophone groups, meaning they speak their own dialect, which is distinct from that spoken by the majority group.

The findings on language made by Simona Sidoti, in reference to the Sicilian Caminanti/Gage can be applied to all the Gypsy/Roma groups studied. Sidoti reports how, in the school, these forms of code switching are interpreted as a linguistic disadvantage that leads to social disadvantage. In various contexts, we have confirmed that the social system in general and the education system in particular, penalises these children who, despite being “native speakers”, make particular use of different languages. These linguistic uses are regarded in many school contexts as an offence against the “intellectual” use of each language which is a central aspect of the school’s role as transmitter of social norms, but is also regarded in the same way in other social contexts.

In addition, the education system frequently regards these uses of language as a facet of Gypsy/Roma pupil “disability”, also linked to a perverse understanding of the concept of “culture”. This gives rise to an educational discourse on the “cultural cause” of linguistic usage without perceiving that their origin is to be found in social and ecological contexts in which cultural identity is a secondary factor.

A wide range of linguistic patterns can be found in the various European contexts studied, both regarding the use of Romany, the Gypsy/Roma language, and in terms of the particular use of language made by the Gypsy/Roma groups themselves. Limited space in this report prevents us going further into relevant details on this issue, and for this reason, we will highlight two questions that are of major importance to Gypsy/Roma pupils as a result of their impact. The first is that the particular use made of language by children from both Gypsy/Roma and non-Gypsy/non-Roma/Gage marginalised groups tends to be interpreted within the school as an example of “intellectual or ethnic disability”. Language and the particular use made of it become a tool used to exclude these pupils from the legitimate culture of the school.

The second question lies in how, with certain Spanish Gypsy/Roma groups, education institutions politically orchestrate the linguistic uses made by Gypsy/Roma pupils to discreetly but effectively encourage ethnic segregation by classrooms in state schools through a perverse use of the pupil’s linguistic assignation. Once again, we can see how language is used as a way to exclude and segregate in the school.

2.9. School performance and irregularity of attendance.

The average academic performance of Gypsy/Roma pupils is significantly lower than that of the non-Gypsy/non-Roma, regardless of age and gender. In France, most of the teachers interviewed (95%) state that Gypsy/Roma pupils experience specific learning difficulties which are reflected in their poor academic performance. The situation is similar in both Spain and Italy. The Spanish teachers interviewed evaluate Gypsy/Roma pupil academic performance with an average of 4.3 out of 10, much lower than the 6.9 of their non-Gypsy/non-Roma classmates. It is particularly significant that aspects of school performance evaluated in the Spanish study coincide with those of the Italian teaching staff, such as evaluations of attention paid in class (4.1), participation (4.7) and motivation (4.1), all evaluated on a scale of 1 to 10. However, in contrast, the evaluations made by Italian teachers of Gypsy/Roma pupils’ school performance indicate that 60% show a performance equal to or above the average (Sorani, 2002). This could be due to teachers’ evaluations being distorted according to the pupil group evaluated, as has occurred in other contexts. A good example of this is the Spanish case. Although we have confirmed that school performance drops considerably as numbers of Gypsy/Roma pupils

increase in Spanish schools, and that maximum performance levels are found in the ghetto schools, these differences show up as insignificant in the quantitative analyses. We suspect that this might be because teachers' evaluations of their Gypsy/Roma pupils is carried out in relation to the context of the school, in such a way that when the educational situation is in a state of degradation and abandon, a fictitious rise in performance takes place. This is an extremely complex field of research that could be the object of a specific research project itself, in which the variables affecting the positive performance of Italian Gypsy/Roma pupils should be studied in depth.

The investigations undertaken confirm and support our quantitative data on Gypsy/Roma pupils' performance throughout the entire schooling process. An inversely proportional relationship occurs between school performance and pupil age, i.e., the older the pupil, the lower the performance. This aspect has been observed in the qualitative studied carried out and is almost always linked to the social and educational interaction difficulties in the school environment experienced by Gypsy/Roma pupils.

Certain aspects, however, present marked variations in the Spanish findings. In the case of gender, girls on the whole show a slightly superior performance, a tendency that is more evident in the case of Gypsy/Roma girls. In all pupils, both Gypsy/Roma and non-Gypsy/Gage, performance gradually deteriorates with age, but significantly, this drop in performance is greater amongst Gypsy/Roma pupils, especially in primary education. The performance rates of Gypsy/Roma and non-Gypsy/Gage are more alike at the non-compulsory, but relatively widespread, pre-school stage of between 0 and 3 years old, and again in secondary education from the age of 13 onwards, the stage in which the drop out rates soar and only the most integrated pupils remain.

The results on school performance related to attendance patterns provide us with highly significant data. As might well be expected, regular school attendance is one of the most influential factors in all aspects related to socio-educational integration, and therefore in pupil performance. The Spanish figures show that the performance of pupils who regularly attend school is significantly higher, at 5.1, exceeding the general average of 4.3 on a scale of 1 to 10. Logically, lower performances are found amongst absentee pupils who obtain an evaluation of 3.4. Thus, school performance is significantly higher amongst pupils who attend school regularly (Martinez, Alfageme 2002).

Regular attendance has proved to be one of the indicators most closely related to all aspects of socio-educational integration. Irregularity in school attendance in Spain only affects Gypsy/Roma pupils, as the percentage of irregular attendance rises to 64% in the case of Gypsy/Roma pupils, whereas amongst non-Gypsy pupils it amounts to 10%. In the Spanish study, we divided the total of Gypsy/Roma pupils who attend school irregularly (63%) into those who are absent from school, i.e., those whose absence is due to justifiable causes, a total of 37% and the absentee pupils, who account for 26%.

Absenteeism averages in Italy are also very high with only 15.7% of Italian Gypsy/Roma pupils attending school regularly (Sorani 2002). This gives us a figure of 84.3% of Gypsy/Roma pupils with varying degrees of absenteeism. It is highly significant that 56.9% of these pupils miss between 30 and 60 school days, while 18.1% are absent on between 60 and 120 school days. Amongst the most underprivileged, we have found groups of pupils who miss more than 120 school days over the whole course (4.9%) and others who drop out of school permanently (3.4%) (Sorani, 2002). In France, 98% of the teachers interviewed state that their Gypsy/Roma pupils show some absentee conduct. The data speak for themselves. School absenteeism and absences have a decisive influence on poor school performance and in general, on the difficulties of interaction with the school. When the reasons for these absences are studied, we find that on

many occasions the causes are inherent to the lack of provision of adequate infrastructure and of integrated policies (Bruggeman, Repair, 2002).

The Spanish figures show that school performance is related to socio-economic level. It is particularly worth mentioning that significant differences only appear in the low and medium socio-economic levels amongst Gypsy/Roma pupils. However, this comparison is the basic socio-economic comparison within the Gypsy/Roma population, as most of this group (N=269) falls within the low socio-economic level. Situations of precariousness and poverty are those that lead to the lowest levels of school performance, and in general, of socio-educational integration in the school.

Firstly, *school performance*, regardless of cultural background, greatly improves when positive personality characteristics are present. However, personal characteristics that affect school performance differ according to cultural background. In the case of Gypsy/Roma pupils, their well below average performance leads teachers to perceive a need for attention, affection and approval in these pupils, which significantly, they do not perceive in the case of low performing non-Gypsy/Gage pupils. This perception of Gypsy/Roma pupils has been confirmed in various ethnographic studies in schools (Sama, García.2002). Teachers perceive that they have to make up for the lack of emotional content in the lives of their Gypsy/Roma pupils. In fact, in most cases, this is a subjective perception that is very closely related to the construction and invention of the figure of the Gypsy/Roma child as lacking in affection, unprotected, and at a disadvantage in comparison with the other pupils.

Furthermore, non-Gypsy/Gage pupil school performance varies in accordance with negative personality characteristics (aggression, hyperactivity and impulsiveness), which lead to a lowering in performance amongst these pupils. In psychological terms, these characteristics form part of a hyperactive disorder characterised by low attention span, which in turn negatively affects their school performance.

In contrast to the non-Gypsy/Gage pupil, the school performance of Gypsy/Roma pupils with a negative personality profile is not lower, which constitutes a fundamental difference between the two groups. This is probably due to the fact that Gypsy/Roma pupils have a lower academic performance than the rest of the class, regardless of their personality profile. In other words, teachers perceive that in matters of performance, the characteristics that tend to negatively affect the dominant pupil group are not evident in the Gypsy/Roma pupil. Teachers identify the need for affection, attention and approval as the cause of poor performance amongst Gypsy/Roma pupils. In the light of the ethnographic studies carried out, these perceptions form part of what we term the construction of the Gypsy/Roma pupil. Our data show how relationships of affection, attention and approval, and in general, close relationships, are basic elements in the socialisation of the Gypsy/Roma child, whereas the teachers interpret these frequent socio-affective expressions on the part of their Gypsy/Roma pupils as resulting from a lack of affection in the family environment.

