# Inclusion of Roma in the Croatian society: Education and Employment

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# ROMA INCLUSION IN THE CROATIAN SOCIETY

## education and employment

Dunja Potočnik – Darja Maslić Seršić – Nenad Karajić

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# ROMA INCLUSION IN THE CROATIAN SOCIETY

## education and employment

Dunja Potočnik – Darja Maslić Seršić – Nenad Karajić

Zagreb, 2020

The views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Office for Human Rights and the Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, nor the views of the institutions in which the authors are employed.

NOTE: All linguistic forms having a gender form in this study shall apply equally to both males and females, regardless of the form used.

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# List of abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| **[G]OHRRNM** | Office for Human Rights and the Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia |
| **AP** | Action plan |
| **CBS** | Croatian Bureau of Statistics |
| **CCE** | Croatian Chamber of Economy |
| **CES** | Croatian Employment Service |
| **CPS** | Center for Peace Studies |
| **CRC** | Convention on the Rights of the Child |
| **EC** | European Commission |
| **ECD** | Early childhood development |
| **EU** | European Union |
| **EUROSTAT** | Statistical Office of the European Communities |
| **F** | Female |
| **FRA** | European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights |
| **ILO** | International Labour Organization |
| **M** | Male |
| **MSE** | Ministry of Science and Education |
| **NEET** | NEET group – not in education, employment or training |
| **NOC** | National Occupational Classification |
| **NRIS** | National Roma Inclusion Strategy from 2013 to 2020 |
| **OG** | Official Gazette |
| **REF** | Roma Education Fund |
| **RNM** | Roma National Minority |
| **RoC** | Republic of Croatia |
| **ŠeR** | Školski e-Rudnik ["School e-Mine" app] |
| **SY** | School year |
| **UNDP** | United Nations Development Programme |

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# 1 Introduction

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Education as a resource

The possession of a certain level of education as a resource can be observed from several levels, in particular the individual, societal and economic one. The individual side concerns competencies, i.e. the knowledge, skills and values which the individual acquires during exposure to educational content and socialization in the education system. The knowledge, skills and values acquired in this way become a resource with which an individual interacts with other individuals, subsequently using the same education as a "ticket" to higher levels of education or to the labor market. There are many factors involved in the acquisition of competencies during preschool and primary education which are considered the basis for the further upgrade of individual resources. These are primarily the capacities of the immediate environment (mainly families) to encourage children to acquire work habits and gain motivation for education as well as capacities for ensuring the basic conditions for education (material and financial ones). When it comes to members of the Roma national minority in Croatia, who on average achieve lower levels of education than the average population, the mediation role of institutions is needed, in particular educational institutions and local government institutions. The mediation role is of particular importance in ensuring equal opportunities for inclusion in the education system.

The child's access to education and their success also depend on the quality of the interconnection between the family level and the institutions. Many Roma families cannot provide conditions for quality inclusion of their children in the education system, and as the results of the study will show, many Roma settlements are too far away from preschools and primary schools. Furthermore, individual success in the education system also depends on the aforesaid societal and economic levels, in particular the way in which a person is involved in the everyday life of a community and how successful they are in navigating the labor market and overcoming their initial position on the social structure scale. In other words, we are dealing with intergenerational social mobility, which has been very limited in Croatia in the last 30 years (Potočnik, 2011). In a certain part, and particularly in the case of the Roma, it can be reduced to social reproduction, namely the transfer of the education level and social position from parent to child.

The need to ensure access to a quality and inclusive education system in early childhood aimed at minimizing initial inequalities, eliminating discrimination, reducing the challenges faced by children from vulnerable social groups and promoting the emotional, social, psychological and physical development of all children is one of the basic principles of the European guidelines for early childhood development (ECD).[1] The Croatian Government has ratified the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*[2] (CRC) and a holistic approach to human rights addressing social, economic, cultural, societal and political circumstances and the protection of the rights of the child. The CRC highlights the right to education as the foundation of equal opportunities, as well as the broad objectives of education in terms of advocating for the child's development to be as comprehensive as possible. The Croatian legislative framework contributes to that as well, and and in addition to the key acts in the filed of preschool,[3] primary[4] and secondary education,[5] *the Education in National Minority Languages and Scripts Act*[6] is also relevant for RNM members.

The European Commission Communication (EC) from 2011 titled *Early Childhood Education and Care* emphasizes that "early childhood is the stage where education can most effectively influence the development of children and help reverse disadvantage". In this light, ECD can reduce the social development gap and foster literacy and numeracy so as to reduce educational disparities between the Roma and the majority population in the future. The aim is to end the transmission of poverty and the low social position from parents to children and to open up new opportunities for education, social inclusion and employment for all generations of members of the Roma national minority.

When it comes to the educational and social status of the RNM in the Republic of Croatia, the Government of the Republic of Croatia has been taking a number of steps, in particular through the activities of the Ministry of Science and Education (MSE) and the Office for Human Rights and the Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia ([G]OHRRNM), to facilitate the access of the Roma to quality education, especially in early childhood and adolescence. The MSE is tasked with implementing a number of measures and activities such as co-financing the parental share in the economic cost of preschool/kindergarten,

1 Council of the European Union (2012) *Preventing and tackling child poverty and social exclusion and promoting children's well-being: Council conclusions.*

2 UNICEF (1989)

3 *Preschool Education Act*, Official Gazette 10/97, 107/07, 94/13, 98/19, *National Educational Standard for Preschool Education*, Official Gazette 63/08.

4 *National Educational Standard for Primary Education*, Official Gazette 63/08.

5 *Vocational Education Act*, Official Gazette 30/09, 24/10, 22/13, 25/18, *National Educational Standard for Secondary Education*, Official Gazette 63/08.

6 Official Gazette 51/00, 56/00.

co-financing the preschool program, providing Croatian language lessons to students who do not know or do not know enough Croatian, providing extended stay and school outings, field trips, summer schools, providing scholarships for secondary and higher education for Roma pupils and students, ensuring their placement in dormitories for pupils and students and co-financing literacy programs and training for adult Roma.[7]

The *National Roma Inclusion Strategy from 2013 to 2020* (Government of the Republic of Croatia, 2012) recognizes that "the under-representation of children of the Roma minority in preschool education has multiple causes, from their parents' lack of awareness of the importance of preschool education through a shortage of finances in local governmental budgets and continuous preschool program financing and the insufficient capacity in kindergartens, to the lack of awareness of the need for long-term planning of Roma community inclusion at the local level" (Government of the RoC, 2012: 36). As the data will show, the Roma are included in preschool education to a greater extent only at preschool stage, i.e. at the age of 5–6, while the guidelines for ECD recommend inclusion as early as at the age of 3. There is a number of reasons for earlier inclusion in preschool education: better development of language skills, adoption of basic concepts which will be needed at preschool and primary school stage and inclusion in peer groups. In addition to segregation and discrimination, the lack of positive models is an important factor contributing to poorer educational accomplishments of the Roma.

Social inclusion, especially of children belonging to the RNM, is a separate topic to which part of this study will be dedicated, in particular as an analysis of education under special and individualized programs and of ethnic segregation in class. There are multiple problems arising from the placement of children in special programs and ethnically segregated classes. They are primarily reflected in the lack of positive peer influence which contributes to forming attitudes towards education and inclusion in the wider social community (Government of the RoC, 2012: 39). In the status analysis of education, the NRIS is aimed not only at the field of education, but also at the social welfare and health of children with the aim of extending the inclusion in preschool education, harmonizing preschool programs, improving the quality of preschool and primary education and raising the quality of life of all RNM members.

Primary education is one of the areas of RNM education in Croatia where satisfactory results have not been achieved yet. According to Eurostat, the fact that 3.3% of pupils who drop out of school prior to completing their compulsory education

7 In 2013, the MSE allocated 8,977,778.29 HRK for the implementation of education measures of the *National Roma Inclusion Strategy* and in 2018, funds amounting to 12,621,729.88 HRK were allocated.

[*early drop-out rate*][8] puts Croatia at the bottom of the EU [with the EU average being 10.2%]; however, part of the Roma still drops out prior to completing primary school, mostly at the age of 15 and after grade retention. Pursuant to the *Primary and Secondary Education Act*,[9] the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports has at its disposal mechanisms for action in cases of parental neglect, so that after repeated attempts to establish contact with parents, it may report neglect to the state administrative office in the relevant county or the social welfare center with jurisdiction. This results in a monetary fine according to the aforementioned Act. Even in the case of filing misdemeanor charges, this measure proves ineffective due to untimely actions of the courts and problems in the implementation of the measures imposed.

According to the *2018 Report on the Implementation of the National Roma Inclusion Strategy from 2013 to 2020*, [Government of the RoC, 2019], placement in dormitories and providing scholarships are measures contributing to the increase in the number of Roma pupils in secondary education and the number of pupils completing secondary education.[10] However, due to weak school performance the majority of RNM pupils enroll in 3-year vocational school programs, which gives rise to difficulties in qualifying for higher education. Therefore, the competent education authorities[11] have been making continuous efforts to ensure quality education, including professional training of teachers, instructors, professional staff members and Roma assistants[12] in primary schools. In addition to the aforementioned measures, the MSE also provides funds for the implementation of literacy and training programs for the first occupation. *The 2018 Report on the Implementation of the National Roma Inclusion Strategy from 2013 to 2020, [Government of the RoC, 2019]* [[G]OHRRNM, 2019] states that in 2018, a total of 475 RNM members [184 F and 291 M] attended these programs, of which 452 participants in the literacy program and 23 participants in the training program for the first occupation, which is an increase of 109 participants compared to 2017.

If we want to look at the RNM education goals in Croatia in their entirety, then our starting point is the NRIS [Government of the RoC, 2012], where the following objectives are stated:

8 Source: Eurostat [edat_lfse_14]

9 Official Gazette 87/08 6/09, 92/10, 105/10, 90/11, 5/12, 16/12, 86/12, 126/12, 94/13, 152/14, 07 /17, 68/18, 98/19.

10 According to the MSE, at the beginning of the SY 2017/2018, there was a total of 805 Roma pupils in secondary education [446 M and 395 F], at the beginning of the SY 2018/2019, there were 760 pupils and at the beginning of the SY 2019/2020 721 pupils [368 M and 353 F].

11 The Education and Teacher Training Agency has been continuously educating teachers and instructors on human rights and the prevention of discrimination and violence.

12 The work of Roma assistants is financed from the state budget and additional assistants are also being employed at the local level.

1. to raise the quality and efficiency of education of members of the Roma minority, and ensure the acquisition of the requisite knowledge and skills that will promote the personal development of pupils, and the completion of primary education with the aim of continuation of schooling and the reduction of differences between the educational accomplishments of Roma children and the average level of educational accomplishments of all pupils encompassed by the primary education system in the Republic of Croatia;
2. to increase the inclusion of Roma children of both sexes in preschool education and raise the quality level of education attempting to meet children's developmental needs as best as possible, and acquire the necessary skills for the continuation of schooling;
3. to reduce the primary school drop-out level of RNM members and achieve a completion rate of 95%;
4. to abolish all ethnically segregated classes;
5. to reduce the differences between the inclusion of Roma pupils and the RoC average in secondary school education and increase the chances for the inclusion of RNM members in higher education;
6. to increase the inclusion in and completion of higher education and facilitate navigating the labor market for RNM members;
7. to increase the inclusion of Roma adults in literacy, education and qualification programs with the aim of nurturing individual potential and enhancing their capacity to navigate the labor market.

## 1.2. Work and social inclusion

The "vicious circle" metaphor of mutually reinforcing poverty, weak school performance, unemployment, discrimination and social distance from the majority population is often used to describe the social status of the Roma ethnic community in most countries. However, it would be accurate to speak of two vicious circles: the one of poverty and low education, and the other of segregation and social distance [Rughinis, 2008]. As we have seen above, poverty and low education of the Roma in Croatia are mutually reinforcing and ultimately determine the resources and position of the Roma in the labor market. In a developed and technologically advanced economy, individuals who do not possess advanced and specialized knowledge and do not use information technology have very limited employment opportunities. Elementary manual labor jobs which they are offered are usually at the bottom of the social ladder, with low and precarious wages and limited participation.

In that sense, the position of the Roma does not differ from the position of other poor and socially excluded levels of society. Segregation and social distance are another trap which, in the Republic of Croatia, is primarily related to the Roma. Settled in segregated settlements guarded by stereotypes and prejudices of the majority population and the homogenization and self-organization of the Roma within these enclaves, the Roma form a socially excluded ethnic community whose members have difficulties in gaining access to society resources. Even when they live integrated with the general population, the Roma are still exposed to discrimination, and the members of the majority population distance themselves socially from the members of this ethnic community (Maslić Seršić and Vukelić, 2013). Therefore, specific social measures are needed aimed at integrating the Roma into the labor market. In doing so, two strategies should be applied: (1) social policy measures aimed at strengthening the Roma human capital through the integration of young people into the regular education system, adult education and poverty alleviation by implementing social measures and (2) integrating adult Roma into the labor market using special employment-promoting measures, proactive and protective measures regulating existing undeclared work and providing career guidance and job-search support.

These measures are aimed at strengthening the human and social capital of the Roma, which should increase their employability and thus their inclusion in Croatian society. At the same time, active employment policy measures and job-search support should raise the employment rate of adult Roma and reduce the social distance between the majority population and the Roma. Employment and inclusion of the Roma in the economic life of the Republic of Croatia is another strategic area of the NRIS and the general goal is to bridge the gap between the Roma national minority and the majority population on the labor market, which, as we will see later, is very large. For that purpose, seven objectives have been defined:

1. to raise the level of social inclusion of the Roma population by enhancement of their ability to participate on the labor market;
2. to increase the competitiveness and rate of employability of young members of the Roma national minority;
3. to increase the competitiveness and employability rate of Roma women;
4. to increase the competitiveness and employability rate of long-term unemployed members of the Roma national minority;
5. to increase the formal self-employment rate of members of the Roma national minority;
6. to raise the level of motivation among Roma for participation on the labor market;
7. to bolster the capacity of the Croatian Employment Service for the work with members of the Roma national minority.

The theoretical models which we rely on in the chapter on employment, as well as data analyses, are guided by precisely these objectives. In order to make specific recommendations for achieving these objectives, the first necessary step was to analyze various aspects of employment and employability of the Roma in the Republic of Croatia. Therefore, the survey employment rate in the Roma ethnic community, the form of work performed by the Roma, their attitudes towards work and employment, experience of discrimination in the labor market, job-search activities and in particular the role of the Croatian Employment Service in this context were analyzed. Special attention was paid to women due to their strong underrepresentation in paid work and young people who largely belong to a vulnerable group of persons who are not in education, employment or training – the so-called NEET. The same chapter describes psychosocial theories of the purpose of employment, the role of work in the process of social inclusion as well as job-search models. Within these frameworks, the results were interpreted and recommendations regarding social policy were given.

# 2. Research objectives and methodology

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## 2.1. Objectives of the study on education and employment

The study consists of two parts representing the research units of Education and Employment. Each part has its own specific research objectives, data analyses from which conclusions are drawn and recommendations regarding social policy. Certainly, both education and employment are two key levers of society in the process of social inclusion of the Roma, which is why the presented data analyses and recommendations should be considered as a whole when planning a social policy aimed at social inclusion of the Roma in Croatia.

The chapter on education provides a detailed overview of the educational status of the Roma in terms of preschool, primary school and secondary school education as well as higher and adult education. This overview also includes an analysis of the participation of RNM members in certain levels and forms of education in Croatia and the fulfillment of conditions for equal participation of the Roma in the education system. Special attention is paid to analyses regarding education of the most vulnerable groups of Roma – children of preschool and primary school age, certain practices that can be assessed as mostly unfavorable when it comes to education of RNM members (such as the impact of spatial segregation, placement in ethnically segregated classes, discriminatory behavior and education under special programs), as well as practices that facilitate the development and education of children and young people (including individualized programs, working with Roma assistants and inclusion in extended stay and extracurricular activities). The last unit of the chapter on education analyzes the attitudes, norms and values of the Roma population as regards education in order to gain insight into the factors hindering the inclusion of RNM members in education, as well as factors which could indicate changing trends when it comes to attitudes of the Roma towards education.

The chapter on education gives answers to following research questions: *How are the educational accomplishments of RNM members distributed in relation to their sociodemographic characteristics? To what extent do RNM children attend*

*preschool education and what are the predictive factors for attending preschool education? To what extent do RNM children attend primary education and what sociodemographic characteristics determine primary school attendance? What are the educational outcomes of RNM children, expressed as the grade point average in the previous school year? What are the relevant factors for secondary school attendance? Which factors shape the attitudes towards higher education? What attitudes, values and norms regarding education and the education system are expressed by members of the Roma national minority? What are the experiences of discrimination in the education system?*

The chapter on employment addresses the determinants of the employment status of RNM members, the characteristics of their work experience, the representation of the Roma in certain segments of the labor market, job-search activities and in particular, the experiences of discrimination in the labor market. The center of interest is not only the employment status of the Roma, but also the quality of working life and the connection between employment status and psychosocial well-being. Special attention is paid to two demographic groups – women and youth, and the phenomenon of long-term unemployment.

Our objective is to answer questions such as: *What is the survey employment rate and the registered unemployment rate of the Roma in the Republic of Croatia? Does the unemployment of the Roma differ depending on the region? Which demographic groups of the Roma are underrepresented in the labor market? Which socioeconomic characteristics are associated with different employment status at the individual and group level? Are there any gender and generational differences in the employment rate and the type of work activities? Are the Roma more often employed in the private or in the public sector and are there differences between regions in this respect? What are the attitudes of the Roma towards work and employment? Are unemployed persons seeking employment and how often do they use active employment support policy measures? To what extent are experiences of discrimination in employment and job search represented? Is employment related to the psychosocial well-being indicators of the Roma? Does undeclared work replace the employment function? Which persons and groups are at risk of long-term unemployment? What is the employment inclusion rate of the youth?*

## 2.2. Data sources

The data presented in this book were collected as part of the project "Collecting and monitoring baseline data for effective implementation of the National Roma Inclusion Strategy" which was carried out for the Office for Human Rights and the Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia

as a beneficiary during 2017 and 2018 by Ecorys Hrvatska d.o.o. and the Center for Peace Studies (CPS). As part of this project, a comprehensive empirical study was conducted in 2017 with the aim of defining baseline values for measuring the effects of the National Roma Inclusion Strategy from 2013 to 2020 (NRIS) and the Action Plan (AP) of the NRIS at national, regional and local level, and defining the needs of Roma communities, as well as obstacles to the inclusion of the Roma national minority at local/regional and national level. Part of the results of this research related to key baseline data was published in the book "Roma Inclusion in the Croatian Society: a Baseline Data Study" (Kunac, Klasnić and Lalić, 2018).

This publication uses data collected in 2017 which directly or indirectly relate to the education and employment of the Roma in the Republic of Croatia.

The chapter on employment also uses current qualitative data – the experiences of persons who professionally support the Roma during their job search and employment. These data were collected in February 2020. This is an appropriate sample of available persons who have voluntarily responded to our invitation for sharing their experience, with a permission from their superiors (CES director and ESF project manager).

**Data collection methods**

This empirical research from 2017 was conducted using the so-called mixed methodology and it included three main research sections: 1) Mapping of Roma communities in the Republic of Croatia, 2) Interviews and focus groups with representatives of the Roma national minority, key persons in Roma communities and representatives of relevant institutions at the level of local self-government units, and 3) Surveys of the Roma population on a representative sample of Roma households. This publication analyzes relevant data on education and employment from all three research sections.

A detailed description of the research methodology and each research section was published in Kunac, Klasnić and Lalić (2018), followed by a brief description of the implementation of individual sections, which is crucial for understanding the data presented in this book.

1) Mapping of Roma communities

The mapping of Roma communities was carried out with the primary goal of determining the Roma population as a prerequisite for quantitative sampling of the Roma population, but also to collect data on the specifics of individual localities inhabited by members of the RNM. The mapping of Roma communities was conducted during May and June 2017 using the methods of structured interviews and observations at a total of 134 localities in 15 counties of the Republic of Croatia.

Informants (persons who provided information about localities) were members of the RNM, i.e. persons who live in these localities and are well informed about them, so they were selected to provide educated mappers with the necessary information according to questions in templates for population and community description. Three structured interviews were planned per each locality, i.e. an interview with three informants where at least one of them was supposed to be female. A total of 371 structured interviews were conducted (with 196 men and 175 women), so there were on average 2.8 informants per locality.

2) Qualitative methodology – interview methods and focus groups

The second research section was related to the application of qualitative methodology. Semi-structured expert interviews were conducted with representatives of relevant institutions at the level of local self-government units (141 in total) and semi-structured in-depth interviews with representatives of the Roma national minority and key persons in Roma communities (67 in total). In addition, seven focus groups were conducted with representatives of relevant institutions at the county level (a total of 73 people participated).

In interviews and focus groups, questions were asked about education, employment, health care, social welfare, children, space, housing and environmental protection, social and cultural life, status and rights, institutional environment, and needs and priorities for change.

Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with four persons working in the governmental and non-governmental sector in the filed of job-search support and placement services for the Roma. This is an appropriate sample of persons who responded to the authors' invitation and were willing to share their experiences for the purpose of this publication.

3) Quantitative methodology – survey method

The third and key research unit referred to quantitative research using a survey method (face-to-face technique) with members of the RNM in 12 counties of the RoC. The survey was conducted during October and November 2017 at a total of 109 localities inhabited by members of the RNM. It covered 1,550 Roma households, collecting data on 4,758 members of these households. Data on 38% of all Roma households registered in the mapping process were collected and on 21% of the total estimated Roma population in these counties.[13]

The survey questionnaire contained questions about the infrastructural, environmental and housing living conditions in Roma settlements, different economic

13 Detailed information on sampling and the conduct of research can be found in Kunac, Klasnić and Lalić (2018).

and social characteristics of Roma households, about different sociodemographic, socioeconomic and sociocultural characteristics of all household members, personal situation in employment, education, health and housing, about integration, discrimination, awareness of citizens' rights and issues, and questions about personal experiences and attitudes related to different areas of the *National Roma Inclusion Strategy*. Due to the extremely large number of topics and questions that the survey was supposed to cover, two versions of the survey questionnaire were used (the so-called A and B versions), therefore not all questions were posed to all respondents. The result, in technical terms, is different subsample sizes for different questions.

The sample of Roma population in the survey was constructed according to data on the survey population collected by mapping Roma communities and it is considered representative by age and gender for members of the Roma national minority in 12 counties of the Republic of Croatia for localities inhabited by at least 30 RNM members.

## 2.3. Methodology of the study on education and employment

### Regional division and population size estimation

For the purpose of statistical processing and analyses, the results of which are presented in the following chapters, data from the county level[14] are grouped into six regions, taking into account their geographical proximity and certain sociodemographic specifics.

Given that this publication discusses the shares of members of the RNM in individual regions, in Table 1 estimates of the total number of RNM members in individual regions are presented, according to data collected by mapping Roma communities.[15]

14 Counties of research interest were determined by applying a combination of external and (expert) internal identification of localities inhabited by a minimum of 30 Roma (for details see: Kunac, Klasnić and Lalić, 2018: 53–55). Such an approach did not identify any locality where at least 30 Roma live in any county in the Dalmatia region.

15 It should be emphasized that this is the sum of the mean values of the estimates of individual informants in each locality.

**TABLE 1. Regional division and population size estimation**

| Region | Counties | Number of localities in which the mapping and the survey were conducted | Number of Roma households in which the survey was conducted | Estimation of population size, i.e. number of RNM members from the mapping |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Međimurje | Međimurje | 14 | 566 | 6 368 |
| Northern Croatia | Koprivnica-Križevci County and Varaždin County | 17 | 156 | 2 460 |
| Zagreb and its surrounding area | City of Zagreb and Zagreb County | 17 | 214 | 3 539 |
| Central Croatia | Bjelovar-Bilogora County and Sisak-Moslavina County | 21 | 194 | 3 655 |
| Slavonia | Osijek-Baranja County, Brod-Posavina County and Vukovar-Srijem County | 25 | 296 | 4 142 |
| Istria and Primorje | Primorje-Gorski Kotar County and Istria County | 15 | 124 | 2 322 |

In addition, the mapping of Roma communities determined that the Roma in the Republic of Croatia live in four types of localities, three of which are marked by different levels of segregation, and integrated housing in the fourth one. Therefore, we distinguish between localities separated from a town or village in a separate location, localities on the outskirts of a town or village, localities where the Roma live separated within a town or village and localities where the Roma live dispersed among the majority population in a town or village. The chapter on education includes analyses with regard to all four types of housing, meaning that the Roma in the Republic of Croatia are distinguished according to four types of localities. Given the very small share of employed and active Roma in the general Roma population in the Republic of Croatia (which has repercussions on the sample size and the possibility of statistical inference), in the chapter on employment, we do not conduct quantitative analyses with regard to these four types of localities but exclusively with regard to the segregation level in relation to the majority population. As follows, the localities are grouped into types of settlements distinguishing between persons living: (1) in segregated and remote settlements, which indicates the highest level of segregation, (2) in segregated settlements (regardless of whether these settlements are located on the outskirts or within settlements of the majority population) and (3) integrated with the majority population.

### Analysis of quantitative data

For the purposes of this study, data from mapping and survey research were combined into a common database, which allowed the simultaneous analysis of three types of characteristics necessary to obtain a comprehensive picture of the Roma population in individual areas:

- characteristics of localities (settlements) in which RNM members live
- characteristics of Roma households
- characteristics of RNM members (personal characteristics, experiences and attitudes).

The analyses are based on quantitative data (survey questionnaire and mapping data). Qualitative data (interviews and focus groups with key representatives of the Roma national minority and key non-Roma actors) were used to illustrate the quantitative results and were supplemented by interviews with persons supporting the Roma in finding employment. The methodology also includes summarized key operations of the baseline data study, while the statistical processing includes a univariate (response distribution), bivariate (correlation, chi-square test, t-test, variance analysis) and multivariate analysis (regression analysis), depending on the type of variables and the purpose of the analysis.

Where appropriate, we analyzed the collected data through: (1) comparison with the general population of the RoC to determine the specific position of the Roma in the national context, (2) comparison of the Roma in six regions to determine the specific position of the Roma according to their region and (3) a comparative analysis of the results with available data from other European countries.

# 3. Education

# 3. Education

## 3.1. Preschool education of the Roma

Early childhood development programs, which we touched upon in the introduction to this study, address the need to ensure uniform initial conditions for children entering the education system, with particular emphasis on children from socially deprived families, and the benefits of the early investment in child development both for the individual and for the society on multiple levels.[16] Based on the results of a longitudinal study that followed the development and growing up of people from socially deprived families until adulthood (Lynch et al., 2004), in addition to monitoring a control group of their peers with the same sociodemographic characteristics,[17] it can be concluded that there are multiple benefits of ECD programs:

- improved verbal skills, numeracy and intellectual development in general
- higher success in school, less frequent grade retention and higher completion rate
- higher employment rates and higher earnings
- better health status
- lower level of dependence on state social programs and assistance systems
- lower crime rate
- decrease in state budget expenditure.

As required by law, preschool education[18] in Croatia includes children from the age of six months to the age for starting school, in accordance with the Educational Standard for Preschool Education.[19] *The National Roma Inclusion Strategy from 2013 to 2020* (2012) recognizes the importance of preschool education and recommends at least two years of preschool education for five hours per day throughout one school year. According to Eurostat data,[20] in 2018 in Croatia, 81%

16 UNICEF Croatia (2013) *Kako roditelji i zajednice brinu o djeci najmlađe dobi u Hrvatskoj [How Parents and Communities Care for the Youngest Children in Croatia].*

17 Respondents from socially deprived families were monitored as regards the (lack) of involvement in early childhood development programs.

18 *Preschool Education Act*, Official Gazette 10/97, 107/07, 94/13, 98/19.

19 *National Educational Standard for Preschool Education*, Official Gazette 63/08, 90/2010.

20 Source: Eurostat [educ_uoe_enra10]

of children aged four to the age for starting school were included in preschool education. However, as we will see later on, members of the RNM are included in these programs to a much lesser extent than the majority population. When it comes to the Roma population, the NRIS states that, in addition to the low inclusion rate, the problem also lies in the lack of integrated groups and inconsistent implementation, in particular in terms of varying quality in different environments. At the international level, Croatia is at the bottom of the scale in terms of inclusion of RNM children in preschool education, and only Greece has a lower inclusion rate than Croatia (FRA, 2018: 23). The EUMIDIS II survey (FRA, 2016: 27) states that in Croatia 32% of Roma children attend preschool education (26% of girls and 37% of boys). In that sense, only the Czech Republic and Slovakia are comparable to Croatia, with 34% of Roma children participating in preschool education, while Spain reports 97% and Hungary 95%. Additionally, when compared to the entire population, Croatia is at the bottom of the European scale in terms of participation in preschool education. In 2017, the EU countries average was 95%, while the average for Croatia was 82.8%.[21,22]

The publication titled *Roma Education in Comparative Perspective. The Analysis of the UNDP/World Bank/EC Regional Roma Survey 2011* (Brüggemann, 2012) states that low preschool attendance rates have been recorded in all Eastern European and Western Balkan countries, with the exception of Hungary where RNM children attend preschool education programs even at a higher rate than the majority population. In Croatia, there is primarily the lack of capacities, i.e. not enough places in preschool education institutions and the distance between kindergartens and the localities (with the exception of cities, where there is a general lack of capacities). The challenges of children's participation in preschool education are also associated with the traditional way of caring for preschool children in Croatia, i.e. to raising children in multigenerational families in which grandparents take on the roles of educators. A significant problem is also the lack of awareness of the need to include children in educational institutions at an early age, which is particularly pronounced in the Roma population, and which will be supported by data later on. The opportunity of an early inclusion in additional activities is missed due to the insignificant inclusion of RNM members. Along with the "regular" program, preschool education also offers additional programs and activities through which preschool children can gain access to content that they might otherwise have difficulty accessing, which is especially true in the case of the Roma population. These include early language learning programs, sports programs, programs aimed at the social inclusion of children with disabilities, programs for the development of artistic and musical skills, and introduction to scientific and technological developments.

21 Source: Eurostat [educ_uoe_enra10]

22 Data at the level of the EU countries average are available only for 2017, not for 2018.

In Croatia, the number of RNM children participating in preschool education programs is increasing, thanks to the efforts of the MES and the [G]OHRRNM as well as the Education Fund [REF], which still funds certain programs for the Roma population that are being implemented in Croatia. Table 2 shows the number of RNM members who attended preschool education programs in the period 2007–2018. **There has been a considerable increase in the participation of RNM children in preschool education since 2015,** but this involvement, as already noted, is still too low.

**TABLE 2. Participation of RNM children in preschool education from SY 2007/2008 to SY 2017/2018.**[23]

| School year | Number of girls | Number of boys | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2007/2008 | 401 | 409 | 810 |
| 2008/2009 | 342 | 350 | 692 |
| 2009/2010 | 402 | 422 | 824 |
| 2010/2011 | 301 | 322 | 586 |
| 2011/2012 | 301 | 322 | 623 |
| 2013/2014 | 405 | 364 | 769 |
| 2015/2016 | 513 | 513 | 1026 |
| 2016/2017 | 518 | 600 | 1118 |
| 2017/2018 | 532 | 488 | 1020 |

The research data presented in the unit on education are aimed at gaining a more comprehensive picture of the educational status of the RNM in Croatia, as well as presenting some obstacles to better educational achievements. The insights presented in the last part of the study are accompanied by targeted recommendations for eliminating the obstacles to greater Roma inclusion at all levels of education [starting from preschool] and better educational achievements.

## Number of preschool-age children in the localities

The first part of the analyses regarding preschool education refers to the analysis of localities [mapping section data]. The sample included 43.4% of localities with 1–49 children aged 3–6, 10.9% of localities were inhabited by 50–99 small children, 15.4% of localities had 100–149 small children, and 30.3% of localities had more than 150 children.

The lowest number of children – less than 49, was recorded in the case of Roma living dispersed among the majority population and in localities within a town or village which, although segregated from the rest of the settlement, are still likely to undergo certain changes, as evidenced by the smaller number of preschool-age children in relation to more segregated localities. **What indicates the vulnerability of preschool children is the significantly higher incidence of localities with**

23 Government of the Republic of Croatia [2019] *2018 report on the implementation of the National Roma Inclusion Strategy from 2013 to 2020.*

**more than 150 children, which are more spatially segregated** and which, as we will see, have more difficult access to preschool infrastructure (Figure 1).

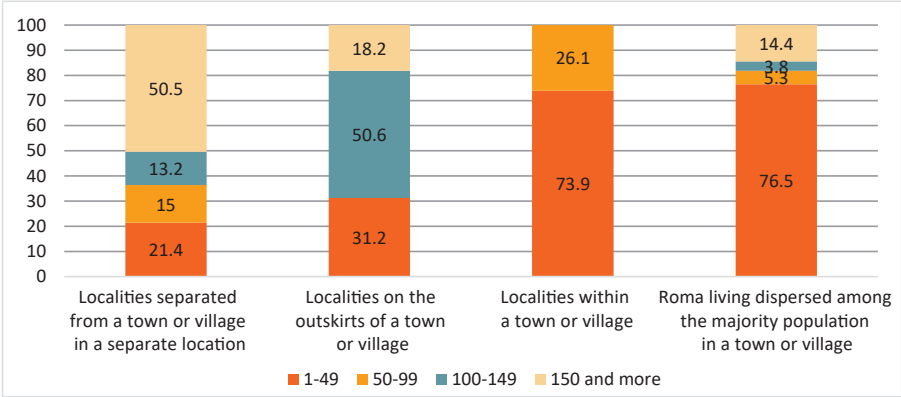


**FIGURE 1. Number of preschool-age children in the localities by locality type (%)**[24]

The distribution of localities with 150 and more children by county[25] showed that the eight analyzed counties do not report any localities with more than 150 preschool-age children, while localities with this number of children were recorded in 46.3% of cases in the City of Zagreb, 60.3% of cases in Međimurje County, 36.8% of cases in Sisak-Moslavina County and 30.3% of cases in Zagreb County. When looking at regions, Međimurje, as expected, has the largest share of localities with more than 150 children (60.3%) and Northern Croatia has the largest share of localities with up to 49 children (84.5%) (Figure 2).

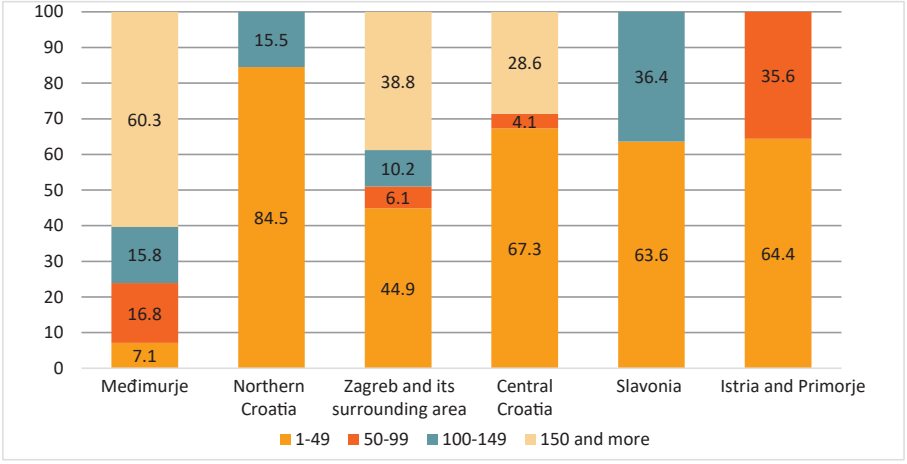


**FIGURE 2. Regional distribution of preschool-age children in the locality (%)**[26]

24 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 235.54$ ; df = 9 ; p<.01.
25 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 422.13$ ; df = 33 ; p<.01.
26 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 303.92$ ; df = 15 ; p<.01.

Northern Croatia has the largest share (85.4%) of localities with the smallest number of children (up to 49), similar to Central Croatia (68.0%), Slavonia (63.8%) and Istria and Primorje (60.9%).

## Distance between the kindergarten and the localities

**As many as 35.2% of children aged 3 to 6 have poor access to preschool infrastructure, with preschool education institutions being more than 3 km away,** while there were only 13.8% of those with accessible kindergartens at a distance of up to 1 km in the sample.[27] Preschool education institutions at a distance of 2.1–3.0 km were available to 38.9% of children aged 3–6, while these institutions at a distance of 1.1–2.0 km were available to 12.1% of children. **The presented distribution of infrastructure, which should be easily accessible to preschool-age children and their parents, is a significant aggravating factor for greater inclusion in organized forms of support for early childhood development.**

Regionally (Figure 3), in **Central Croatia 80.0% of children aged 3–6 lived more than 3 km away from the kindergarten, in Northern Croatia there were 49.1% of children in such a position, and in Slavonia there were 47.7% of them. Consequently, these three regions are the ones with the most remote preschool institutions.** Nonetheless, it should be emphasized that in all regions, significant work should be done when it comes to the geographical accessibility of kindergartens and facilities where preschool programs take place.

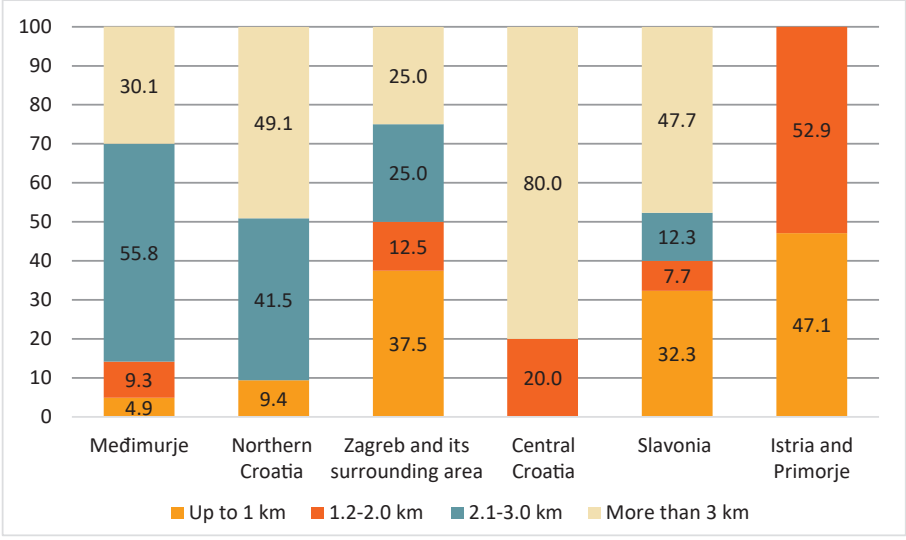


FIGURE 3. Regional distribution of the share of children aged 3–6 living in localities with a certain distance from the nearest kindergarten [%][28]

27 N = 406

28 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 201.04 ; df = 15 ; p<.01.

The share of children aged 3–6 living at a certain distance from the kindergarten by locality type (Figure 4) is very indicative of the extent to which some areas in Croatia inhabited by RNM members are affected by the lack of preschool infrastructure, even to the level indicating spatial segregation.