PART III. The teacher: training, perceptions and diversity of contexts

1. Teacher training and education structures

Most of the Gypsy/Roma children who attend school are enrolled in ordinary schools, usually state funded, but also in the private sector. Yet, as previously mentioned, there are education structures aimed specifically at Gypsy/Roma children that represent the poorest end of the school system. Proof of this can be seen in France, where the 40 caravan-schools (Antennes Scolaires Mobiles) are located over the various departments and in Spain, the 300 or so ghetto

schools from a total of more than 16,000 existing education institutions. In the case of Italy, school back up and therapeutic education classes can be found, together with a small number of specific classes for the Gypsy/Roma population, or special education classes along with a few odd cases of segregated schools left over from the Lacio Drom schools. Organisational models such as compensatory education classes, special education classes or Curricula Support in specific classes are to be found in all three countries.

The very dynamic of these education structures, either forming part of state schools or as separate entities, has an influence on the diversity of teacher profiles and their way of tackling the presence of the Gypsy/Roma pupil in the school. As mentioned in previous sections of this report, the variability in teachers' professional profiles is highly conditioned by the choice available to them as to where they can teach. Our research clearly shows that whether or not the teacher is able to choose in which school, and which pupils, he or she is to work with will have a determining influence on the successful development of his or her teaching. In France, where teachers are able to choose their workplace, the socio-pedagogical relationships in the school show a clear improvement. This has also been observed in the Spanish state-subsidised private schools where teachers actively choose to work with immigrant and/or Gypsy/Roma pupils, and professional motivation and personal involvement in teaching have a highly positive influence on the pupils (García 2002). In contrast, in the Spanish state sector in which teachers do not have this choice, or it is conditioned by factors determined by the administration such as their professional evaluation, or by practical reasons such as proximity to their homes, socio-educational relationships are poorer, above all in schools with high concentrations of Gypsy/Roma pupils.

In France, we have been able to confirm that the teachers working in the so-called specific structures interact much more closely with the Gypsy/Roma pupils, their families and their cultural context, all of which contributes to a more capable and efficient profile of the teacher in the realisation of his or her teaching work. Clearly the same situation arises in other contexts studied, both on the Italian sites and Spanish schools with high concentrations of Gypsy/Roma pupils. A series of factors tends to arise in these "special" contexts that leads to an improvement in socio-educational relationships. The regular contact, often in the home environment, maintained by teachers with the Gypsy/Roma families is one example of this. From these relationships, the teachers get to know the family background of the children in their classes, and the difficulties they face, which in turn leads to a greater mutual understanding and improved communication. The most motivated and interested teachers benefit from this positive coexistence with the Gypsy/Roma families, gaining practical knowledge of the social norms and values as well as the practices of relationships and communication that will be extremely useful to them in the classroom. This practical learning experience is regarded as a privilege by a minority of teachers, since generally in the education system, neither the time nor the space is available in which to foster such encounters between families and schools. According to our research, university training in these subjects is also a privilege available to only a few. Our quantitative data reveal that these "privileged" teachers constitute a marginal group, as those who are trained in these subjects are few and far between. Furthermore, this type of training tends to be sporadic, not usually standardised and often falls outside the official training processes. The teachers themselves, particularly those working in specialised structures, are the ones who point out the importance of this type of training and show both interest and motivation in receiving further training in these areas.

In terms of gender, over 75% of Spanish teachers are women. This figure reflects the growing tendency for women to take up professions in the area of social and education sciences, while men are more likely to be found in the fields of science and technology. This tendency is more marked in Italy where women make up 93% of the teaching staff. The figures for Spain

show no major influence of the effect of gender on the socio-educational dynamic, except in slight variations in training and in certain expectations or perceptions. Our ethnographic studies have also revealed that gender has very little effect either on the relationships with the families, or on the image the families have of the school. However, the diversity of the European contexts is extremely wide, and with regard to this issue, we have observed that the social representation of the school held by certain Rom/Roma and Sinti/Roma groups is negatively influenced by the fact that the teachers are women. This is a direct result of the fact that the woman's role in terms of power is dependent on the man, and the school, as an institution represented by women, is undervalued by certain groups.

Data from our ethnographic research clearly indicate that amongst the minority group of teachers with specific training in Gypsy/Roma culture, all the indicators of their pupils' socio-educational relationships improve. Regrettably, the vast majority of teachers have had no specific training, and when they have, it is sporadic and insufficient. Further diversity is found with regard to the general academic training received by teachers. Our findings indicate that more than half Spanish teachers (56.3%) have only completed teacher training for infant and primary school levels. Of the remaining 43.7%, 15% have an education related degree, while the remaining 28.8% hold other degrees or studies, in all likelihood related to the subjects they teach in the secondary education system. Most Italian teachers, 63%, have a teaching certificate for infant and primary school levels (Diploma di Maturità) while 37% also have degrees (Diploma di Laurea). It is also significant that 93% of Italian teachers attend training courses on various subjects related to their professional activity, 9.4% of which are of an inter-cultural nature. Of the French state school teachers interviewed about their initial training, the majority (80%) only had general training with no specific content on inter-cultural issues. In contrast, of those working in specialised structures (caravan-schools amongst others), 22.5% have received specialised training for general inter-cultural educational contexts. A further group (23%), state that they have received specialised training related to Gypsy/Roma pupils in various contexts, in associations such as ASET and public entities such as CEFISEM. In Italy and Spain, teachers working in special or compensatory education receive specific training on Gypsy/Roma pupils through associations and teacher training centres known as CEFIRES.

The ethnographic studies carried out reveal that teachers' attitudes, their teaching styles, their ability to communicate and their pupils' success all improve when bonds of positive coexistence and are established and the two parties get to know each other in the Gypsy/Roma pupils' family and social setting. This coexistence improves understanding of the children's culture, values and social strategies. This information is highly beneficial to the classroom dynamic, as the teacher knows the context the pupils come from and is able to establish closer, quality communication. We believe that knowledge of Gypsy/Roma culture favours the Gypsy/Roma pupils' socio-educational integration. Despite the growing interest amongst teachers for information on inter-cultural issues, only 24.4% of Spanish teachers have taken part in training activities related to Gypsy/Roma pupils. 12% of these teachers identify the activities they have taken part in as attending courses, talks and conferences on inter-cultural issues, 12.4% have carried out integration work, amongst other activities, with the Gypsy/Roma population through Gypsy/Roma NGOs, 1.8% have participated in or collaborated with the Association of Teachers with Gypsy/Roma and 0.8% with the Foundation Secretariado Gitano.

As mentioned above, although few Spanish teachers have participated in training activities on subjects related to the Gypsy/Roma, interest in the area is growing. This is demonstrated by the 46.8% of women teachers and 47.7% of men who regard a knowledge of the Gypsy/Roma pupils' social and cultural reality to be very important, and express interest in receiving training in inter-cultural matters. In Spain, 21% of men teachers and 33.7% of women teachers express a

great interest in receiving specialised training while a high percentage (44.5% women teachers and 34.4% men teachers) claim to be quite interested in receiving this type of training.

Obviously not all teachers value these issues in the same way, and this is revealed in the degree of importance and interest they show. It would be unreasonable to argue that the scant importance and interest given to the issue by some teachers was a consequence of their lack of concern over the socio-educational problematic surrounding Gypsy/Roma pupils, and as a result, we consider that the above evaluations reflect the complexity of working with pupils from a variety of cultural backgrounds, and of the difficulties involved in training and adapting psychopedagogical principles to such a diverse group of pupils.

The evaluation given by teachers to their own knowledge of Gypsy/Roma culture (traditions and history, family structure, language, living conditions and socio-employment situation) is therefore very significant. Ignorance of Gypsy/Roma culture is widespread. Of the various aspects of Gypsy/Roma culture mentioned, it would seem that Spanish teachers are most ignorant about their traditions, history and language. In general, the absence of social bonds between teachers and Gypsy/Roma pupils is an obstacle to attaining this knowledge.

2. Perceived difficulties.

Most Spanish teachers (63.3%) state that they experience difficulties on a daily basis with their Gypsy/Roma pupils, compared with 37.3% who claim not to have these difficulties. School absenteeism is said to be the main problem, as 23.9% of the 63.3% claiming to experience difficulties consider irregular attendance to be one of the most important problems amongst the Gypsy/Roma population. Linked to school absenteeism, 21.3% consider there to be a lack of interest and motivation towards schooling on the part of the families. Some teachers also consider that parental lack of interest and participation make their job more difficult, as they do not stimulate employment expectations in their children. Discipline problems, difficulty in accepting norms and acquiring habits (study, hygiene, etc.), together with a lack of integration in the group and low school performance are other most frequently mentioned difficulties. Some teachers claim to have difficulties in working with Gypsy/Roma pupils in terms of cultural difference ('their cultural and psychological level is different from that of the non-Gypsy/Gage) while others mention the shortages within the education system or ignorance of Gypsy/Roma culture ('the curricula and texts do not cover Gypsy/Roma cultural issues'), and finally, others consider that the difficulties of working with these children lie in the problems facing teachers in tackling the diversity in the class (lack of resources).