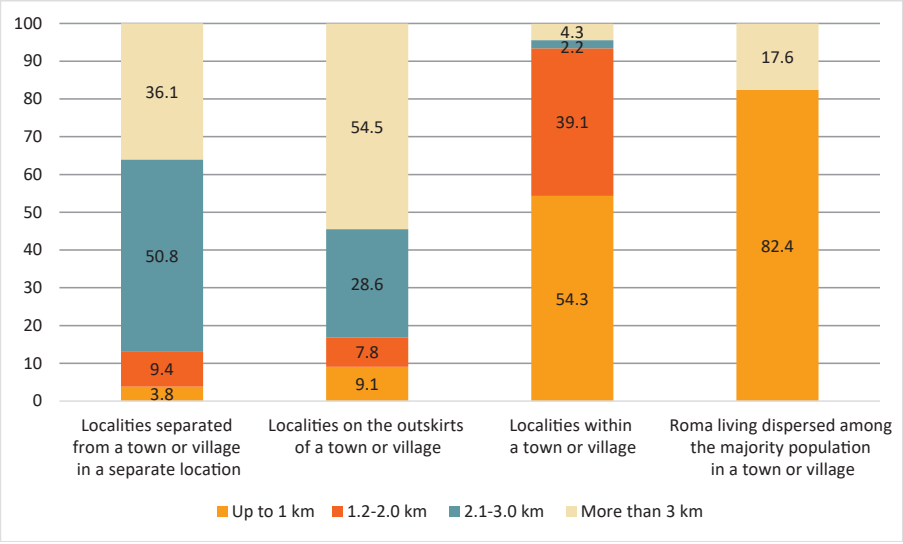


**FIGURE 4. Share of children aged 3–6 living in localities with a certain distance from the nearest kindergarten by locality type (%)**[29]

When it comes to children living in localities separated from a town or village in a separate location, there are almost no kindergartens less than 1 km away, which is similar to the case of children living in localities on the outskirts of a town or village. In both locality types, the distance of more than 2 km prevails. The situation is completely opposite when looking at the Roma living in localities with the majority population, where eight-tenths of children aged 3–6 have a kindergarten up to 1 km away.

29 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 222.56$ ; df = 9 ; p<.01.

## The challenges of early integration

The distance of kindergartens from localities presents just one of the challenges in preschool education of RNM members in Croatia. As illustrated by the quotation from the focus group shown below, **the prescribed preschool program of 250–550 hours during one school year is insufficient to compensate for all the effects of social deprivation of Roma children.**

> *The preschool program lasts for a year in the settlement, but it's too short, they don't reach the level of Croatian children who enter the education system with them at the same time, and they are in a worse position at the beginning. They find it difficult to attend classes and are absolutely not interested, it's not clear to them. The whole system failed here because it didn't adapt to the Roma, but they adapt the Roma to our system.*
>
> Excerpt from a focus group interview with representatives of relevant institutions

Additionally, from the interviews conducted during the focus groups, it is possible to draw a conclusion on the insufficient efforts made in the field of early integration.

> *When the preschool program for the Roma was introduced, then the Ministry of Science said, no, no, no, when we asked to include a few Croats, no, no, no it's for the Roma.*
>
> Excerpt from a focus group interview with representatives of relevant institutions

Based on the statements gathered during the interviews with RNM representatives, we can conclude that one of the problems regarding the access to preschool seems to be the criteria which do not favor RNM members (employment of both parents as a precondition for priority enrollment in public preschool education institutions), which should certainly be abolished. This criterion is principally based on the undercapacity of the Croatian preschool education system, which should be remedied with joint efforts of institutions at national, regional and local level.

> *It's a small kindergarten and there are a lot of children. Both Roma and non-Roma. The criterion that exists for kindergartens is that children whose parents work have the right to enroll, and in the Roma population none of them do.*
>
> Excerpt from an interview with a Roma representative

## Inclusion of Roma children in preschool education

One of the key pieces of data for drafting programs for the early inclusion in preschool education is also the number of children from the locality who actually attend kindergarten or preschool. When asked how many preschool-age children from the locality attend kindergarten (N = 521), the sample identified 45.1% of localities where the representatives stated that there are no children attending kindergarten and 54.9% of localities where children of that age attend kindergarten, which again points to the weak social inclusion of RNM children. **Regionally (Figure 5), the highest non-involvement of children up to 6 years of age in preschool education is recorded in the Međimurje region (59.2%),** while children attend preschool education in Slavonia (91.1%) and Northern Croatia (87.8%) the most.

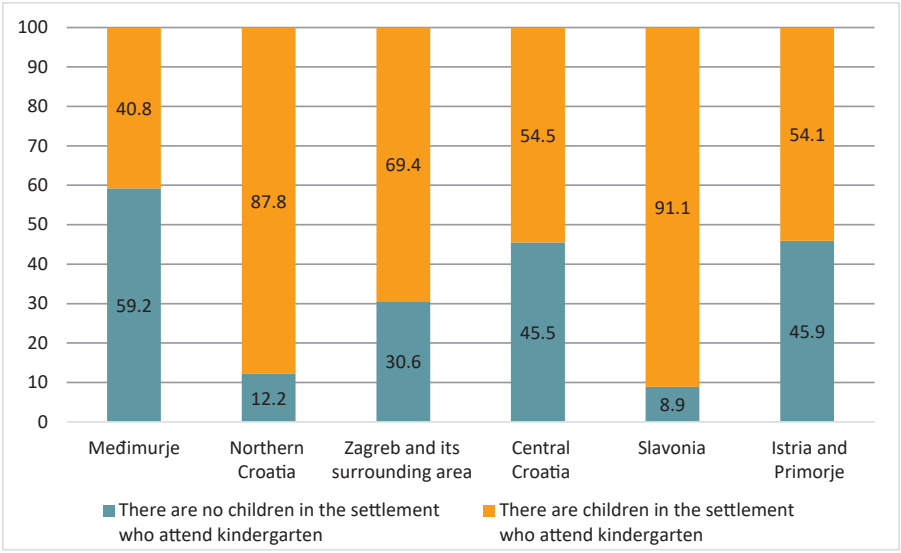


FIGURE 5. Kindergarten attendance of children from the localities by region (%)[30]

The spatial segregation of settlements proves to be the key factor in the inclusion of children in preschool education because in as many as 62.0% of localities separated from a town or village in a separate location there are no children participating in preschool education, while the number of such children in localities where the Roma live dispersed among the majority population amounts to 28.8%.[31] In 29.9% of localities on the outskirts of a town or village there are no children attending kindergarten and the situation is similar in localities within a town or village (28.3%).

30 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 74.12$ ; df = 5 ; p<.01.

31 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 57.17$ ; df = 3 ; p<.01.

In order to present a clearer picture of the participation of children in preschool education, we created a variable of the share of children aged 3 to 6 from the examined locality who attend preschool education institutions (Figure 6). **In as many as 56.1% of localities, up to 10% of children are included in kindergartens, while there are only 14.0% of localities where 31–50% of children attend kindergarten.**

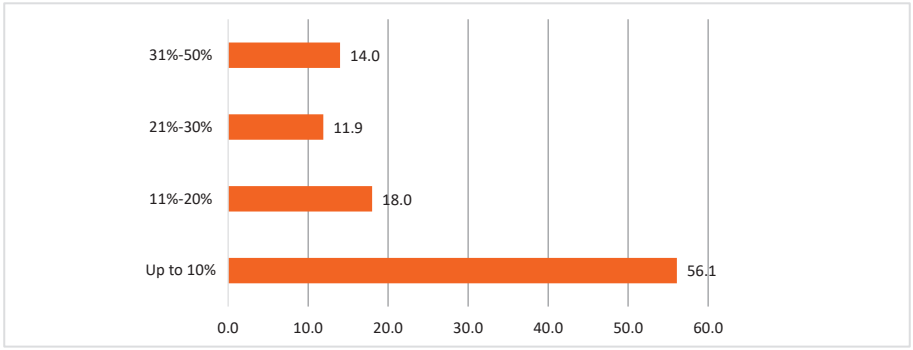


FIGURE 6. Share of children from the localities participating in preschool education in relation to the number of preschool-age children in the localities (%)[32]

**As many as 10 counties do not have a single locality where 31–50% of preschool-age children attend kindergarten,** while only 36.4% of localities in Istria County and 37.6% of localities in Međimurje County report this share of preschool children participating in organized education.[33] When looking at the regional distribution of the aforementioned locality categories (Figure 7), **there are no localities in Northern and Central Croatia where more than 10% of children aged 3–6 participate in preschool education,** and children from Međimurje are in the relatively best position given that 37.6% of localities have a kindergarten attendance of 31–50%.

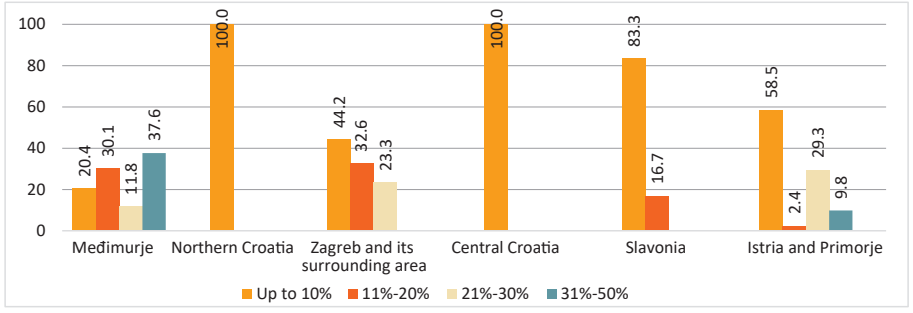


FIGURE 7. Regional distribution of the share of children from the localities participating in preschool education in relation to the total number of preschool-age children in the locality (%)[34]

32 N=278

33 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 228.80 ; df = 33 ; p<.01.

34 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 161.68 ; df = 15 ; p<.01.

**Localities on the outskirts of a town or village are almost exclusively (96.3%) characterized by up to 10% of children participating in preschool education,** followed by localities within a town or village and localities where the RNM live dispersed among the majority population (60.6% and 64.9% respectively). On the other hand, Roma children participate in preschool education the most (31–50%) in localities separated from a town or village in a separate location, which can be interpreted by the local authorities recognizing the needs of Roma children (Figure 8). Early childhood is the most sensitive development period, and the vulnerability of Roma children is further exacerbated by the vulnerability of families themselves due to their difficult socioeconomic living conditions. Therefore, not only institutions at the national level, but primarily those at the regional and local level should activate new instruments for the purpose of increasing the inclusion of RNM children in preschool education, which will be discussed in more detail in the chapter on recommendations.

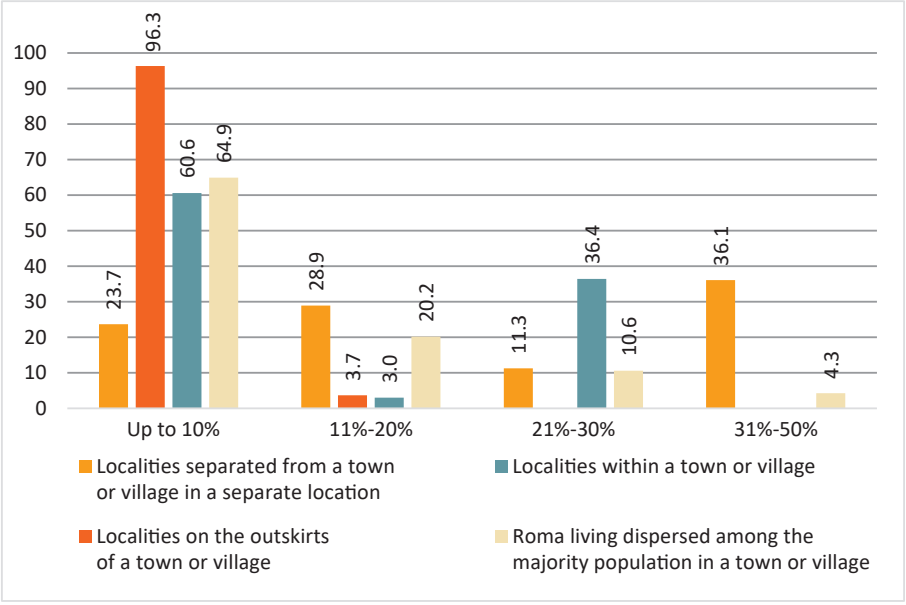


**FIGURE 8. Distribution of the share of children from the localities participating in preschool education in relation to the total number of preschool-age children in the locality by locality type (%)**[35]

35 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 127.43$ ; df = 9 ; p<.01.

## Inclusion of Roma children in preschool education

After the mapping results, we analyzed data at the individual level, where, **in a sample of 453 children aged 3 to 6, it was found that as many as 76.6% of them do not attend kindergarten or preschool,** 16.8% attend kindergarten, 6.4% attend preschool, and 0.2% attend some other preschool educational institution. **The inclusion in preschool education increases with the age of the child and children at the age of 3 participate the least** [Figure 9].

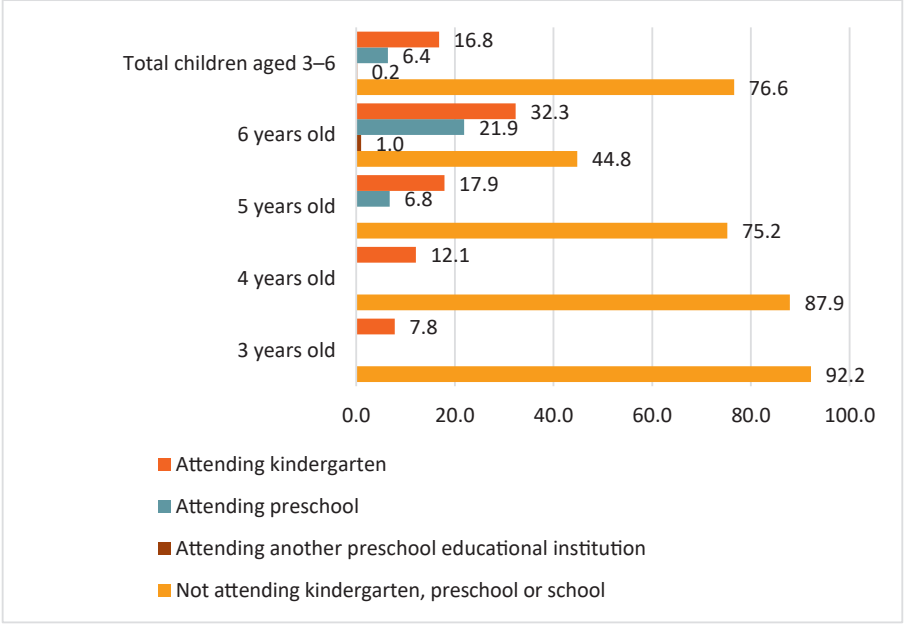


FIGURE 9. **Inclusion in preschool education in SY 2016/2017 by age [%]**[36]

The distinction between Roma children in relation to the type of locality is also pronounced in the form of preschool education they participate in [Figure 10]. When distinguishing between kindergarten and preschool attendance by locality type, the smallest number of Roma children in localities on the outskirts of a town or village or localities separated from a town or village in a separate location participate in preschool education. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that **the results indicate the importance of spatial desegregation of the RNM, especially when it comes to families with children.**

36 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 94.61$ ; df = 9 ; p<.01.

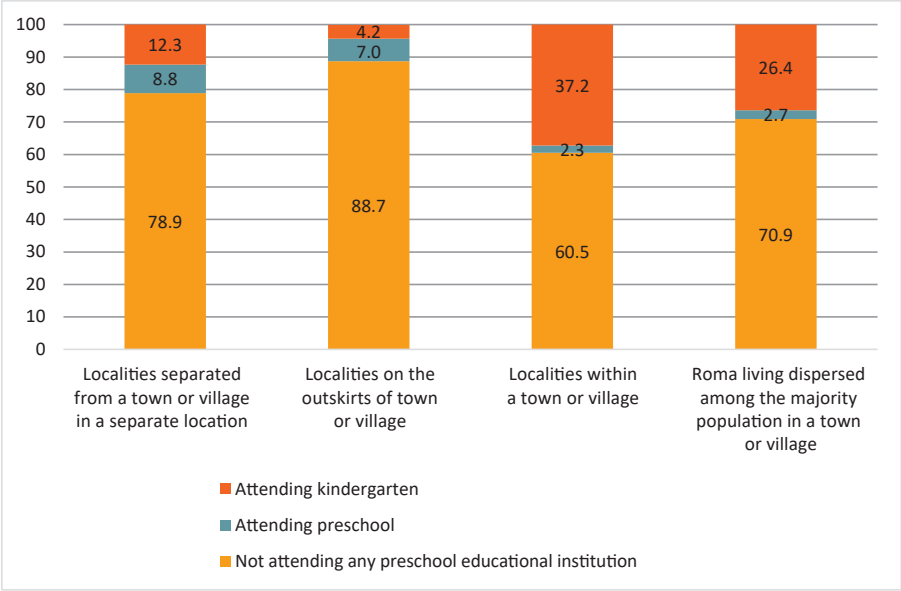


**FIGURE 10. Participation in preschool education by locality type [%]**[37]

The distribution of Roma children participating in preschool education by counties [Table 3] speaks in favor of significant differences between counties.[38] When compared to children from other counties, children from Primorje-Gorski Kotar County attend kindergarten to a greater extent, similar to children from Vukovar-Srijem County. **RNM children from Bjelovar-Bilogora County are most deprived in that respect since there was not a single child attending kindergarten recorded in that county.** However, the largest number of children attending preschool [18.2%] is found in that county, while, according to research data, in Istria, Primorje-Gorski Kotar, Koprivnica-Križevci, Varaždin and Vukovar-Srijem counties there is not a single child attending preschool.

37 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 34.99$ ; df = 6 ; p<.01.

38 In Zagreb County, there is a certain irregularity the source of which is difficult to identify according to the conducted research. Specifically, this county did not report a single child participating in preschool education, i.e. none of the respondents knew whether there was a child attending kindergarten or preschool. Therefore, Zagreb County was excluded from the analysis of this question.

**TABLE 3.** Participation in preschool education by county [%][39]

| | Attend kindergarten | Attend preschool | Do not attend any preschool education institution |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bjelovar-Bilogora | 0.0 | 18.2 | 81.8 |
| Brod-Posavina | 2.8 | 5.6 | 91.7 |
| City of Zagreb | 33.3 | 2.8 | 63.9 |
| Istria | 23.1 | 0.0 | 76.9 |
| Koprivnica-Križevci | 21.6 | 0.0 | 78.4 |
| Međimurje | 10.3 | 10.3 | 79.4 |
| Osijek-Baranja | 8.3 | 12.5 | 79.2 |
| Primorje-Gorski Kotar | 51.6 | 0.0 | 48.4 |
| Sisak-Moslavina | 19.4 | 2.8 | 77.8 |
| Varaždin | 20.0 | 0.0 | 80.0 |
| Vukovar-Srijem | 50.0 | 0.0 | 50.0 |

The regional distribution of participation in preschool education [Figure 11] puts Istria and Primorje at the forefront in terms of the number of children attending kindergartens, followed by Zagreb and its surrounding area. In this case, however, Međimurje ranks the lowest with only 10.3% children attending kindergarten and the same share of children attending preschool, along with Slavonia where there are 7.8% of children in kindergarten and preschool respectively. Given that Međimurje is the region with the highest number of RNM children in Croatia, and that Slavonia is one of the regions most affected by depopulation due to recent international migration [Gvozdanović et al. 2019], a special set of measures to increase the inclusion of children in preschool education should be established for these regions.

39 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 67.75$ ; df = 22 ; p<.01.

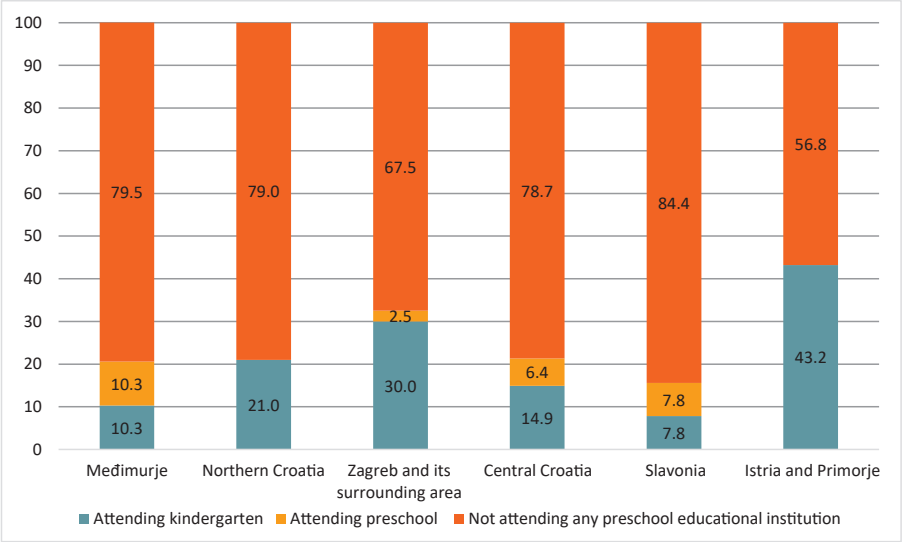


FIGURE 11. Regional distribution of participation in preschool education [%][40]

**The data collected as part of this research enable the creation of tailored measures for each individual county and region, and this potential should be used in designing new strategies, action plans and measures in the field of preschool education.**

## Reasons for not participating in preschool education

To a large extent, RNM children do not participate in preschool education, and it is important to identify the reasons for them not attending kindergarten (Figure 12). It was found that **almost half of the parents (49.4%) consider that a child of preschool age is too young to participate in this form of education,** while 20.6% of them believe that attending kindergarten is financially too demanding for the family, 17.0% of the parents do not see the need for the children to participate in preschool education since someone is taking care of the child at home and 11.5% of them answered that there is no such institution nearby, while other reasons constitute less than 5% of the answers. These answers indicate a lack of family support for the inclusion of children in preschool education, to which special attention should be paid when designing public policy measures.

40 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 47.04$ ; df = 10 ; p<.01.

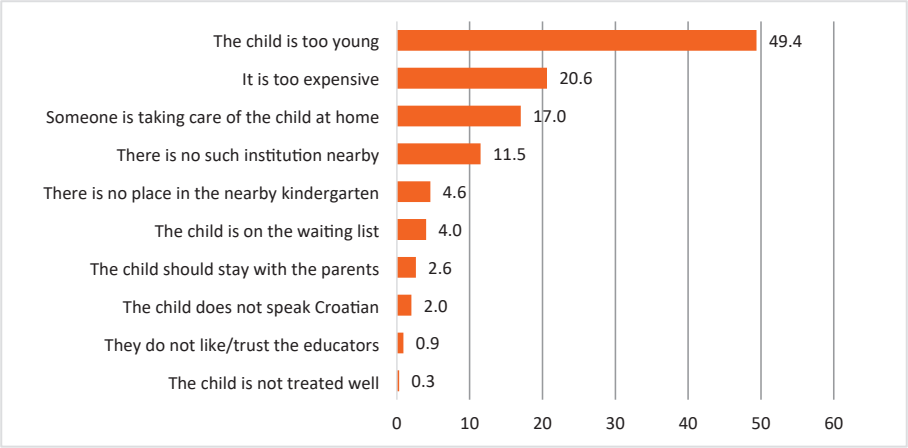


**FIGURE 12. Reasons for not attending preschool education [%]**[41]

Statistical analyses did not show any significant differences among the respondents regarding the attitude that the child does not participate in preschool education because it is too expensive. Parents and guardians of preschool-age children believe that the child is too young to attend kindergarten in the case of 59.6% of three-year-olds, 55.5% of four-year-olds, 41.6% of five-year-olds and 25.0% of six-year-olds.[42]

The material status of the family is associated with one objective reason for the child's non-participation in preschool education – the expenses are too high.[43] 50.0% of respondents from households without any income state that the child does not attend kindergarten because the family cannot afford it, while 84.1% of respondents from households whose income is 1,000–1,500 HRK state the same and so do 73.6% of respondents from households whose income is 1,500–3,000 HRK, 79.0% of respondents from households whose monthly income amounts to 3,001–4,500 HRK and 87.0% of the Roma who have more than 4,500 HRK at their disposal.

11.7% of the respondents answered that the child does not attend kindergarten or preschool because someone at home can take care of the child in the case of 11.7% of children in localities separated from a town or village in a separate location, 12.7% in localities on the outskirts of a town or village, 26.9% in localities within a town or village and 29.5% in localities with the Roma living dispersed among the majority population.[44]

41 N = 347

42 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 18.84$ ; df = 3 ; p<.01.

43 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 10.02$ ; df = 4 ; p<.05.

44 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 14.88$ ; df = 3 ; p<.01.

**The child being to young as a reason for non-participation in preschool education is stated by 59.9% RNM members living in localities separated from a town or village in a separate location,** 39.7% of those living on the outskirts of a town or village, 23.1% of the Roma living in localities within a town or village and 42.0 of respondents living dispersed among the majority population.[45] Again, this finding indicates the positive impact of desegregation of the Roma, i.e. the raised awareness of the importance of preschool education with the increasing exposure to the influence of the majority community.

Counties [Figure 13] and regions [Figure 14] are also statistically significantly associated with differences among respondents in the case of one objective reason for not attending kindergarten or preschool – being too far away, and two subjective ones – assessment that the child is too young to attend kindergarten or preschool and that a household member can take care of the child at home. Respondents in Vukovar-Srijem County take the lead when it comes to statements about the excessive distance of kindergartens, while Roma from Varaždin County have the most pronounced attitude about the child being too young, and the largest share of answers of RNM members from the City of Zagreb refers to taking care of the child by a household member.

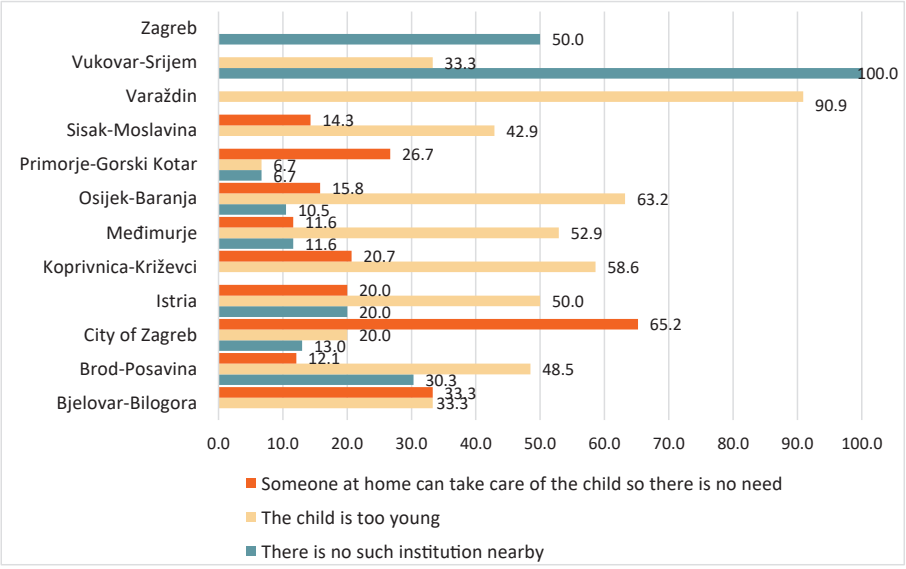


**FIGURE 13. Most important reasons for not participating in preschool education by county [%][46]**

45 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 19.39$ ; df = 3 ; p<.01.

46 There is no such institution nearby: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 44.89$; df = 11; p <.01; the child is too young: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 43.59$, df = 11, p<.01; someone at home can take care of the child so there is no need: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 50.17$ ; df = 11 ; p<.01.

Findings on the excessive distance from kindergartens and the attitude that the child is too young for preschool education are slightly different when regions are included in the analysis. This puts Slavonia at the forefront when considering the frequency of the attitude that the child is too young for kindergarten or preschool, while Northern Croatia takes the lead in stating the excessive distance, and Zagreb does so when claiming that the child can be taken care of at home as obstacles to participating in preschool education.

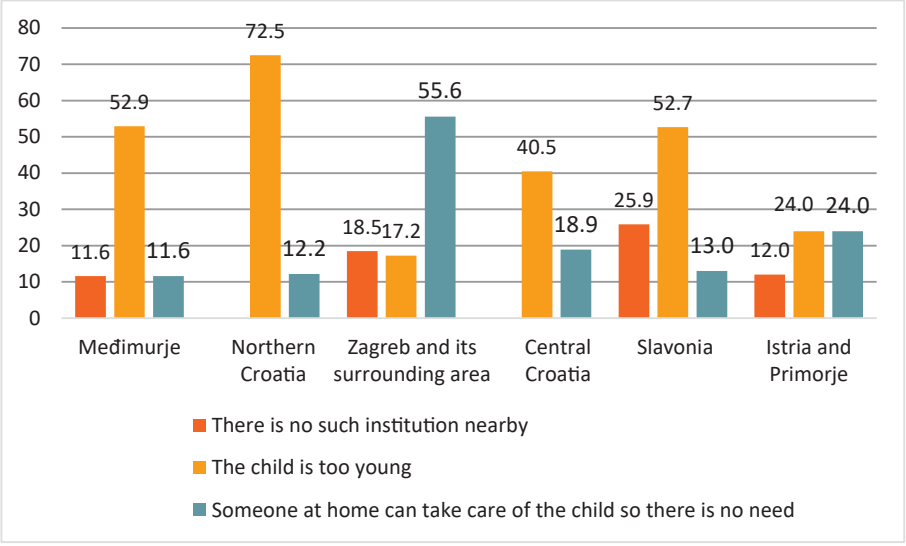


**FIGURE 14. Regional distribution of the most important reasons for not participating in preschool education [%][47]**

After questions concerning preschool-age children, the question that covered the population aged 3–24[48] dealt with determining whether the person attended kindergarten and where they attended it [Figure 15]. So, **32.6% of respondents aged 3–24 did not participate in preschool education,** and the rest mostly participated by attending kindergarten [54.0%]. Only 13.0% of RNM members attended kindergarten in primary school, and 0.5% did so in some other location.

47 There is no such institution nearby: chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 23.48 ; df = 5 ; p<.01; the child is too young: chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 31.55 ; df = 5 ; p<.01; someone at home can take care of the child so there is no need: chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 34.00 ; df = 5 ; p<.01.

48 There was no person over the age of 25 in the sample who participated in preschool education.

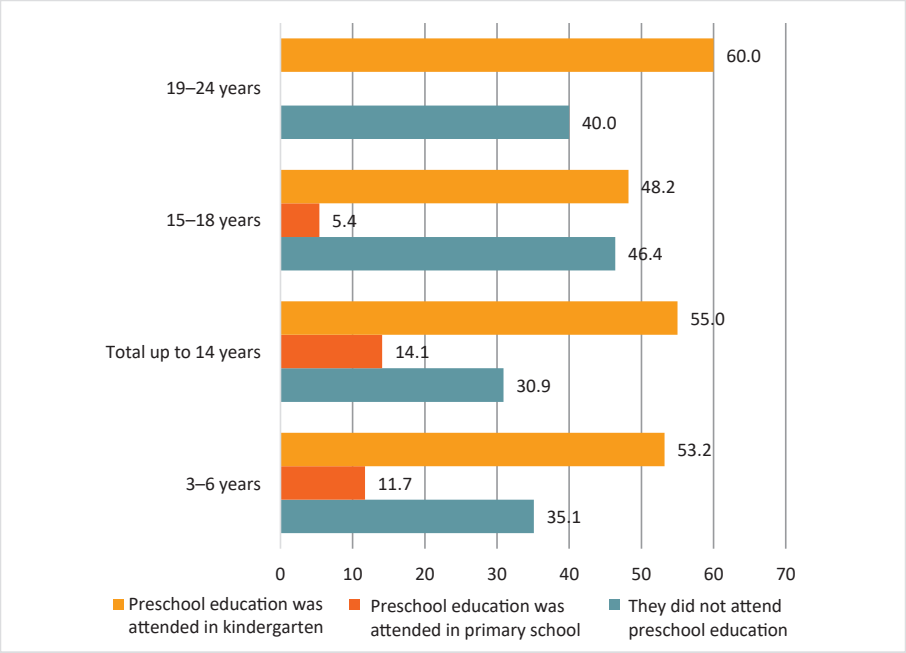


FIGURE 15. Location of attending preschool by the age of the respondents (%)

**The material status of the family[49] correlates with the location of attending kindergarten in the following way: preschool education and education in kindergarten was mostly attended by Roma of the lowest material status (91.2%),** and kindergarten attendance decreases with the growth of material status of families. Consequently, RNM members with a monthly income of more than 4,501 HRK participated in preschool education and education in kindergarten with only 53.0%. Participation in preschool education within primary school provides a completely different picture, i.e. it increases with the household income: in preschool organized within primary school there were no Roma from households without any income, there were 5.9% of Roma from households whose income amounts to 1,000–1,500 HRK and 17.0% of Roma with an income higher than 4,501 HRK.

Brod-Posavina County seems to show a continuously very small inclusion of children in preschool education since in that county, as many as 79.5% of persons aged up to 24 have never attended kindergarten or preschool (Figure 16). Sisak-Moslavina and Vukovar-Srijem County as well as the City of Zagreb also report more than half of respondents who have never attended preschool education. On the other hand, in Međimurje County, as many as 63.9% of respondents who attended kindergarten and 24.5% of those who attended preschool were reported. Varaždin and Istria County show a relatively high inclusion rate as well.

49 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 21.46$ ; df = 8 ; p<.01.

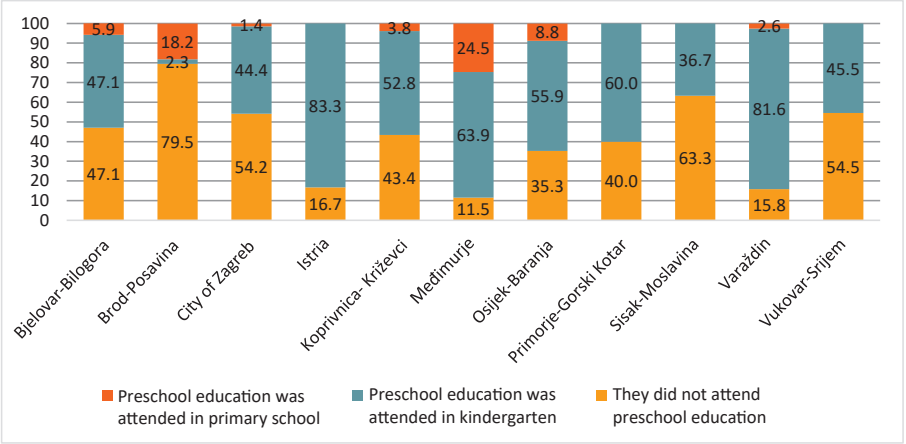


**FIGURE 16. Distribution of locations of attending preschool education by county [%]**[50]

With respect to regional distribution [Figure 17], **the largest number of RNM members who have never attended preschool education is registered in Slavonia, Central Croatia and Zagreb and its surrounding area.** As expected, Northern Croatia, along with Međimurje and Istria and Primorje, takes the lead in kindergarten attendance. However, it should be noted that the preschool program, except the one in Međimurje County, has very low capacities since it includes a very modest share of RNM members.

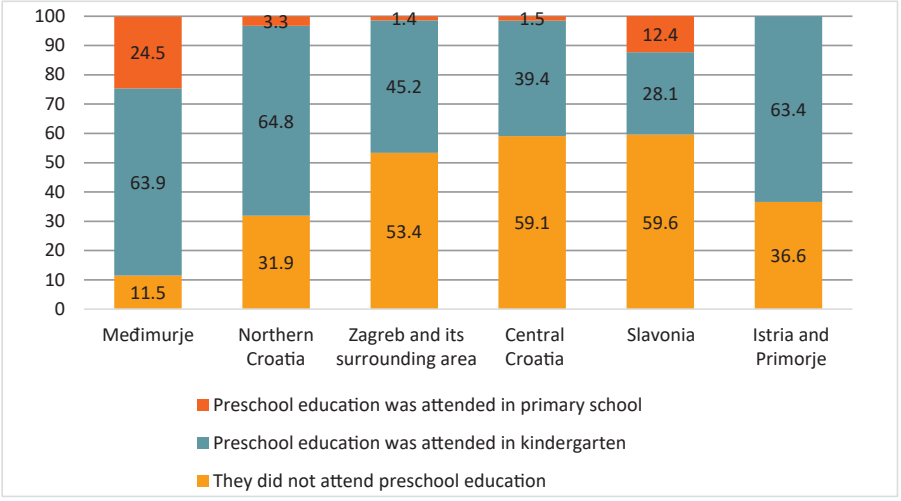


**FIGURE 17. Regional distribution of locations of attending preschool education [%]**[51]

50 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 19.20$ ; df = 22 ; p<.01.

51 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 193.16$ ; df = 20 ; p<.01.

The connection between the share of persons attending preschool education and the locality type (Figure 18) provides different insights for the population aged up to 24 than for the Roma children who participate in preschool education in recent times.

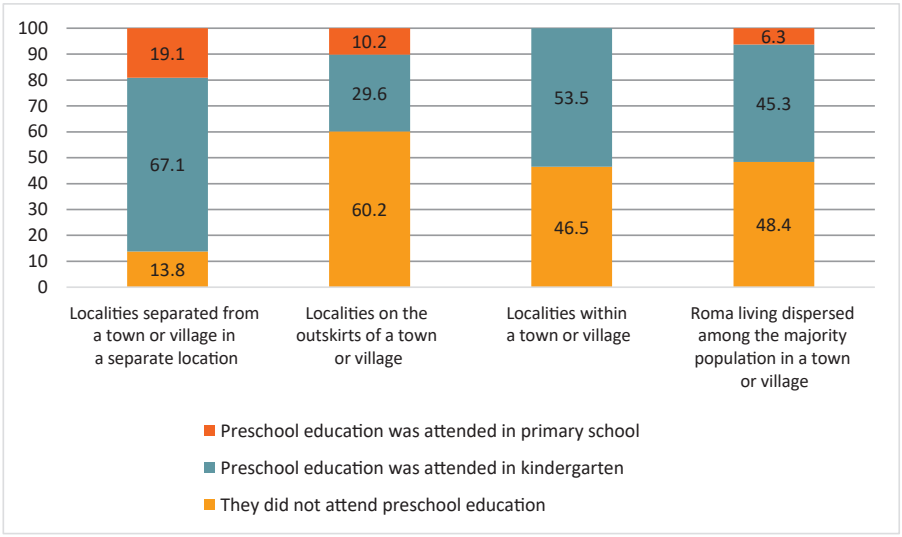


**FIGURE 18. Distribution of locations of attending preschool education by locality type (%)**[52]

In contrast to children who participate in preschool education in recent times, where the highest attendance rates in kindergartens or preschools are reported among Roma living in localities within a town or village, among RMN member aged up to 24 the highest inclusion in kindergartens or preschools is reported in localities which are separated from a town or village in a separate location. A possible explanation can be found in the cumulative effect over time which affected these types of localities the most.

52 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 119.27$ ; df = 6 ; p<.01.

## 3.2. Primary education of the Roma

*The 2018 report on the implementation of the National Roma Inclusion Strategy from 2013 to 2020* (Government of the RoC, 2019: 7) emphasizes that in the primary school system there has been a noticeable "decrease in the number of pupils compared to the last school year. At the beginning of the SY 2017/2018 5,134 pupils (2,589 M, 2,545 F) were included in the primary school system, while at the beginning of the SY 2018/2019 there were 4,983 pupils (2,496 M, 2,487 F)". The report also states that in the primary school system, the conditions for more successful inclusion of RNM members in education, such as learning the Croatian language and organizing an extended stay in primary school, are still not being provided. At the beginning of the SY 2018/2019, 785 pupils (406 M, 379 F) were included in the extended stay, which is a significant increase compared to the previous year – 357 (172 M, 185 F). Improvements can also be seen in language learning, as program that facilitates schooling, but they are still insufficient. The number of RNM pupils participating in the Croatian language learning program increased in the SY 2017/2018, when 380 pupils (200 M, 180 F) were included in this program, which is 44 more than in the previous period (166 M, 170 F). On the other hand, unfavorable trends have been recorded in the number of ethnically segregated classes given that in 2016/2017 there were 60 such classes, and the following year there were 65. **In addition to ensuring support for Croatian language learning and extended stays, the abolition of completely ethnically segregated classes is extremely important in preventing the early drop out of RNM pupils.** Raising awareness of the importance of education in the entire Roma population is of the utmost importance in order to keep as many pupils as possible in the education system and ensure the completion of compulsory education as a ticket for secondary education.

### Number of preschool-age children in the locality

The EUMIDIS II survey (FRA, 2016: 24) states that in Croatia, 93% of Roma girls and 94% of Roma boys of primary-school-age participate in compulsory education. This makes the situation in Croatia similar to the one in Spain, which is first ranked and where 99% of Roma of primary-school-age participate in this form of education, while the lowest share of compulsory education attendance in the observed European countries was reported in Greece (69%). However, research data for Croatia indicate the shortcomings of support systems for a more successful inclusion of RNM members in the education system and better educational structure of the Roma population. The first part of the analyses regarding primary education refers to the analysis of localities (mapping section). In accordance with the analyses in the field of preschool education, in the analysis of primary education, the first level consisted of determining the number of children of primary-school-age

who live in the locality. The results show that localities with up to 49 children at that age are represented by 29.2% and that there are 10.8% of localities with 50–99 children of primary-school-age are, 9.3% localities with 100–149 children of that age and 50.6% localities with 150 or more children aged 6–13.

With respect to the type of locality and the number of children in the locality (Figure 19), up to 49 children of primary-school-age mostly live in localities within a town or village, while **150 or more children of that age mostly live in localities separated from a town or village (68.2%) or in localities on the outskirts of a town or village (55.6%), which, again, indicates a high spatial segregation of RNM members.**


FIGURE 19. **Number of primary-school-age children in the locality by locality type (%)**[53]

The distribution of children in the localities by county (Figure 20) indicates high diversification among counties, with three counties having up to 49 children of primary-school-age in all examined localities (Bjelovar-Bilogora, Vukovar-Srijem and Zagreb). On the other hand, in Brod-Posavina County, as many as 84.1% of localities have 150 or more children of primary-school-age. The counties where localities with 150 or more primary-school-age children have been registered also include Sisak-Moslavina, Varaždin and Međimurje and the City of Zagreb.

53 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 298.48$ ; df = 9 ; p<.01.

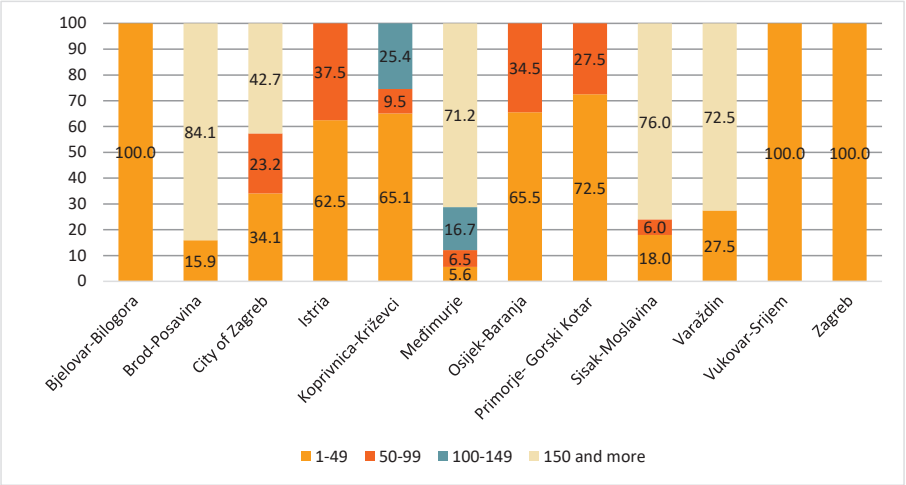


**FIGURE 20. Number of primary-school-age children in the locality by county [%][54]**

When looking at the regional distribution [Figure 21], in Međimurje [71.2%] and Central Croatia [55.9%] the largest share is occupied with localities with 150 or more children of primary-school-age.

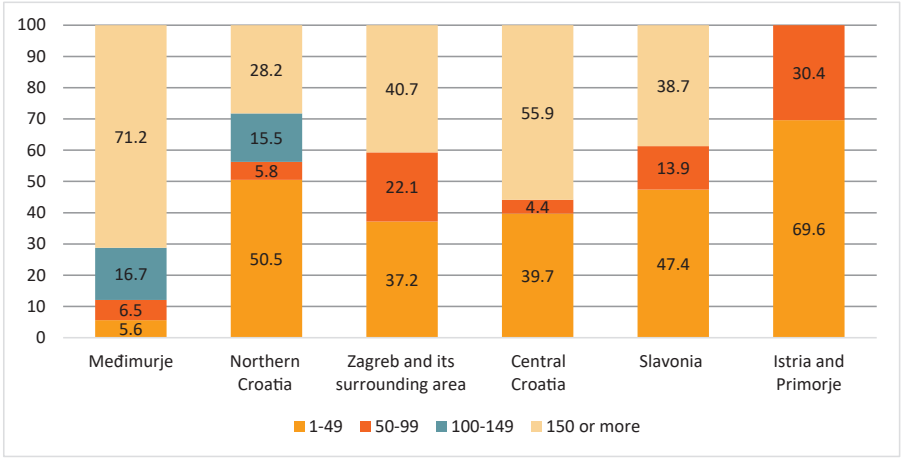


**FIGURE 21. Regional distribution of primary-school-age children in the locality [%][55]**

Istria and Primorje have the most localities with up to 49 children of this age [69.6%], followed by Northern Croatia with 50.5% and Slavonia with 47.4%.

54 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 549.76$ ; df = 11 ; p<.01.

55 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 307.78$ ; df = 15 ; p<.01.

## Distance between the primary school and the localities

The survey found that only 7.9% of children aged 6–13[56] live less than 1 km away from a primary school (Figure 22), while in the case of almost half of children aged 6–13 the primary school is more than 3 km away, which corresponds to the findings on the spatial accessibility of kindergartens to children aged 3–6. This finding also confirms that Croatia chronically lacks the infrastructure for compulsory education, especially when it comes to spatial distribution in the localities where members of the RNM live.

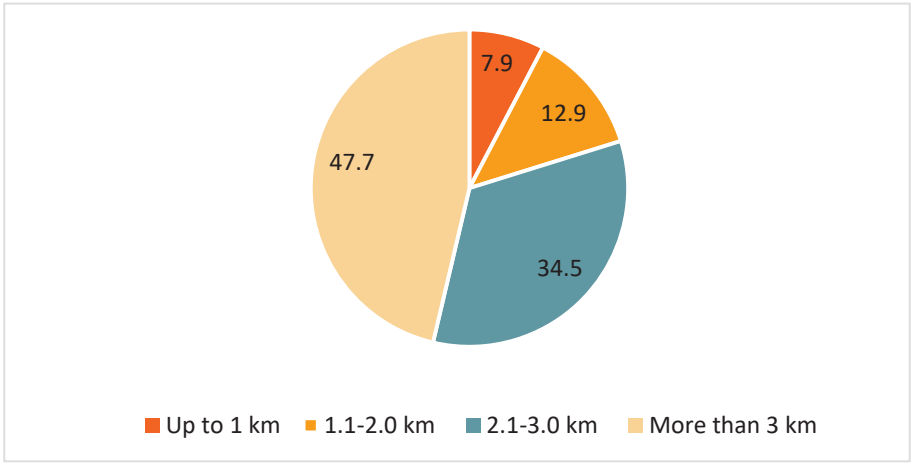


**FIGURE 22. Share of children aged 6–13 living in localities with a certain distance from the nearest primary school (%)**

As expected, the results showed that **children aged 6–13 living in localities separated from a town or village (3.4%) and localities on the outskirts of a town or village (5.2%) have the least access to primary schools at a distance of less than 1 km** (Figure 23). In contrast to the findings on preschool institutions, 91.7% of children aged 6–13 from localities where the Roma live dispersed among the majority population have schools which are more than 3 km away.

56 N = 769

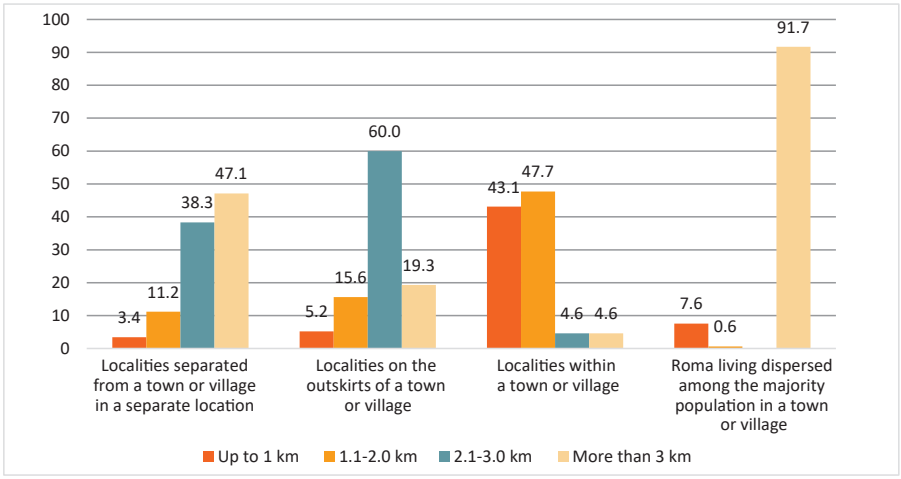


**FIGURE 23. Share of children aged 6–13 living in localities with a certain distance from a primary school by locality type [%]**[57]

The capacities of cities and settlements for the provision of primary education services depend on the financing and organization of the education system as well as the needs and the number of children in the localities. However, in the case of RNM members, ethnic segregation is an aggravating factor that further reduces the capacities. Looking at the data on the spatial accessibility of primary schools to children aged 6–13 in 12 counties included in the survey, we conclude that **Roma children have the most difficult access to primary schools in the City of Zagreb, Varaždin** County and **Sisak-Moslavina County** [Table 4]. On the other hand, primary schools seem to be the most accessible in Osijek-Baranja County.

**TABLE 4. Share of children aged 6–13 living in localities with a certain distance from a primary school by county [%]**[58]

| | Up to 1 km | 1.1–2.0 km | 2.1–3.0 km | More than 3 km |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bjelovar-Bilogora | 0.0 | 33.3 | 0.0 | 66.7 |
| Brod-Posavina | 0.0 | 11.1 | 84.1 | 4.8 |
| City of Zagreb | 0.0 | 0.0 | 6.4 | 93.6 |
| Istria | 12.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 87.5 |
| Koprivnica-Križevci | 9.5 | 0.0 | 44.4 | 46.0 |
| Međimurje | 5.4 | 10.5 | 42.1 | 42.1 |
| Osijek-Baranja | 41.8 | 38.0 | 5.5 | 14.5 |
| Primorje-Gorski Kotar | 27.5 | 45.0 | 0.0 | 27.5 |
| Sisak-Moslavina | 0.0 | 16.0 | 2.0 | 82.0 |
| Varaždin | 0.0 | 5.0 | 7.5 | 87.5 |
| Vukovar-Srijem | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 |
| Zagreb County | 0.0 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 |

57 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 411.71 ; df = 9 ; p<.01.

58 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ =460.46 ; df = 33 ; p<.01.

When looking at the regional distribution (Figure 24), children from Međimurje aged 6–13 have the same number of primary schools at a distance of 2.1–3.0 km and of more than 3 km (42.1% each), in Northern Croatia this distance is mostly more than 3 km (62.1%) and Zagreb and its surrounding area differ from other regions since 90.2% of the answers were given for a distance of more than 3 km. This can be interpreted by the fact that, even though the Roma in Zagreb and its surrounding area live dispersed among the majority population, they still live in an area that is far from areas with quality housing and thus from primary schools.

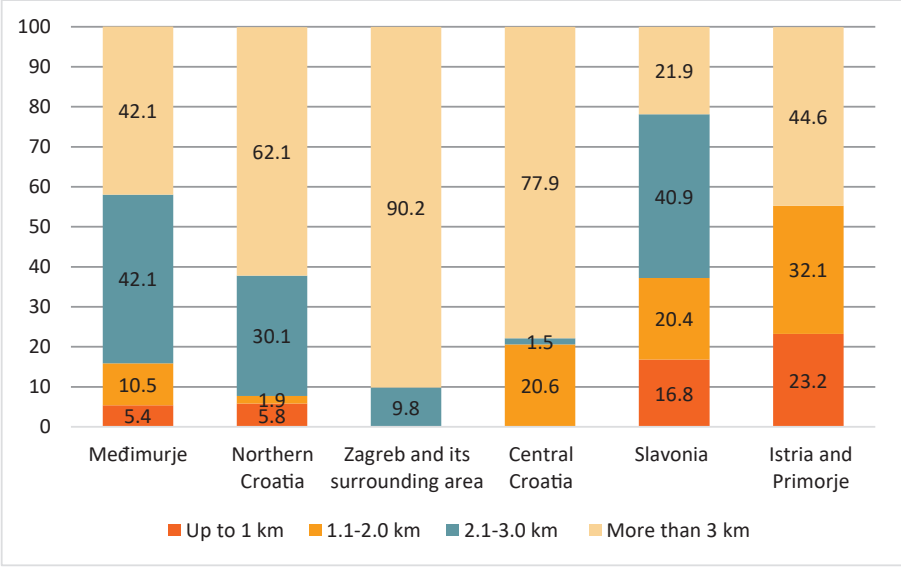


**FIGURE 24. Regional distribution of the share of children aged 6–13 living in localities with a certain distance from a primary school (%)**[59]

Central Croatia also has a high share of Roma aged 6–13 who have access to a primary school at a distance of more than 3 km (77.9%), followed by Istria and Primorje with a distance of more than 3 km (44.6%), while in the case of Slavonia the distance is mostly 2.1–3.0 km (40.9%).

59 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 205.77 ; df = 15 ; p<.01.

## Participation in primary education

In the mapping research section, data were obtained on the number of children of primary-school-age (aged 6–13) in the localities attending school, with 150 or more children of that age attending primary school living in most localities (48.6% of localities). In 31.5% of localities there are up to 49 children of primary-school-age, in 8.6% of them there are 50–99 children, and 11.3% of localities registered 100–149 children of primary-school-age. By calculating how many primary-school-age children from the locality attend school in relation to the total number of primary-school-age children in the locality, we recognize that **in 71.3% of the localities 100% of children attend primary school.** For the purposes of the research, we combined this category of localities with those in which children participate in primary education to 98% or 99%, which amounts to a total of 79.7% of localities from which 98–100% of children participate in compulsory education. In the remaining 20.3% of localities, 97% or less participate in primary education (Figure 25).

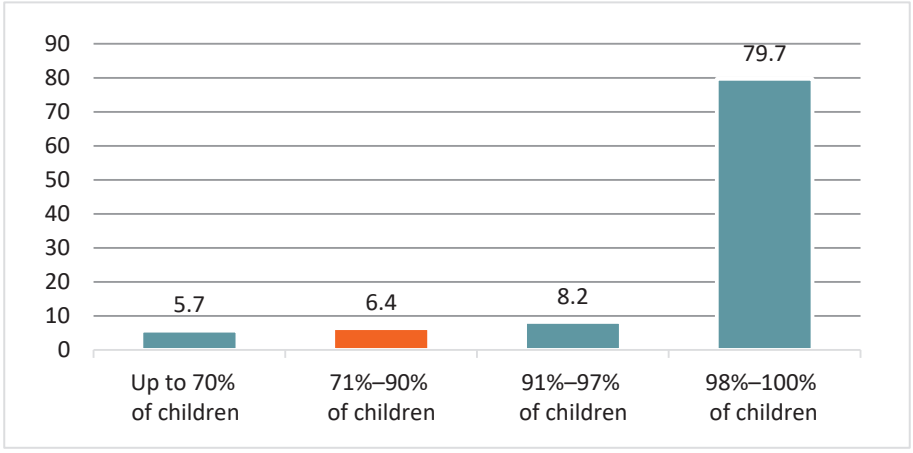


FIGURE 25. **Share of primary-school-age children from the locality attending primary school in relation to the total number of primary-school-age children in the locality (%)**[60]

In the next step, analyses were carried out by categories aggregated this way, and the data show that children from households dispersed among the majority population (53.5%) are least represented in the category of participation of 98% or more, whereas in the category of the largest participation, localities separated from a town or village in a separate location have 95.9%, and localities on the outskirts of a town or village 71.9% (Figure 26). In later analyses, we will try to determine the reasons facilitating such differences.

60 N = 4,749

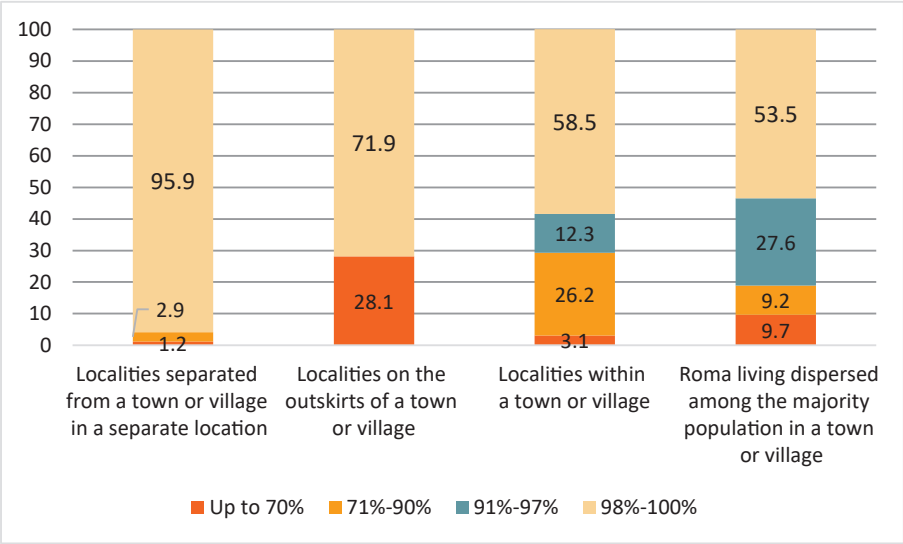


**FIGURE 26. Share of primary-school-age children from the locality attending primary school in relation to the total number of primary-school-age children in the locality by locality type [%]**[61]

**Zagreb County, Vukovar-Srijem County and Varaždin County have the highest primary school attendance rate: 98–100% [Table 5].** In other counties, the attendance is low, especially considering that the Croatian average is 96.3%.[62] Brod-Posavina County with 70.0% of localities where the participation of children in primary education is up to 70%, and Koprivnica-Križevci County with 51.1% of such localities, are two counties with localities where a relatively large share of children do not participate in primary education.

61 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 281.88$ ; df = 9 ; p<.01.

62 Source: Eurostat [edat_lfse_14]

**TABLE 5.** Share of primary-school-age children from the locality attending primary school in relation to the total number of primary-school-age children in the locality by county [%][63]

| | Up to 70% | 71–90% | 91–97% | 98–100% |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bjelovar-Bilogora | 0.0 | 16.7 | 0.0 | 83.3 |
| Brod-Posavina | 70.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 30.0 |
| City of Zagreb | 4.0 | 10.7 | 46.7 | 38.7 |
| Istria | 12.5 | 37.5 | 0.0 | 50.0 |
| Koprivnica-Križevci | 51.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 48.9 |
| Međimurje | 0.0 | 3.4 | 0.0 | 96.6 |
| Osijek-Baranja | 8.7 | 6.5 | 17.4 | 67.4 |
| Primorje-Gorski Kotar | 0.0 | 35.0 | 0.0 | 65.0 |
| Sisak-Moslavina | 2.0 | 0.0 | 32.0 | 66.0 |
| Varaždin | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 |
| Vukovar-Srijem | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 |
| Zagreb County | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 |

The regional distribution [Figure 27] indicates that the localities with the highest number of primary-school-age children participating in compulsory education are on average most often located in Međimurje [96.6%] and Northern Croatia [72.4%].

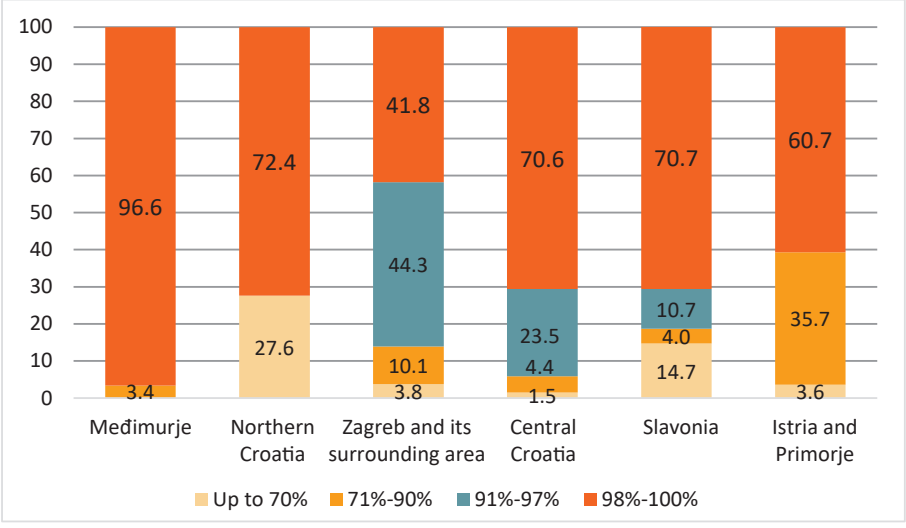


**FIGURE 27.** Regional distribution of the share of primary-school-age children from the locality attending school in relation to the total number of primary-school-age children in the locality [%][64]

63 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 633.95$ ; df = 33 ; p<.01.

64 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 413.31$ ; df = 15 ; p<.01.

In contrast to the aforementioned results, the localities with the lowest share of children participating in compulsory education at 98–100% are, on average, most often located in Zagreb and it surrounding area (41.8%) and Istria and Primorje (60.7%).

## Barriers to participation in primary education

When starting primary school, RNM children face a number of barriers which are, on average, less frequently encountered by children form the majority population. These primarily include their unpreparedness for systematic education – lack of learning habits and poor graphomotor skills. The challenges also lie in insufficient socialization, as well as in inadequate material conditions for regular studying and fulfillment of school obligations. However, as will be shown later in the section on values and norms of the Roma population, there is insufficient support for the systematic education of children in the Roma population, which is reflected in not encouraging children to study regularly and in including children in housework and paid work before completing compulsory education. Below is a statement of a focus group participant which illustrates one of the reasons for the weaker starting position of RNM children when starting primary school compared to children from the majority population.

> *And when I test them for first grade readiness, it shows that Roma children are weaker than non-Roma, just because they are not socialized enough. Their parents don't do what other parents do, they lack work habits, continuous work, basic communication skills.*
>
> Excerpt from a focus group with representatives of relevant institutions

## Duration of primary school attendance

Compulsory education in Croatia lasts for eight years, however, **only 78.4% of Roma aged 15 or older have attended compulsory education for eight years, and some Roma do not complete that form of education during those eight years due to grade retention or even multiple grade retention** (Figure 28). The sample also included 4.2% of Roma who attended primary school for up to four years and 10.7% of Roma who attended it for more than eight years.

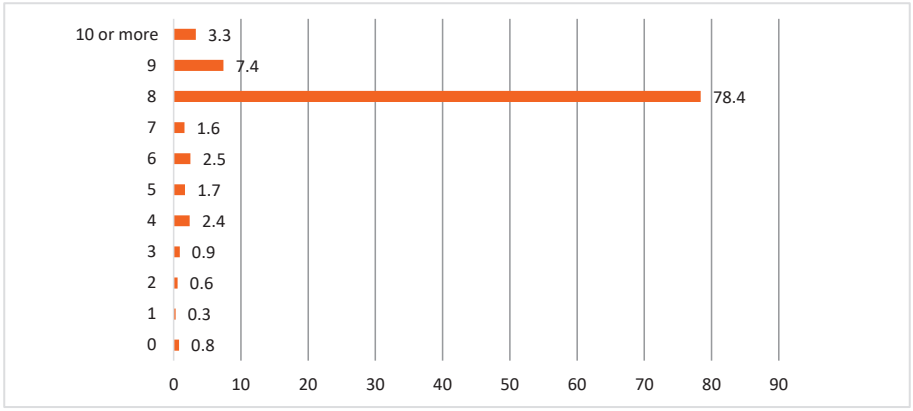


FIGURE 28. Duration of primary school attendance [%][65]

Nonetheless, the original research data presented in this study suggest that the situation regarding the completion of primary education is improving. Specifically, from a sample of 484 primary school pupils, 13 of them dropped out of compulsory education [2.7% of the sample], of which eight were girls and five were boys. When asked about the reasons for dropping out, parents stated financial reasons for two girls, and two boys had serious health issues, while for other children who dropped out of school in the research year, parents did not give a reason. When looking at the entire sample of children older than 15 [Figure 29], we notice that the duration of compulsory education attendance increases with younger age cohorts.

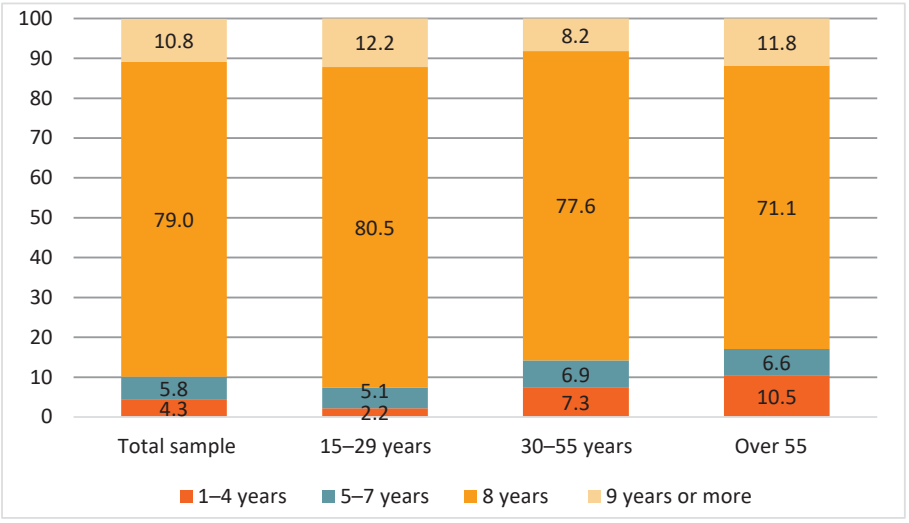


FIGURE 29. Duration of primary school attendance by age [%][66]

65 N = 1,441

66 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 33.56$ ; df = 6 ; p<.01.

Even though, according to the answers, it seems that some respondents did not understand the question about the duration of primary school attendance or the level of completed education because they made a statement about completing primary education or a higher level of education although they attended primary school for less than 8 years (Figure 30), it can be said that **attending primary school for 9 years or more for some Roma guarantees the completion of primary school (7.6%), and that 11.3% of RNM members who attended primary school for more than 9 years have completed at least secondary school.**

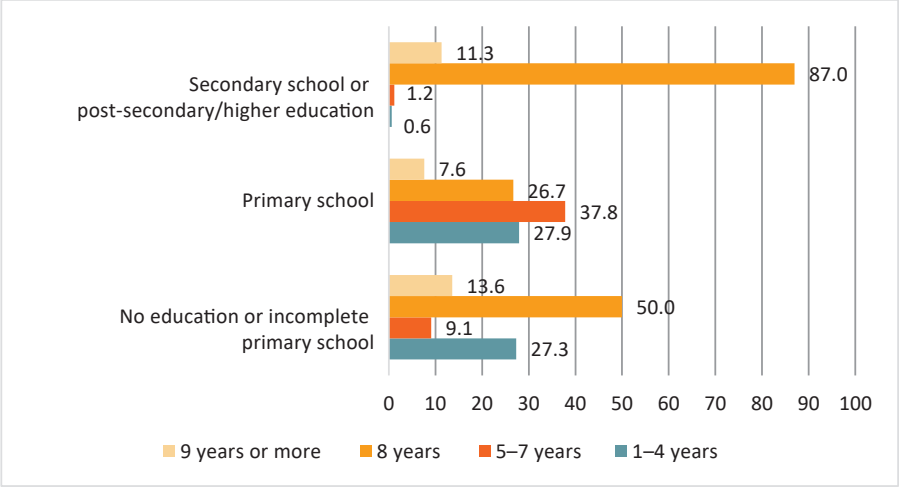


**FIGURE 30. Duration of primary school attendance by level of education (%)**[67]

With the exception of preschool education, the relevance of spatial segregation is also largely reflected in all segments of primary education, and thus in the distribution of the duration of primary school attendance by locality type (Figure 31).

67 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 706.90$ ; df = 6 ; p<.01.

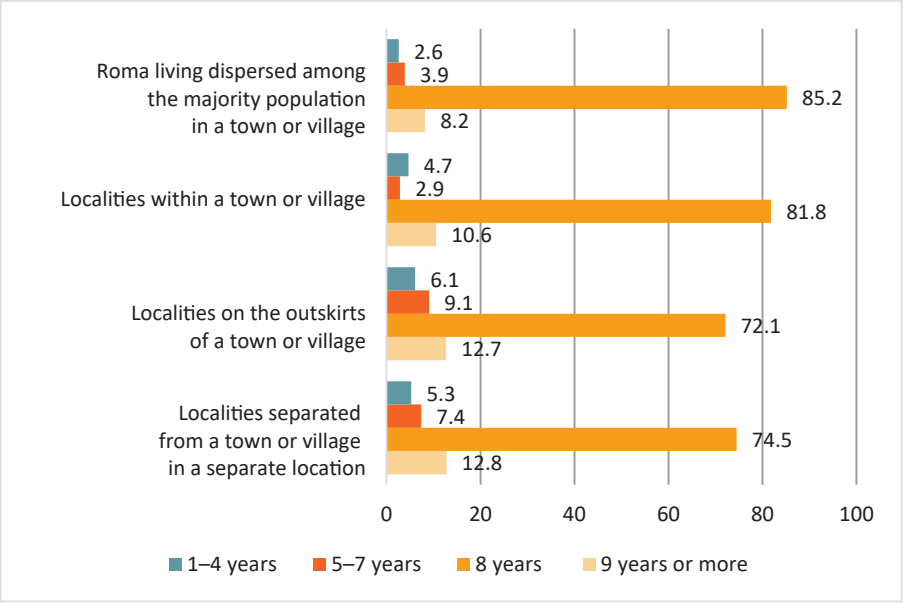


FIGURE 31. Duration of primary school attendance by locality type [%][68]

**Attending primary school for eight years or more is mostly evident in RNM members who live in localities that are somewhat more (although to a significantly different extent) integrated into areas where the majority population lives** – localities within a town or village, or areas where the Roma live dispersed among the majority population. Better spatial integration also means greater availability of the infrastructure for compulsory education, as well as greater exposure to influences of the majority community. The positive influences of the majority community are demonstrated through the models of people who completed certain levels of education and became involved in society to the extent that they have broken the "vicious circle" of poverty and marginalization.

On the other hand, the regional distribution of the duration of primary school attendance indicates serious challenges in the compulsory education system given that the lowest number of RNM members who participated in compulsory education for eight years or more was reported in the regions with the most Roma in Croatia – Međimurje and Northern Croatia (Figure 32 ). When it comes to completing primary school in adulthood, there were only 3.9% of respondents who completed primary school in adulthood. Due to the insufficient number of respondents, further statistical processing was not possible in terms of gaining insight into the characteristics of persons who complete compulsory education in adulthood.

68 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 29.24$ ; df = 9 ; p<.01.

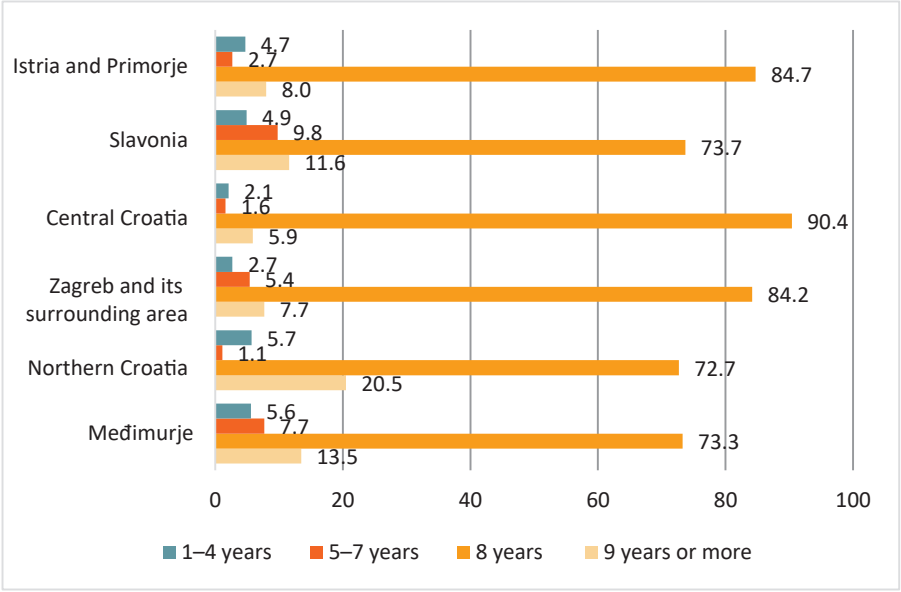


FIGURE 32. Regional distribution of primary school duration [%][69]

## Grade point average during compulsory education

One of the topics which preoccupies researchers in the field of education is also the grade point average at the end of the school year, to which the next unit will be dedicated. The grade point average in primary education is very often an indicator of whether a person will be able to complete the education they are currently attending and whether they will qualify for the next level of education. **The research findings** on Roma pupils who participated in primary education at the time of the research [Figure 33] **show that more than half of the RNM members have an average lower than 3.5 during compulsory education [aged 7–14].** By comparison, in the general population the average grade is 4.45, while 0.3% of the primary school population has an insufficient grade, and 57.2% have an excellent grade [ŠeR – Školski e-rudnik ["School e-Mine" app]].

69 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 53.20$ ; df = 15 ; p<.01.

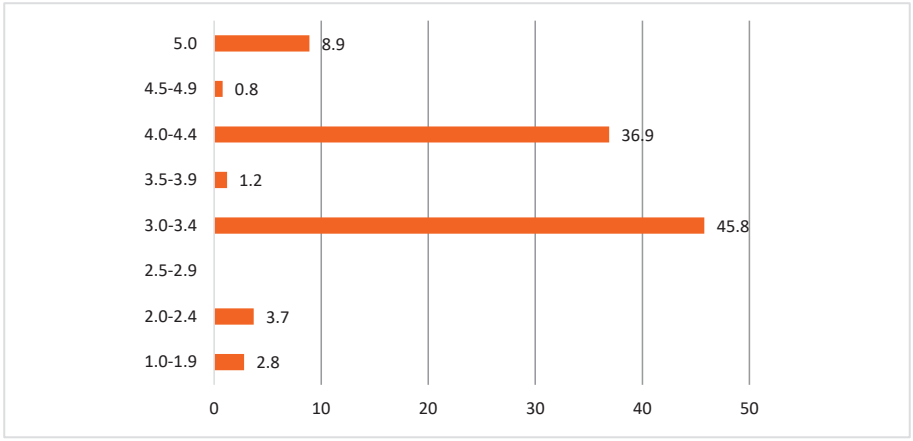


**FIGURE 33. Grade point average of primary school pupils in SY 2016/2017 [%][70]**

After re-coding, i.e. merging the categories of passing grades, three new categories were obtained, which were used for further data analysis: good [48.9%], very good [40.7%] and excellent [10.4%], and the distribution of grades by counties is shown in Figure 34.

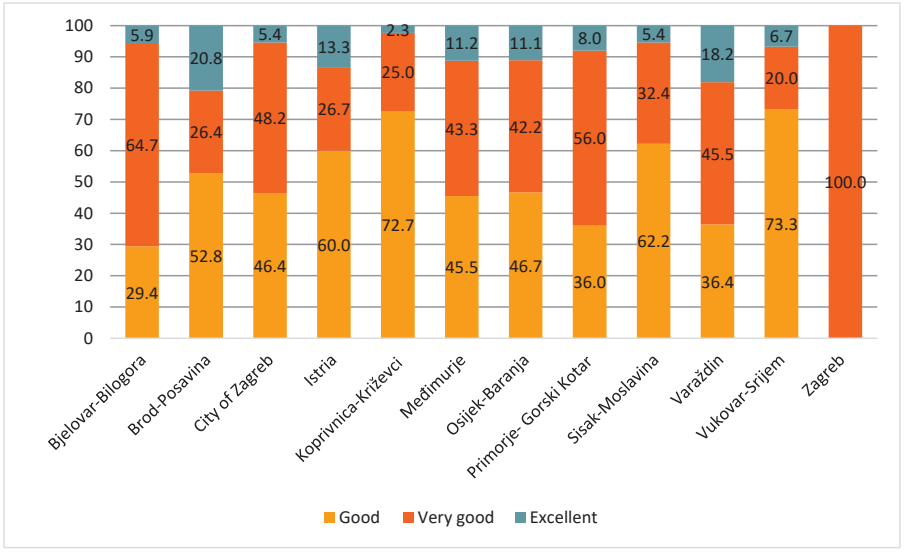


**FIGURE 34. Distribution of grades of primary school pupils in the school year 2016/2017 by counties [%][71]**

70 N = 607

71 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 45.36 ; df = 22 ; p<.01.

**The distribution of pupils with certain grades by counties suggests that, on average, the lowest grades during compulsory education are achieved by pupils in Koprivnica-Križevci County and Vukovar-Srijem County,** while pupils from Bjelovar-Bilogora County and Varaždin County are the most successful in this sense.

## 3.3. Secondary and higher education and adult education of the Roma

According to the *Report on the implementation of the National Roma Inclusion Strategy* (Government of the Republic of Croatia, 2019: 8), in the school year 2018/2019, "... there is a noticeable decrease in the number of pupils involved in secondary education. According to the obtained data, at the beginning of school year 2018/2019, 760 pupils (401 M, 359 F) were included in secondary school programs (at the beginning of school year 2017/2018 there were 805 pupils (446 M, 359 F)). On the other hand, there is an increase in the number of pupils enrolled in first grades of 3-year secondary schools and in the number of pupils continuing their education in 3-year vocational programs (461 pupils (283 M, 178 F)) compared to the number of pupils in 4 and 5-year programs (132 pupils (37 M, 95 F))". Overall, **the basis for identifying two negative effects: one is the decrease in the number of secondary school pupils, and the other is the lower qualification of RNM pupils for 4 and 5-year secondary school programs.** The data which will be presented in the section on secondary education will try to give some answers about the structure of Roma secondary school pupils in the Republic of Croatia and their reasons for dropping out of secondary schools.

### Number of young people of secondary school age in the locality

The first part of the analyses regarding secondary and higher education refers to the analysis of localities (mapping section). The relatively highest number of localities included in the research (36.7%) have up to 49 young people aged 14–17, there are 25.2% of localities inhabited by 50–99 potential secondary school pupils, 20.9% of localities with 100–149 young people aged 14–17 and 17.2% of localities inhabited by more than 150 young people of that age.[72] **The pattern of spatial segregation of the Roma observed in the interpretation of data on preschool and primary education of the Roma was also identified in the connection between the number of young people of secondary school age and the locality type** (Figure 35). Localities with more than 150 young people aged 14–17 appear exclusively in the case of separation from a town or village in a separate

72 N = 436

location (27.3%). On the other hand, localities with less than 50 young people aged 14–17 were mostly those within a town or village (76.9%) or in cases where RNM members live dispersed among the majority population (62.7%).