As can be seen in the Spanish case, and will be described below in relation to other countries, teachers perceive the difficulties to be connected to the context outside the school. They describe conflict situations such as irregular attendance, lack of norms, cultural or other differences, but the causes of these difficulties are always sought beyond the school (family, social situation, culture) or in the Gypsy/Roma pupil (lack of norms, lack of interest). Yet in the responses they give on perceived difficulties, they hardly ever allude to factors related to the actual role of the teacher. However, our analyses of teacher profiles indicate that this influence is a fundamental part of the school dynamic. In the indicators showing the influence of teacher character and attitude on Gypsy/Roma school attendance regularity, similar tendencies are seen to those revealed in the ethnographic observations carried out, thus confirming what we expected. When teachers have greater experience of working Gypsy/Roma pupils, are more disposed to recognising cultural diversity and give more importance to showing the emotional side of their nature, Gypsy/Roma children's attendance at school tends to show more signs of regularity. These effects are not so marked as to be statistically significant, but the relationship

tendencies they indicate have been confirmed by both sociological and ethnographic observations in a range of school contexts.

The same perceptions noted by Spanish teachers are found amongst their French counterparts. Numerous French teaching staff and head teachers give “lack of motivation” in both pupils and families, together with the “mobility” that forms part of their lifestyle as reasons for absenteeism amongst Gypsy/Roma pupils. For teachers in ordinary schools, lack of motivation is the main cause of absenteeism, whereas on the other hand, teachers working in specialised schools (caravan-schools and site-based schools) point to mobility, evictions from the sites and health problems as the main causes. The difficulty of getting a place on the sites is the reason most frequently given by teachers who witness the problems faced by these families on a daily basis. They also point to the financial difficulties faced by the families and the long distances from the sites to the schools, both of which have a negative effect on regular school attendance. That the teachers working in specific structures point out concrete ecological causes (problems of settling in camping areas etc.) as being linked to poor school attendance is highly significant, and is a real indication of the proximity and contact these teachers have with their pupils’ families.

The Italian teachers’ accounts of difficulties at school appear to focus particularly on the rejection of school norms, with 38% pointing to this factor as a principal difficulty. Lack of family support is regarded by 20.4% as a major problem, together with language problems and lack of basic knowledge (18.4%) and self-exclusion (10.9). That 8.3% of Italian teachers are critical of the education system itself, and consider both the school system and the teachers themselves to be inadequate is one of the surprising findings in the Italian context. This response did not surface in either Spain or France, and is an important detail in that it expresses certain self-criticism towards the education system, in contrast to the most frequent response in which the source of the difficulties is generally located outside the school. In addition, most Italian teachers, 77.4%, consider that the presence of Gypsy/Roma pupils has a negative effect on the class dynamic. Of this 77.4%, 58% put this negative influence down to the Gypsy/Roma child’s cultural characteristics and the reciprocal prejudice between Gypsy/Roma and non-Gypsy/Gage.

Concerning the main difficulties facing Gypsy/Roma pupils at school, the French teachers identify the process of getting down to learning and the school routines as causing the most difficulties for the Gypsy/Roma child (55% and 50% respectively). The idea that difficulties tend to come from the differences between the culture of the family and that of the school is also widespread (61%), while a further 32% point to sporadic attendance and starting school late as key factors.

Amongst the French teachers, 69% claim to have specific difficulties with their Gypsy/Roma pupils. We have verified that teachers in specialised schools (or support structures) express the greatest difficulties, 71% and 76% respectively. In ordinary schools, this percentage drops to 68%. For the vast majority of teachers, special difficulty is encountered with “behaviour and relationships with the children”. These difficulties are more extreme in the specialised schools with a majority of Gypsy/Roma pupils. The ordinary schools experience greater difficulties in “pupils’ socialisation”, and here, the most outstanding problem is the academic level of the Gypsy/Roma pupil.

3. Teacher proposals and approaches

According to the Spanish teachers, specific educational approaches are needed if academic achievements are to be obtained with Gypsy/Roma pupils. Of all the teachers interviewed, 74.4% pointed to the need for specific educational approaches for Gypsy/Roma pupils. The approach that most teachers (33%) agree on is the need for a change in communication strategies with

Gypsy/Roma pupils, followed by a change in methodology (25.8%), particularly in the need to work on more practical, functional aspects, and a change in content (20.5%) in such a way that content is better adapted to and closer to the pupils' experience. Further approaches put forward by teachers are: working together with families (promotion of co-education), integration of Gypsy/Roma pupils in the dominant culture, habit training (adapting to norms, study habits and so on), a greater shift towards the Gypsy/Roma social and cultural reality on the part of the school system through, for instance, the curriculum, or through increased resources for Gypsy/Roma pupils (compensatory, support classes).

However, what is clear is that the ideology behind the education systems is not sustained in a vacuum. It is created, fomented and becomes a reality in the hands of individuals, in particular, the education communities and teachers, who consciously or unconsciously, construct this reality. Teachers with a clearly inadequate all-purpose training, and with no training in specific subjects such as social sciences or social psychology have to tackle the job of teaching without the basic tools that would give them some chance of success. This reality specifically affects Gypsy/Roma pupils, but as is almost always the case, it has structural references. It is essentially caused by the lack of coordination in the design of training programmes, almost always traditional curricula seriously lacking in interdisciplinary focuses, comprising very short training periods and few practical experiences in which to fully learn the skills that enable the teacher to tackle the complexities of the classroom. The gaps in teacher training mean that they become victims of the system. In the classroom, in front of a group of children, they have to set about learning and experiencing what they should have been taught previously, and they generally end up by applying arbitrary strategies of trial and error in their classes. This situation leads to the most resounding failure, caused above all by the fundamental reason that the teacher does not have the intellectual tools available nor has he or she been provided with the adequate ideological focuses with which to cope with the reality of the classroom.

PART IV. The family and the school.

When a reference to the family is included in the school environment, the pupil feels more accepted and his or her self-esteem is encouraged and grows. "Academic success" and the social consequences it brings with it is not an experience that can be generalised to the Gypsy/Roma group. Obviously it is not a fact that must be considered as determining in the relationship established by the Gypsy/Roma families with the school, as many other factors play their part. However, I do consider it to be a reality that inevitably conditions the perceptions and attitudes adopted by the members of the Gypsy/Roma community towards the institution of the school.

At the same time, the fact that Gypsy/Roma pupils do not attain "academic success" also affects the perceptions and attitudes of both teachers and other pupils towards the Gypsy/Roma. They are faced with the burden of a further negative stereotype, that of "academic failure".

Academic results or marks reflect the school learning process. If good academic results are not obtained, the pupil is not learning, and therefore, he or she is not meeting the targets set down by the institution. As a consequence, its meaning and usefulness is taken away. Many Gypsy/Roma parents complain that their children do not learn at school.

The parents of Gypsy/Roma pupils are often distanced from the school learning process because they do not have the means available with which to help them.

1. Authority and respect in the family context.

The freedom and autonomy enjoyed by the Gypsy/Roma child in the family environment is curtailed by the value of respect and by the authority of the older members.

Children receive protection from the youth and adults of the family group, and this is met with a corresponding respect as a sign that their authority is accepted. Authority is not imposed or demanded by the adults. Through the process of socialisation in which children learn a rigorous set of norms by imitating the adults around them, this “respect” is formed and articulated. Children show respect in the way they address the adult family members, demonstrating their affection and in the way they ask for things. Respect means, amongst other things, never using bad language, diligently obeying, listening attentively, showing willingness to help and not contradicting the adults in the family. Respect is most conscientiously shown to the adult men and the elderly men and women in the family. Any lack of respect is severely punished by the family group.

Respect for the adults of their own family, for other adult relations, and for all Gypsy/Roma adults is instilled in the Gypsy/Roma child from an early age. But this respect is not all one way. In return, the adult must offer the child protection and security, guarantee him or her equal treatment, be fair in his demands, avoid authoritarian postures and show the child consideration and affection. In sum, the adult must “be worthy of respect”.