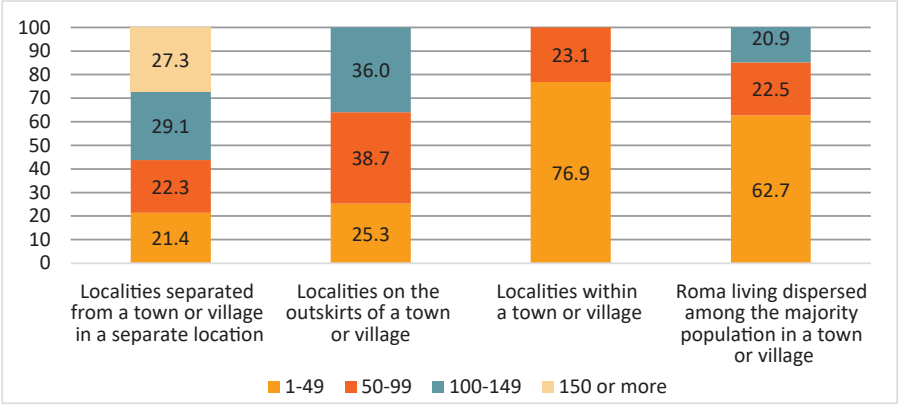


**FIGURE 35. Number of young people aged 14–17 in the locality by locality type**[73]

The counties with the relatively lowest number of young people in secondary school are Bjelovar-Bilogora, Vukovar-Srijem and Zagreb. However, Varaždin County stands out with as many as 65.4% of localities having more than 150 pupils of that age, and in Međimurje County more than 150 secondary school pupils per locality are registered in slightly more than a fifth of localities (Figure 36).

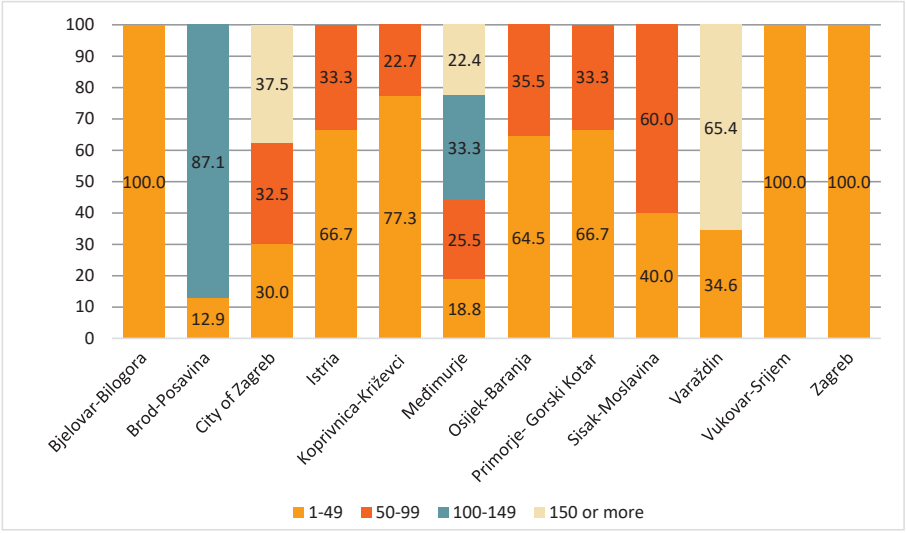


**FIGURE 36. Number of young people aged 14–17 in the locality by county (%)**[74]

73 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 137.00 ; df = 9 ; p<.01.

74 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 318.08 ; df = 33 ; p<.01.

Comparatively speaking, most young people per locality (more than 150 per locality) of secondary school age live in Zagreb and its surrounding area (43.1%) – Figure 37. On average, potential secondary school pupils in Northern Croatia and Istria and Primorje are mostly found in localities with up to 49 of their peers (in both cases 58.8%).

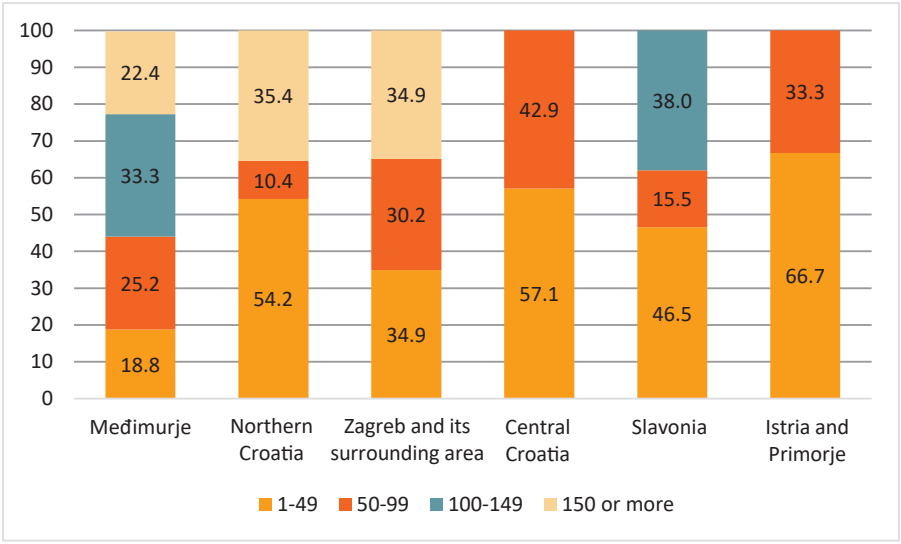


**FIGURE 37. Regional distribution of young people aged 14–17 in the locality (%)**[75]

## Participation of the Roma in secondary education

The FRA EUMIDIS survey (2016: 26) indicated that a total of 68% of Roma aged 18–24 (78% of boys and 60% of girls) in Croatia did not complete secondary education. This is a significant difference compared to the Czech Republic and Slovakia, where a total of 57% and 58% of RNM members, respectively, did not complete secondary school, which is the best recorded result in the analyzed countries. **The attendance of secondary education of RNM members in Croatia is significantly lower than the national average**[76], supported by the fact that **in as many as 38.4% of localities only up to 10% of young Roma aged 14–17 attend secondary school, while in 37.3% of localities 31% or more young RNM members participate in secondary education (Figure 38).** The research found that the highest secondary school attendance in a locality is only 47%, which concerns five localities or 1.1% of the sample.

75 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 157.37$ ; df = 15 ; p<.01.

76 According to Eurostat data (edat_lfse_14), in Croatia in 2019, 3.1% of children and young people of secondary school age did not attend secondary school.

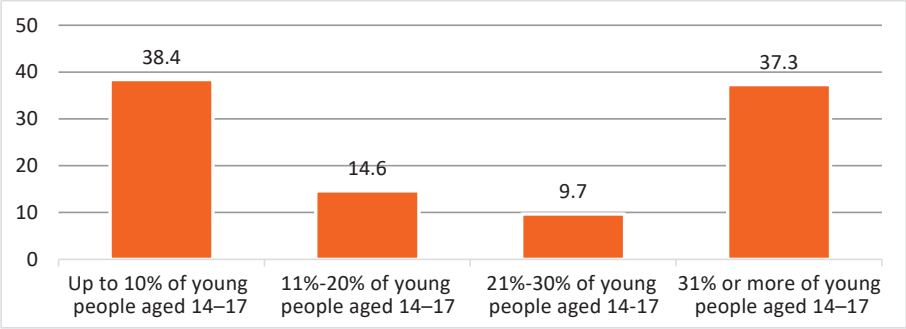


**FIGURE 38. Share of children aged 14–17 attending secondary school in relation to the total number of children in the locality [%][77]**

When looking at the share of RNM members aged 14–17 who participate in secondary education by locality type (Figure 39), it was found that the highest percentage of the **lowest secondary school attendance – less than 10% – is in localities within a town or village (91.3%), and that the highest attendance is in localities separated from a town or village in a separate location (50.0%) – more than 31%.** Consequently, the Roma youth is deprived in multiple ways and at the risk of not being able to break the vicious circle of marginalization and poverty. They do not have opportunities to actively participate in the modern lifestyle of young people, in education, in gaining life experiences outside their locality and finding a positive role model in their immediate environment who will raise their awareness of the importance of obtaining a secondary school diploma.

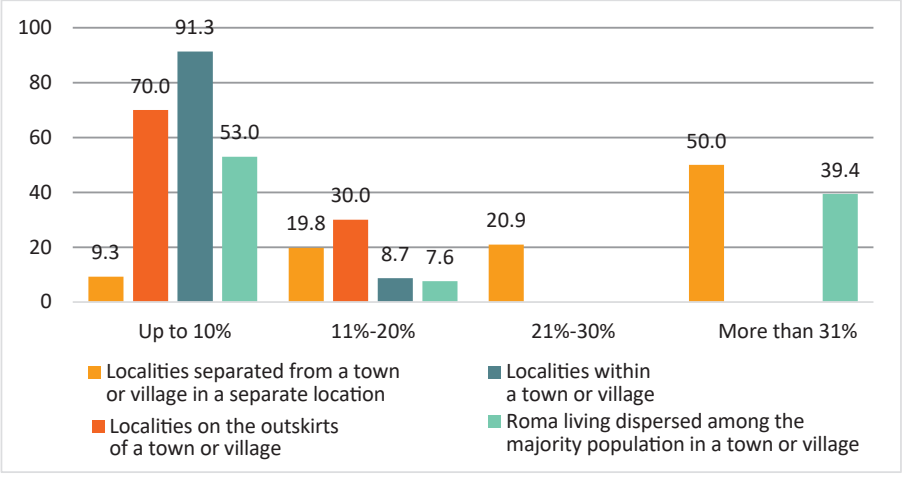


**FIGURE 39. Share of children aged 14–17 from the locality attending secondary school in relation to the total number children aged 14–17 in the locality by locality type [%][78]**

77 N = 4,485

78 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 84.84 ; df = ; p<.01.

Young people from as many as five counties from which up to 10% of children aged 14–17 participate in secondary education: Bjelovar-Bilogora, Brod-Posavina, Koprivnica-Križevci, Vukovar-Srijem and Zagreb (Table 6) are mostly deprived of opportunities to participate in activities that would help young Roma in forming educational aspirations and finding ways to achieve them, as well as the opportunities to participate in structured education. The largest shares of participation in secondary education (31% and more) were registered in the City of Zagreb (88.5%) and Međimurje County (58.2%).

**TABLE 6. Share of children aged 14–17 from the locality attending secondary school in relation to the total number children aged 14–17 in the locality by county (%)**[79,80]

| | Up to 10% | 11–20% | 21–30% | 31% and more |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bjelovar-Bilogora | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Brod-Posavina | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| City of Zagreb | 11.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 88.5 |
| Koprivnica-Križevci | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Međimurje | 16.5 | 2.5 | 22.8 | 58.2 |
| Osijek-Baranja | 66.7 | 33.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Primorje-Gorski Kotar | 66.7 | 33.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Sisak-Moslavina | 91.7 | 8.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Varaždin | 19.0 | 81.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Vukovar-Srijem | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Zagreb County | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |

**Regionally, the highest number of localities with the largest share of young people attending secondary school can be found in Zagreb and its surrounding area (79.3%) and Međimurje (58.2%). In Central Croatia, in as many as 94.4% of cases only up to 10% of young people aged 14–17 attend secondary school** – Table 7. Such distribution calls for urgent measures which would include significant persons from the Roma community, Roma parents and children, as well as representatives of relevant institutions and experts in the field of education. It is unacceptable that in the 21st century such a small number of young people from a certain community have the opportunity for learning, socializing and a quality psychophysical development within the formal education system.

79 In Istria County, a low number of answers to this question was collected, so that in this analysis, Istria County was excluded from the presentation of results.

80 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 221.52$ ; df = 30 ; p<.01.

**TABLE 7. Regional distribution of the share of children aged 14–17 from the locality attending secondary school in relation to the total number children aged 14–17 in the locality [%]**[81]

| | Međimurje | Northern Croatia | Zagreb and its surrounding area | Central Croatia | Slavonia | Istria and Primorje |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Up to 10% | 16.5 | 39.3 | 30.7 | 94.4 | 80.0 | 66.7 |
| 11–20% | 2.5 | 60.7 | 0.0 | 5.6 | 20.0 | 33.3 |
| 21–30% | 22.8 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| 31% and more | 58.2 | 0.0 | 79.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |

## Grade point average during secondary education

In the subchapter on primary education, we pointed out that the majority of RNM pupils achieve school success up to the highest grade of 3.4, and the grade point average of secondary school pupils (Figure 40) differs from the originally stated number in the lower average success. Consequently, this means that **RNM members in secondary education are unlikely to achieve educational success that would allow them to enroll in a higher education institution.** When looking at the grade point average during secondary education in the entire population of secondary school pupils, it can be concluded that the average grade is 3.9, that 22.4% of pupils achieve excellent success while 1.8% of pupils have insufficient success (ŠeR – Školski e-Rudnik ("School e-Mine" app).

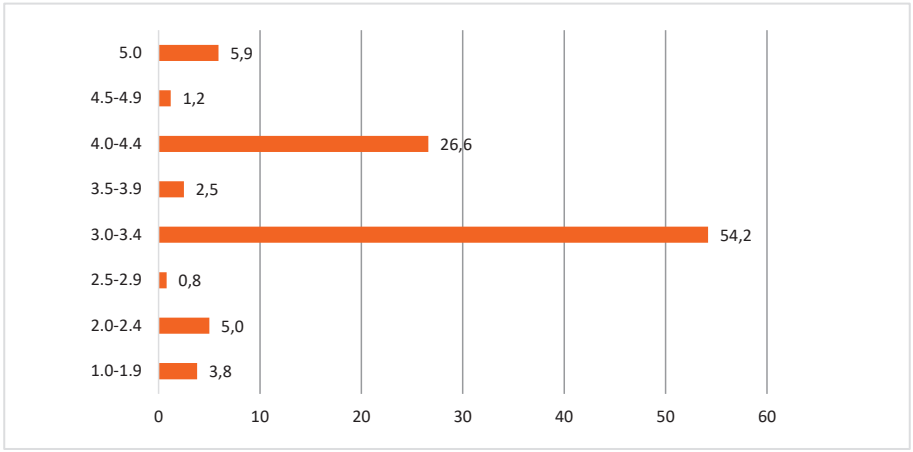


**FIGURE 40. Grade point average of secondary school pupils in SY 2016/2017 [%]**[82]

81 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 171.29$ ; df = 15 ; p<.01.

82 N = 105

By further merging the categories, three groups of grades were obtained – good (60.5%), very good (31.6%) and excellent (7.9%). By including the characteristics of secondary school pupils in the analysis, no statistically significant differences were obtained regarding the different achieved success. In other words, Roma secondary school pupils are not different when it comes to the relation between secondary school success and any independent variable (gender, age, material status, locality type, county and region).

## Duration of secondary school attendance

In addition to the achieved secondary school success, some elements of enrolling in higher education institutions also relate to the completion of secondary school and the duration of secondary education.[83] **From the analyzed sample, 2.4% of RNM members attended secondary school for only one year, 4.3% for two years, the highest number of them – 69.4% – for three years, 23.0% for four years, 0.2% for five years and 0.7% for six years or more.** By aggregating the results, three categories of the duration of secondary school attendance were obtained: 1–2 years (6.5%), 3 years (69.5%), 4 years or more (24.0%).

The type of locality showed a high correlation with the duration of secondary school attendance (Figure 41). **Most members of the RNM who attended secondary school for less than three years come from localities on the outskirts of a town or village (17.8%), whereas 4.0% of them come from localities within a town or village and 3.9% come from localities where the Roma live dispersed among the majority population.** There are several reasons for the Roma dropping out of secondary education, which will be discussed in more detail in the following sections of this study.

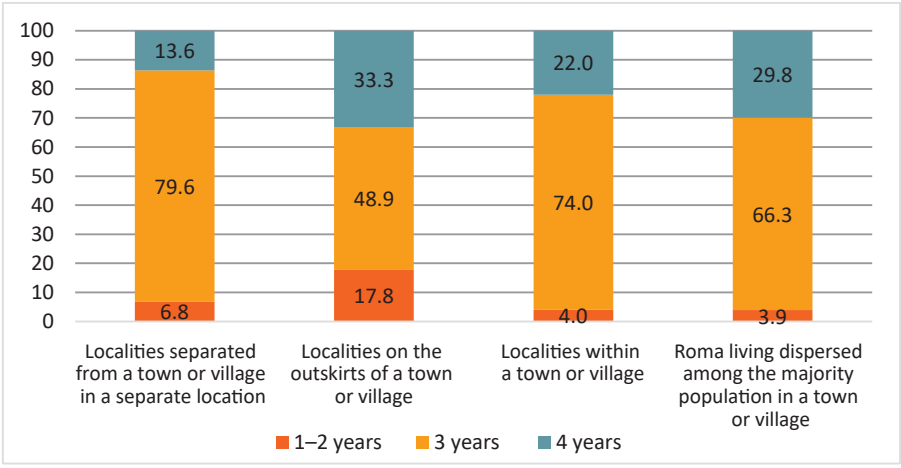


FIGURE 41. Duration of secondary school attendance by locality type (%)[84]

83 The analyses included respondents older than 18 (N=409).

84 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 30.69 ; df = 9 ; p<.01.

In the distribution of the duration of secondary school attendance by counties (Figure 42), Varaždin and Vukovar-Srijem differ from other counties in that all respondents in these two counties attended secondary school for three years, while respondents who dropped out of secondary school before the end of the three-year period were not recorded in Istria or Koprivnica-Križevci County.

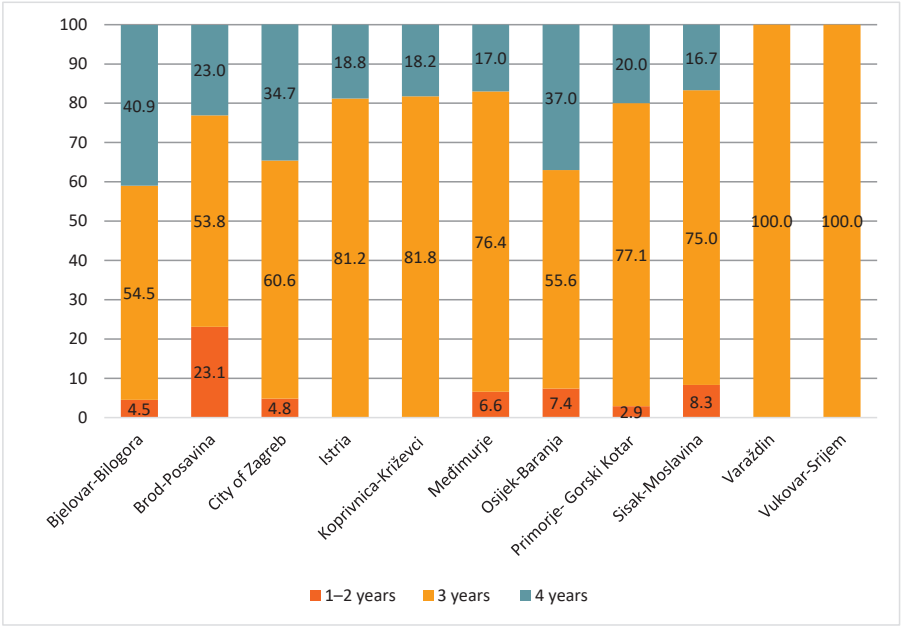


FIGURE 42. Duration of secondary school attendance by county (%)[85,86]

**The highest number of drop-outs from educational programs of at least three years was reported in Brod-Posavina County (23.1%). The highest shares of four-year secondary school attendance were registered in Bjelovar-Bilogora and Osijek-Baranja County and in the City of Zagreb.**

When looking at the regional distribution (Figure 43), the largest share of the shortest secondary school attendance was reported in Slavonia, whereas in Northern Croatia there were no respondents who attended secondary school for only a year or two.

85 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 352.34$ ; df = 9 ; p<.01.

86 Zagreb County was excluded from this analysis due to the insufficient number of respondents who answered this question.

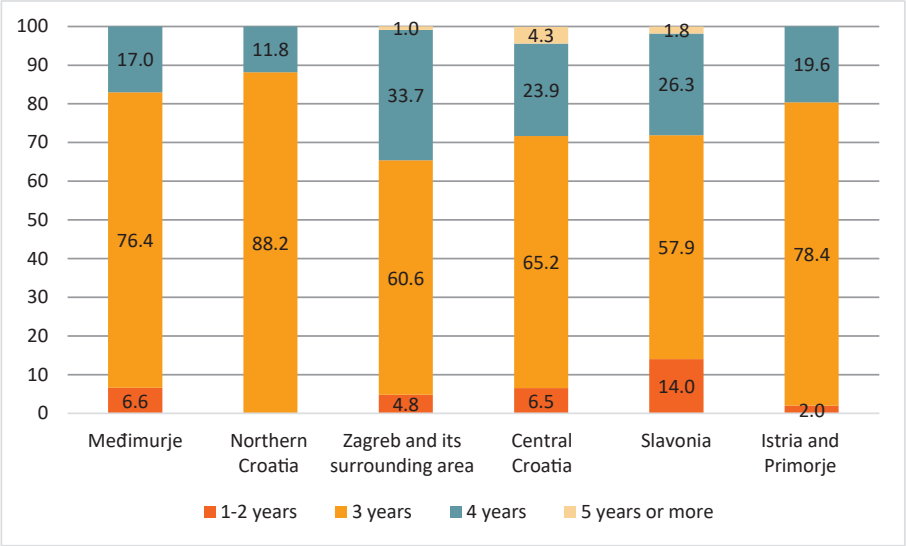


**FIGURE 43. Regional distribution of secondary school duration (%)**[87]

Northern Croatia, Istria and Primorje and Međimurje are regions in which more than three quarters of respondents attended secondary school for at least three years. Compared to Northern Croatia, Zagreb has almost three times more RNM members who attended secondary school for four years, and twice as many compared to Međimurje.

## Adult education and higher education

The research also included a question about RNM members who completed secondary school in adulthood, but due to the small number of respondents who completed their secondary education in adulthood (a total of 54 respondents or 1.7% of the sample), further findings on differences in characteristics of the respondents are not possible. In addition, **only 17 respondents (0.4% of the sample) who attended higher education were recorded in the sample. There were only 0.7% of young people aged 20–29 in higher education.**

As evidenced by the data presented in the *2016 and 2017 Report on the Implementation of the National Roma Inclusion Strategy from 2013 to 2020* and according to the *2018 Report 2018* of the National Foundation for Support to the Pupil and Student Standard of Living, in 2017, 19 scholarships were awarded for higher education (for 11 male and 8 female Roma students), which is an increase of 1 scholarship for Roma women and 2 for Roma men, and in 2018, 22 scholarships

87 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 28.95$ ; df = 16 ; p<.05.

were awarded (for 14 Roma men and 8 Roma women).[88] However, the most recent data[89] show a total of 27 scholarships and a reversed ratio of students who were eligible for scholarships, i.e. 15 female and 12 male RNM members. By taking a look at the qualitative part of the research, it can be concluded that the most common reasons for non-inclusion of Roma youth in higher education are poor educational results in secondary school, but also the lack of motivation for higher education (as illustrated by the quote below) and early inclusion in the world of work.

*We get outside invitations to include them in academies, faculties, everything paid, but we can't get them. Because they get disappointed. They want one thing and they get another, and that spite is a problem.*

Excerpt from an interview with a Roma representative

## 3.4. Inclusion of Roma in the education system

### Attained level of education

Through the survey involving individual respondents, we gained insights into the highest completed level of education of RNM members in Croatia, which in total is mostly primary education (28.4%), i.e. in the case of women 25.7% and men 31.1%. A total of 56.0% of RNM members did not complete compulsory education, i.e. 62.5% of Roma women and 49.6% of Roma men. A total of 15.1% of Roma completed secondary school, i.e. 11.4% of Roma women and 18.7% of Roma men. **Only about 0.4% of the respondents from the sample have completed a three-year college or some form of academic education.** These data coincide with those collected at the international level since according to the EUMIDIS II survey (FRA, 2016), a total of 14% of RNM members (25% Roma men and 6% Roma women) in Croatia completed secondary education. According to the same survey (p. 9), the situation is not better in other Eastern European countries either, given that only 20% of adult Roma have secondary or higher education. When comparing these data with the educational structure of the Croatian population,[90] where in 2017 there were 18.8% of persons with lower education and 22.3% of persons with higher education, we notice a discrepancy between the educational structure of the Roma and the majority population. Specific data on the educational struc-

88 In 2016, 160,000.00 HRK were allocated for scholarships for RNM students, and in 2017 this amount was 190,000.00 HRK. In 2018, scholarships were provided for 22 students (14 M, 8 F), and a total of 230,000.00 HRK was spent on higher education scholarships.

89 Results of the call for tender for the award of state scholarships for students belonging to the Roma national minority for the academic year 2019/2020.

90 Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_03)

ture of the Roma population in Croatia are shown in Figure 44, where it can be noticed that the educational structure of Roma women is lower than that of their male compatriots.

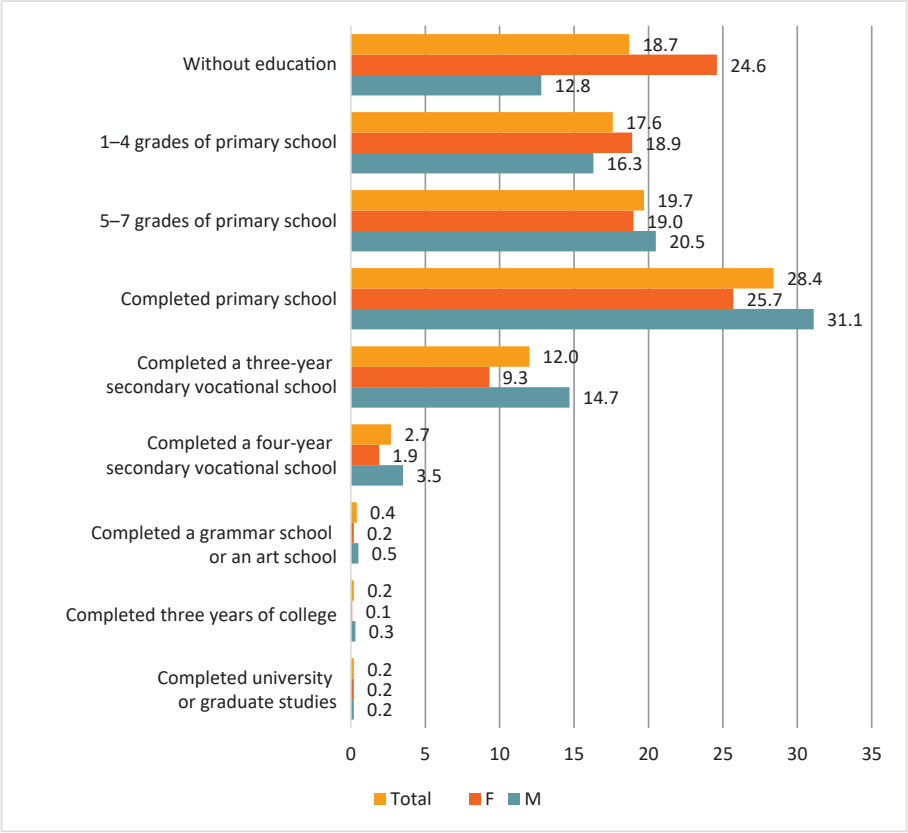


**FIGURE 44. Gender distribution of the highest attained level of education [%]**[91]

In light of the data obtained by combining the gender and regional educational structure of RNM members in Croatia [Table 8], we conclude that gender differences in primary school completion are most drastic in Northern Croatia, whereas Istria and Primorje demonstrate the most significant differences in secondary education. **There were no Roma women with higher education identified in Međimurje, Central Croatia, Slavonia, Zagreb and its surrounding area, while in Slavonia the research did not collect data on Roma men/women with higher education.**

91 N = 1,325 [excluding persons who are still in the education system].

TABLE 8. The highest attained level of education by gender and regional distribution (%)

| | Međimurje | | Northern Croatia | | Zagreb and its surrounding area | | Central Croatia | | Slavonia | | Istria and Primorje | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F |
| Without education | 8.6 | 15.7 | 16.9 | 30.1 | 13.8 | 23.5 | 13.6 | 27.4 | 15.4 | 28.1 | 8.0 | 25.5 |
| Did not complete primary school | 45.5 | 49.0 | 49.3 | 47.8 | 29.7 | 24.5 | 26.5 | 31.5 | 44.3 | 39.6 | 31.0 | 34.3 |
| Completed primary school | 29.1 | 26.4 | 25.4 | 16.9 | 34.4 | 31.9 | 36.7 | 31.5 | 25.4 | 20.4 | 30.1 | 26.5 |
| Secondary school | 16.5 | 9.0 | 8.5 | 4.4 | 22.1 | 18.6 | 21.8 | 9.5 | 14.9 | 11.9 | 29.2 | 12.7 |
| Higher education | 0.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.7 | 0.0 | 1.5 | 1.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.8 | 1.0 |

In the analyzed sample, at the time of the survey 41.0% of young Roma (aged 15 to 29) completed primary education,[92] 19.6% completed secondary school,[93] and only 0.4% of them graduated from college or university.[94] Slightly less than two-fifths of young Roma (39.0%) did not complete primary school. Data on the educational structure of young people in relation to the type of locality in which they live (Figure 45) clearly show the extent to which spatial segregation has an adverse effect on educational achievement. **The research results show a linear increase in the level of education with the increase in the level of spatial inclusion.** In other words, young people in localities separated from a town or village in a separate location, similar to young people from localities on the outskirts of a town or village, have a significantly less favorable educational structure than individuals living in localities within a town or village or in households dispersed among households of the majority population.

92 N = 761

93 N = 146

94 N = 9

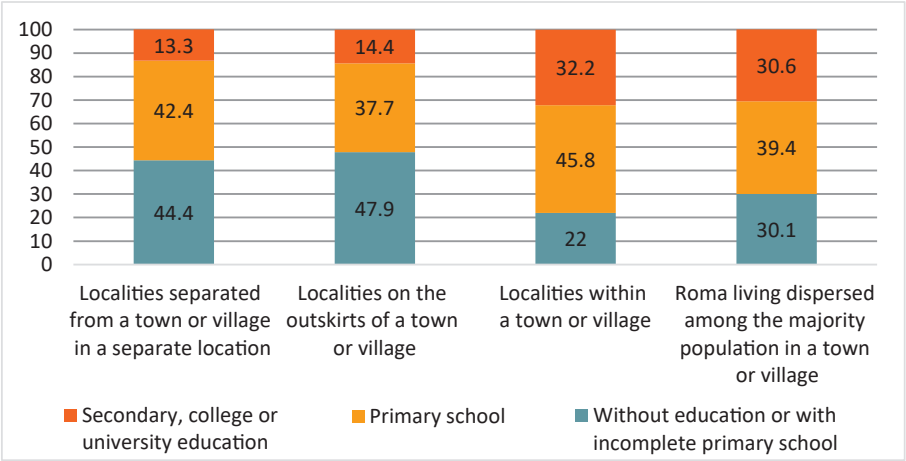


FIGURE 45. Level of education of young people by locality [%][95]

When looking at the data in Figure 46, we can state that in terms of the level of education of Roma youth, the most critical situation is in Zagreb County, where as many as three quarters of young people have not completed primary education, and the situation is similar in Varaždin County, where 69.7% of young RNM members did not complete primary education. The best educational achievements are the one of young Roma men and women from Bjelovar-Bilogora and Istria County.

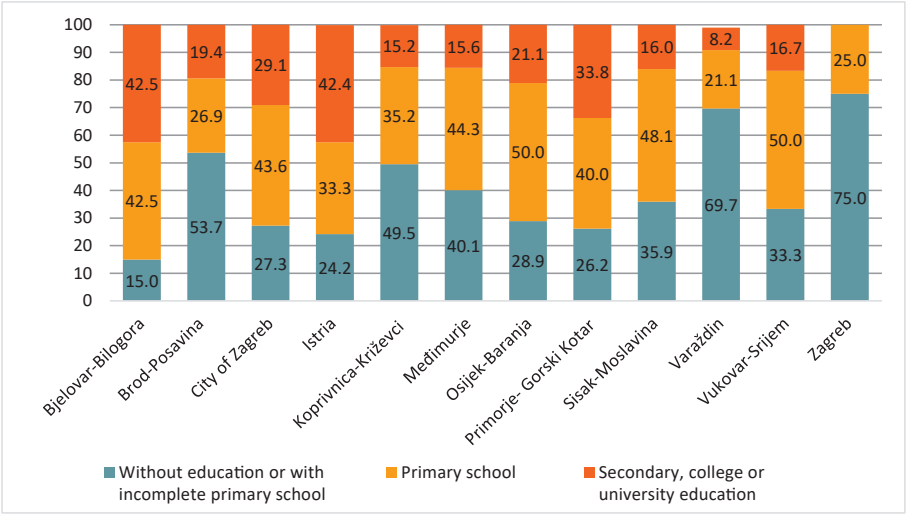


FIGURE 46. Educational structure of Roma youth by county [%][96]

95 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 77.68$ ; df = 6 ; p<.01.

96 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 116.67$ ; df = 22 ; p<.01.

Data on the attained level of education by county partly do not follow the data grouped at regional level (Figure 47). Specifically, **Northern Croatia stands out as the region in which young people complete primary education to the least extent, whereas Istria and Primorje, as well as Zagreb and it surrounding area have the best educational results in that sense.** That is exactly why it is very important to present data at the county level, because concrete action plans are adopted at the local level, in an environment where the everyday life of young people takes place.

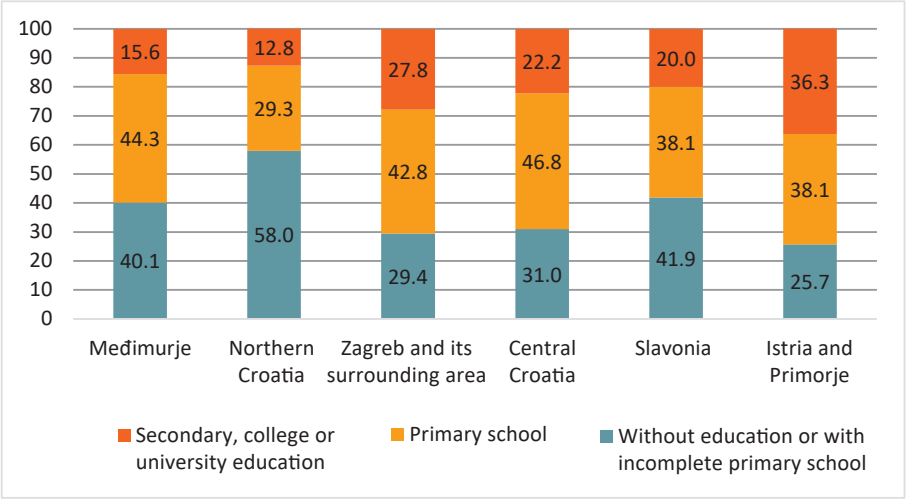


FIGURE 47. Regional educational structure of Roma youth (%)[97]

It is interesting to note that the material status of the family is not statistically significantly related to the attained level of education among Roma youth, which can be explained by the high level of material deprivation in most Roma households. However, marital status is one of the characteristics of Roma youth according to which they show statistically significant differences in their educational achievements.[98] The differences are very indicative given that as many as 45.8% of young Roma who are married did not complete primary school, as opposed to 28.2% of RNM members who also do not have primary education and have never been married. **37.7% of married and 46.5% of unmarried young Roma completed primary school, and there is a difference in the share of completed secondary school or higher education – 16.6% of married RNM members and 25.3% of their unmarried compatriots completed at least secondary school.**

97 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 70.20$ ; df = 10 ; p<.01.

98 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 43.55$ ; df = 3 ; p < .01.

The favorable impact of educational achievement on employment opportunities can be seen in Figure 48, where we notice that completing at least primary school increases the employability of young people.

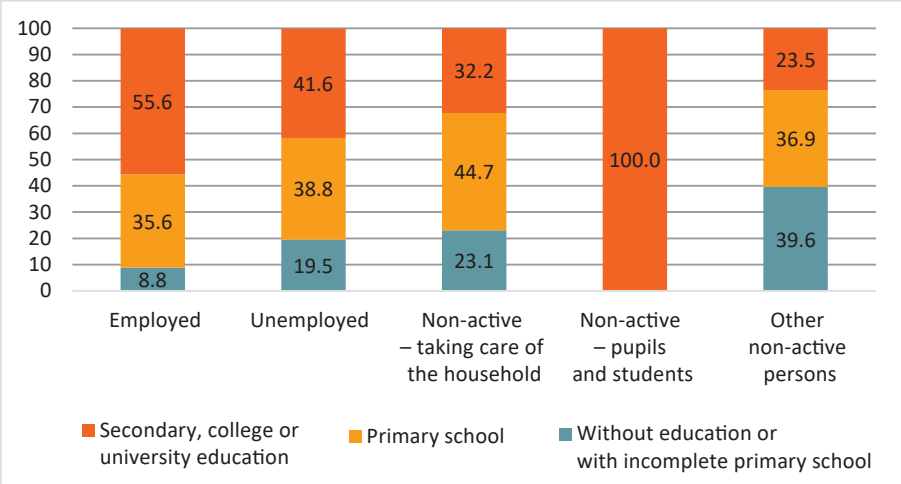


FIGURE 48. Educational structure of Roma youth by employment status [%][99,100]

It can also be concluded that **part of young Roma men and women, despite completing secondary and high/higher education, is not in employment or education. Individuals of this status should be included in a system of measures to help them get out of social exclusion.**

## Reasons for not participating in education

**The data show that 1,042 or 28.9% of respondents from the sample are currently in education,** and later in the analysis we will present the reasons why RNM members were not in education at the time of the research [Figure 49]. First, there are financial reasons and marriage; slightly more than a tenth of the respondents stated their poor previous educational performance or that they were unable to enroll in secondary school, and a slightly smaller number stated attaining a sufficient level of education as a reason for dropping out of school.

99 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 128.06$ ; df = 8 ; p<.01.

100 Employment status is discussed in detail in the next chapter on employment and in this chapter it will be used only as an independent variable.

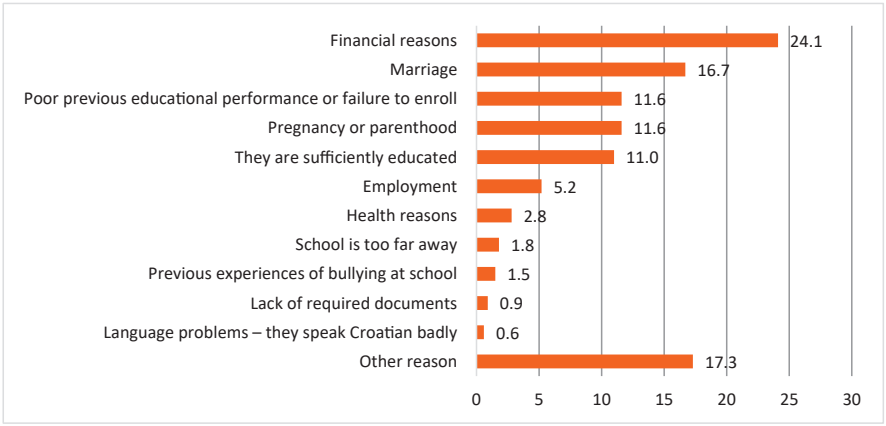


**FIGURE 49. Reasons why RNM members aged 6–24 are not currently in education (%)**

Considering the presented gender differences in the reasons for not participating in education, poorer previous educational performance were stated among more Roma men than Roma women, while marriage is more present among Roma women. **Pregnancy and parenthood are the reasons for not participating in education almost exclusively among Roma women, with more than a fifth of Roma women dropping out of school due to starting a family** (Figure 50).

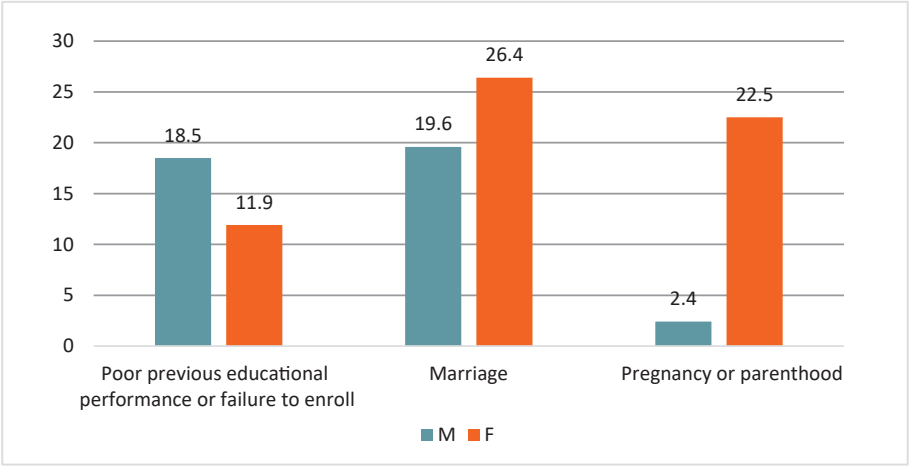


**FIGURE 50. Main reasons for not participating in education by gender (%)**[101]

The age of children and young people (Figure 51) is related to the differences between the reasons for not participating in education, which makes financial reasons most pronounced in the oldest cohort, but they are also present in the

101 Poor previous performance or failure to enroll: T-test, t=7.12 ; p<.01; marriage: T-test, t=5.75 ; p<.01; pregnancy and parenthood: T-test, t=7.20 ; p<.01.

youngest age group, and this is certainly a situation that should be remedied by public policy measures. Almost the same percentage of Roma drop out of school due to marriage, which constitutes a breach of Croatian law[102] and this situation should be completely abolished regardless of the ethnicity of the children.

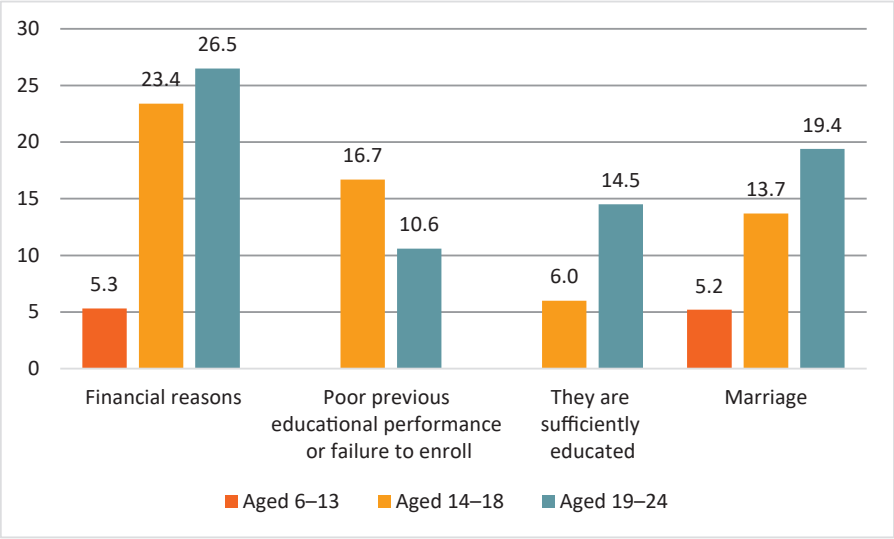


**FIGURE 51. Main reasons for not participating in education by the age of children and young people [%][103]**

The attitude of having attained a sufficient level of education as a reason for not participating in the education system is another reason presented here, which should be reduced to a minimum by public policy measures, primarily by raising awareness of the Roma population about the importance of secondary education. This attitude is present among 6.0% of the Roma population under the age of 18, i.e. at the secondary school age. As expected, poor previous educational performance of children or failure to enroll in an educational institution does not appear at the earliest age, while among young people aged 14 to 18 it is present in almost one-sixth of the cases, and in the oldest observed age group in more than one-tenth of the respondents.

**Marital status is statistically significantly related to two groups of reasons for dropping out of school – financial reasons (32.8% of married and 24.8% of unmarried respondents) and pregnancy and parenthood (19.1% of married and 2.7% of unmarried RNM members).** This finding should form another basis for

102 *Family Act*, Official Gazette 103/15, 98/19.

103 Poor previous performance or failure to enroll: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 175.55$ ; df = 4 ; p<.01; they are sufficiently educated: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 231.42$ ; df = 5 ; p<.01; marriage: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 230.22$ ; df = 4 ; p<.01; pregnancy and parenthood: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 101.58$ ; df = 4 ; p<.01.

measures to motivate the Roma youth to remain unmarried as long as possible and to attain secondary education and gain financial stability before getting married.

However, it is not that easy to interpret the occurrences in the RNM community, as shown by the connection between the material status of Roma households and the three reasons for not participating in education [Figure 52]. Specifically, financial reasons for not participating in education are mostly expressed among Roma living in households with more than 4,500 HRK per month [35.9%], whereas, for example, those reasons are present among only 13.6% of Roma whose monthly income amounts to 1,000–1,500 HRK.

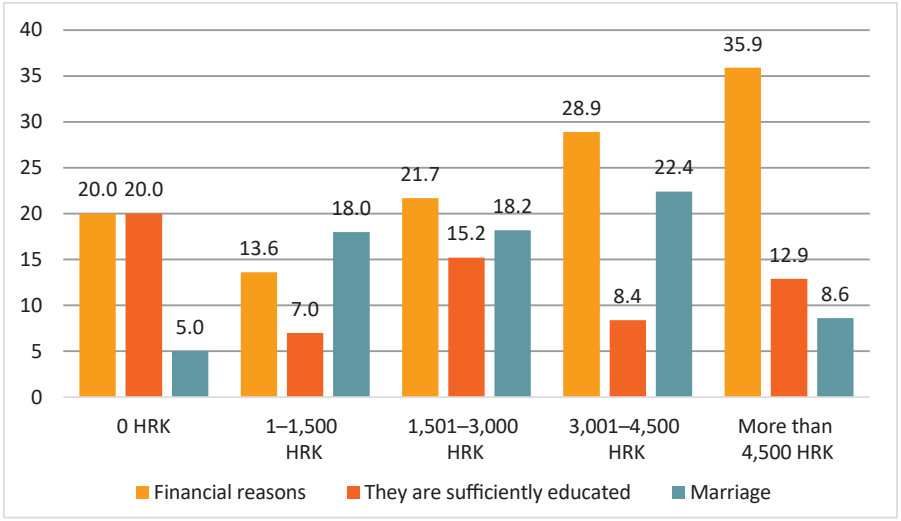


**FIGURE 52. Main reasons for not participating in education by material status [%]**[104]

The attitude that RNM members are sufficiently educated is expressed in a way that is difficult to explain in connection with the material status of their households because there is no recognizable pattern. The only thing we can say with a slightly higher certainty is that the attitude of being sufficiently educated is most often expressed by Roma from households without any monthly income, which again indicates the need for comprehensive measures aimed at raising awareness of the importance of attaining a certain level of education among RNM members. The connection between marriage as a reason for not participating in education and the financial status of the household demonstrates a somewhat more recognizable pattern than the one mentioned above. Marriage is the least common reason for dropping out of school among Roma in the lowest and the highest income categories. A possible explanation is that, from the financial aspect, RNM members without any income can afford to get married to a lesser extent, while Roma men

104 Financial reasons: chi square test, $\chi^2 = 30.95$ ; df = 4 ; p<.01; marriage: chi square test, $\chi^2 = 14.05$ ; df = 4 ; p<.01; they are sufficiently educated: chi square test, $\chi^2 = 13.87$ ; df = 4 ; p<.01.

and women in the highest income category are aware of the importance of education and therefore less often decide to get married before completing school.

Findings on the connection between the level of education and certain reasons for not participating in education among Roma aged 6–24 indicate several important conclusions [Figure 53]. The first conclusion relates to the **importance of encouraging Roma pupils to achieve better school performance** since almost a quarter of young people with only primary school could not continue their education due to poor educational performance, and the same holds true for a tenth of Roma who were able to complete secondary school. The second conclusion reiterates the argumentation of the **importance of awareness-raising actions related to attaining the highest possible level of education,** i.e. on increasing the educational aspirations of RNM members given that more than a tenth of respondents without compulsory education believe that they are sufficiently educated. The third conclusion is closely related to the second one and is based on the fact that **almost a third of young RNM members without compulsory education did not continue their education because they got married, and an equal share of young people did not continue their education due to marriage after completing only primary school.** The conclusions and recommendations of this study will suggest potential awareness-raising measures in this area.

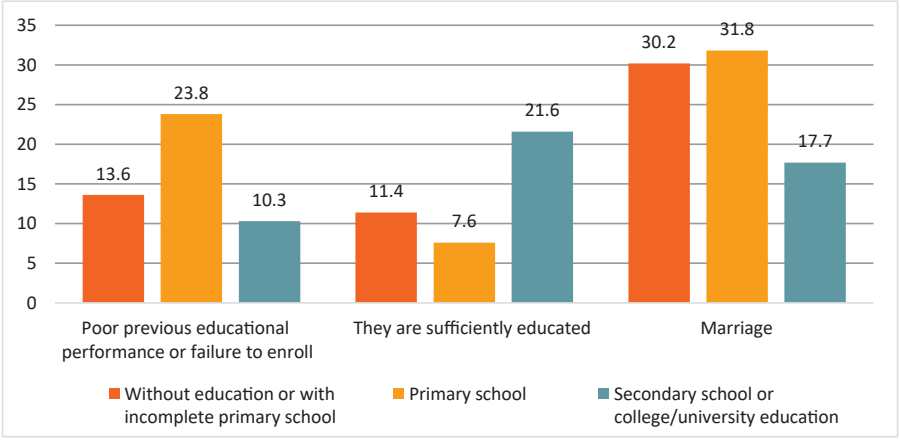


**FIGURE 53. Main reasons for not participating in education by level of education [%]**[105]

Figure 54 demonstrates the close intertwining of educational and employment status and marriage and dropping out of school. Based on the presented data, we can draw conclusions about some clear and a some not so clear phenomena or trends. When it comes to employment and unemployment, the data largely follow

105 Poor previous educational performance or failure to enroll: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 24.81$ ; df = 2 ; p<.01; they are sufficiently educated: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 25.95$ ; df = 2 ; p<.01; marriage: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 21.84$ ; df = 2 ; p<.01.

clear patterns: the largest share of employed Roma dropped out of school due to employment, whereas the largest share of unemployed Roma men and women dropped out of formal education due to marriage, which is also significantly present among non-active RNM members taking care of the household. Among Roma women and men with this status, parenthood is also very prominent as a reason for dropping out of school, which also appears as an important reason for not participating in education for other non-active RNM members. However, it is not so easy to explain the data that 14.3% of pupils and students dropped out of education for each of the three reasons. Here we can reiterate the clear need for comprehensive awareness-raising actions on the importance of education among Roma.

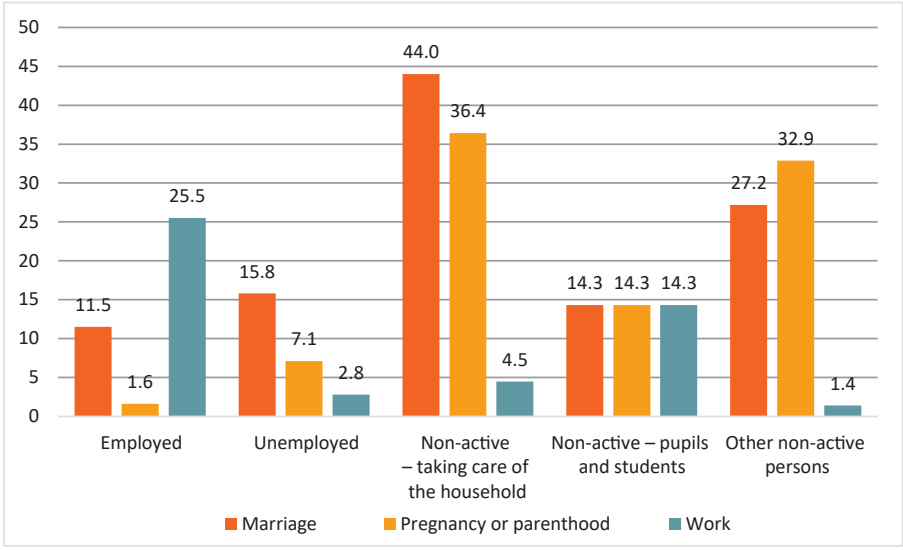


**FIGURE 54. Main reasons for not participating in education by employment and educational status (%)**[106]

When considering the locality type, the financial situation and marriage as reasons for not participating in education do not indicate a clearly recognizable pattern (Figure 55) because RNM members who should demonstrate different results due to living in localities which are spatially integrated in different ways – Roma living in localities separated from a town or village in a separate location and Roma living dispersed among the majority population, as well as Roma living in localities on the outskirts of a town or village and those living within a town or village – demonstrate very similar results. However, when looking at poor previous educational performance, the direction of the connection is clear since this reason for not participating in education is on average mostly expressed by Roma living

106 Marriage: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 21.11$ ; df = 4 ; p<.01; pregnancy and parenthood: $\chi^2 = 94.68$ ; df = 4 ; p<.01; work: $\chi^2 = 89.09$ ; df = 4 ; p<.01.

in the most segregated localities, i.e. localities separated from a town or village in a separate location. Employment as a reason for not participating in education is relatively most pronounced among Roma living dispersed among the majority population in a town or village.

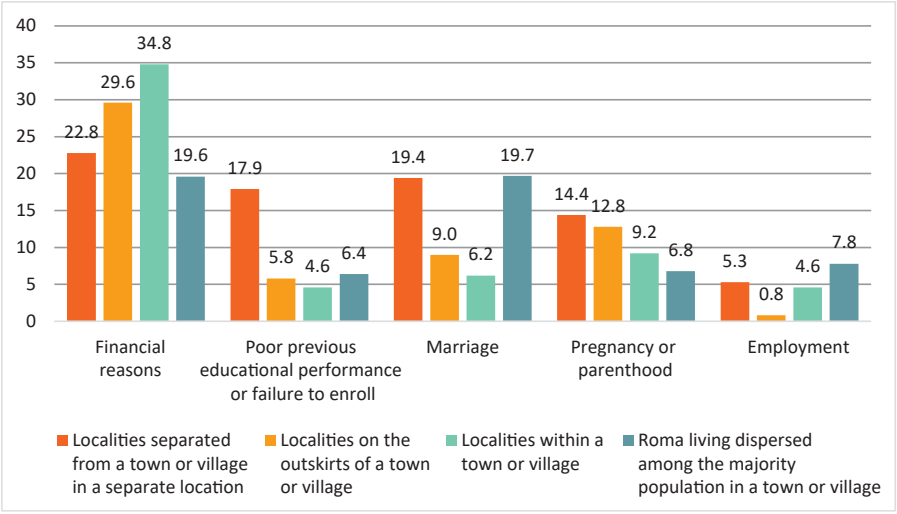


**FIGURE 55. Main reasons for not participating in education by locality type (%)**[107]

The distribution of reasons for not participating in education with regard to counties (Table 9) provides a somewhat surprising picture when it comes to financial reasons: Primorje-Gorski Kotar County leads with 58.8%, followed by Zagreb County (55.6%) and Sisak-Moslavina County (53.9%), while this reason for not participating in education is least expressed in Koprivnica-Križevci County (12.3%). However, this county ranks first in terms of marriage as the reason for not participating in education (35.1%), and Međimurje County comes second with 20.5%, while Osijek-Baranja, Sisak-Moslavina, Vukovar-Srijem and Zagreb are counties in which marriage is not stated as a reason for not participating in education. Istria is another county standing out, where 36.8% of respondents do not participate in education because they believe they are sufficiently educated, whereas in Vukovar-Srijem and Zagreb County there are not any RNM members who share this view. Poor previous educational performance or failure to enroll singles out Istria County as the county without RNM members who do not participate in education for this reason, while Međimurje (19.8%) and Varaždin (15.5%) are at the top.

107 Financial reasons: chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 17.58 ; df = 3 ; p<.01; poor previous performance or failure to enroll: chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 35.37 ; df = 3 ; p<.01, they are sufficiently educated: chi-square test $\chi^2$ = 17.28 ; df = 5 ; p<.01; marriage: chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 16.68 ; df = 3 ; p<.01; pregnancy and parenthood: chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 17.28 ; df = 5 ; p<.01; work: chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 12.07 ; df = 3 ; p<.01.

**TABLE 9.** Main reasons for not participating in education by county (%)[108]

| | Financial reasons | Poor previous educational performance or failure to enroll | They are sufficiently educated | Marriage |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bjelovar-Bilogora | 36.8 | 5.3 | 21.1 | 15.8 |
| Brod-Posavina | 26.9 | 9.4 | 13.7 | 12.0 |
| City of Zagreb | 9.4 | 9.4 | 7.7 | 20.0 |
| Istria | 31.6 | 0.0 | 36.8 | 5.3 |
| Koprivnica-Križevci | 12.3 | 4.1 | 1.4 | 35.1 |
| Međimurje | 13.6 | 19.8 | 12.8 | 20.5 |
| Osijek-Baranja | 21.4 | 5.3 | 7.1 | 5.4 |
| Primorje-Gorski Kotar | 58.8 | 6.4 | 17.8 | 2.3 |
| Sisak-Moslavina | 53.9 | 2.6 | 7.9 | 3.9 |
| Varaždin | 31.0 | 15.5 | 8.6 | 19.0 |
| Vukovar-Srijem | 33.3 | 0.0 | 16.7 | 0.0 |
| Zagreb County | 55.6 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |

The regional distribution of reasons for not participating in education (Figure 56) ranks Istria and Primorje (51.4%) and Central Croatia (50.5%) first in terms of financial reasons, while this reason is least expressed in Međimurje (13.6%) and Zagreb and its surrounding area (13.8 %). On the other hand, **Zagreb is at the top in terms of the number of RNM members who do not participate in education due to work (12.6%), and in Slavonia there were only 0.9% of such respondents.** Međimurje and Northern Croatia rank differently when it comes to insufficient success as the reason for not participating in education: Međimurje has 19.8% of such respondents and Central Croatia 3.2%.

Međimurje is at the top of the list when looking at another reason – pregnancy and parenthood (16.8%), while Zagreb and its surrounding area have the lowest number of Roma who do not participate in education due to pregnancy and parenthood (5.3%). **Northern Croatia (28.0%) and Međimurje (20.5%) rank first in terms of not participating in education due to marriage,** and Istria and Primorje report the lowest number of RNM members of that profile (3.2%); however, that region has the greatest relative share of those who think that they are sufficiently educated and that they do not need further education (23.4%).

108 Financial reasons: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 125.94$ ; df = 11 ; p<.01; poor previous performance or failure to enroll: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 54.10$ ; df = 11 ; p<.01; they are sufficiently educated: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 29.57$ ; df = 11 ; p<.01; marriage: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 67.40$ ; df = 11; p<.01; work: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 58.78$ ; df = 5 ; p<.01.

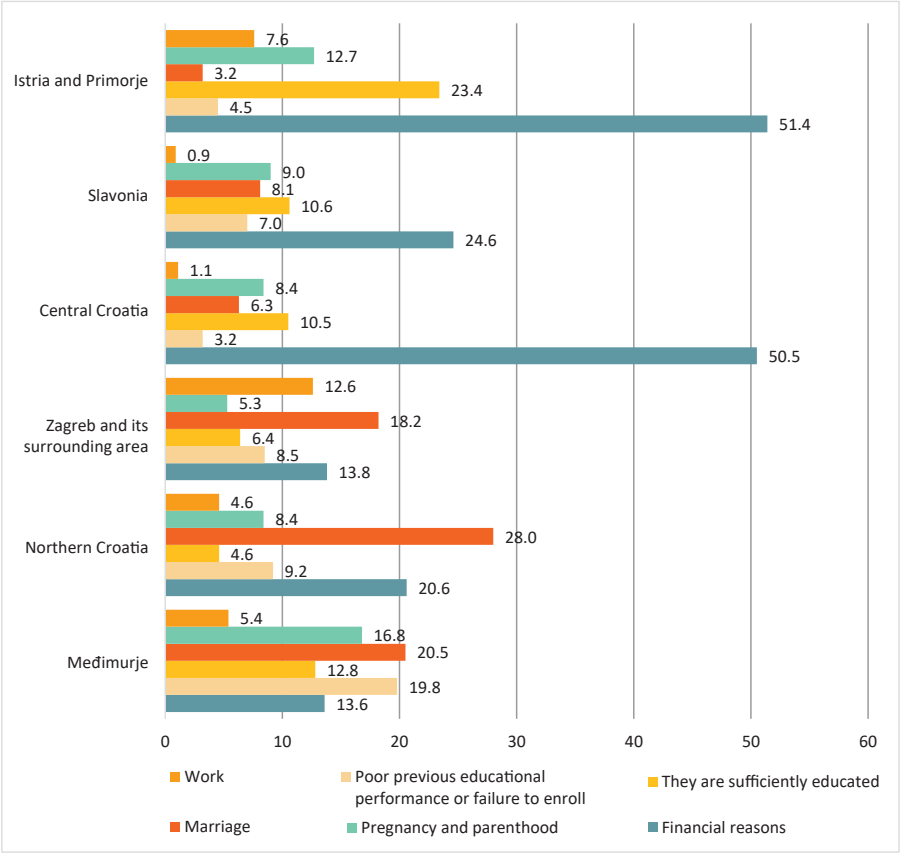


**FIGURE 56.** Main reasons for not participating in education by region [%][109]

*The biggest problem is actually their persistence and hard work. They give up when at age of 16 or 17, they think about their existence again. In a conversation with them they tell me "It is more important to me that I earn money, for example, by metal sales or repurchase or to start a family because what will I do with school anyway. I won't get a job, I'm wasting my time.*

Excerpt from an interview with a representative of relevant institutions

In addition, the above quotation is illustrative for interpreting dropping out of school due to a lack of work habits during education and entering the labor market.

109 Financial reasons: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 109.36$ ; df = 5 ; p<.01; pregnancy and parenthood: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 17.28$ ; df = 5 ; p<.01; poor previous performance or failure to enroll: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 48.38$ ; df = 5 ; p<.01; they are sufficiently educated: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 23.06$ ; df = 5 ; p<.01; marriage: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 55.85$ ; df = 5 ; p<.01; work: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 23.27$ ; df = 5 ; p<.01.

## Participation in educational programs

In order to provide a complete picture of the participation of the Roma in the education system, it is also important to determine the regularity of attending an educational institution. **Of the 1,046 RNM members who are still in school,**[110] **92.8% attend school or lectures daily or when lectures are held. 6.2% of them are absent once a week, and 1.0% of them are absent more than 4 days a month.**[111] Due to the insufficient number of respondents who are absent from school, it was not possible to perform further statistical processing in terms of establishing differences between different subgroups of respondents. As regards the levels of education and programs they attend (Figure 57), **Roma who participate in primary education (78.8%) predominate among RNM members, 11.4% attend three-year secondary vocational schools, and a total of 3.8% of the Roma participate in four-year secondary school programs. 2.1% of the surveyed Roma attend colleges or universities.**

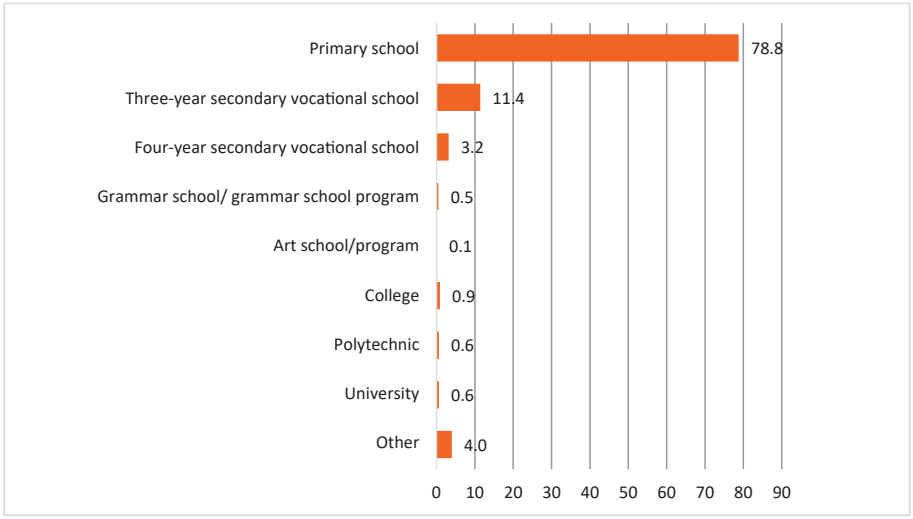


FIGURE 57. Educational programs currently attended by RNM members (%)[112]

When it comes to the gender and age of young people aged up to 29 (Table 10), it was shown that **as many as 53.7% of girls and 63.0% of boys aged up to 19 do not go to school, and that there is not any RNM member older than 24 included in the survey who attends school. 25.9% of boys and 19.0% of girls aged 14–19 attend secondary school and 0.4% of boys and no girls attend university.**

110 N = 1,046, the question concerned all RNM members. Most RNM members who are still in school are under the age of 29 (N = 993).

111 N = 75

112 N = 1,028

**TABLE 10. Differences in attending educational programs by gender and age of young people [%]**

| | 14–19 years old | | 20–24 years old | | 25–29 years old | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | M | F | M | F | M | F |
| Do not attend school | 53.7 | 63.0 | 98.7 | 98.7 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Attend primary school | 20.1 | 17.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Attend secondary school | 25.9 | 19.0 | 0.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Attend universities | 0.3 | 0.6 | 0.8 | 1.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 |

The regional distribution [Figure 58] of RNM members with regard to participation in a certain level of education indicates differences that do not follow a clear trend.

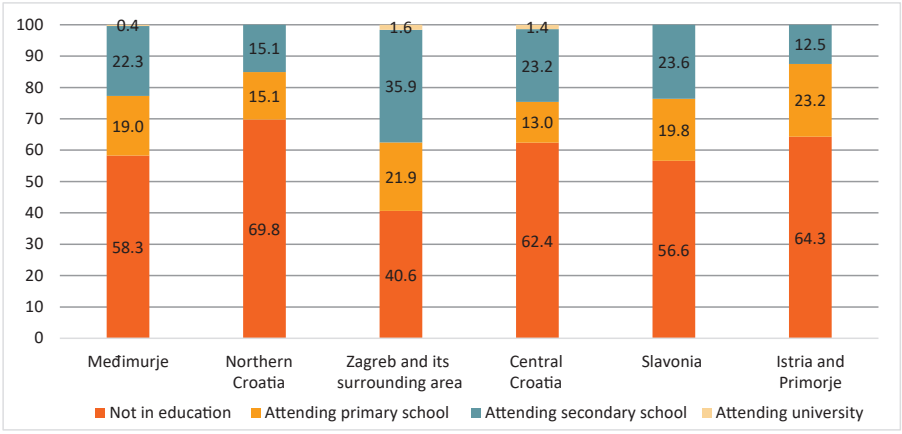


**FIGURE 58. Regional distribution of participation in educational programs [aged 14–19] [%][113]**

**When it comes to the number of young people participating in primary education, Istria and Primorje are in the lead,** although this region also comes second [after Northern Croatia] in terms of the number of young people aged 14–19 who do not attend school. **Zagreb and it surrounding area differ in positive terms from other regions in three aspects – in the relatively smallest number of young people who do not attend school, the largest share of young people attending secondary schools and the largest number of students.**

## Dropping out of school

Data from the individual level research suggest that **two thirds of the respondents[114] [63.3%] stated that they did not drop out of school, while 27.1% dropped out of primary school, 8.6% dropped out of secondary school and a total of**

113 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ =10.89 ; df = 5 ; p<.05.

114 The question included all respondents [N = 3,092].

**1.0% dropped out of university or professional training (0.5% for each form of education).** Further analysis excluded the categories of dropping out of university or professional training since these categories had insufficient respondents. There were no statistically significant gender differences in dropping out of a particular level of education. When looking at the locality type,[115] localities separated from a town or village in a separate location have the least RNM members who did not drop out of school (57.2%) and localities where the Roma live dispersed among the majority population have the most RNM members who did not drop out of school (71.8%). In separated localities, 34.1% of RNM members dropped out of primary school and 18.9% of them did so in localities where the Roma live dispersed among the majority population. Data on Roma who dropped out of secondary school do not follow this pattern because most of them dropped out of school in localities within a town or village (12.0%) and this number was the smallest in localities on the outskirts of a town or village (5.8%).

Zagreb County has the largest number of young RNM members who dropped out of some level of education (70.0%), followed by Varaždin (49.0%) and Međimurje County (44.5%) (Figure 59). On the other hand, the lowest number of young Roma men and women dropped out of school in Vukovar-Srijem (20.0%) and Sisak-Moslavina County (78.7%).

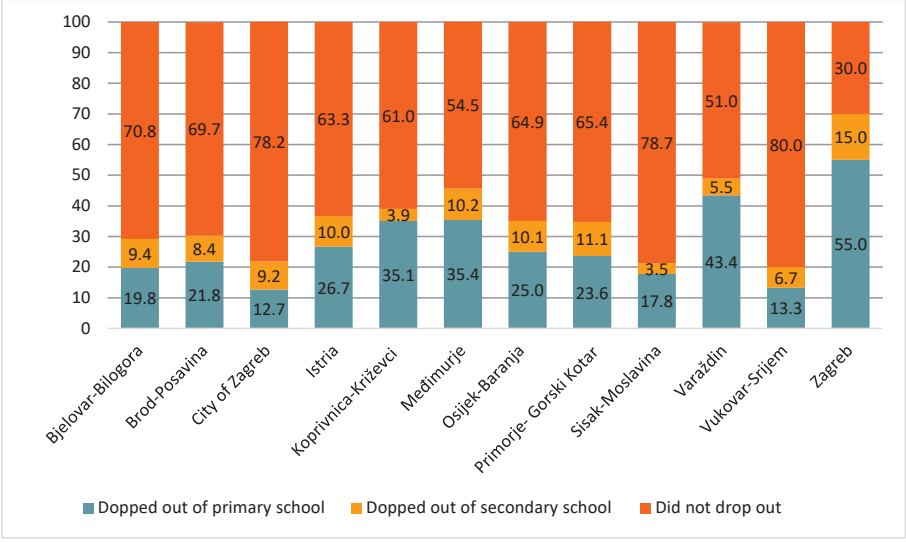


**FIGURE 59. Distribution of RNM members who dropped out of a particular level of education by county (%)**[116]

115 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ =77.03 ; df = 6 ; p<.01.

116 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ =171.66 ; df = 22 ; p<.01.

Taking into account that the text previously presented data on RNM members who dropped out of a particular level of education, we can say that the regional distribution of Roma men and women who dropped out of school follows a pattern which is not completely expected (Figure 60). The aforesaid means that **the largest number of Roma who dropped out of school was in Međimurje (45.6%) and Northern Croatia (43.2), and the lowest in Zagreb and its surrounding area (24.0%).**

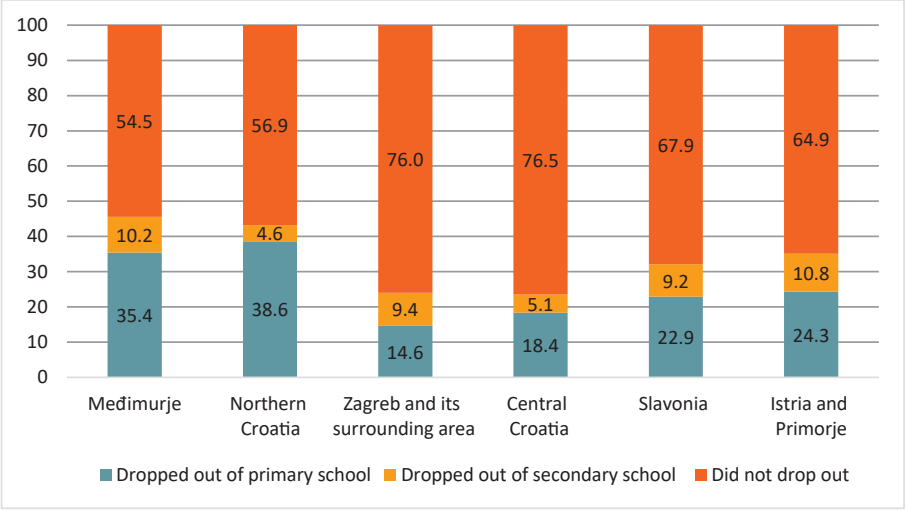


FIGURE 60. **Regional distribution of RNM members who dropped out of school (%)**[117]

The working status of Roma men and women who dropped out of school, i.e. those who continue their education (Figure 61), demonstrates certain "anomalies" since a total of 8.7% of pupils and students stated that they dropped out of school, which can be attributed to the misunderstanding of questions and answer categories. **However, among employed persons, the number of those who dropped out of school is the lowest, although almost a third of them dropped out of primary school, and almost a tenth from secondary school.** This is a target subgroup of Roma who should be encouraged to continue their education in order to increase their chances of maintaining a job. Likewise, as many as 34.0% of unemployed persons dropped out of primary school and 10.5% dropped out of secondary school, and their low level of education certainly is one of the factors hindering their positioning on the labor market.

117 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ =140.21 ; df = 10 ; p<.01.

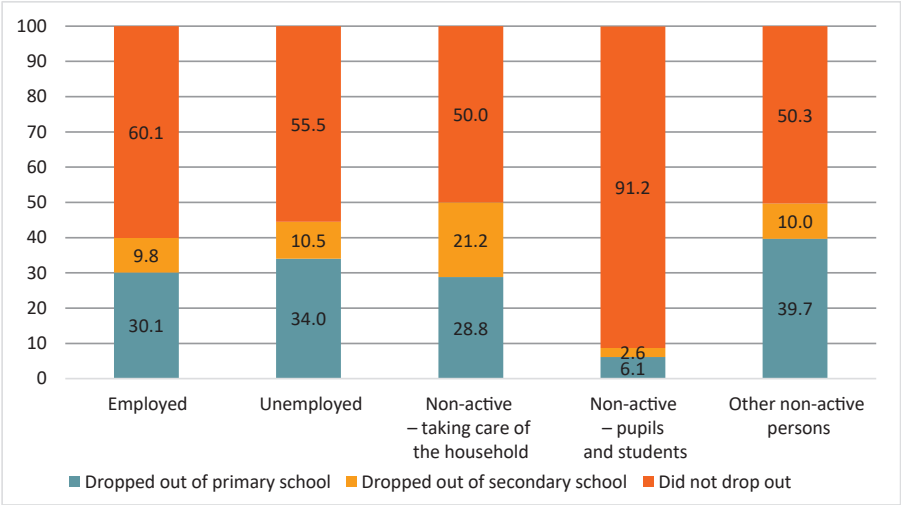


**FIGURE 61. RNM members who dropped out of school by employment status [%][118]**

One interesting finding, which should form the foundation of future measures to encourage education among RNM members, is the data on as many as 21.2% of Roma who take care of the household (most of them being Roma women) who dropped out of secondary school. In the following sections, we will focus precisely on the reasons for dropping out of school and we expect that taking care of the family and the household will be one of the dominant factors in dropping out of school. **Both women and men most often stated financial reasons or poor performance in primary school as reasons for dropping out of school (Figure 62). Nonetheless, as many as 25.9% of women and "only" 16.1% of men stated marriage as a reason, while in terms of parenthood this discrepancy is even greater (9.5% of women and 2.5% of men).** In support of such findings, we state one quote which resulted from data collection in focus groups.

*Girls have bigger problems here because in their culture it is believed that they have to get married young because who would want to have her as wife after secondary school? It's rare for parents to support girls' secondary education, but they also have to want to complete some education themselves. But it's all in vain if the parents intended she has to get married.*

Excerpt from a focus group interview with representatives of relevant institutions

118 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ =79.05 ; df = 8 ; p<.01.

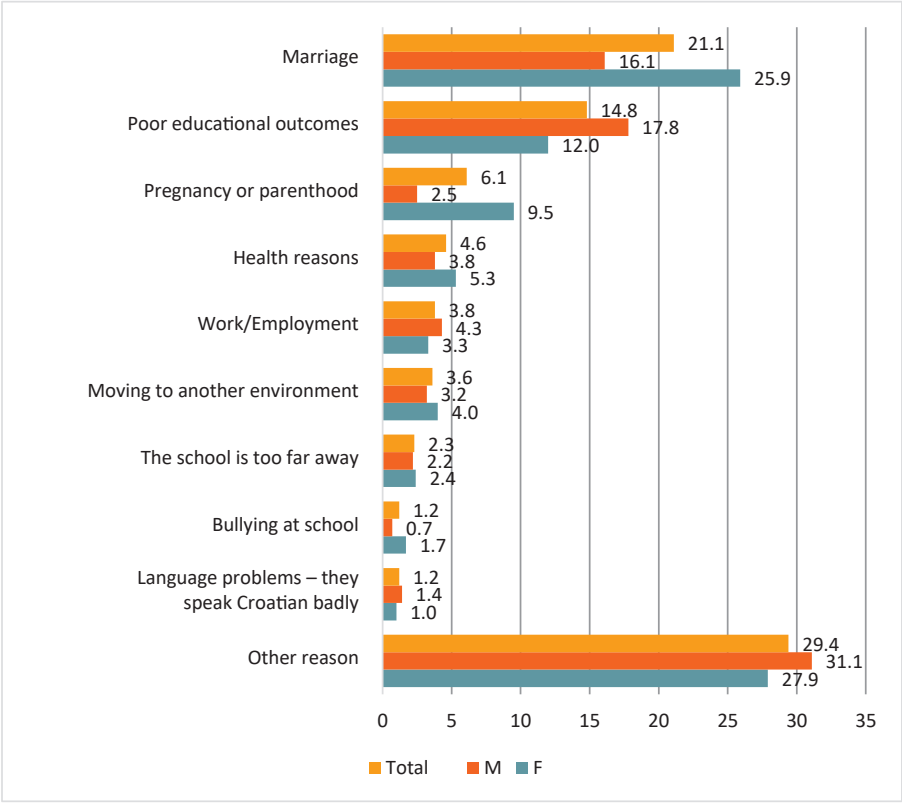


**FIGURE 62. Reasons for dropping out of school [%][119]**

RNM members who state financial reasons as the primary reason for dropping out of school[120] mostly live in localities within a town or village [42.9%], and the least of them can be found in localities separated from a town or village in a separate location [22.8%] and in localities where the Roma live dispersed among the majority population [25.7%]. When it comes to the county where a particular locality is located,[121] financial reasons are seen as relatively important by Roma from Primorje-Gorski Kotar [63.6%] and Zagreb County [62.5%], while Roma men and Roma women from the City of Zagreb [12.2%], Međimurje and Koprivnica-Križevci County [15.6%] state those reasons the least. From the regional point of view,[122] according to the respondents, financial reasons are relatively most important for dropping out of school in Istria and Primorje [55.6%] and Central Croatia [54.3%], whereas Roma from Međimurje [14.4%] and Zagreb and it surrounding area state

119 N = 265

120 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ =15.30 ; df = 3 ; p<.01.