Respect for the non-Gypsy/Gage takes on a completely different form and depends on other factors such as the structural position of the group and the quantity and quality of the inter-ethnic social relationships it enjoys. However, on the whole, it can be said that the relations of respect towards the non-Gypsy/Gage are fashioned to varying degrees of intensity in accordance with the socio-affective proximity established. Whatever the case, the non-Gypsy/Gage must show the Gypsy/Roma child that he or she is worthy of their respect. This should be done by following the same guidelines as for the Gypsy/Roma: a non-Gypsy/Gage adult must show affection, be fair in his other demands, avoid favouritism, unequal treatment and authoritarian stances, guarantee the child’s security, take decisions for the benefit of all and apply any punishment fairly. To be deserving of respect automatically implies authority. Authority is not a quality handed out by “*motu proprio*”, but rather it is conceded by the group through respect. As will be detailed below, this concept of authority has far-reaching consequences in the education process.

2. Models for learning. Learn by living, learn by doing.

All these processes in their upbringing are experienced by the Gypsy/Roma child through observation and participation in the daily lives of the adult members of the family.

More than anywhere else, Gypsy/Roma children experience the learning process in the bosom of the family. Their experience is constructed by imitating the adults around them, although it is not a formal learning process in which the adult takes on the role of the teacher and the child that of the learner. The smoothness of this process is determined by the fact that learning takes place within the peer group and is a cooperative process. Often the imitation of adult roles and learning of their roles takes place through play. Through their games, the Gypsy/Roma children act out their culture, their way of life and their customs. They play at getting married, and act out the weddings as they are celebrated in real life, with the full cast of characters. They imitate family roles by playing Mummies and Daddies. The girls play at being mothers: shopping, cooking and caring for the children. They change their dolls’ nappies, take them for walks and look after them. The boys imitate the men by playing football, running races and fighting amongst themselves.

In addition, all the groups studied such as the street traders (García 2002) (Sama 2002), fairground workers (Trevisan 2002), beggars (Tauber 2002) casual agricultural labourers (Giménez 2001) or the Spanish street musicians (Chulvi 2002) begin to learn their trade by

accompanying their parents from a very early age. They learn by listening when the adults speak, by observing and helping even when they are very young. Ways of working are passed on to the children in a “natural” way. By participating in the professional activities of their parents, they feel useful, whether setting up a stall or fairground attraction, arranging the goods, taking money, attending to customers and chaperoning their mothers as their fathers would do. They clearly express their wishes to be with the adults, to have their own niche, to please their parents to the best of their abilities. They express their desire to form part of the family, and they all want to “be there”. They often feel a sense of usefulness in the world of work that they do not experience at school, where very few of their peers get good results. This negative experience, frequently felt amongst the Gypsy/Roma has an effect of school absenteeism. For these children, their family is their world, a world associated with protection, respect and security. In contrast, the school is part of the non-Gypsy/Gage world.

For the Gypsy/Roma, learning to work is clearly useful as their parents’ professional activity is what offers them real guarantees in terms of economic survival. In spite of this, many families express their desire to decide the professional future of their children, that they might go on to be “*something in life*”. These expectations for the future are linked to the school (García, 2002, Tauber 2002). The family’s profession or trade might well guarantee economic survival, but it could become a difficult economic rut to climb out of and get a foot on the socio-economic ladder. Indeed, for many Gypsy/Roma families, their way of earning a living is not the profession or trade they would choose, but rather, the most obvious means of getting by, when in fact, they do not have any other option. In some Gypsy/Roma communities, academic results are linked with employment possibilities; often a desire to be able to choose which area of employment to take up is expressed, a desire that is completely out of the question for the most underprivileged and segregated groups,

When academic success and the social advantages it brings with it in the dominant society have never been experienced, it is extremely difficult to build up expectations of social success associated with the school. This socio-educational dynamic is closely bound up with the perceptions of school qualifications held by both parents and children, especially amongst groups that are socially excluded. This is reflected in the way socially excluded groups evaluate academic qualifications (García, 2002, Sama 2002). In the end, the evaluation of learning is tested and measured in everyday activities, and as such, neither the children nor their families regard school qualifications as a measure of either the child’s ability or what he or she has learned.

At the same time, the opposing perspectives arising between the two spheres of learning, in the home and in the school, is a further point of interest. The function of the institution of the school today responds to the socio-education demands imposed by the dominant group’s socio-employment position. Yet, bearing in mind the cultural and socio-employment exclusion borne by most Gypsy/Roma groups, the socio-educational programme put forward by the school has in no way been adjusted to respond to the social reality they are bound up in.

3. Values and expectations of the school.

In the various Gypsy/Roma contexts studied, especially those interacting more intensively in society, many families clearly express their concern for their children’s future and imagine a new set of employment expectations arising from their education in the school (García 2002). In general, Gypsy/Roma families from these groups view the coexistence in both the school and other areas of social interaction as an interesting possibility for learning from the non-Gypsy/Gage community. In the school especially, they value the chance presented to their children to socialise with the non-Gypsy/Gage (Sama, 2002)

As in mainstream society, the more integrated and socio-economically placed Gypsy/Roma groups tend to perceive the school as a useful step on the social ladder. In these contexts, many families are clearly worried about their children's chances of employment in the future, and are thus prompted to encourage their children to form good relationships and get a good education in the school. This process may trigger a transformation of attitudes in their relationships with the school and what they expect from it. However, the family's negative past experiences and the present difficulties faced by the children are often projected onto their expectations of the school for the future. Obviously, the lack of social success surrounding these groups has an influence on their expectations, which although they do not altogether determine the education process, almost certainly have a major influence.

The situation becomes much more serious for the vast majority of the most underprivileged groups. The Gypsy/Roma perceive their employment and economic precariousness as an unalterable feature of their lives. Their separation from the regularised employment system, the precariousness of their housing situation or the caravan sites, the shanty towns or substandard housing in which they live mean that the school becomes an educational space that is far removed from their present reality and their future expectations.

For the families in the most precarious situations, the school and the education process are hardly ever considered as a strategy for social betterment. To this must be added the environment of illiteracy in the family and their own experiences of failure and frustration in the school, factors that do not improve these expectations whatsoever. The family does not look beyond holding on to its precarious employment and its marginalised niche, and the children gradually fall into the same patterns. Therefore the school fails these groups by not fulfilling its educational and instrumental role in society, due to the structural position of social exclusion held by the Gypsy/Roma .

The relationships between the Gypsy/Roma family and the school are conditioned by two main factors, the internal factor shaped by the experience of the adult family members at school, and the second external factor, which is bound up in the family's structural position, its socio-economic resources, its way of life and its levels of interaction in the social context. Both factors give rise to a wide range of different relationships between the Gypsy/Roma family and the school, and of its expectations and desires. The most underprivileged family groups and those with a structural position conditioned by their nomadic lifestyle, families of casual agricultural labourers or other seasonal workers such as fairground workers are those in most urgent need of greater intervention designed to counteract the inequality generated by external factors and which negatively condition their interaction with the school.

4. The family - school relationship

The relationship between the Gypsy/Roma family and the school can take a wide range of forms and possibilities, depending on lifestyle, economy, parents' education, group norms and values, and the socio-economic and cultural contexts in general. Teachers in many of the contexts studied state that scant family support, absence of norms and general adaptation difficulties amongst Gypsy/Roma children are due to their family and socio-cultural environment. Our ethnographic studies based on long periods observing the daily lives of the groups give a contrasting picture, and show how many families make a great effort to encourage their children in improving their relationships with the school and in achieving success.

The Italian example is particularly significant. In contrast to the negative social representation of the Gypsy/Roma family that "culturally transmits rejection of the school as an institution", teachers paradoxically show that most families take a great interest in and are involved in their children's attendance at school, by evaluating this factor with a national average

score of 7.4 on a scale of 0 to 10. Each particular context plays its part, as in the case of the group studied in Melfi, a group with a high level of both social and economic integration. The teachers interviewed informed us that the families ensure their children's attendance at school at above national average rates, rising to 8.1 out of 10.

On the other hand, various ethnographic studies also report that certain Gypsy/Roma families mistrust the school and are to a certain extent afraid of the institution. This is specifically a fear of leaving their children in a space with different values and norms in which the adults of the family cannot intervene. But above all, these fears are based on the conviction often held by the families in the contexts studied, that a communicative relationship with the school is practically impossible. This lack of communication specifically comes down to the perception that the school "could not possibly understand" the Gypsy/Roma, a view held particularly closely by those who have most suffered from intense processes of exclusion and persecution, as in the case of the Sinti/Roma from Bolzano who were victims of the Nazi persecution, and as a result, find it impossible to contemplate the idea that the Gage might ever understand the Gypsy/Roma (Tauber, 2002). This perception is also held in many of the other groups studied (Sama, García, Marcos 2002). The fears of and wariness of sending their children to school in these families clearly have a negative influence on their socio-educational relationships with it. However, this situation can be overcome with effort and in particular, through the growing positive appraisal they have of the school and their consideration of it as an essential experience for their children, both in terms of education and of the social relationships and coexistence with the non-Gypsy/Gage.