121 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ =109.89 ; df = 11 ; p<.01.

122 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 91.03 ; df = 5 ; p<.01.

those reasons the least (17.1%). It is interesting to note that financial reasons are more frequently stated by respondents from households with an income amounting to 3,001–4,500 HRK (31.0%) and 4,501 HRK and more (38.2%) than by Roma from households with 1,000–1,500 HRK (16.8%) or households without any income (23.5%),[123] for which we cannot provide a simple explanation. Finally, when looking at the employment status,[124] the smallest share of non-active Roma state their financial situation as an important reason for dropping out of school (16.5%), whereas in other forms of employment status this percentage is around 30.

**Poorer educational performance or failure to enroll in secondary school were stated to a significantly greater extent by RNM members in localities separated from a town or village in a separate location (27.0%), and they were stated the least by Roma men and women living dispersed among the majority population (8.6%).**[125] Again, this points to the crucial role of spatial integration of the RNM in Croatia, especially given the positive role models of educated persons whom young people can directly meet if they are integrated with the majority population. The distribution of answers on educational performance by county[126] shows that in three counties – Istria, Vukovar-Srijem and Zagreb – there have not been any respondents who dropped out of school due to poor educational performance. On the other hand, this reason was, in relative terms, mostly pointed out by respondents from Međimurje (23.1%) and Sisak-Moslavina County (17.0%). When looking at the regional distribution,[127] Roma from Međimurje (23.1%) mostly dropped out of further education due to poor educational performance, whereas this number was lowest in Central Croatia (3.3%).

The way in which the characteristics correlate with emphasizing one's own sufficient education as a reason for dropping out of school is very indicative. Specifically, this reason for dropping out of school is to the relatively greatest extent pointed out by RNM members living in localities within a town or village (25.0%), who, on average, indeed have slightly higher educational achievements than RNM members living in localities separated form a town or village in a separate location or those on the outskirts of a town or village.[128] The county variable[129] introduces differences when it comes to the lack of attitude about one's own sufficient education as a reason for dropping out of school in Zagreb County, as opposed to Istria County where 38.9% of respondents share this attitude, as well

123 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ =20.46 ; df = 4 ; p<.01.

124 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ =17.17 ; df = 4 ; p<.01.

125 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 25.84 ; df = 3 ; p<.01.

126 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 42.38 ; df = 11 ; p<.01.

127 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 35.30 ; df = 5 ; p<.01.

128 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ =10.51 ; df = 3 ; p<.01.

129 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ =30.85 ; df = 11 ; p<.01.

as Bjelovar-Bilogora (26.3%) and Primorje-Gorski Kotar (22.0%) County. However, the regional distribution[130] indicates somewhat different results: the RNM in Međimurje (47.5%) mostly believe that sufficient education is a reason for dropping out, while Roma men and women from Northern Croatia (6.1%) and Zagreb and its surrounding area (7.1%) express this opinion the least. It is interesting to note that respondents without any household income[131] mostly state that they dropped out of school because they are sufficiently educated (23.5%), which, again, speaks of the importance of positive role models and social integration of RNM members for their educational aspirations and accomplishments, and consequently their social status. A similar interpretation can be found among as many as 66.7% of respondents in the category "other non-active persons" (excluding those who take care of the household and pupils and students) who claim that sufficient education is the main reason for dropping out.[132] In this case, those are mostly older RNM members and those who are excluded from the labor market due to a serious health condition, which again involves social isolation and marginalization and consequently the disregard for educational accomplishments.

Marriage as the reason for dropping out of school is related to the locality type[133] in such a way that RNM members living dispersed among the majority population (25.0%) and those living in localities separated from a town or village in a separate location (21.4%) mostly state this particular reason, as opposed to Roma men and women from localities within a town or village (6.9%) or localities on the outskirts of a town or village (10.9%). When looking at the distribution by county,[134] Vukovar-Srijem and Zagreb County do not have any respondents stating marriage as an important reason for dropping out of school, while Koprivnica-Križevci County (45.7%), the City of Zagreb (25.0%) and Međimurje County (22.1%) have the largest number of such answers. Considering the regional distribution,[135] **respondents from Northern Croatia (35.0%), Zagreb and its surrounding area (22.7%) and Međimurje (22.1%) have the relatively largest number of answers claiming that they dropped out of school due to marriage, as opposed to only 3.5% of RNM members from Istria and Primorje and 6.6% from Central Croatia.** The material status[136] correlates with marriage as the reason for dropping out of school in such a way that RNM members without any household income (5.9%) made such decision the least, while there were between 21% and 26% respondents from other income categories. Finally, for the purpose of awareness-raising

130 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ =20.23 ; df = 5 ; p<.01.

131 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 9.54 ; df = 4 ; p<.01.

132 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 11.38 ; df = ; p<.01.

133 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 16.19 ; df = 3 ; p<.01.

134 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 60.47 ; df = 11 ; p<. 01.

135 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 43.24 ; df = 5 ; p<.01.

136 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ =13.32 ; df = 4 ; p<.01

measures regarding the importance of education of RNM members, it is important to emphasize the finding that 52.5% of unemployed Roma point out marriage as the reason for dropping out of school, in contrast to 0% of non-active respondents. These categories include either mostly the elderly population or pupils and students, which again speaks in favor of not entering into marriage as one of the instruments ensuring the completion of education.[137]

Marital status[138] was expected to be statistically significantly associated with parenthood as the reason for dropping out of school: 20.2% of married and only 1.4% of unmarried RNM members stated that they dropped out of school due to parenthood. The largest share of those who dropped out of school due to parenthood is found among non-active persons taking care of the household (34.5%), whereas the results of the survey do not include any other non-active persons who dropped out of school due to parenthood, while there are 7.6% of unemployed and 4.7% of employed persons.[139]

As expected, employment, i.e. the inability to harmonize work and education as the reason for dropping out of the educational system is mostly chosen by employed Roma (13.8%), while no such answer was recorded among non-active Roma.[140] The City of Zagreb ranks first with 16.2% of respondents who stated that they dropped out of school due to work, while Osijek-Baranja, Sisak-Moslavina, Vukovar-Srijem and Zagreb County do not have any such respondents.[141] These findings are partially inconsistent with the ones regarding the regional distribution of Roma who dropped out of school due to employment: most respondents are found in Zagreb and its surrounding area (14.6%) and the least in Central Croatia and Slavonia (0.1% respectively).[142]

## Lifelong learning and adult education

So far, the participation of RNM members in lifelong learning and adult education programs[143] shows modest results: **3.9% of respondents participated in professional training programs, the same share of the Roma completed primary school in adulthood, 2.1% of them participated in occupational training without entering into employment and 1.7% of the respondents completed secondary school in adulthood.** Considering the level of education, 2.5% of RNM members without primary school, 5.0% with primary education and 18.2% of the respondents who completed secondary and college/university education partici-

137 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ =18.25 ; df = 4 ; p<.01.
138 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 52.83 ; df = 11 ; p<.01.
139 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ =78.28 ; df = 4 ; p<.01.
140 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 32.77 ; df = 4 ; p<.01.
141 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 29.18 ; df = 11 ; p<.01.
142 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 22.45 ; df = 5 ; p<.01.
143 N = 365

pate in professional training.[144] When analyzing the connection with gender, there are certain differences given that 6.3% of men and 3.9% of women participate in professional training.[145]

There are significant differences regarding marital status between RNM members participating in professional training.[146] 11.5% of married and 7.6% of single Roma participate in professional training. Among employed Roma, there are 19.6% of them participating in professional training, 10.4% of them are unemployed, 11.5% of RNM members take care of the household, 1.3% are pupils and students and 6.7% other non-active persons.[147] 3.8% of young people aged 14–18, 15.2% of young people aged 19–25, 12.7% of RNM members aged 26–40, 8.6% aged 41–60 and 4.8% of Roma over 60 participate in professional training.[148] Differences in the number of Roma participating in professional training in relation to the locality type have also been noted, albeit insignificant.[149] 12.1% of Roma from localities separated from a town or village in a separate location, 11.9% of Roma in localities on the outskirts of a town or village, 8.6% of those living in localities within a town or village and 7.3% of Roma living dispersed among the majority population participate in professional training. When looking at the counties (Figure 63), **most RNM members participate in professional training in Brod-Posavina and Sisak-Moslavina County, and the least do so in Vukovar-Srijem and Varaždin County.**

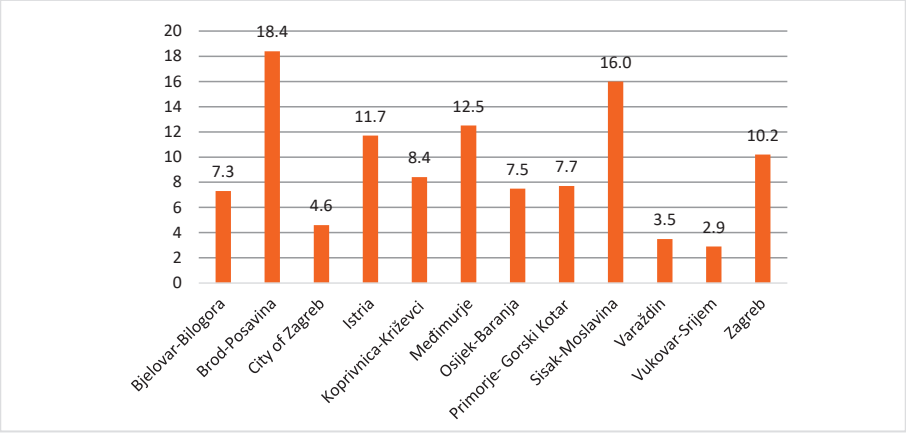


**FIGURE 63. Distribution of RNM members participating in professional training by county (%)[150]**

144 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 156.50$ ; df = 2 ; p<.01.
145 T-test, t=20.70 ; p<.01.
146 T-test, t = 9.1 ; p<.01.
147 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 76.33$ ; df = 4 ; p<.01.
148 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 58.25$ ; df = 4 ; p<.01.
149 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 16.60$ ; df = 3 ; p<.01
150 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 66.72$ ; df = 11; p<.01.

The regional distribution of RNM members[151] indicates that 12.5% of the population in Međimurje participates in professional training and lifelong learning programs, 6.2% in Northern Croatia, 4.4% in Zagreb and its surrounding area, 13.4% in Central Croatia, 11.8% in Slavonia and 9.0% in Istria and Primorje.

## Literacy

The 2014 FRA Roma survey found that Roma generally have a significantly lower literacy rate than the general population, although a positive change was noted in terms of a higher share of literate RNM members in the younger population. When it comes to Croatia, we can compare the data of the CBS (2016: 118), where there are 0.065% of illiterate men and 0.054% of illiterate women in the population aged 15–29. **In the sample of this research,[152] there were 12.0% (N=468) illiterate persons. There are twice as many illiterate persons among RNM women (16.0%) than men (7.9%)** in Croatia. The connection between the material status of a household and the literacy of the members of that household[153] indicates that **the household income is higher when its members are literate.** So, 83.8% of literate members can be found in households without any income, and 90.7% in those whose income is higher than 4,500 HRK. **The share of illiterate RNM members is relatively highest in Northern Croatia (17.6%), Međimurje (13.2%) and Istria and Primorje (12.2%).**[154] Slavonia has 11.4% of illiterate Roma, Central Croatia 9.8% and Zagreb and its surrounding area report the smallest share – 7.4%. As a clear proof of the negative effect of spatial segregation of the Roma, we can state that **literate RNM members mostly live dispersed among the majority population (92.3%)** and in localities within a village or town (88.0%), while the smallest number of them is found in localities on the outskirts of a town or village (84.7%) and in localities separated from a town or village in a separate location (86.7%).[155] The distribution of literate RNM members indicates the relatively most successful literacy in Bjelovar-Bilogora County (only 3.1% of illiterate population), while the largest share of illiterate RNM members is found in Zagreb County (26.9%) (Figure 64).

151 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 39.92$ ; df = 5 ; p<.01.
152 N=3,908
153 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 25,49$ ; df = 4 ; p<.01.
154 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 24,32$ ; df = 5 ; p<.01.
155 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 29,74$ ; df = 3 ; p<.01.

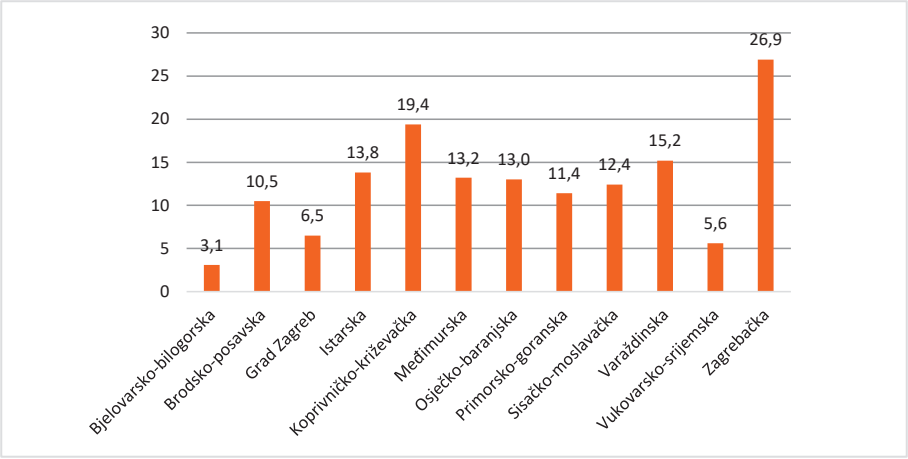


**FIGURE 64.** Distribution of iliterate RNM members by county [%][156]

We were particularly interested in youth literacy, and these data are presented in Table 11 in relation to gender and regions. We can conclude that, **when it comes to (il)literacy, gender differences prevail in most regions, in favor of men. The most noticeable difference is in Northern Croatia, where there are three times more illiterate young women than men.**

**TABLE 11.** Regional distribution of gender differences in youth illiteracy [%][157]

| Region | Share of illiterate young people [14–29] | |
|---|---|---|
| | M | F |
| Međimurje | 4.9 | 4.3 |
| Northern Croatia | 4.0 | 12.5 |
| Zagreb and its surrounding area | 1.0 | 2.0 |
| Central Croatia | 1.2 | 2.1 |
| Slavonia | 0.9 | 2.3 |
| Istria and Primorje | 0.0 | 3.3 |

When presenting the social picture of the localities, it is also very important to note the number of illiterate RNM members in the locality. Two-fifths of the localities have more than 20 illiterate members, only 3.9% of the localities are without illiterate members [Figure 65], and among the presented categories as many as 43.2% of the localities have more than 20 illiterate women.

156 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 50,44 ; df = 11 ; p<.01.

157 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 20.31 ; df = 5 ; p<.01.

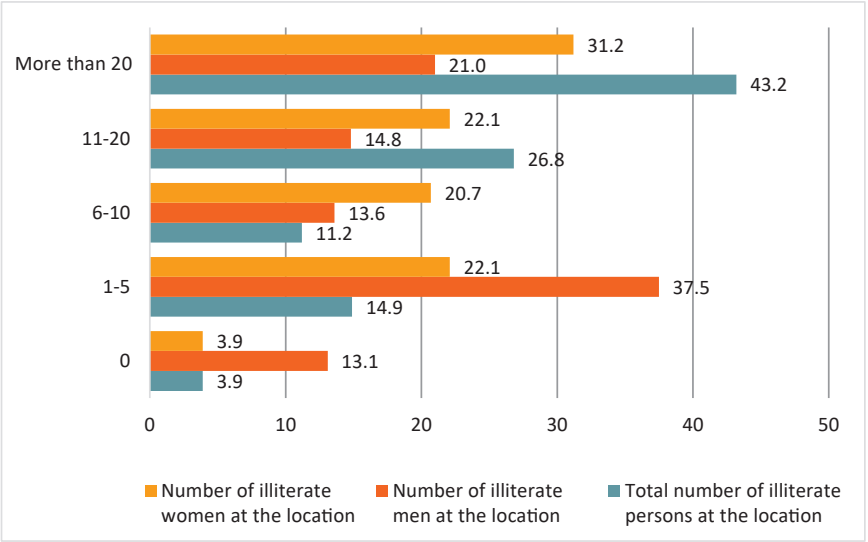


**FIGURE 65. Number of illiterate men and women in the surveyed locality (%)**

The regional distribution of localities in relation to the total number of illiterate RNM members in the locality (Figure 66) ranks Central Croatia (66.3%) first in terms of the share of more than 20 illiterate persons in the locality, followed by Northern Croatia and Slavonia, each with slightly more than 50% of the localities with more than 20 illiterate persons. The presented data also determine similarities between two regions which, according to the data presented in the previous subchapters, are usually opposite – Međimurje and Istria and Primorje – two regions with the smallest share of localities with more than 20 illiterate RNM members.

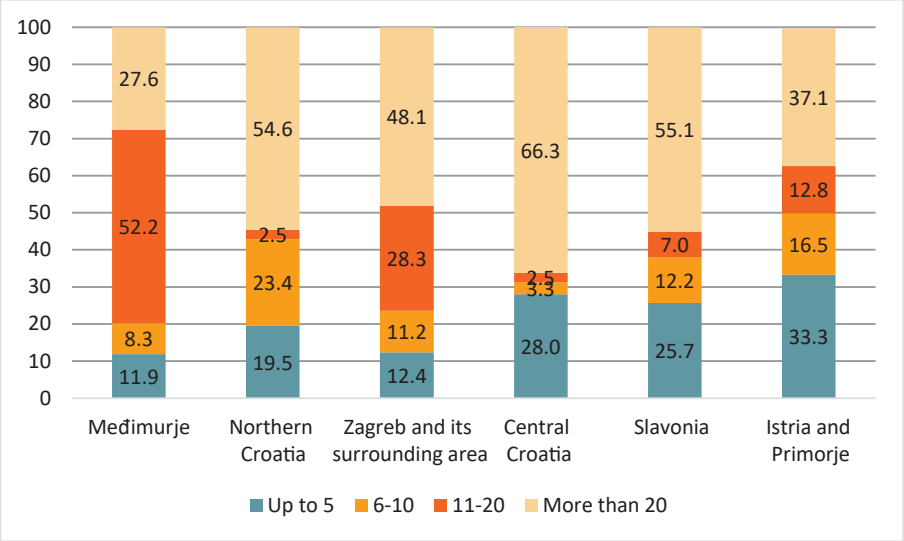


**FIGURE 66.** Regional distribution of localities in relation to the total number of illiterate inhabitants in the localities [%][158]

The distribution of the number of illiterate persons between the locality types [Figure 67] is expected since the localities on the outskirts of a town or village have more than 20 illiterate persons.

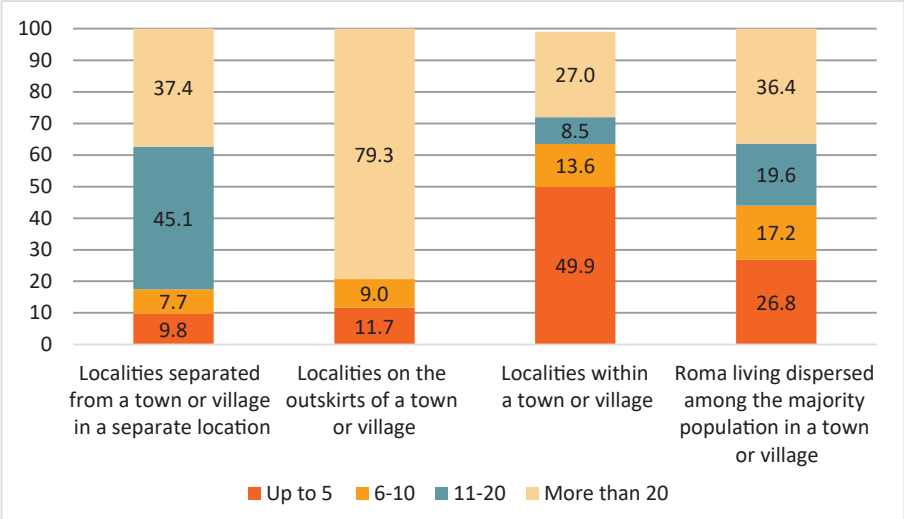


**FIGURE 67.** Distribution of illiterate persons by locality type [%][159]

158 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 1467.10$ ; df = 20 ; p<.01.

159 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 1398.54$ ; df = 12 ; p<.01.

Localities on the outskirts of a town or village have twice the incidence of more than 20 illiterate people in one locality than other locality types. According to the above, the lowest number of illiterate persons is found in localities within a town or village.

## 3.5. Education conditions of the Roma

**In the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights (Government of the Republic of Croatia, 2012; NRIS, 2012), Croatia is one of the countries in which educational segregation has been officially acknowledged;**[160] **it is present in preschool and primary education institutions attended by RNM members.** The NRIS recognizes that educational segregation has a negative impact at at least three crucial levels: 1) reduction in the quality of education in the classes attended by Roma children, which consequently affects the relatively low rate of inclusion in secondary and higher education and reduced level of knowledge and skills of Roma entering the labor market as well as their high unemployment rate; 2) Roma children attending exclusively or predominantly Roma classes have difficult conditions for social integration and achieving quality peer relationships due to segregation and discrimination; and 3) teachers in predominantly Roma classes often have scarce material and financial resources for teaching and opportunities to offer children programs and activities which are usually offered in classes largely attended by children from the majority population. Reduced social integration in preschool and primary education also leads to different self-expectations in the majority and Roma populations – Roma pupils have lower educational aspirations than the majority population and often drop out after the fifth grade of primary school.

The publication titled *Roma Education in Comparative Perspective. The Analysis of the UNDP/World Bank/EC Regional Roma Survey 2011* (Brüggemann, 2012) states that more than 50% of RNM members is the number for ethnically segregated classes and points out that there are multiple causes of ethnic segregation in education. The first refers to the population density of the Roma in particular localities, where it is difficult to set up mixed classes. The second is the decision of parents from the majority population to enroll their child in a preschool or primary school where there are either no Roma pupils or where there are very few of them. The third reason is the practice of placing the Roma in special programs, even without a thorough assessment of the child's ability to follow the regular program and without programs which would contribute to better integration of pupils (such as early language learning and the development of graphomotor skills). However,

160 The case "Oršuš and others v. the Republic of Croatia", in which the action was brought on 8 March 2003 and the judgment delivered by the European Court of Human Rights on 16 March 2010.

Brüggemann (2012) also states that sometimes Roma parents prefer to place their children in special programs because this means that the child will attend a majority Roma class and will mostly be exposed to the influence of the Roma community. The study also states that there are about 5% of ethnically segregated classes in Croatia, while the share of such classes in the Czech Republic and Hungary is as much as 10%.

## Insights into ethnic segregation in the education of RNM members

Data from the original research on which the study on Roma education and employment in the Republic of Croatia is based speak in favor of an even higher rate of ethnic segregation than the one stated in the cited international publication (Figure 68).

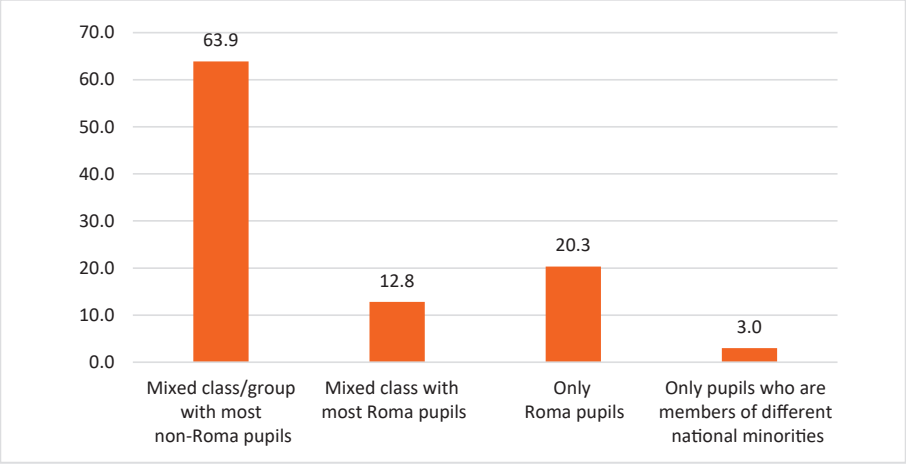


FIGURE 68. Ethnic structure of pupils in the class or group (%)[161]

**In Croatia, a total of 36.1% of Roma pupils aged 7–14 are exposed to some level of ethnic segregation,** with more than one-fifth of cases where minorities make up 100% of the classes and an additional 12.8% of mixed classes with the Roma as majority pupils. The positive impact of spatial desegregation of the Roma population is also demonstrated through the connection between the ethnic structure of the class and the type of locality in which Roma children live. Only 39.9% of pupils from localities separated from a town or village in a separate location have opportunities for broader integration, compared to 95.2% of pupils living dispersed among the majority population (Figure 69).

161 N = 1,060

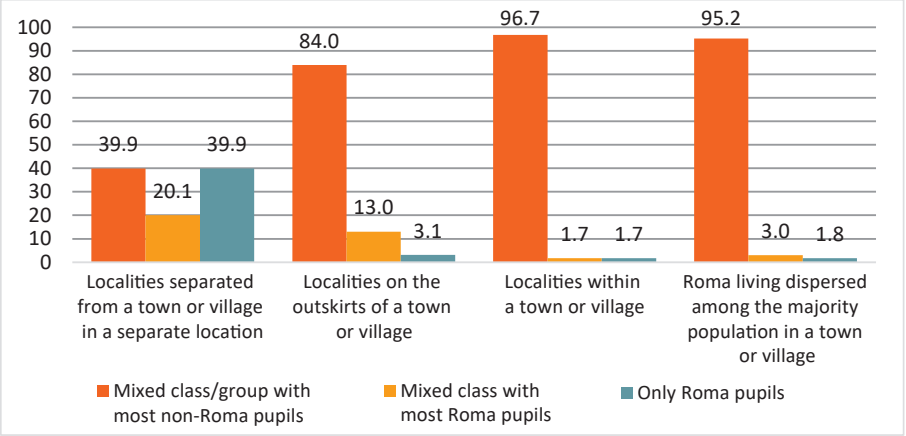


**FIGURE 69. Ethnic structure of the class or group by locality type [%]**[162]

Istria, Vukovar-Srijem and Zagreb are the only counties where Roma children are fully integrated into the teaching process through classes with the majority of non-Roma pupils. Similar results were also recorded in the City of Zagreb [94.4% of integrated children], Sisak-Moslavina [95.9%], Koprivnica-Križevci [92.9%], Osijek-Baranja [90.2%] and Varaždin County [88.9%]. However, in Međimurje County only 34.0% of children are integrated into classes with the majority population, followed by Brod-Posavina County [69.4% of integrated children], while in Primorje-Gorski Kotar County there are 80.6% of children attending classes with the majority of non-Roma pupils.[163]

Regionally [Figure 70], **Međimurje has a noticeable level of ethnic segregation with more than four-fifths of exclusively Roma classes.** Only 34.0% of pupils attend mixed classes with the majority of non-Roma pupils, meaning that only these pupils have real opportunities for quality education and integration with their non-Roma peers. In contrast to Međimurje, in Central Croatia 96.9% of the classes attended by Roma are mixed classes mostly attended by non-Roma, which is similar to the situation in Northern Croatia and Zagreb and its surrounding area.

162 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 236.35$ ; df = 6 ; p<.01.

163 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 289.70$ ; df = 22 ; p<.01.

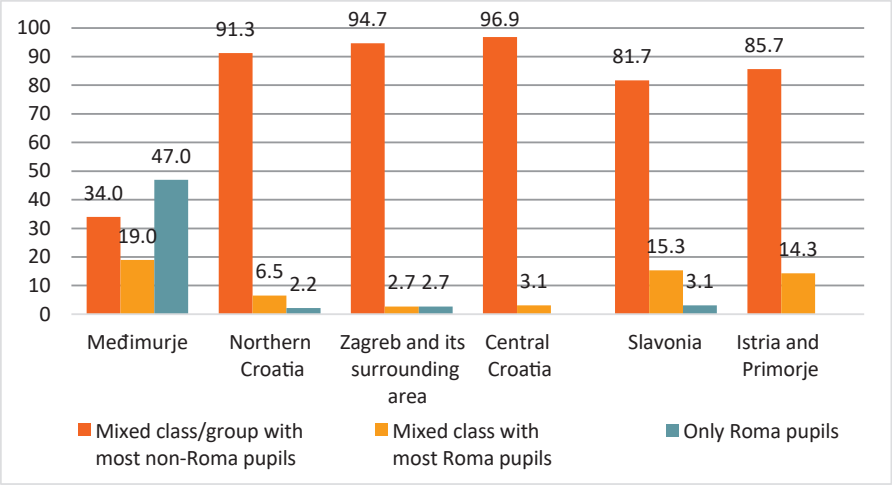


**FIGURE 70. Ethnic structure of the class or group by region [%]**[164]

Below is an illustrative quotation from the qualitative research which provides insights into some elements of ethnic segregation in the education system in Croatia.

*Roma children are not covered by a good program like the children of the majority population, for example, it would be good to include Roma children in music schools, recitals on some occasions, school day or whatever.*

Excerpt from an interview with a Roma representative

The second quotation clearly demonstrates the extent to which attending ethnically segregated classes hinders Roma pupils and pushes them even deeper into social marginalization and deprivation.

*We have one district school which is now ethnically completely pure because it is a settlement where the number of the rest of the population is decreasing, the Roma population is growing. In previous years, sometimes it happened that only two non-Roma students attended first to the fourth grade and then their parents asked for them to be allowed to attend classes in the central school, so the district school was then attended only by Roma children. This is, of course, unacceptable to them, but classes cannot be organized differently.*

Excerpt from an interview with a representative of relevant institutions

164 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ =273.44 ; df = 10 ; p<.01.

## Discrimination in education

Finally, given that we are analyzing the reasons for dropping out of school stated by RNM members, we provide illustrations of an important reason which is still prominent, although it is not among the highest ranked reasons for dropping out – discrimination based on ethnicity and/or material status.

*Nationality is not always a problem. Appearance is more of a problem, material status, social status. Apart from being bad on that basis, then if there is nothing else, then they will find this as well.*

Excerpt from an interview with a Roma representative

*They don't complete secondary school to a large extent... In secondary school, children are pulled out of school because they cannot tolerate discrimination from other children. They are provoked or harassed to such an extent that there are fights, I know that about a boy who went to[...] school and had to drop out – he wanted to be a car mechanic – because he could no longer endure the terror, so he fought and then dropped out.*

Excerpt from an interview with a Roma representative

## Subsidized transport

Education conditions which significantly correlate with the quality of education of the Roma, as it directly affects their ability to attend classes regularly, include subsidized transport,[165] with **52.5% or 533 RNM members[166] who had subsidized transport to an educational institution at the time of the research.** When looking at the locality type,[167] **the data speak in favor of an increase in the share of subsidized transport with the increase of the distance from a larger locality.** Specifically, in localities separated from a town or village in a separate location, 65.1% of the Roma have subsidized transport, which is similar to localities on the outskirts of a town or village [64.4%]. However, transport is subsidized in 38.4% of the localities where the Roma live dispersed among the majority population and in 16.5% of the localities within a town or village.

Figure 71 demonstrates unequal conditions for the access to educational institutions across different counties. It should be added that there are differences between counties due to their actual need for subsidized transport since in some areas the distance between the place of residence and the educational institution

165 N = 1016

166 The question included all respondents who were in school at the time of the research.

167 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ =97.92 ; df = 3 ; p<.01.

is such that it does not require the use of public transport, but the data presented here still indicate certain patterns. Zagreb County offers all respondents the possibility of subsidized transport, which is similar to Varaždin County and to a lesser extent to Sisak-Moslavina County. Nonetheless, in Istria and Primorje-Gorski Kotar County, more than eight-tenths of RNM members attending school do not have subsidized transport and we must reiterate that these two counties are among those in which primary school pupils have to cross more than 1 km to get to school, i.e. in Istria County, in 93.9% of cases this distance is more than 3 km.

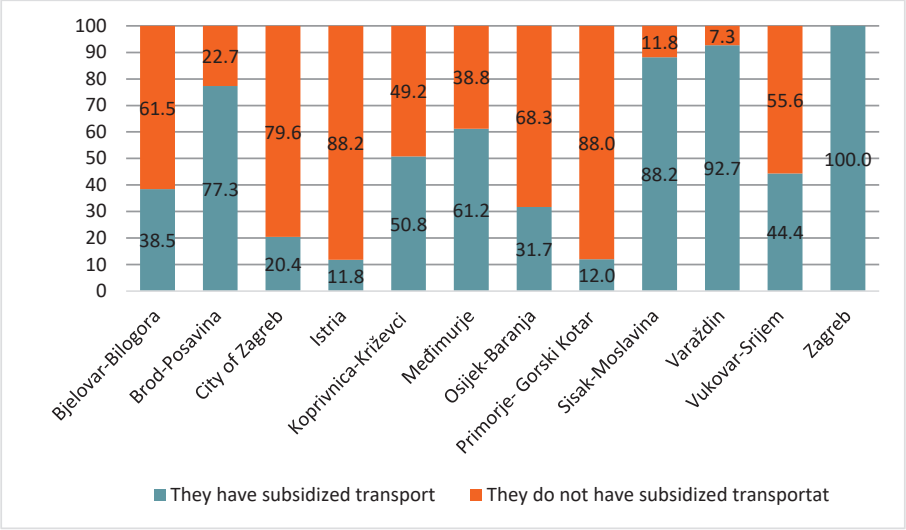


**FIGURE 71. Share of RNM members with subsidized transport to the educational institution by county (%)**[168]

The research results concerning the distribution of subsidized transport by county are partly reflected in the regional distribution of the share of Roma who have subsidized transport (Figure 72), with the Zagreb area significantly reducing the total share of the Zagreb region in subsidized transport, which means that most RNM members from the Zagreb area attending school do not have access to subsidized transport.

168 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 197.98$ ; df = 11 ; p<.01.

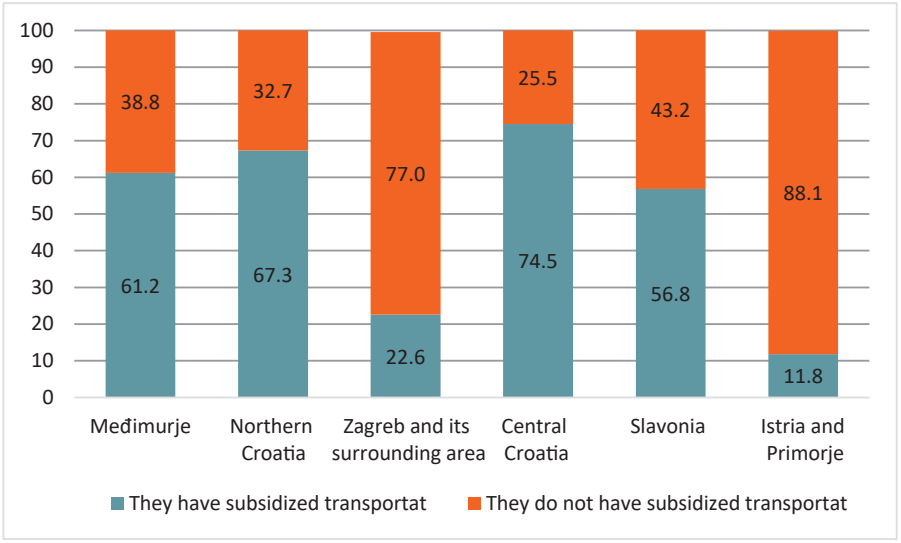


**FIGURE 72. Share of RNM members with subsidized transport to the educational institution by region [%][169]**

Central and Northern Croatia are among the regions which facilitate the access of RNM members to the educational institution, while **in Međimurje only 61.2% of RNM members have subsidized transport to the educational institution.**

## Scholarships for the education of RNM members

Scholarships during the entire education process, from primary to higher education, are a very important part of financial aid to children and young RNM members. *2018 report on the implementation of the National Roma Inclusion Strategy from 2013 to 2020* (Government of the Republic of Croatia, 2019: 8) states that in the SY 2018/2019 scholarships were provided for 652 secondary school pupils (354 M, 298 F), for which a total of 3,212,200.00 HRK was spent from the state budget in 2018.[170] According to our research results,[171] a total of **13.8% of RNM members[172] receive scholarships. In 77.3% of the cases the scholarships are provided by the state, in 16.8% by city or municipality and in 5.9% by another body. In primary school, 3.2% of the pupils included in the sample receive a scholarship.** Due to the insufficient number of respondents, no further analyses were conducted involving primary school pupils. **Among secondary school pupils,**

169 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 22.20$ ; df = 5 ; p<.01.

170 In 2017, scholarships were provided for 689 pupils (373 M, 316 F), and a total of 3,488,411.44 HRK was spent for that purpose.

171 On a sample of primary and secondary school pupils and students.

172 N=877

**there were 73.1% of scholarship recipients** and in further analyses, only regional differences have been found among scholarship recipients.[173] In the relative share, most secondary school pupils receive scholarships in Međimurje (34.8%), followed by Zagreb and its surrounding area (18.9%), Central Croatia (14.1%), Slavonia (13.0%), Northern Croatia (11.9%) and Istria and Primorje (7.6%). Scholarships are exclusively provided by the state in Bjelovar-Bilogora and Brod-Posavina County and the state is the dominant source of scholarships in Koprivnica-Križevci, Istria and Sisak-Moslavina County as well (Figure 73). The City of Zagreb is the only county where more than half of the scholarships for Roma secondary school pupils are provided by the city or municipality. In that respect, the City of Zagreb allocates 35% of the net amount of the average wage for pupils, 50% for students and 60% for postgraduate students.[174]


FIGURE 73. Source of scholarship by county (%)[175]

Regionally (Figure 74), **the state proves to be the main source of scholarships in Međimurje, Northern Croatia and Slavonia, while in Zagreb and its surrounding area, again, scholarships for Roma pupils are provided by local self-government units.** The largest shares of funding from "other sources" are found in Istria and Primorje (40.0%), whereas in Međimurje, Northern Croatia and Zagreb and its surrounding area, scholarships from other sources are not available. This implies that in these regions, potential donors should be made aware of the issue of edu-

173 Kruskal-Wallis test; $\chi^2$ =25.80 ; df = 5; p<.01.

174 Source: Scholarship of the City of Zagreb for pupils and students of the Roma national minority.

175 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 72.78 ; df = 16 ; p<.01.

cation of RNM members and the need for additional scholarships for Roma pupils. Indeed, the impact of the high rate of material deprivation of households of Roma pupils cannot be reduced only by financing formal education and there is certainly a need to also finance the participation of Roma pupils in additional programs, especially extracurricular ones, which could help children and young people to develop special talents or reduce the gap in relation to children and young people of the majority population regarding these programs.