Rejection and social prejudice often lead Gypsy/Roma families to feel "under suspicion" from the school. An understanding of these emotions and feelings is a fundamental question that could enable a transformation to take place in the ideological focus and the strategies and interventions carried out by the school. Their fears focus particularly on the security of their children, their welfare and whether their needs will be looked after, or the fact that they might feel isolated and lonely. In the various groups studied all these fears and feelings come out in the form of numerous different attitudes that the non-Gypsy/Gage find both incomprehensible and bizarre. Various examples of these experiences have been observed in all the countries studied. The Valencian Gitana/Roma mothers who spy on their children through a hole in the fence at school break times (García, 2002), or the Sinti mothers who go to visit their children at break time to check they are all right, even though this practise is not allowed (Tauber, 2002, 134) or the French Manouche father who stayed all day at the school gate to ensure his children were being properly cared for (c.p. Montclair).

Quantitative data on Spain show that the family participates in Gypsy/Roma pupils' education to a much lesser extent (3.1) than the non-Gypsy/Gage family (7.1). Family participation at school has proved to be a highly influential variable in all socio-educational aspects surrounding the Gypsy/Roma pupils. It is directly connected to regularity of attendance, positive social relationships and what we might generally term educational integration. Yet it is true that this set of variables presents an important gradation, in that the situation can be found in which the most socio-educationally integrated children are those whose parents participate in the school environment, and also that parental participation in the dynamic of the school improves educational integration. Our ethnographic case studies reveal both aspects, and as a result it is frankly very difficult to establish a uni-linear causal relationship, but in any event, we can conclude that the improvement in relations of communication and trust between the family and the school is a decisive factor in the integration of the Gypsy/Roma child in the school.

In the Spanish case, statistics reveal that family-school relationships tend to decline as the child gets older except in the case of the Gypsy/Roma. The small group of Gypsy/Roma families who have this relationship with the school maintain contact throughout the entire education

process, becoming even closer when the children reach higher level courses. It should not be forgotten that in Spain, there is a minority group of well-integrated pupils who finish their education and whose families maintain regular contact with the school.

The participation of the family in school education is lower amongst pupils with higher rates of “absences” and even more so in the case of “absenteeism”. Most of the aspects that could have an impact on the child’s socio-educational integration tend to be closely related. In this vein, the influence of family participation in the child’s educational dynamic can be observed where the object is to improve rates of absenteeism (avoidable absences from school) but not so much so in the case of absences due to the impossibility of pupils attending school.

Spanish data also show that family participation in their children’s education, while having a positive effect on all aspects of children’s socio-educational integration, does vary significantly according to the socio-economic level of the family, amongst both Gypsy/Roma pupils or non-Gypsy/non-Roma. Thus, while the family’s material standard of living has not always shown clear and significant links with the various aspects of the child’s socio-educational integration in the school, the influence it has as a decisive link with the degree of participation in the school is however much clearer.

To conclude, parental participation is also slightly but positively linked to a greater inclination on the part of teachers towards recognition of Gypsy/Roma culture and of the importance of the affective content of classroom relationships.

In the French context, 95% of the teachers interviewed claim to maintain a relationship with the families of their Gypsy/Roma pupils. However, these relationships clearly vary in character depending on whether the school is “specialised” or not. The specialised mobile caravan-schools that travel to the Gypsy/Roma sites obviously involve a greater level of involvement and contact between the family and the teaching staff.

All the teachers in ordinary schools reported that their contact with Gypsy/Roma families “takes place in the working environment” and “for school related reasons”. However, 45% of those working in “specialised” schools informed us that contact occurred outside the school timetable, compared with only 27% in ordinary schools. Many (62%) of the teachers working in specialised structures also maintained contact with the families for reasons other than purely educational ones, compared with only 37% of those in ordinary schools.

Concerning contact location, 59% of the teachers in ordinary schools meet the families in the school itself, whereas 83% of those working in specialised schools established contact on the sites as that is the setting for their work. It is highly significant that the teachers point out that these meetings tend to take place when “there are problems with the children”. In general, the French teachers are more aware of the positive influence that contact with the family has. Indeed, 97% of this group estimate that contact with the family is decisive to “establishing relationships of trust” with the families and with their pupils.

The data were similar in Italy, where 59.6 % of teachers at a national level reported contact with the Gypsy/Roma pupils’ families, while 40% did not. A small but significant number establish contact on the sites; 6.6% of the teachers interviewed visit the families’ caravans or houses once a year on average, and a high percentage of this group do so at the invitation of their pupils (Sorani, 2002). But without doubt, the vast majority of these meetings take place in the school. On the whole, the mothers tend to visit the school more (50.4%) but the number of fathers is also high (39.6%) and tend to take place on average three times during the school year. The visits are mainly motivated by an interest in their children’s progress (74.4%), other reasons being to accompany their children to school, school parties or complaints.

PART V. Conclusions and policy implications

1. Conclusions

The education processes of Gypsy/Roma children in the countries studied are influenced by factors of a political, socio-cultural, institutional and ideological nature.

Our study reveals the inability of the education structures in the countries studied to take on board the positive incorporation of the Gypsy/Roma into the education system. Rates of non-attendance, lack of academic results and high absenteeism and drop out rates clearly demonstrate the extent of this failure.

Our objective was to offer a diagnosis of the educational situation of the Gypsy/Roma child and of the dynamics of the interacting factors. Some of the most relevant factors are the following:

1.1. The political factor. Education policies.

- The education policies studied present a diversity of approaches. In some contexts, the approach focuses specifically on the Gypsy/Roma child, while in others this does not occur. In the contexts studied, the basic political malfunction has proved to be the lack of coherence between the theoretical model designed in education legislation and its practical application.
- The failure in the development of education policies in terms of their interaction with the Gypsy/Roma child is an example of a series of structural malfunctions that affect the school as an institution. The dynamics of the education systems are frequently of a traditional character influenced by an ideological model associated to the perpetuation, the reproduction and the preservation of the social and cultural systems of the dominant and/or most powerful groups. This ideological model affects pedagogical practices, educational innovation, power relations, ideological and social representations of the pupil and each and every one of the factors and aspects that interact in the school..

The practical application of the education policies studied presents shortfalls in terms of the scant or non-existent theoretical reflection on policies, the total lack of strategic planning, the inadequacy of evaluation instruments and misinformation, all of which, together with the absence of any coordination between the various state departments, are the main causes of the general situation described in this report.

- The education policies developed in the countries studied by no means guarantee the progressive successful incorporation of the Gypsy/Roma child into the education system. Shortages of material and human resources, and of coordinated political approaches contribute to the development of this situation. Furthermore, the dispersed and disjointed nature of education policies relating to Gypsy/Roma children that have been developed at a regional or local level only contribute to greater malfunctions.
- The implementation of education policies referring to Gypsy/Roma children from European countries does not significantly improve the educational interaction of these groups. In various European contexts, high percentages of non-attendance amongst Gypsy/Roma children have been confirmed, together with an absence of socio-educational integration. In general, their social and educational situations reveal disconcerting levels of exclusion, precariousness and degradation.

- The practical application of education policies, often against the spirit of the legislation itself, leads to official and unofficial processes of segregation of Gypsy/Roma children in the various education systems studied. These applications are ultimately based on ideological models grounded in homogeneity, authoritarianism and in the reproduction of anachronistic pedagogical methods. These negative processes are aggravated by evaluation process and development follow-up shortfalls in the education systems studied. This situation clearly affects the children, the whole school age population and particularly the weakest, poorest and most vulnerable groups of children. Gypsy/Roma children are found in the groups that are victims of this ideological system.
- Education policies define educational models designed for the majority and disregard the specific situations of social groups with an itinerant lifestyle such as the case of groups of Gypsy/Roma casual agricultural labourers, fairground workers, or those who are forced into mobility such as Gypsy/Roma refugees. In general, no forms or strategies are considered for the integration of these groups of children into the ordinary education systems.
- Education policies do not encourage cultural recognition of the Gypsy/Roma child in the school environment. This absence is expressed at different levels within the education systems. In the university environment, there is a clear absence of multidisciplinary research into these subjects, together with a dearth in the diffusion of curricula programmes and academic qualifications related to Gypsy/Roma culture, language and history. This all has an effect on teacher training and the training of all professionals in the education sector. Likewise, the lack of recognition manifest in the absence of specific curricula content on the Gypsy/Roma in school material designed for all pupils has also been confirmed. In general, a process is seen to take place in which Gypsy/Roma culture as a positive enriching reference for all pupils is made invisible.