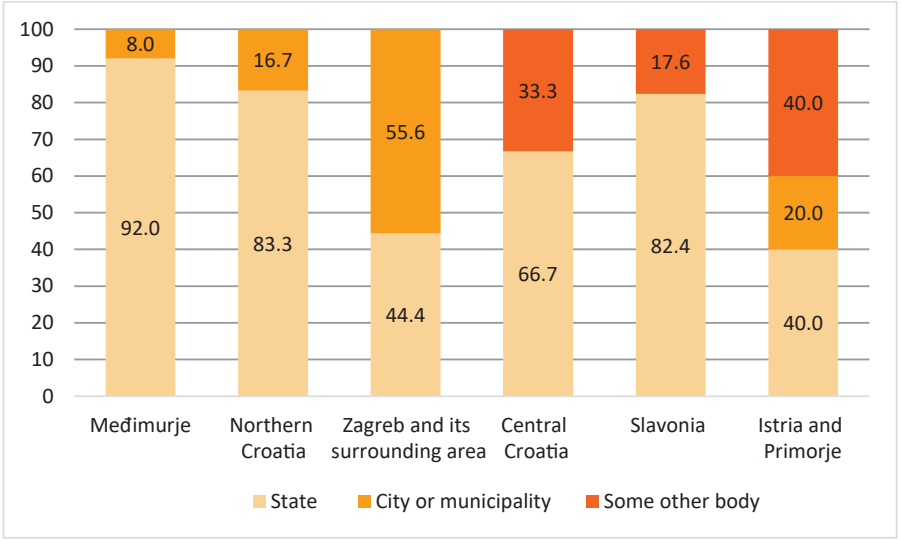


**FIGURE 74. Source of scholarship in relation to the regional distribution [%]**[176]

When looking at the locality type,[177] **the state is the source of scholarships in the case of 86.3% of localities separated from a town or village in a separate location, 88.2% of localities on the outskirts of a town or village, 57.1% of localities within a town or village and 63.3% of the cases where the Roma live dispersed among the majority population.** Data for funding provided by the city or municipality in relation to the above locality types are 7.8%, 11.8%, 5.9% and 58.8%. Scholarships from other sources in localities separated from a town or village in a separate location are provided in 5.9% of the cases, in localities on the outskirts of a village or town there have not been any such scholarships, in localities within a village or town there are 28.6% of them and in localities where the Roma live dispersed among the majority population they amount to 3.3%. We note that the state is more often the source of scholarships in communities which are more spatially segregated, whereas in the case of better spatial integration of

176 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 50.59$ ; df = 10 ; p<.01.

177 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 17.42$ ; df = 10 ; p<.01.

RNM members, the city or municipality and other donors have larger shares. This indicates the division of responsibilities between the state and local communities, as well as the capacity and willingness of cities and municipalities and other donors to provide scholarships for the education of RNM members.

## Participation in extracurricular activities

The quality of learning content and activities offered to RNM members and their integration into peer groups largely depend on their participation in extracurricular activities. It was established that **344 Roma pupils or 35.7% of the pupils included in the sample participate in extracurricular activities.**[178] **There were 640 pupils in primary schools who participated in these activities, and only 97 pupils in secondary schools.** When considering the material status,[179] **the majority of extracurricular activities were attended by pupils from households in the highest income class** (more than 4,500 HRK per month) – 26.3%, those in the 3,001–4,500 HRK category by 20.9% and in the range 1,501–3,000 HRK there were 27.0% of pupils. **Among pupils from households without any income, there were only 17 of pupils who participated in extracurricular activities (1.9%),** and 23.9% among those with an income of 1,000–1,500 HRK. This indisputably shows that in order to achieve better integration of Roma pupils and provide better opportunities for non-formal education and the acquisition of additional knowledge and skills, it is very important to open funding channels offering funding for programs beyond regular education.

Further analyses showed that the locality type correlated to a statistically significant extent with the number of Roma pupils participating in extracurricular activities, in the sense that pupils of this profile mostly appear in localities separated from a town or village in a separate location, which means that these pupils are most likely participating in extracurricular activities in segregated conditions (47.9% of pupils from localities separated from a town or village in a separate location), which certainly reduces the favorable impact which the participation in these activities could have in conditions that allow peer integration with non-Roma.[180] Roma who live dispersed among the majority population participate in extracurricular activities with 24.3%, those living in localities on the outskirts of a town or village with 18.9% and pupils living in localities within a town or village with 8.9%. **The largest number of Roma pupils participating in extracurricular activities is found in Međimurje (41.5%),** followed by Slavonia with 19.3%, Zagreb and surrounding area with 11.7%, Northern Croatia (10.7%), Central Croatia (9.9%) and Istria and Primorje with 6.9%.

178 N = 964

179 Kruskal-Wallis test; $\chi^2 = 14.53$ ; df = 4 ; p<.01.

180 Kruskal-Wallis test; $\chi^2 = 43.19$ ; df = 3 ; p<.01.

When looking at the ethnicity of pupils participating in extracurricular activities,[181] 18.6% of these activities are attended mostly by the Roma, 28.6% mostly by non-Roma, 52.8% by the Roma and non-Roma alike, which still indicates **the integration potential of participating in extracurricular activities.** Considering the material status of the household,[182] equal participation of the Roma and non-Roma in extracurricular activities decreases as the income rises. Pupils from 71.4% of households without any income and 41.1% of households with a monthly income higher than 4,500 HRK participate in extracurricular activities in classes mostly attended by non-Roma. In addition, the largest share of extracurricular activities in which only Roma participate is found in households with incomes higher than 4,500 HRK (43.8%), as opposed to all other income categories where it ranges from 25.2 to 28.6%. When looking at the counties, a noticeable segregation in extracurricular activities is found only in Međimurje, where 80.0% of participants in extracurricular activities are exclusively Roma, while in other counties this percentage is up to 10,[183] and the same deviation is also found among regions.[184] As regards the locality type,[185] we conclude that in localities separated from a town or village in a separate location, the largest share refers equally to the participation of the Roma and non-Roma in extracurricular activities (52.3%), which is similar to localities on the outskirts of a town or village (67.5%) and to localities where the Roma live dispersed among the majority population. However, in localities within a town or village, non-Roma are those who primarily participate in extracurricular activities (60.0%), which is explained by the fact that the majority of residents in these localities are non-Roma.

## Extended stay

Extended stay is the next analyzed element of the quality of programs offered to Roma pupils,[186] with **25.4% of them (199 pupils) participating in extended school stays. Pupils from households without any income participate in extended stay the least** (1.3%), followed by similar shares of pupils from households from other income categories, starting from 23.8% of pupils from households whose income is lower than 1,500 HRK, to 25.4 % of pupils in the highest analyzed category (more than 4,500 HRK per month).[187] As many as 50.3% of pupils participating in extended stays come from localities separated from a town or village in a separate location, 22.8% come from localities where the Roma live dispersed among the majority population, 19.1% from localities on the outskirts of a town or village and 7.8% from

181 N = 377
182 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 20.60 ; df = 8 ; p<.01.
183 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 94.71 ; df = 20 ; p<.01.
184 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 50.36 ; df = 10 ; p<.01.
185 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 43.14 ; df = 6 ; p<.01.
186 N = 783
187 Kruskal-Wallis test, $\chi^2$ = 1431 ; df = 4 ; p<.01.

localities within a town or village.[188] This distribution undoubtedly leads to only one clear conclusion – **a larger number of Roma participate in the extended stay in localities where a larger number of RNM members live.**

## Education under special and individualized programs

The analysis of participation in extended stay builds up on data on participation in education under special programs ranging from the most common form – adapted program in primary school, to the least represented one – accommodation in dormitories, which amounts to only 0.1% of the sample of young people [aged 15–29] [Figure 75]. Eurydice data[189] on the inclusion of pupils with special needs into mainstream education show that there were 5.6% pupils with disabilities participating in primary education and a total of 4.5% pupils with disabilities who were integrated into the regular program. As can be seen from the presented graphical representation, at the level of primary school pupils, the share is two times smaller than in the case of RNM pupils. In this connection, it is important to note that these are mostly children aged up to 14, indicating that this is a more recent trend. Hopefully, it will decline wherever possible and RNM children will be integrated in the education system and regular programs to a greater extent.

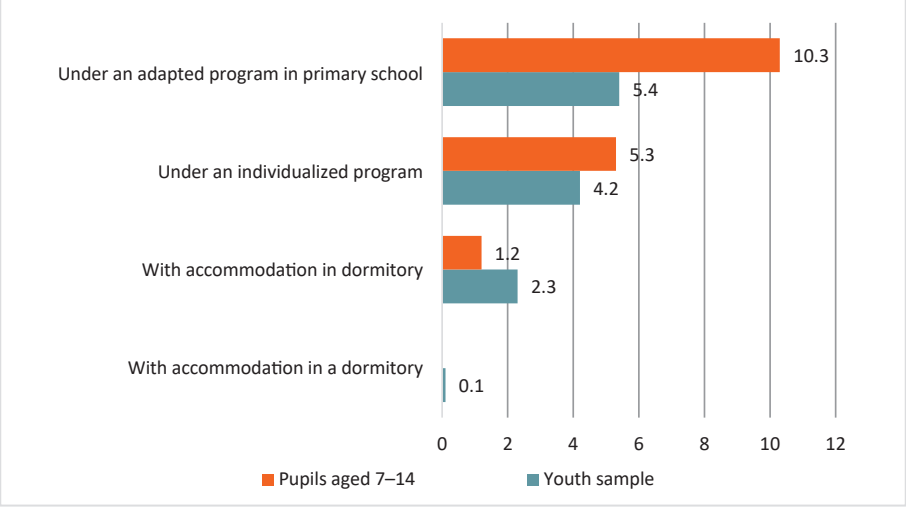


FIGURE 75. Children participating in education under special programs [%][190]

**Education under special programs in primary school is one of the weakest points of primary education of RNM members since children are often placed**

188 Kruskal-Wallis test, $\chi^2 = 47.95$ ; df = 3 ; p<.01.

189 Special Education Needs Provision within Mainstream Education https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/special-education-needs-provision-within-mainstream-education-11_en

190 N = 799

**in these programs not because they have reduced psychophysical abilities but because of their poorer command of the Croatian language,** which is an issue that should be more actively dealt with in preschool education in order for the child to meet all the conditions for equal inclusion in the teaching process with the majority of their peers on the first day of primary education.

The quotation from an interview during focus groups illustrates the challenges faced by Roma children and teachers in schools attended by the Roma.

> *The problem is that their parents can't help them much because they don't know the Croatian language well enough, let alone a foreign language or a difficult subject, so that they can help them to pass it.*
>
> Excerpt from a focus group interview with representatives of relevant institutions

Regionally,[191] most Roma pupils participate in individualized programs in Northern Croatia (27.8%), while in Istria and Primorje such pupils have not even been recorded. In Međimurje and Slavonia there are 1.5% of them, in Central Croatia 4.2% and in Zagreb and its surrounding area 4.8%. The regional distribution of Roma who are being educated under adapted programs in primary school provides a slightly different picture.[192] Specifically, **19.6% of Roma pupils in Northern Croatia are being educated under the adapted program, in Istria and Primorje there are 18.5% of them, 11.8% in Slavonia, 8.0% in Međimurje, 7.1% in Zagreb and its surrounding area and 2.8% in Central Croatia.**

If the child's participation in the adapted program is based only on their lack of command of the Croatian language, the participation therein can have long-term negative consequences on the child's development and school performance, and consequently their social status as an adult. Therefore, the efforts of individual teachers to bring teaching under regular school programs in the initial phase closer to Roma pupils should be greatly appreciated and encouraged. One possible way of achieving this is described in the quotation below.

> *There's been a change, for example, from the experience of our teachers who have been working with Roma children since the first grade. What has changed is that they put a lot of their effort and work into dealing with Roma children, primarily because they had to learn to communicate with them. In some schools, the teachers made picture dictionaries themselves, they came up with some, on their own, they came up with some solutions on their own initiative to make it easier for them to work with those children.*
>
> Excerpt from an interview with a representative of relevant institutions

191 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 115.86$ ; df = 5 ; p<.01

192 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 20.55$ ; df = 5 ; p<.01.

## Roma teaching assistants

**When asked if the child has or had a Roma helper/assistant in the class, 72.8% of respondents answered in the negative, 26.4% answered in the affirmative and 0.7% said that they did not know.**[193] The locality type proved to be statistically significant in relation to the frequency of including teaching assistants in the classes attended by RNM members.[194] In localities separated from a town or village in a separate location, 42.1% of assistants were reported, in localities within a town or village there were 20.6%, in localities on the outskirts of a town or village 18.8% and in localities where the Roma live dispersed among the majority population 11.8%. On the other hand, the regional distribution[195] indicates the highest inclusion of assistants in classes in Međimurje (48.2%), Slavonia (30.0%) and Northern Croatia (21.6%), while Central Croatia had 12.7% and Zagreb and its surrounding area only 6.2%, almost the same as Istria and Primorje (6.1%).

**When assessing the quality of work of Roma teaching assistants, the majority of respondents highly valued the favorable impact on mastering the school program (70.8%), improving the child's communication skills (70.2%), the child's self-esteem (67.9%) and recognizing the child's talents and creativity (60.4%)** (Figure 76).

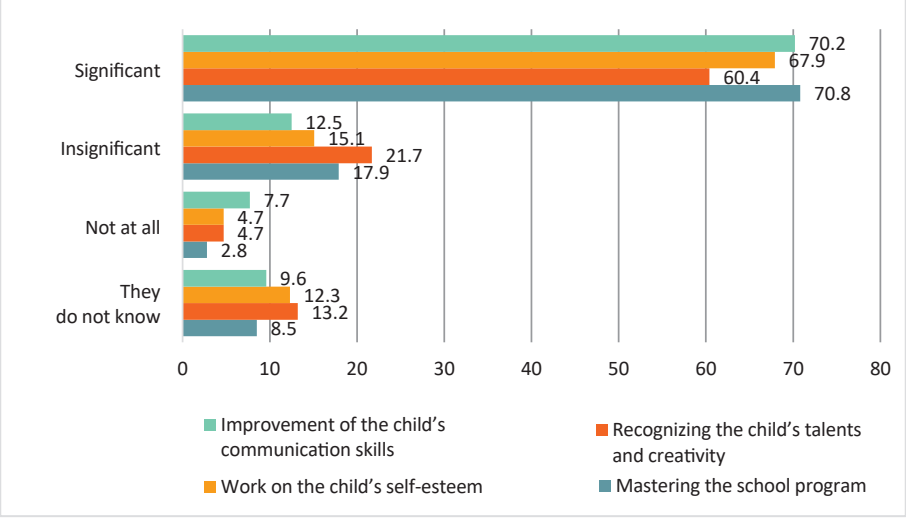


FIGURE 76. Assessment of the quality of work of Roma assistant in some areas of child development (%)[196]

193 N = 405

194 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ =37.96 ; df = 3 ; p<.01.

195 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 62.72 ; df = 5 ; p<.01.

196 N = 104-106

Given the number of answers and their distribution, with the options "insignificant" and "I don't know" represented in a small number of answers related tot he work of Roma assistants, further processing included only the child's communication skills. However, no differences in the characteristics of the respondents were recorded in this area either.

**When asked if they think that someone else would better fulfill the role of teaching assistants in classes attended by Roma children,[197] 68.0% answered that no one else could be better at assisting Roma children, 12.1% believe that such a person exists and 19.1% do not know.** Among the respondents who think that someone else would be a better teaching assistant than the current one, most respondents are from Northern Croatia (19.2%), Međimurje (17.0%) and Istria and Primorje (15.4%), while only 10.4% of the Roma from Zagreb and it surrounding area, 3.8% from Central Croatia and 3.3% from Slavonia agree with this statement.[198] **Specific suggestions on who would better perform the role of Roma assistants were provided in only 25 of valid individual answers, 8 of which referred to the Roma and 17 to non-Roma.** We end this subchapter with a very indicative quotation that suggests that parents, due to the insufficient number of Roma teaching assistants, are literally left on their own in working with children.

> *And Roma assistants, there are simply not enough of them, especially not the ones that have to be paid. Volunteers are hard to find. The school again doesn't have enough funds to pay someone to translate... It's more up to the parents.*
>
> Excerpt from a focus group interview with representatives of relevant institutions

197 N = 281

198 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 49.12$ ; df = 10 ; p<.01.

## 3.6. Attitudes, norms and values of the Roma population regarding education

The first component which we will analyze regarding the views of Roma population towards education in this subchapter – attitudes – can be defined as views on a certain topic (education), manifested through three elements – the cognitive element (affects how knowledge is acquired and how one learns about a certain topic), the emotional element (the reaction to a certain topic) and the action element (determines whether an action will be initiated in relation to the topic and what kind of action it is going to be). Norms, on the other hand, are defined as written or unwritten rules for how we treat certain topics and areas, while values are standards of social behavior which individuals express on the grounds of belonging to a particular community. We analyzed the first of the elements listed here – attitudes – by asking about the assessment of the effectiveness of the school program when it comes to the development of knowledge and skills in primary school pupils (Figure 77).

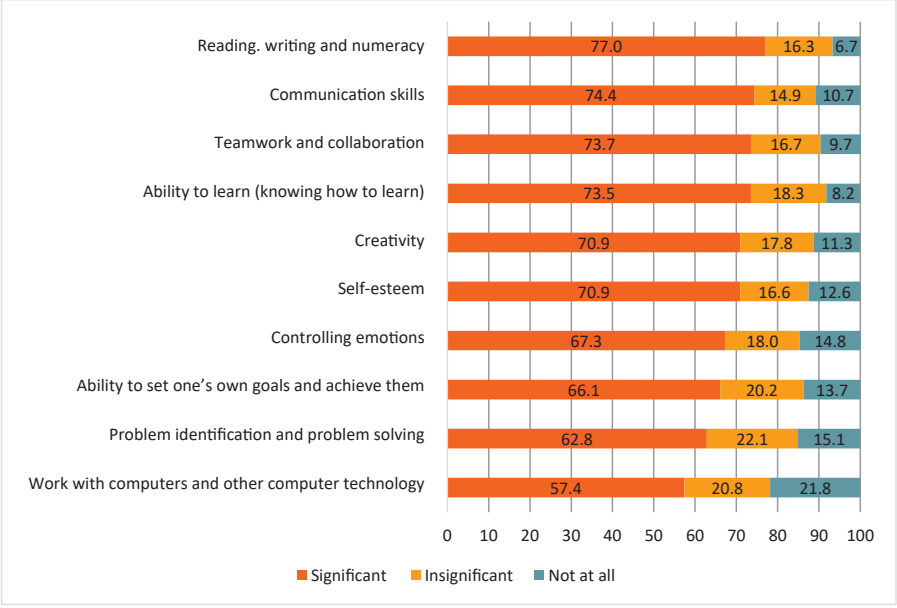


FIGURE 77. Assessment of the effectiveness of the school program regarding the development of child's knowledge and skills (%)

**RNM members believe that the school program largely develops basic skills in the field of literacy – reading, writing and numeracy, as well as transferable skills – communication skills and teamwork and collaboration.**

Lowest ranked in the field of skills development is working with computers and other computer technology, where just over a half of the respondents rated the school program as significantly contributing to their development.

The locality type influenced the assessment of the impact of the school program on computer technology skills in such a way that this area is most valued by respondents living dispersed among the majority population (67.5%), while it is least appreciated by those living in localities within a town or village (38.1%), where we cannot establish a clear pattern and interpret it. RNM members who live in localities separated from a town or village in a separate location and those who live in localities on the outskirts of a town or village have a similar attitude towards this learning content (56.0% and 51.0% rated it as "significant"). There is a similar problem with the interpretation of results when it comes to interpreting data on the impact of the school program on the self-esteem. Its contribution to child development is most valued by RNM members who live in localities separated from a town or village in a separate location (75.6%) and those who live dispersed among the majority population (70.6%), while it is equally assessed by 69.2% of Roma living in localities on the outskirts of a town or village and 45.0% of those living in localities within a town or village.

The regions are statistically significantly related to as many as nine observed areas of the development of pupils (Table 12), with work on controlling emotions, self-esteem and creativity being most valued in Northern Croatia and least in Istria and Primorje. In the relatively largest share in relation to RNM members from other counties, respondents from Northern Croatia recognized the significant progress in their children in all observed areas, except when it comes to problem identification and problem solving, and in this area the largest share of the highest scores were given by Roma from Međimurje. Based on this finding, **we can conclude that respondents from Northern Croatia, when compared to other regions, especially Roma from Istria and Primorje, are more satisfied with the effects of their children's participation in formal education than RNM members from other regions.**

**TABLE 12. What knowledge and skills does the school program develop in children by region (answer: significant) [%]**[199]

| | Međimurje | Northern Croatia | Zagreb and its surrounding area | Central Croatia | Slavonia | Istria and Primorje |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reading, writing, numeracy | 83.0 | 96.7 | 82.0 | 54.7 | 79.5 | 58.3 |
| Work with computers and other computer technology | 61.4 | 70.4 | 70.5 | 47.2 | 47.4 | 30.4 |
| Communication skills | 82.9 | 86.7 | 86.7 | 55.6 | 68.6 | 41.7 |
| Teamwork and collaboration | 81.6 | 89.7 | 78.9 | 51.9 | 76.3 | 54.2 |
| The ability to set one's own goals and achieve them | 75.6 | 76.2 | 70.7 | 51.0 | 62.9 | 45.5 |
| Problem identification and problem solving | 73.1 | 65.2 | 71.2 | 54.0 | 52.8 | 33.3 |
| Creativity | 82.4 | 82.6 | 73.2 | 54.9 | 63.9 | 50.0 |
| Self-esteem | 83.8 | 91.7 | 66.1 | 59.3 | 63.2 | 40.9 |
| Controlling emotions | 77.9 | 82.6 | 67.2 | 61.1 | 57.1 | 31.6 |

The employment status[200] relates to the evaluation of the acquisition of knowledge and skills in the field of reading, writing and numeracy in such a way that this field of teaching is mostly valued by non-active persons who take care of the household (81.9%), employed RNM members (77.8%) and the unemployed (76.0%), while pupils and students occur in only 45.5% of cases of high evaluation scores.

**It is encouraging that more than nine-tenths of parents surveyed stated they wanted their children to continue their education after primary school.** In this regard, 0.9% of respondents are unsure of their preferences, 4.9% of Roma parents want it partly and 3.4% of parents strongly oppose the continuation of their

199 Reading, writing and numeracy: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 69.77$ ; df = 10 ; p<.01; work with computers and other computer technology: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 44.10$ ; df = 10 ; p<.01; communication skills: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 67.52$ ; df = 10 ; p<.01; teamwork and collaboration: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 48.19$ ; df = 10 ; p<.01; ability to set one's own goals and achieve them: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 39.43$ ; df = 10 ; p<.01; problem identification and problem solving: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 45.44$ ; df = 10 ; p<.01; self-esteem: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 51.58$ ; df = 10 ; p<.01; creativity: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 34.80$ ; df = 10 ; p<.01; controlling emotions: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 47.53$ ; df = 10 ; p<.01.

200 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 17.56$ ; df = 6 ; p<.01.

children's education. Parents agree to a relatively high extent when it comes to preferences for the continuation of their children's education and and it is not possible to conduct further processing due to the insufficient number of respondents who do not share an affirmative attitude.

The next major subtopic in this subchapter refers to the norms of the Roma population related to education and marriage [Figure 78].[201] From a scale of 19 statements used to examine the norms, we singled out 11 norms, and in the further analysis we included five norms and values which directly relate to children and education. **In the Roma population, the most accepted norm is that young people enroll in universities and the one regarding divorce in case of violence or adultery, whereas RNM members least accept the norm of arranging marriage for their son or daughter.**

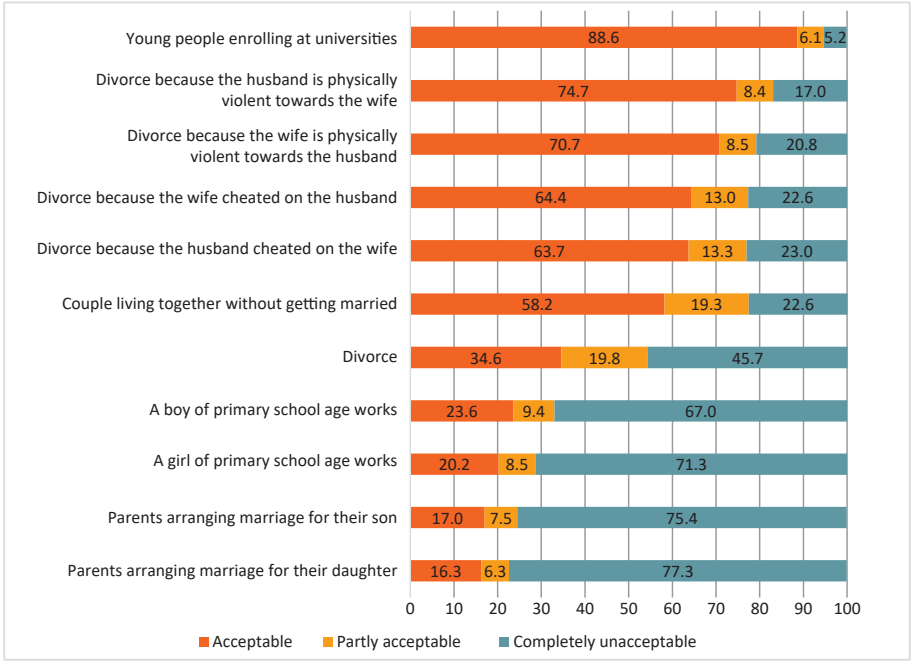


**FIGURE 78. Distribution of support of particular norms and values (%)**

Believing in particular norms related to education and marriage by the employment status of the respondents[202] leads to statistically significant differences in relation to the norm that it is acceptable for a girl of primary school age to work and that it is acceptable for parents to arrange marriage for their daughter.

201 N = 765

202 A girl of primary school age works: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 23.95$ ; df = 8 ; p<.01; Parents arranging marriage for their daughter: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 23.64$ ; df = 8 ; p<.01.

32.6% of employed respondents claim that it is acceptable for a girl of primary school age to work and 28.6% that it is acceptable for parents to arrange marriage for their daughter, while these shares are two times lower for unemployed Roma (15.9% and 13.8%). 28.2% of non-active respondents who take care of the household believe that it is acceptable for a girl of primary school age to work and 16.4% that it is acceptable for parents to arrange marriage for their daughter. These norms are shared by 18.2% and 18.8% of other non-active RNM members. It goes without saying that these norms are harmful for the current and future educational, social and economic status of young Roma women. It is all the more unexpected that a not so insignificant number of pupils and students share these norms. Specifically, 6.7% of pupils and students think that it is acceptable for a girl of primary school age to work and in this context, a very high 20.0% of young Roma who are still in education think that it is acceptable for parents to arrange marriage for their daughter. This is yet another finding which should act as an incentive for comprehensive awareness-raising actions aimed at the Roma and concerning the importance of children's rights and education, as well as the right of Roma girls to determine their own personal and professional path.

As regards the attitude towards the three examined norms, the Roma population differs according to the locality type (Figure 79). **The first two norms presented – that a boy and a girl of primary school age work – are most prevalent in localities separated from a town or village in a separate location and the least in the case of Roma living dispersed among the majority population.**

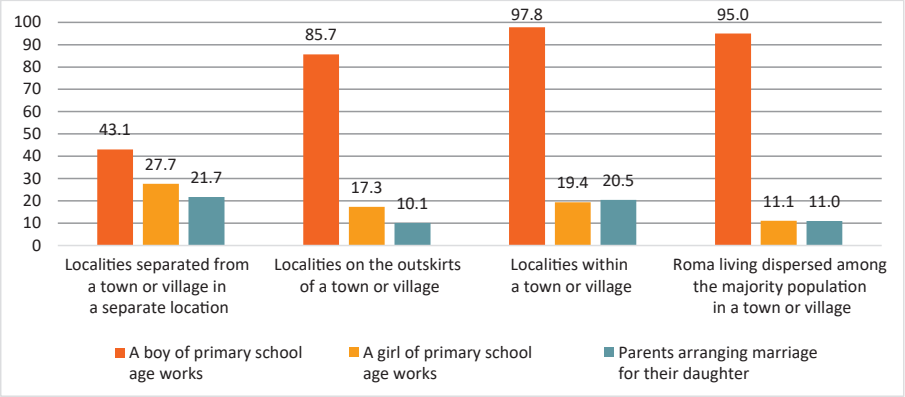


**FIGURE 79. Norms of the Roma population regarding education and marriage by locality type (%)**[203]

203 A boy of primary school age works: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 25.81$ ; df = 6 ; p<.01; a girl of primary school age works: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 36.61$ ; df = 6 ; p<.01; parents arranging marriage for their daughter: chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 21.99$ ; df = 6 ; p<.01.

**The distribution of the norm on the acceptance of child labor by locality types also supports the finding on the favorable impact of spatial desegragation of the Roma population.** However, when it comes to the norm that it is acceptable for parents to arrange marriage for their daughter, the conclusion is not so simple. Specifically, this norm is mostly shared by Roma who live in localities separated from a town or village in a separate location and those who live in localities within a town or village, and the least by RNM members who live on the outskirts of a town or village and those who live dispersed among the majority population.

Only the region is statistically significantly related to the differences between the RNM members when it comes to the norms they share regarding education and children, and this is the case with five norms (Figure 80).

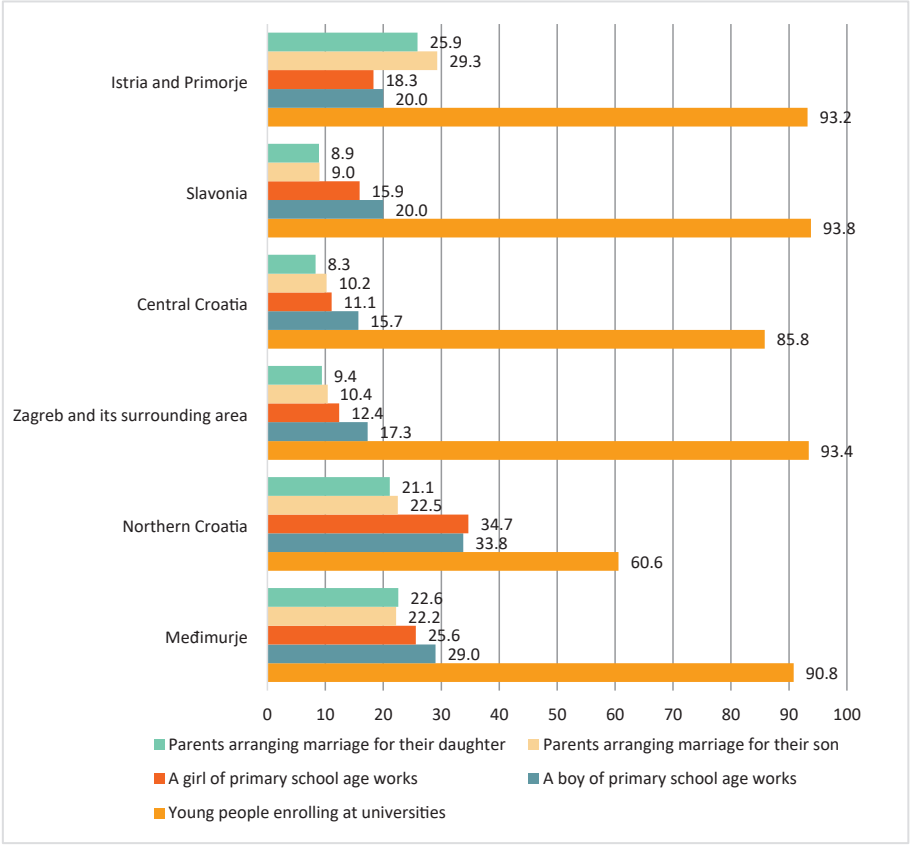


**FIGURE 80. Norms of the Roma population regarding education and marriage by region (%)**[204]

204 Young people enrolling at universities: chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 132.23; df = 10 ; p<.01; a boy of primary school age works: chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 60.68 ; df = 10 ; p<.01; a girl of primary school age works: chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 63.35 ; df = 10 ; p<.01; parents arranging marriage for their son: chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 85.30 ; df = 10 ; p<.01; parents arranging marriage for their daughter: chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 80.65 ; df = 10 ; p<.01.

Among the Roma population, the most accepted norm is that young people enroll at universities, mostly in Slavonia, Istria and Primorje and Zagreb and its surrounding area (more than 90% each). Somewhat surprising is the finding that the relatively largest share in the norm stating that it is acceptable for parents to arrange marriage for their children is found in Istria and Primorje, whereas the lowest share is in Slavonia, Central Croatia and Zagreb and its surrounding area. Northern Croatia is at the top regarding the two analyzed norms which violate the rights of children and are detrimental to their development – that it is acceptable for girls and boys of primary school age to work. After such dismal findings, we finally come to the finding on the evaluation of education, i.e. the level of importance which the Roma assign to education.[205] **More than three-quarters of RNM members (75.2%) stated that their children's education was extremely important to them, 15.0% answered that education was mostly important to them, and 6.9% of the respondents were not sure how they valued their child's education.** It is optimistic to find that "only" 1.0% of parents claim that the education of their children is mostly not important to them and that 1.8% believe that this component of their children's development is not important to them at all. Given the high agreement of the respondents on the importance of education, it was not possible to carry out further statistical analyses in terms of distinguishing between the characteristics of the respondents and the evaluation of education. This finding of broad support for the value of education is a moment that decision-makers should use to raise awareness of the importance of education both in Roma communities as well as among decision-makers and actions at the local and regional levels.

205 N = 788

# 4. Employment

# 4. Employment

## 4.1. Insights into the employment status and work activities of the Roma

Work and employment are the basic mechanisms of modern society through which people achieve economic prosperity, social integration and psychosocial well-being. Consequently, work is listed as a fundamental citizen's right in democratic countries, while the prevention of discrimination in the workplace and employment discrimination are regulated by law. *The Constitution of the Republic of Croatia* guarantees the right to work, freedom of choice and equal access to employment,[206] while *the Anti-Discrimination Act* applies in particular to work, employment and working conditions.[207] The EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020 is the first EU initiative aimed at the Roma which includes a monitoring mechanism (EC, 2018). Its main objectives include combating socioeconomic exclusion and discrimination against the Roma by promoting equal access to education, employment, health services and housing.

The importance of monitoring the employment status and economic activities of the population is generally accepted, and the share of unemployed and employed adults in the population is an indicator of social well-being and economic prosperity. Concurrently, the unemployment rate and the employment rate of the population are monitored at different levels,[208] and a distinction should be made between the survey data and the registered data regarding both unemployement and employment.[209] This publication is related to the survey data on the employment status of the Roma in the Republic of Croatia.

206 Official Gazette 85/10 (55)

207 Official Gazette 85/08, 112/12, Art.8(1)

208 The unemployment rate is the share of unemployed persons in the working age population, while the employment rate is the share of employed persons in the working age population. Unemployment and employment rates are correlated and are not fully complementary measures – the decline in unemployment does not necessarily lead to an increase in employment. For example, the unemployment rate can decrease due to emigration or giving up on job search. This means that the decline in unemployment is not aways an indication of positive social trends, and social policy should be based on both data – the unemployment and employment of community members.

209 Since 1995, Croatia has been conducting a workforce survey (Mrnjavac, 1996), where the data are not based solely on the registered unemployment data of the Croatian Employment Service (CES) or the registered employment data of the Pension Insurance System and the Ministry of Labor. The survey unemployment rate includes both persons who have given up on their job search (the so-called discouraged workforce) and socially excluded persons. The survey employment rate includes undeclared work and economic activities. Both rates do not have to match the registered data, and the differences are particularly evident in times of economic crisis, in economically less developed countries, and in socially excluded communities. The analysis of survey data is crucial in social policy planning.

The chapter begins with general data on the unemployment and employment rate of the Roma in Croatia and the characteristics of paid work activities that include persons of Roma nationality. We were interested in the survey employment and unemployment rates in that ethnic community, the extent to which the Roma are involved in paid work, and the kind of jobs that they perform in terms of content and working status. We interpret the results on the basis of their absolute values,[210] but also in comparison with comparable data collected on the general population in Croatia[211] and data on the employment status of the Roma in European Union countries.[212] We evaluate the findings in the broader context of theories on the psychosocial significance of work, the causes and consequences of unemployment.[213] Our conclusions on the importance of Roma integration in the labor market are based on these theories. We use the results of research on macroeconomic trends in the Republic of Croatia and their repercussions on the labor market for social recommendations and predictions.

At the start, we emphasize our distinction between declared and undeclared work, not only because of their different status, but also their different psychosocial significance for the integration of the individual into society. As we will soon describe, Roma work is primarily characterized by undeclared and precarious jobs typical of socially excluded individuals and communities.

## Survey unemployment and employment rates

The employment status of RNM members clearly illustrates the social exclusion of this ethnic community. According to the survey results, **the survey unemployment rate is 43.3%.** This means that 43.3% of survey participants aged 15 to 65 declared themselves as unemployed. In the same period, the survey unemployment rate of the general population of the same age range in Croatia was 11.2% [CBS, 2018]. When we compare the percentages of employed RNM members with data from the general population, the differences are even more substantial. Only **8.1% of persons are employed** in paid full-time work, while the same survey employment rate in the general population is 45.8% [CBS, 2017].

210 We use relative frequencies [%] and average values – arithmetic mean [AM] and standard deviation [SD].

211 We use data from the Croatian Bureau of Statistics and the Croatian Employment Service.

212 We use the results of the EU MIDIS-FRA survey.

213 We rely primarily on the latent deprivation model [Jahoda, 1982; 1997], conservation of resources theory [Hobfoll, 1989; 2001] and the model of social exclusion that puts unemployment and poverty at the heart of the process of social isolation [Gallie 1999; Gallie, Paugam and Jacobs 2003; Šućur, 2004; Švero, Galešić and Maslić Seršić, 2004].

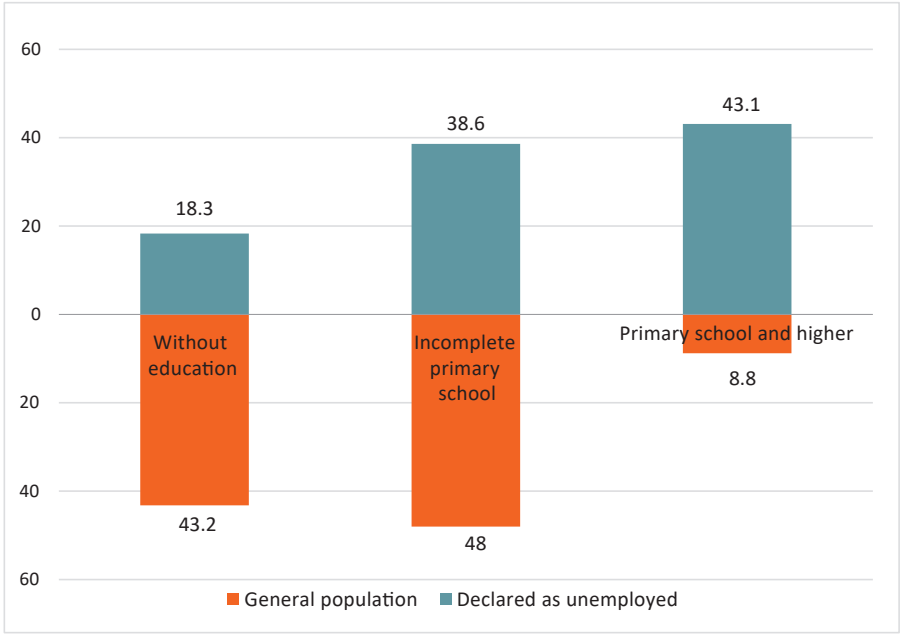


**FIGURE 81. Relative share of Roma of different levels of education in the total sample and among those who declare themselves as unemployed (%)**

It is interesting to note that the status of an unemployed person is more often chosen by men and more educated Roma. Although there was an equal number of male and female adults up to 65 years of age (49.9% of men and 50.1% of women) in the examined sample, there are significantly more men among the unemployed – 63%. Furthermore, the unemployment status is more often chosen by more educated persons (Figure 81). Even though 43.2% of the surveyed adults do not have any formal education (they are "without education"), only 18.3% of them declared themselves as unemployed. Although only 8.8% of adult Roma completed primary school or higher education, they make 43.1% of the unemployed.[214] Since the survey employment rate of the Roma is very low, the gender and educational structure of the survey unemployment indicates a greater social exclusion of women and uneducated persons. They are less likely to define themselves in terms of employment status and are likely to be excluded from the labor market.