1.2. The socio-economic factor

The socio-economic factor is a key factor that has a direct influence on the failure of the school system.

- The socio-economic factor has a decisive influence on the interaction of the Gypsy/Roma child with the school. This is reflected in the tendency for the more prosperous groups to enjoy a higher quality relationship with the school. Given that in the countries studied, many of the Gypsy/Roma are found in precarious and economically unstable socio-economic positions, this factor has negative repercussions on the relationships of the Gypsy/Roma child with the school, and thus, the situation of poverty and economic insecurity particularly effects the Gypsy/Roma child and his or her interaction with the school. This, together with the fact that most European Gypsy/Roma groups are unable to escape from their marginalised occupational niches also generally associated with instability and precariousness makes for a structural situation that negatively affects the education processes of the Gypsy/Roma child with the school.
- The lack of infrastructures designed for the Gypsy/Roma population with an itinerant lifestyle has a decisive effect on their children's relations with the school. Although European legislation theoretically guarantees all its citizens the right to freedom of movement, in practice, these rights are restricted by coercive practices endorsed by outdated legislation and by the lack of infrastructures that enable this right to be exercised. This is demonstrated by the chaotic and precarious situation of the Gypsy/Roma groups on the caravan sites. The practical implementation of education policies presents serious deficiencies in terms of the coordination strategies and flexibility needed to provide a positive answer to schooling for the groups of itinerant Gypsy/Roma children.

- The processes of urban concentration of Gypsy/Roma communities analysed in various European contexts has a decisive influence on the negative interaction of the Gypsy/Roma child with the school. The dynamic of urban segregation contributes to the way Gypsy/Roma pupils are concentrated in specific ghetto schools. Moreover, Gypsy/Roma families are frequently denied the possibility of enrolling their children in the school of their choice due to unofficial exclusion processes often justified by technical or bureaucratic issues.

1.3. The ideological factor

- The ideological factor in the education system is intrinsic to the way all pupils interact with the school. As a microcosm of society, the school reproduces social representations. In the social contexts studied, the social representation of the Gypsy/Roma is highly negative and encompasses racist prejudices, stereotypes and negative images. The education systems reproduce identical models that are manifested in the school.
- In most of the contexts studied, the school is shown to be a space that reproduces knowledge with a clear instrumental emphasis that tends to perpetuate an ideological model of society oriented towards competitiveness, whose purpose is to maintain or reach a certain social status. The groups of children who, like the Gypsy/Roma, fall outside this dynamic of social status perpetuation, also on the whole find themselves outside the ideological system of the school.
- The ideology of the school, both in its practices and through its discourses, encourages the “myth of homogeneity” of its pupils, which attributes a fictitious “equality” often confused with the principle of equal rights. This myth, which underlies the school context, promotes concepts of competition, social reproduction and power structures, and irremediably ends in a process of exclusion and segregation of pupils considered to be different because of their culture, ethnic group, educational level or social class.
- Officially or unofficially, education systems transmit, often through what is known as the hidden curriculum, values and worldviews with a hierarchical cultural orientation taken directly from the class structure of the dominant society. The groups of Gypsy/Roma pupils are adversely affected by this dynamic, which, officially or unofficially promotes the cultural homogeneity of the pupils and thus the less powerful cultural minorities, including the Gypsy/Roma pupils, become invisible.
- The ideological perspectives described in the education systems lead to the segregation of pupils who do not “adapt” to this model. The Gypsy/Roma child who does not form part of the ideological dynamics projected in the school is segregated both in the classroom and in certain specific schools. These segregation processes, justified by arguments such as difference in academic level (lagging behind) and/or the need for socio-educational “adaptation” are particularly damaging in that they materialise through unofficial dynamics that on many occasions go against the spirit of education policy.
- The ideological perception of the concept of diversity foments motivation, stimulus and participation amongst the pupils. Within this framework, diversity ceases to be the origin of all conflict, and instead becomes a reference for the positive construction of the education process. Two ideological aspects, democracy and diversity, are paramount to the understanding of the reality of the Gypsy/Roma pupil in the school. Authoritarianism, the antithesis of democracy, and the myth of homogeneity, the antithesis of diversity, are two key elements that go part of the way to explaining the failure of the school in its relations with the Gypsy/Roma and non-Gypsy/non-Roma child. The segregation, exclusion and stigma that are a millstone round the neck of the Gypsy/Roma, together with the invention of these pupils as “incompetent” and “incapable” tend to be linked with their mental deficiency. Ethnic determinism also attributes the failure of Gypsy/Roma pupils to succeed at school to their cultural identity. All these ideological processes generate a subtle, very often unconscious, ideological discourse, but so dense and so

well-structured that it takes root in thought, it shapes discourses, and it is articulated in expectations and social representations to conclude in racist actions and in the exclusion from the education system of the weakest and socio-economically most vulnerable children.

- The ideological aspects of the teaching role influenced by negative social representations of the Gypsy/Roma pupil, the lack of expectations for their academic success, together with the malfunctioning socio-pedagogical dynamics that become established in the classroom and the numerous manifestations of segregation and stigmatisation of the Gypsy/Roma child create a harmful dynamic of the institutionalisation of failure that teachers perceive as an inalterable reality.

1.4. Institutional factor

The densely woven web of factors that interact in the education processes are of paramount importance, but the school as an institution is surely the most relevant since it is here that the whole interactive dynamic of this myriad of factors is expressed. Its role as coordinator and agent of interrelation both vertically, between administration and citizen, and horizontally, between the various groups and social classes, confers it a strategic position. The function of the school as an education institution cannot be separated from its socialising function. The presence of the Gypsy/Roma child in the ordinary school becomes a burden because they do not achieve good academic results, because of their irregular attendance and their high drop-out rates, and the lack of communication between the school and the family. These factors determine the seriously disadvantaged structural situation suffered by the Gypsy/Roma child on an educational level in the institution of the school.

- Most of the Gypsy/Roma pupils in the contexts studied attend ordinary schools in which processes of segregation are common. Administrative initiatives that foster specific structures for Gypsy/Roma pupils – caravan schools, special education classes, compensatory education etc, do not help to resolve the structural situation of educational disadvantage they suffer, but rather simply serve to palliate immediate ad hoc situations in school that can only be conclusively resolved within the framework of state administrations and with interventions of a structural nature.
- We have witnessed how teachers find themselves embroiled in a diversity of education systems and bureaucratic structures that condition their role and their capacity to act. In the education of the Gypsy/Roma child, huge gaps in the training needed to be able to tackle the situation positively are blatantly evident. The bureaucratic and practical limitations also involve teachers in strictly regulated structures that prevent them from tackling their job with the flexibility they need. In addition, structural shortages of every type, from human and material resources and infrastructures, negatively condition the way they work.
- The training processes aimed at Gypsy/Roma “specialist” teachers generate a set of harmful dynamics such as the reification of the Gypsy/Roma pupil as disabled or incompetent and the processes by which the “special” teacher is stigmatised within the education system as the group of “Gypsy/Roma teachers” who gradually end up in a similar position to that of their pupils, marginalised and excluded.
- This negative structural vision must not blind us to the fact that Gypsy/Roma pupils do not always fail at school, nor does this occur in every context. Essentially, the credit for the success of the small group of successful Gypsy/Roma children must go to their teachers. Through their considerable professional skill, human and affective involvement and high expectations of academic and social success for all their pupils enables them to overcome the cultural, socio-economic and ideological barriers we have described. Their personal profile is what enables them to bring out success in their Gypsy/Roma pupils.

- Insofar as the relationships between Gypsy/Roma and non-Gypsy/Gage pupils are concerned, on the whole we have confirmed that the relationships of opposition from the social context are reproduced in the school. Through the socialisation process, the child learns the negative social representations and mutual prejudice that prevent healthy social relationships between the two parties and at the same time reinforce intra-ethnic relations. The shortage or absence of socio-affective relationships between Gypsy/Roma and non-Gypsy/Gage children has an effect on the socio-pedagogical relations since the Gypsy/Roma children do not regard the school as a positive social space in which to develop affective bonds. This situation, along with other factors previously described, leads to the social disconnection that encourages absenteeism, absences and as a consequence, failure at school.
- Relations between Gypsy/Roma families and the school are conditioned by a series of interconnected factors analysed above. In considering these relations, the diversity of contexts and wide range of situations in which they occur must be taken into account. The most underprivileged families, affected by the structural situations linked to their lifestyles such as in the case of the itinerant Gypsy/Roma, or marginalised employment niches that might also involve itinerancy, are often steeped in economic precariousness and instability. The social dynamic of opposition between Gypsy/Roma and non-Gypsy/Gage adds to the fact that these families frequently find themselves in a situation outside the dynamic of the school, and with no expectations in this respect whatsoever.
- At the other end of the social scale, the Gypsy/Roma families in a more favourable social position view the school context from a different angle. They recognise the value of the school as a space in which to build relations with the non-Gypsy/Gage and value the instrumental learning experience it offers as a strategy for incorporation into the job market and upward social mobility. By the same token, social success is an intrinsic element of the model of their expectations they have for their child's academic success. The school therefore forms part of their social context and they establish positive interaction contacts within it.
- At all socio-economic levels, the Gypsy/Roma family's relation with the school is adversely affected by the negative social representation of their ethnicity. Prejudice often prevents positive links from being established between the Gypsy/Roma family and the teacher, and limits communication between the two parties. This poor communication increases as a result of the ideological, socio-economic and institutional factors described above.
- In most of the contexts studied, channels of communication between the family and the teacher are practically non-existent or highly deficient due to questions of codes and social bonds. The impenetrable school structure provides neither the time nor the space for families and teachers to get to know each other. Contact is maintained on a very sporadic basis. The two parties are not from the same social class and do not share a common educational background. On occasions, they do not even share the same language, and when they do, they come up against the cultural traditions of their discourses: the erudite discourse of the school and the quotidian discourse of the family. Many families bring up their children with a different set of values that are at times contrary to those of the school. In addition to all these underlying factors in the poor communication processes between the family and the school, the omnipresent latent or visible relations of opposition and mutual prejudice must also be taken into account.
- The determining factor on which positive communication between the family and the school rests is the teacher's personal profile and style of working. The key to the articulation of this relation lies in the teacher's capacity to be flexible and to adapt, and in his or her willingness to understand and to communicate.

1.5. Cultural and symbolic factor.

- Gypsy/Roma culture is an intellectual construct developed over the centuries by the Gypsy/Roma as a group that has enabled them to adapt to their ecological, social and political medium. As a consequence of the adaptations to a variety of contexts, their culture has taken on a huge diversity of forms. As Gypsy/Roma we share a language and a common identity. Within each context, the norms and traditions, the different interpretations of the world and of life, the concept of time and space, of childhood and maturity, to name but a few, form part of this cultural factor and indisputably have a major impact on the processes of education and upbringing and on the relations of the Gypsy/Roma child with the school.
- The present school system clearly demonstrated that education is neither neutral nor objective, but rather it creates an awareness of legitimacy, and reproduces the ideology and the culture of the dominant society. For this reason, teacher recognition of Gypsy/Roma culture is one of the key factors to helping us understand the extent to which Gypsy/Roma pupils are integrated in the school. In a school whose cultural parameters are different from those of the Gypsy/Roma socio-cultural environment, a knowledge of their culture helps to approach an understanding, through socio-educational relations, of the values, norms, attitudes, sentiments and customs with which Gypsy/Roma pupils identify.
- Knowledge of this culture, of its norms and values, its traditions, its kinship relations and social networks and of all the aspects that make up their worldview is a crucial factor in school interaction. But as we have seen, Gypsy/Roma culture and the social representation and the use that is made of it are two completely different notions.
- The cultural factor is adversely affected by the interactive relationships maintained by the Gypsy/Roma community with their social and cultural environment. This situation introduces a wide range of slight variations into Gypsy/Roma culture, shaped by the processes of enculturation between the group and the majority. The Gypsy/Roma world is not just one world, but a “world of worlds” (Piasere 1999) and the widespread image of the Gypsy/Roma as a homogeneous group is simply a representation that stems from prejudice, from invention or from ignorance. Our research provides exhaustive evidence of this diversity.
- The Gypsy/Roma live and are immersed in certain specific contexts and their own culture has become part of those contexts, but at the same time, their culture is Spanish, French and Italian, and even more so, it is the culture of Valencia or Turin, Melfi or Avila, Montpellier or Palencia, Dijon or Jerez de la Frontera. These cultural nuances are in no way gratuitous. On the contrary, they demonstrate one of the contradictions faced by the Gypsy/Roma child in the school. They feel²¹, and they are, French, Spanish and Italian, but they are labelled as outsiders and foreigners. Their exoticism is invented and constructed day by day in school interactions through the label “Gypsy/Roma”. This is one of the reasons why specific structures, specific classes, specific teachers and specific mediators are considered necessary. They are no longer girls and boys, but they become the representation of what is Gypsy/Roma and Gypsy/Roma culture. They are said to have a culture, which of course they do, but their culture is not the mythical, exotic culture created by society. Gypsy/Roma culture is not the reification that society has turned it into. The concept of Gypsy/Roma culture has been manipulated to such an extent that it has become a poor imitation. The resulting suffering and hardship brought about by this process reach catastrophic proportions for the Gypsy/Roma child in the school. In this way, the representation of their ethnicity becomes a sinister wall that separates them from “normality” and leads them to be stigmatised through the most absurd inventions. Paradoxically, the Gypsy/Roma child is steered towards educational “specificity” when on a daily basis, he or she forms part of the town or city in which they live. They and their non-Gypsy/Roma classmates share the same

²¹ These feelings of belonging to a particular country also give rise to a great diversity of situations that are closely linked to the interaction of the Gypsy/Roma in different contexts.

norms and habits, customs and traditions, the same streets and squares in their town, the same school playground and the games they play.

- Clearly they do have certain singularities, but these aspects are their contribution to the contexts in which they live. Their attitudes, worldviews and relationship patterns form part of their context. The Gypsy/Roma are itinerant, like the Yenish/Gage who are non-Gypsy/Gage and have similar experiences, they are poor, as are many other groups who live in the most extreme precarious situations, they are casual agricultural labourers, like hundreds of thousands of workers of other nationalities, they are refugees and migrants and know the suffering of war and expulsion in the same way as many other groups. These are some of their “singularities”, but as we can see, they are not exclusive to the Gypsy/Roma, but are widespread and generalised situations experienced by a myriad of peoples and communities. These are the factors that affect them in the school, and not because they are Gypsy/Roma children, but because, purely and simply, they are Gypsy/Roma children in particular circumstances.
- The paradox is manifested when, at the same time that Gypsy/Roma culture, language and literature, history and all the positive and enriching references that make up their world are being made invisible, the invention of the negative social representation of the Gypsy/Roma is evolving, an invention that encompasses, in the eyes of the legitimising institution of culture, the school, all that is undesirable.

2. Policy Implications

2.1. Political factor

1. To guarantee the protection of the **basic rights** of the Gypsy/Roma child, and particularly their right to a workable and effective education and the compliance with prevailing legislation in this area.
2. To fully develop **national and European legislation** on educational and cultural issues referring to ethnic minorities.
3. To encourage the harmonisation of education and social policies, coordinated around criteria of transnationality, comprehensiveness and flexibility.
4. To promote education policies designed for **the itinerant groups in the European Union** to coordinate infrastructures that allow for the inclusion of Gypsy/Roma children in ordinary schools and guarantee their right to an education.
5. To promote education policies designed for the **migrant populations from the countries of Eastern Europe** that guarantee the socio-educational integration and basic rights of these groups of particularly underprivileged children.
6. To prioritise **transnational coordination of education policies** and ensure that they are of an integral nature, with particular attention to itinerant, casual agricultural labourer and fairground worker Gypsy/Roma groups.
7. To coordinate and stimulate **the coordination between local, regional and state administrations** in each country to tackle the issue of efficacy in socio-education policies.
8. To design socio-educational and cultural policies in the area of the European Union directed towards the **recognition of Gypsy/Roma culture in the school.**
9. To promote education policies in the area of the European Union **directed towards the recognition of the Gypsy/Roma language and its inclusion in teaching programmes** at all levels of the education system.
10. To foster **the inclusion of the Gypsy/Roma community in all socio-educational areas of decision-making** and democratic participation: state and local administrations, public and private institutions, non-governmental organisations (NGOs)

11. To implement education policies that follow the **principal of positive discrimination** in areas of education grants and scholarships, school materials, school meals and nurseries.

2.2. Socio-economic factor

1. To implement **coordinated, coherent and effective social policies** formulated at local, state and international administrative levels. The successful socio-educational inclusion of Gypsy/Roma children requires coordinated and complementary action in all areas of intervention.

2. To articulate **socio-educational policies that guarantee the most underprivileged groups of Gypsy/Roma children access** to housing, health care and education, and to base these measures on positive discrimination models.

3. To foment **urban and social policies that put an end to processes of concentration** and urban segregation, through relocation in social housing and provision of infrastructures on the official sites.

4. To stimulate **socio-employment policies** that foment regularisation of the employment situation of the Gypsy/Roma in general and of migrant groups in particular in order to guarantee the education of the Gypsy/Roma children of these groups.

5. To establish **socio-educational policies that guarantee access to** socio-educational resources for all pupils at a social or education disadvantage caused by their socio-economic situation.

2.3. Ideological factor

1. To consolidate socio-pedagogical interventions aimed at **improving inter-ethnic relations** in education contexts, by combating the discrimination against, and stereotypes and negative social representations of the Gypsy/Roma.

2. To steer teacher training towards an **ideological reshaping of the system itself** from a critical and constructive angle on education processes.

3. To guarantee **interdisciplinary teacher training** approached from the perspective of ideological deconstruction in order to stimulate the renovation and positive transformation of the education systems

4. To foster **democracy and participation** within the education community to guarantee the participation of Gypsy/Roma families.

5. To articulate **pedagogical and school curricula strategies** aimed at combating ethnic prejudice towards and negative social representations of the Gypsy/Roma child.

2.4. Institutional factor.

1. To eradicate the educational segregation of Gypsy/Roma pupils in classes and schools, propagated through both official and unofficial processes, to encourage **positive inter-ethnic coexistence**.

2. To foster the **inclusion of Gypsy/Roma pupils in ordinary classes and schools** thereby avoiding their exclusion and segregation in specific education structures.

3. To design education policies that bring about a **reduction in the teacher/pupil ratio** (1:10) in inter-ethnic school contexts in which Gypsy/Roma pupils present educational disadvantages.

4. To encourage **models of cooperative education** that stimulate positive inter-ethnic coexistence, a reduction in discrimination and in the segregation processes applied to Gypsy/Roma pupils justified by the gap in their academic knowledge.

5. To stimulate education policies aimed at **the interdisciplinary training of teachers at university level**, and towards the extension of curricula in subjects referring to the Gypsy/Roma.

6. To foster **continuous teacher training** by promoting transnational training networks that enable retraining through the sharing of experiences and dissemination of academic successes resulting from good teaching practices.
7. **To extend this training** to all teachers, thereby avoiding the creation of categories of “specific” teachers for Gypsy/Roma pupils.
8. To foster democracy across the education community in order to **stimulate active participation of both Gypsy/Roma family members and pupils**.
9. To extend the **channels of communication for families in the schools** by following criteria of flexibility and socio-educational adaptation to the context.
10. To ensure the **right to a free choice of school** to all the Gypsy/Roma community and in particular to the most socio-economically underprivileged groups in order to prevent the processes of concentration and exclusion from developing.
11. To guarantee the inclusion of **Gypsy/Roma culture in the school curricula** and the design of **educational material** covering aspects of both Gypsy/Roma culture and language.
12. To guarantee **support to teachers** through training and material resources, by providing more flexibility so as they might participate in continuous training courses and by promoting interdisciplinary training projects.
13. To promote the **introduction of new technology in schools** in order to facilitate follow-up of itinerant Gypsy/Roma pupils.
14. To set up an **institutional portal** (ROMA-NET) to coordinate EU member states’ education policies on the education of Gypsy/Roma children.

2.5. Cultural and symbolic factor

1. To introduce material on Gypsy/Roma culture, history, literature and language into academic curricula at every educational level.
2. To promote the publication at European level of educational material on these subjects aimed at all pupils and students.
3. To guarantee adequate interdisciplinary training for all teachers.

PART VI. Dissemination and/or exploitation of results

From the very outset, the research team has taken great pains to disseminate the objectives and content of the project through academic, social and institutional media, as well as through the traditional mass media.

Courses, seminars and conferences have been held on the OPRE ROMA project and its progress and results throughout its development in various European universities. The Complutense University in Madrid and the Social Institute of Employment/Labour Sciences at the University of Lisbon have held conferences and seminars about the project. The universities and research centres with a direct involvement in the project have organised conferences, meetings between experts and researchers, seminars and post graduate courses on which various theoretical and methodological aspects of the project have been analysed.

In the Ecole Doctorale Cultures et Comportaments Sociaux of the Université René Descartes has organised doctorate courses and research seminars. The Gypsy/Roma Research Centre in the same University has also carried out a great deal of work to

disseminate information on the project through the networks linked to research and intervention projects that it is developing in various European countries.

In the University of Florence, major efforts have also taken place in the dissemination of the objectives and preliminary findings of the project in academic media, through seminars and doctorate courses. The seminars organised in Florence by the Gypsy Lore Society were of an international character.

The Universitat Jaime I has organised two seminars per year to inform on the preliminary findings of the project, together with doctorate courses and seminars for experts on the subject. The research team has also taken part in scientific congresses at a national level, such as the 7th Congreso de Sociología entitled “Convergencias y Divergencias en la Sociedad Global” or in the 2nd Encuentro Científico de Antropología de la Educación in which papers and lectures were given on the findings of the project.

But the dissemination of information has also gone beyond academic circles, to include public institutions and administrations and NGOs. Informative meetings have been held with various education administrations at national and regional levels, with teachers associations, social services and with national and local Gypsy/Roma organisations and institutions.

A single issue journal on the project was published, with a print run of 5,000 copies, sent out to education departments at state and autonomous regional level in Spain. Particular attention has also been given to dissemination through the mass media in all its forms: press, television and radio. The project’s research teams have taken part in regional and national radio and television programmes, and the press has covered the teams’ activities and research work. Press conferences have been held and interviews given to cover details of the development and progress of the project.

Through a series of seminars and conferences organised by the research team in the three countries involved, groups of experts, public education administration management and members of professional associations and Gypsy/Roma NGOs have been informed on the findings of the project.

Finally, the positive results of the dissemination through the project’s web page www.opre.roma.uji.es must be mentioned. The web page came into being in September 2000 and has provided coverage on sections dealing with the project’s design, methodology and objectives. It offers information on the research teams and the universities involved in the project. From the outset it was designed as a multi-lingual page and new languages have been incorporated during the time it has been operating. In the final phase of the project, we have included a translation of the page into Romany, the Gypsy language, and new languages will continue to be incorporated.

The web page has been developed and extended throughout the life of the project and our intention is to attach the reports from each participating country and the present final report. We consider this strategy to be the most practical and effective way of transmitting extensive detailed information on the OPRE ROMA project. The web page will remain on the Internet on the Universitat Jaime I site and the consolidation of its capacity for dissemination and extension is therefore assured. Over the last year, the web page has received an average of 400 monthly visits from a large number of countries worldwide, and the numbers are expected to grow with the publication of the reports, findings and recommendations that will be incorporated in various languages in the following months.

During the final phase of the project, the three research teams have organised seminars and lectures to give advance information on the findings and recommendations of

the project. These encounters have been attended by representatives from education departments, social service and social welfare administration managers, officials from Gypsy/Roma organisations, teachers' associations and various groups of professionals associated with the area of the education of Gypsy/Roma children. Professionals and education managers from 14 countries participated in the Universitat Jaume I International Conference, which was held with the cooperation of the Council of Europe. Likewise, the Université René Descartes organised an international gathering in conjunction with the Council of Europe in which the project's reports and findings were presented. The University of Florence also organised a seminar in which education experts and professionals and Gypsy/Roma organisations and associations working in the area of education participated.

Throughout the development of dissemination on the project, the inherent difficulties facing the research into the Gypsy/Roma community have been apparent. The widespread disinformation on the subject and the scant visibility of the Gypsy/Roma in the mass media have been a constant serious obstacle to our research teams in this field. In this vein, we consider that the dissemination of the project through academic and social channels and particularly in the mass media, whether through the press or audiovisual media, has had a positive impact. Various professionals from the fields of education, the administration and diverse organisations have benefited from the contributions made by the project, and above all, it has enabled us to bring to light and focus attention on Gypsy/Roma children and their social and educational contexts, which, given the structural invisibility of the group, is a major step forward.

PART VII. Acknowledgements and References

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OPRE ROMA has evolved in an atmosphere of intense coexistence with the families of the Gypsy/Roma community, who have welcomed the ethnographers and researchers into their homes and their lives. They have generously offered not only information and data, but also their understanding and affection, which has given rise to close emotional and human bonds as well as the extensive ethnographic and sociological information crucial to the development of the projects. They deserve our most heart-felt recognition and deep gratitude.

While it is irrefutable that the cooperation of the Gypsy/Roma community has been one of the cornerstones of the project, we are also most sincerely grateful for the collaboration and generosity of the hundreds of teachers who have willingly cooperated in the interviews, surveys and ethnographic studies carried out in the schools. The data we

have been able to offer throughout the project is the fruit of their experience and generosity, and as such, we are most appreciative of all their help and efforts.

This project is a team project, and has been considered as such from its very beginnings. The OPRE ROMA team is not just the sum of its parts, specialist researchers from the social sciences. Behind the pages of this report lie the effort, the enthusiasm for research and the personal and professional involvement of a group of individuals who have given the best of themselves for more than 40 months. To all of them I would like to express my gratitude and recognition.

OPRE ROMA

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