214 Age is unrelated to employment status, so is the type of settlement (segregation and remoteness of settlements in relation to housing integrated with the majority population). Persons over the age of 55 declare themselves as unemployed to a much lesser extent, while the differences between young and middle-aged persons are insignificant.

*The most influential theory that links people's psychosocial well-being to their employment status is the **theory of latent deprivation** (Jahoda, 1982). The theory describes the latent functions of employment which cannot be replaced in the modern society, not even with work activities. According to this theory, employed persons, unlike unemployed or non-active persons: (1) have a set **time structure** on a daily, weekly and annual basis, which allows them to plan activities and coordinate with others; (2) have the opportunity to experience their own purpose through the role assigned to them by society in the realization of **collective purpose**, which keeps them from experiencing their own meaninglessness and worthlessness; (3) enter into **social contacts** that are not related to their family or community, thus broadening their own social and cultural horizons and building social capital; (4) are able to define their **status in society,** which encourages a sense of belonging and self-esteem; (5) are forced into **regular activity** that preserves work potentials and prevents passive spending of time. These employment functions are called latent because they are indirect and incidental as opposed to the manifest, financial function of employment.*

Even though the Roma ethnic community is characterized by a high rate of poverty and social exclusion in all European countries, the position of the Roma in Croatia is extremely unfavorable. *EU-MIDIS II* research has shown that the average survey employment rate of Roma aged 20 to 64 in the European Union is 30%, with an average survey employment rate of the general population of 70% (FRA, 2016). Although these data clearly demonstrate the unfavorable position of the Roma in the European labor market, the employment rate of Roma living in Croatia can be considered extremely low. It is only partly the result of the low employment rate of the general population, that is still not reaching 50%, although the unemployment rate is declining, currently standing at less than 6% (CES, January 2020).

According to the UNDP, the World Bank and the European Commission survey conducted in the countries of Central, Eastern and Southern Europe in 2011, the survey unemployment of the Roma in the Republic of Croatia was higher than average. The survey included people aged 15 to 64 who are willing and able to work, with the results based on comparison between the majority population and Roma populations in specific regions. The survey unemployment of the Roma in Croatia was 59%, while the comparable majority population unemployment was 20%. The average unemployment of the Roma in the countries of Central, Eastern and Southern Europe was 41%, while the unemployment of the majority population reached 17%. The differences in the unemployment rate between the Roma and non-Roma population cannot be explained only by the difference in the education level, because it is on average significantly lower in the Roma population in all countries (O'Higgins, 2012).

Until March 2020, the correlation between supply and demand for jobs in Croatia was no longer so unfavorable for job seekers, and for the first time there was a considerable shortage of workforce, especially in the real sector and tourism. Was this an opportunity for better integration of the Roma into the labor market, and therefore into Croatian society? It probably was. In fact, we can expect that the labor market in Croatia will become dynamic and more open, which will be a favorable context for the integration of discriminated groups. Nevertheless, this integration should be encouraged and supported by active social policy measures, with a particular focus on employer education, preparing the Roma for active job search and creating an inclusive social climate. However, economic growth provides an opportunity, but not a guarantee, for a large-scale integration of the Roma into the labor market. International research, in which Croatia participated, shows that there was no significant progress in Roma employment between 2004 and 2011, even though most countries recorded economic growth and recovery from the recession (O'Higgins, 2011). **According to the FRA (2018), Croatia recorded a decline in the Roma employment rate between 2011 and 2016. In 2016, only 8% of persons declared involvement in paid work as their primary status (the same survey employment rate as in our survey), while in 2011 it was 14%.**

Unfavorable economic conditions – conditions in which the majority of the population also experiences widespread insecurity and job loss, as with the COVID-19 pandemic, are particularly unfavorable for discriminated and marginalized groups. Therefore, special attention should be paid to the opportunities of the Roma in the labor market in the Republic of Croatia in the new circumstances. It is safe to assume that in the current moment, their position is even more unfavorable as they have fewer job opportunities than they did before this pandemic-triggered crisis. Social policy measures and social solidarity are especially necessary today.

*When a person is stopped outside the social processes and structures of the community, they find themselves in a situation of social exclusion. Social exclusion is commonly associated with poverty, which can be viewed both as a cause and as a consequence of social exclusion. Paradoxically, socially excluded individuals and groups find themselves outside the system which simultaneously determines their status. That makes the access to the labor market extremely difficult for the socially excluded persons because the success of their employment does not depend on their work potential or motivation to the extent it does to those who are not socially excluded. Socially excluded persons seek employment outside the social system, with a tendency to solve the economic situation mainly through undeclared low-status jobs with the primary goal of short-term solutions to the financial and material deprivation in which they find themselves. Research shows that society needs to play a*

*particularly active role to achieve successful employment and integration of socially excluded members (Gerxhani and Kosyakova, 2020; Gómez-Torres, Santero and Flores, 2019). A moving and open labor market together with the economic growth are favorable social circumstances for the integration of marginalized persons into the labor market.*

## Work activity

The low survey employment rate does not provide a realistic picture of the work activity of Roma residents in the Republic of Croatia. When we asked our respondents, "Have you done any paid work (paid in cash or in kind) during the past week?", 20% of adults under the age of 65 gave an affirmative answer. **Less than half of the respondents, i.e. 43.9% of them state that they never do paid work.** There are very few full-time employees, not even 7% (6.9%). A small number of persons state that they have a temporary job (6%) or that they do seasonal jobs (7.8%). The largest number state that they work occasional jobs (23.5%) and this form of work is the most widespread form of Roma work in the Republic of Croatia (Figure 83). Only 39.3% of persons who work permanently/temporarily/seasonally or occasionally have signed a written employment contract, which means that they have or have had the status of an employed person. If we look at the total sample of adults up to 65 years of age, it amounts to 16.4%. We can include persons who sometimes signed an employment contract with an employer (2.2%) and conclude that **less than 19% of adult Roma have experience of employment status as an employed person at all** (Table 13).

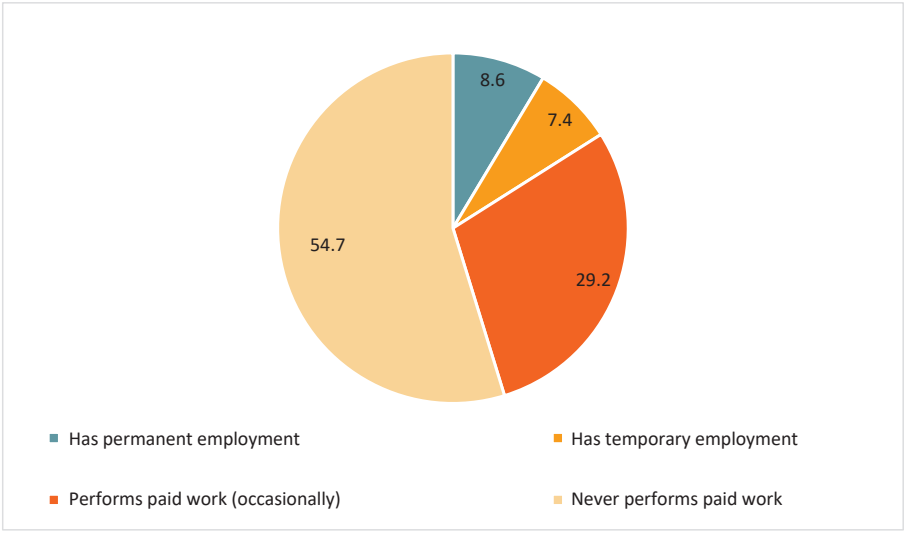


FIGURE 82. Representation of persons by performing paid work (%)

**TABLE 13. Representation of written employment contracts [%]**

| Did you sign a written contract with the employer you worked for? | [%] |
|---|---|
| No | 55.3 |
| Yes | 39.3 |
| With some employers I did, with some I did not | 5.3 |

*Note: applies to all types of jobs – permanent/temporary/seasonal/occasional*

We can conclude that about half of the adult RNM members under the age of 65 are at least intermittently active, mostly performing jobs that are both undeclared and occasional. This type of paid work does not meet two major human needs – security and social identity. Persons who perform occasional jobs are in perpetual uncertainty about whether they will be able to find a job and how long they will be able to stay at work. This experience of work uncertainty prevents long-term planning and creates feelings of anxiety [De Witte, 2005]. Despite having an economic function, performing undeclared work does not contribute to social inclusion [Šverko et al., 2008]. As we will describe in detail later, the work activities of the Roma do not enable the attainment of psychological, social and material resources, but are associated with the experience of a constant threat of their loss [Hobfoll, 2001; 1989].

*...I even have a girl who was in my extended stay for three years, a Roma assistant to whom I personally wrote a recommendation on behalf of the school for the next job of a teaching assistant somewhere else in the school, but they didn't hire her...*

Excerpt from an interview with a public sector representative

There is another fact that clearly demonstrates the social exclusion and legal non-regulation of Roma work in the Republic of Croatia. Persons, who stated that they were employed, had to categorize the employer they work or have worked for. They were offered all existing forms of work based on the type of employer: "private sector", "public or state sector", "self-employed in their own trade or liberal profession", "employer in its own trade with employees", "work in a family business or on a family farm without receiving a salary" [Figure 83]. Nearly a third of the respondents, i.e. 32.5% of them, chose the answer "none of the above". Such an answer suggests two presumptions: [1] that a large number of working Roma are so uninformed about the organizational context of the work they do that they are unable to assess who their employer is or [2] that working Roma who work within Roma communities, in cooperation or as employees of other Roma, do not categorize their work according to the classification of employers as it is common in the majority population [because they probably think that it does not apply to them]. The answer of almost a third of the respondents should be examined by

additional, primarily qualitative studies in order to thoroughly examine the content and conditions of the work performed by these persons. Regardless of their legal status, these forms of paid work constitute economic and work activities, which makes them one of the starting points for the analysis of work competencies and interests, and perhaps the first step in the inclusion of some Roma in the Croatian labor market.

**The largest number of working persons declare that they work in the private sector (35.1%),** which also applies to the general working population in the Republic of Croatia. However, 35% of employed persons work in the state and public sector (Bejaković and Vukušić, 2010), and that sector, according to our research, employs only 20% of working Roma. This finding suggests that budget and state institutions have yet to realize their employment potentials of vulnerable groups of workers, and take a more active role in integrating the Roma into the labor market.

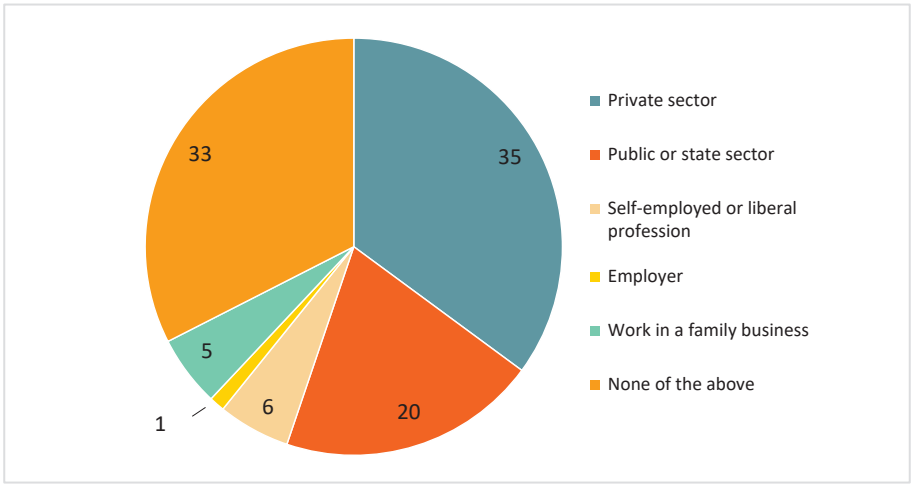


FIGURE 83. Representation of forms of work by type of employer (%)

**On average, active RNM members work 30.5 hours per week,**[215] and inter-individual differences are substantial. However, the largest number of active persons, **29.2%, state that they work 40 hours per week,** which is statutory full-time work in the Republic of Croatia (*Labor Act*, OG 93/14, 127/17 and 98/19). The age of persons engaged in full-time paid work ranges from 16 to 67,[216] and this group consists of significantly more men (67.8%) and persons who have completed at least primary school (63.2%). There is a noticeable underrepresentation of persons without education (7.2% of this sample) and women who do not make up even a

215 SD=20.08

216 M=35.8 ; SD=12.86

third (32.2%) of persons employed full-time. Finally, it should be noted that persons performing full-time paid work make up only 7.2% of the total population over the age of 15 and that percentage coincides with the survey employment rate from the very beginning of this chapter (8.1% of persons between the ages of 16 and 65 declare their status as "full-time paid work").

According to the *International Labor Organization (ILO)*, a "decent job" is one that provides a fair income, job security and social protection for the family, accelerates personal development and social integration, and gives people the freedom to express their opinions, organize and participate in decisions that are affecting their lives. The data collected show that these jobs are accessible to the Roma in a lesser extent.

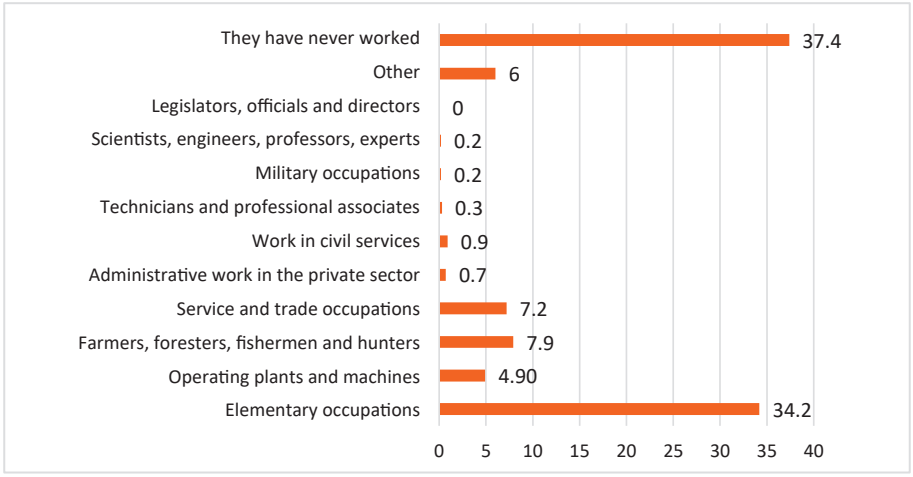


**FIGURE 84. Relative share of particular occupations and jobs (%)**

Among paid work performed by the Roma (Figure 84), the most represented form of work are elementary occupations (e.g. cleaning or production line work) (34.2%), which does not come as a surprise given the low average level of education and the exceedingly low representation of persons with secondary or higher education. They are followed by agricultural and related occupations, service and trade occupations and operating machines and plants (e.g. assembly of electronic equipment, drivers, forklift managers). These occupations constitute up to 54.2% of Roma work activities. All other occupations are represented in less than 1% of the survey participants, and not a single person performs jobs in the field of legislation or governance. It is interesting to note that 147 persons or 6% of them state that they are engaged in some other business that is not listed in the classification provided.[217] Among them, almost 30% of respondents state activities related to

217 The National Occupational Classification (NOC) implemented by the Croatian Bureau of Statistics was used and is comparable to international databases.

the collection and sale of waste, secondary raw materials, especially metals (iron and copper) and bottles. The underrepresentation of the Roma in secure legally regulated jobs with a higher social status is an indication of the social exclusion of this ethnic group from Croatian society.

We can conclude that the collected data are insufficiently informative for the purpose of analyzing of the content of paid work performed by persons of Roma nationality. In future research, detailed data on the form of simple paid work performed by the Roma should be collected and jobs related to waste and secondary raw materials should be taken into account. **Insights into the employment status of the Roma are well illustrated by the following general data, which we thoroughly analyzed in this chapter: (1) very low survey employment rate (8.1%), (2) low survey employment rate in paid work (43.9% never perform paid work), (3) performing occasional jobs (23.5% of active individuals) of low socioeconomic status, (4) undeclared work (55.3% of them do not sign a written employment contract), (5) positive connection between education and determining their own status in terms of employment status in society (among the unemployed there is a greater number of educated people).** This general data provides a framework for social policy – most RNM members have neither direct nor indirect employment experience. They themselves, as well as members of their families or friends, are unemployed or excluded from the labor market. As a result, they most likely lack the skills needed for a job search, they do not have successful and accessible models on which to base their own work self-efficacy (Lippke, 2017) or a social network to rely on. These facts should be taken into account when including the Roma in the labor market and evaluating their success in finding work.

## 4.2. Sociodemographic determinants of Roma employment status

Up to this point, we have analyzed the employment status and work activities data of the Roma in Croatia at a general level, comparing Roma residents with the general Croatian population and their data with comparable data from other European countries. However, unemployment does not equally affect all members of a society or community, just as all demographic groups do not have equal access to certain jobs and occupations. The unemployment rate can vary in certain parts of the population, and the most common demographic predictors of employment status are the level and form of education, age, work experience, gender and place of residence. The causes of these differences can be economic (for instance, different job offers based on educational profiles or economic activity of a certain region)

or a result of discrimination of specific groups in the labor market (for example, women or the elderly). For the most part, it is a combination of factors that result in difficult access to employment for particular individuals and groups. Therefore, we will put our focus on group and individual predictors of Roma employment status and work activities in Croatia to identify particularly vulnerable groups, but also the categories of residents which managed to integrate into the labor market to a greater extent. While the first group is the target population for additional social support and care measures, the second represents the resources of a particular community on whose experience social policy programs should be built.

More precisely, we will examine the sociodemographic determinants of the employment status and activities of our respondents to establish: (1) whether there are regional and territorial differences in the inclusion of the Roma in the Croatian labor market and (2) which individual sociodemographic characteristics predict Roma work status and work activities. In the first case, we will deal predominately with the differences in the employment rate of the Roma living in six Croatian regions – Međimurje, Northern Croatia, Central Croatia, Zagreb and its surrounding area, Slavonia, Istria and Primorje. We will also analyze the differences between twelve Croatian counties. Considering the fact that a small number of the Roma state that they are employed (only 8,1% aged 16 to 65 define their status as a "person performing full-time paid work"), we will base our analysis on the current work activities, no matter its formal legal status and regardless of the answer to the question ***Have you done any paid work (in cash or in kind) during the past week?*** and questions building on that answer. In that sense, we will differentiate between currently active and non-active persons, and persons who have experienced paid work and those who never perform paid work.

We will limit the sample to persons aged 18 to 65, although the age limit is raised to 20 years in some comparable European surveys (FRA: EU MIDIS II, 2016). The reasons for lowering the age limit are the low average level of education of the research population and the lack of a legal obligation for secondary education in the Republic of Croatia (*Primary and Secondary Education Act*, OG 87/2008 and 94/2013). In later text, we will pay special attention to young people aged 16 to 24 who are not included in education or the labor market (the so-called NEET group).

The number of persons aged 18 to 65 in the research sample varies because the number of Roma living in certain regions differs significantly – the largest share of the sample consists of persons from Međimurje (N = 838), and the smallest of persons from Istria and Primorje (N = 221). Similar differences exist between individual counties. We will take these differences into account during the statistical analyses and examining of the differences between certain regions and counties in the representation of the Roma in the labor market and paid work.

## Differences between regions and counties

There is a significant difference between certain Croatian regions in the ratio of active and non-active persons.[218] The largest share of the active population was found in Istria and Primorje (29.9% of participants were active at the time of the survey), and the smallest in Central Croatia (only 13.7% of persons were performing paid work at the time of the survey) (Table 14). In Međimurje, the region where the largest number of the Roma live, there is only 21%. **In all regions, active Roma are a distinct minority.** Only in Istria and Primorje, the share of employed Roma is close to one-third of the surveyed sample, but this region is the least represented in the total sample (only 221 adults under the age of 65).

*There are a lot of our boys who are from here – Roma children – and work at the sea. They are accepted there. They go to the sea every year...*

Excerpt from an interview with a RNM representative

Table 15 shows the differences between certain counties.[219] In 8 counties with more than 100 adult Roma under the age of 65, the lowest share of active persons is in Sisak-Moslavina County (6.4%), and the highest in Primorje-Gorski Kotar County (30.9%).[220] In the observed period, Sisak-Moslavina County has one of the highest registered unemployment rates in the general population (24.3%) and one of the smallest declines in the number of unemployed persons compared to 2008 (-19.9%) (CCE, 2019). However, the correlation between the share of non-active Roma and the registered unemployment rate in the county is not significant,[221] just as the correlation between the share of non-active Roma and labor market trends over a period of 9 years in each county.[222] This result shows yet again that **economic trends reflected in the labor market do not necessarily reflect the employment status and work activities of the Roma.** The link between economic trends and Roma employment is not direct, but is probably moderated by other social (e.g. social distance between the majority population and the Roma), cultural (e.g. multiculturalism of a region) and political factors (e.g. the status of combating poverty in the current government program).

218 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 28.7$ ; df = 5 ; p<.01.

219 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 60.2$ ; df = 11 ; p<.01.

220 When discussing the low general employment level of the Roma ethnic community members, especially when it comes to differences in specific regions and counties, it is worth mentioning that the survey does not include persons who do not declare themselves as Roma, even though they have Roma ethnic heritage and other inhabitants regard them as Roma. For example, the survey did not include residents of Karlovac and Karlovac County and Virovitica-Podravina County who had previously declared themselves as Roma. This raises the questions whether the inhabitants of these areas were more successfully integrated into the labor market and if the integration came with a price – giving up their ethnic identity. Some analyses show that this *ethnomimicry* is especially present in business-successful individuals and Roma communities having above-average living standards compared to other Roma (Babić and Škiljan, 2019).

221 Spearman $\rho = .17$ ; p>.05.

222 Spearman $\rho = .21$ ; p>.05.

**TABLE 14.** Regional differences in the share of active persons [%]

| Region | Active | Non-active |
|---|---|---|
| Međimurje | 21.0 | 72.0 |
| Northern Croatia | 14.8 | 85.2 |
| Zagreb and its surrounding area | 22.7 | 77.3 |
| Central Croatia | 13.7 | 86.3 |
| Slavonia | 18.3 | 81.7 |
| Istria and Primorje | 29.9 | 70.1 |
| Total | 20.0 | 80.0 |

*Note: The obtained data consist of answers to the question: Have you done any paid work [in cash or in kind] during the past week?*

**TABLE 15.** Differences between counties in the share of active persons [%]

| County | Active | Non-active | Registered unemployment rate | Change compared to 2008 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Brod-Posavina | 16.2 | 83.8 | 22.4 | -32.9 |
| City of Zagreb | 80.9 | 77.0 | 6.4 | -16.6 |
| Koprivnica-Križevci | 12.5 | 87.5 | 13.0 | -45.8 |
| Međimurje | 21.0 | 86.3 | 9.7 | -44.3 |
| Osijek-Baranja | 18.4 | 81.6 | 24.9 | -10.8 |
| Primorje-Gorski Kotar | 30.9 | 69.1 | 9.9 | -22.9 |
| Sisak-Moslavina | 6.4 | 93.6 | 24.3 | -19.9 |
| Varaždin | 18.0 | 88.0 | 6.9 | -47.7 |

*Note: The obtained data consist of answers to the question: Have you done any paid work [in cash or in kind] during the past week? The presented data show only eight counties with more than 100 adult Roma up to 65 years of age. The third column contains the registered unemployment rate data of the general population for 2017. The last column contains data on the change in the registered unemployment rate compared to 2008.*

In addition to the rate of work activity, we also found significant regional differences in the legal regulation of work.[223] **The largest share of persons performing exclusively undeclared work is found in Međimurje – more than two-thirds [67.6%], and the smallest in Istria and the Primorje [31.9%]** [Table 16]**.** It is interesting to note that a minuscule number of respondents stated that they sign employment contracts with some employers and with others they do not, which would mean that they occasionally perform declared and occasionally undeclared work. In Istria and Primorje alone that option was chosen by 10% of respondents, while in other regions that number is around 3% to 6%. This dichotomization of our sample to exclusively declared or undeclared work is not expected and should

223 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 74.5$ ; df = 10 ; p<.01.

be investigated in more detail. The conclusions of this research should be based on cumulated data, namely the differences between the largest group that has never done declared work and a minority performing work under an employment contract with the employer. In this sense, two regions stand out – Slavonia and Istria and Primorje: **in these regions, more than half of the respondents state that they perform work under an employment contract.**

**TABLE 16. Regional differences in the representation of declared and undeclared work (%)**

| Region | Without a contract | Occasionally under contract Occasionally without a contract | Under a contract |
|---|---|---|---|
| Međimurje | 67.6 | 6.2 | 26.3 |
| Northern Croatia | 63.3 | 3.3 | 33.3 |
| Zagreb and its surrounding area | 59.0 | 3.0 | 38.0 |
| Central Croatia | 49.5 | 5.2 | 45.4 |
| Slavonia | 43.4 | 4.8 | 51.8 |
| Istria and Primorje | 31.9 | 9.5 | 58.6 |
| Total | 55.3 | 5.3 | 39.3 |

*Note: The obtained data consist of answer to the question: Have you signed a written contract with the employer with whom you work permanently/temporarily/seasonally or occasionally?*

The rate of undeclared work among RNM members is certainly high and in all regions, it significantly differs from the undeclared work recorded in the general population. However, its scale is not unexpected given the social exclusion of members of this ethnic community and the general presence of the so-called informal economy.[224] According to the aforementioned survey conducted by UNDP, the World Bank and the European Commission in countries of Central, Eastern and Southern Europe, the reported undeclared work rate in the Croatian Roma population was slightly lower at 43%, while in the comparable non-Roma population it was only 6% (O'Higgins, 2012). It should be noted that the survey data show a definitely higher number of the reported cases of undeclared work and correspond better to the real situation, but they can also give a distorted picture. For example, some surveys conducted on a representative sample of unemployed persons registered with the Croatian Employment Service show that more than 40% of them are involved in some form of undeclared work (Šverko et al., 2008). In a survey conducted by the European Commission, 11% of adult EU citizens admitted buying goods and services related to undeclared work in the past year, and 4% admitted performing undeclared paid activities (EC, 2014).

224 The European Commission estimates that the share of the informal economy in the Croatian GDP is 28.4% (EC, 2014).

We can conclude by saying that the position of the Roma in the labor market in different regions of Croatia is more similar than different, although some significant statistical differences have been identified. But they are primarily quantitative, not qualitative in nature. The similarities in the findings collected in different Croatian regions and counties indicate two conclusions: (1) a unique methodological approach in data collection and, consequently, their credibility; (2) the homogeneity of RNM members with regard to their exclusion from the labor market. Nevertheless, **more favorable results both in the rate of work activity and in the share of reported work can be found in Istria and Primorje.** That is why we will analyze the work activities of the inhabitants of that region in more detail and check whether the jobs performed by Roma from Istria and Primorje are different in relation to the general Roma population in Croatia. We will also compare the demographic characteristics of the active and non-active inhabitants of Istria and Primorje and Central Croatia, the region with the lowest share of active Roma.

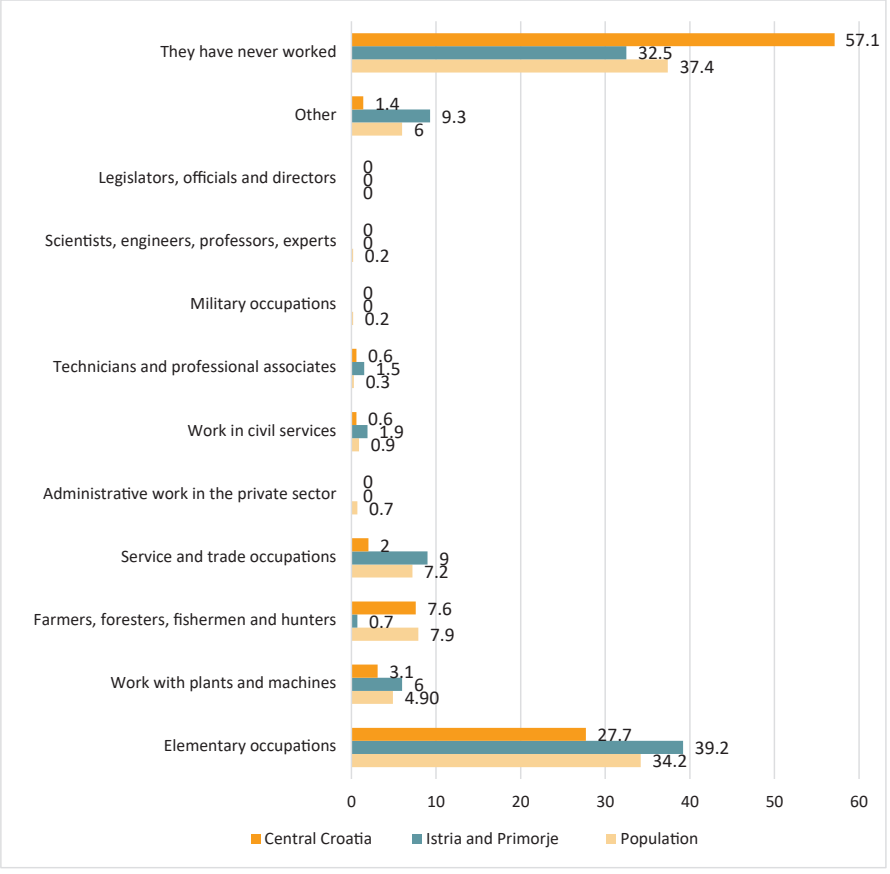


FIGURE 85. Relative share of certain occupations and jobs: comparison between the total Roma population and the Roma population in Istria, Primorje and Central Croatia (%)

*Most of them are uneployed. I will say about 98%. The unemployed ones are collecting secondary raw materials – iron, bottles, this and that, they are failing. They used to be merchants. They used to sell, I don't know, all kinds of fabrics, shoes, cars, they did seasonal work. They had their own stands, shops, they sold their measures, but that's it, it died down. After that, now that bulky waste is no longer thrown away, they just have nothing to do. Most of them are employed, most of whom do not want to admit that they are members of the Roma national minority, so they say that they are Macedonians, Albanians, everything, but not Roma.*

Excerpt from an interview with a representative of a public institution

In Istria and Primorje, the largest share of persons is performing simple tasks (39,2%) and it exceeds the share of persons who have never worked (32,5%) (Figure 85). As we commented earlier, in the total population, the largest share of adults under the age 65 is made up of persons who have never worked, and it is particularly large in Central Croatia (57,1%). In the active population, the largest share is the one of those who perform elementary occupations, and trends in the representation of certain occupations and forms of work in these two regions reflect trends in the total Roma population. There are noticeable differences between the inhabitants of Istria and Primorje and the inhabitants of Central Croatia in three categories: (1) 7,6% of persons from Central Croatia work in agriculture and related jobs, while only 0,7% of such workers are from Istria and Primorje; (2) 9% of the residents of Istria and Primorje work in service activities, while only 2% of persons from Central Croatia do the same work; (3) 9,3% of the residents of Istria and Primorje state that they do "something else", which is claimed only by 1,4% of individuals from Central Croatia. The first two differences reflect the differences in the regional economic activities – tourism in Istria and Primorje, agriculture in Central Croatia. The third difference is intriguing and worth further research. Specifically, **the vast majority of persons from Istria and Primorje who claimed that they were engaged in "something else" state that this includes the following jobs: collection and selling of secondary raw materials, collecting metals (especially copper), collecting bottles.** We should add that some persons, who state that they perform simple tasks on the construction site, state that they also collect waste. In a small group of persons from Central Croatia who stated that they were doing "something else", no one stated that they were collecting secondary raw materials or waste (they state the job of a housewife and a teaching assistant). The larger share of persons engaged in activities related to the collection and sale of secondary raw materials and waste in Istria and Primorje points to the importance of this activity in the Roma ethnic community. We have already pointed out that the work and economic activities of the Roma should be investigated in detail, primarily using an exploitative approach and a qualitative methodology, with special attention paid to

the analysis of activities related to secondary raw materials and waste. Although this activity is typical of marginalized, poor and socially excluded persons, this does not mean that this activity is not arduous or that it does not need organizational or other skills. Therefore, this work activity should not be ignored, but analyzed for its potentials for greater involvement of the Roma in declared work.

The relationship between gender, age and level of education with employment shows the same patterns in the region with the highest employment rate, Istria and Primorje, and the region with the lowest employment rate, Central Croatia. As shown in Figure 86, columns illustrating the situation in these two regions are vastly different in height, but they are still following the same patterns. The largest difference is in the representation of males and females. In both regions, there is a larger number of active men, while a majority of women (85,6% in Istria nad Primorje, 94% in Central Croatia) is non-active – women are rarely involved in paid work. As expected, the work activity in both regions is growing with the level of education. However, the differences in the work activity of certain age groups are surprising. In both regions, middle-aged persons, those aged 30 and 55, are more often employed than young people aged 16 to 29 (Figure 86).

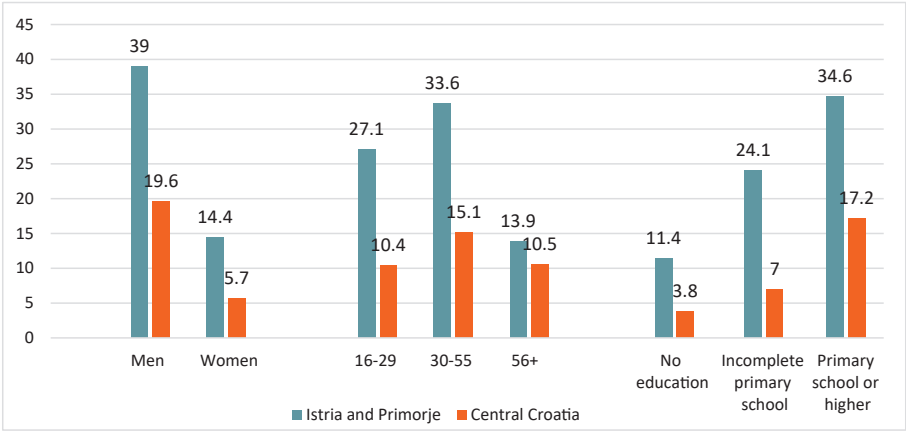


**FIGURE 86. Relative share of active persons by demographic characteristics – gender, age and level of education: comparison between the inhabitants of Istria and Primorje and inhabitants of Central Croatia (%)**

*Well the majority, I can say, the majority, 80% of the Roma live from their work, yes, they work. Now I said a little while ago that it's strange that all women work here. (Where do they work?) Everywhere, there's a company like Belvedere, so there's building cleaning, maintenance. They work, they work for a salary. You see, for a salary, everyone. So, that is the advantage of Roma in Rijeka, that they think, that they like to work...*

Excerpt from an interview with a RNM representative

We conclude the analysis of regional and territorial differences in the work activity of RNM members by examining the differences in the level of involvement in paid work between persons living in segregated settlements, settlements that are both segregated and remote from majority settlements and those living in integrated settlements with the general population in the Republic of Croatia.

The segregation and remoteness of the settlement in which a person lives did not prove to be significant predictors of self-assessed work activity. However, in segregated and remote settlements only 25,3% of active persons have signed employment contracts, while in segregated but not remote settlements 55,3% of active persons have signed an employment contract, i.e. 40% of those living dispersed in settlements with the majority population. The difference is statistically significant (Figure 87).[225] Besides that, **persons living in segregated and remote Roma settlements are more likely to state that they never do paid work than persons living in segregated settlements on the outskirts or within a town or village and those living dispersed with the majority population** (Table 18).[226] It should be emphasized that the largest number of Roma live in segregated and remote Roma settlements (41% of the sample), and most of them (50,7%) never do paid work (Table 17).

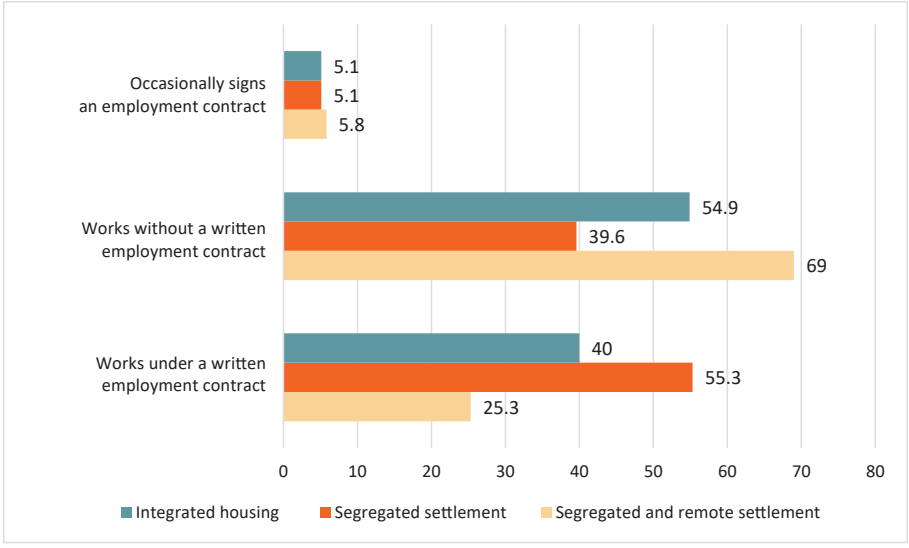


**FIGURE 87. Relative share of declared and undeclared work by type of settlement (%)**

225 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 70.3$ ; df = 4 ; p<.01.

226 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 33.2$ ; df = 2 ; p<.01.

**TABLE 17.** Rate of the active population by type of settlement: comparison between segregated and remote settlements, segregated settlements and integrated housing [%]

| Settlement type | Perform paid work | Do no perform paid work |
|---|---|---|
| Segregated and remote settlement | 81.1 | 18.9 |
| Segregated settlement | 79.9 | 20.1 |
| Integrated housing | 78.7 | 21.3 |
| Total | 80.0 | 20.0 |

*Note: The obtained data consist of answers to the question: Have you done any paid work [in cash or in kind] during the past week? The differences between settlements are not statistically significant.*

**TABLE 18.** The share of residents who never perform paid work based on the type of settlement: comparison between segregated and remote settlements, segregated settlements and integrated housing [%]

| Settlement type | They performed paid work | They did not perform paid work |
|---|---|---|
| Segregated and remote settlement | 49.3 | 50.7 |
| Segregated settlement | 60.7 | 39.3 |
| Integrated housing | 60.6 | 39.4 |
| Total | 56.0 | 44.0 |

*Note: The data are based on the comparison between the number of respondents who state that they never perform paid work and the respondents who stated that they have a permanent, temporary or seasonal job, or that they perform occasional jobs [from time to time].*

*The main principles of the National Roma Inclusion Strategy in the field of housing are destigmatization, desegregation and deghettoization at the levels of processes, resources [implementation mechanisms] and people who are beneficiaries or implementers of the Strategy. The principles are aimed at raising standards and adequacy of Roma housing in Croatia.*

NRIS from 2013 to 2010, 2012, p. 80.

**The analysis of regional and territorial differences in the employment status and work activities of the Roma in the Republic of Croatia suggests a conclusion about the relative homogeneity of the sample regardless of the region or county from which the respondents come and the segregation and remoteness of the settlement in which they live.** Even though some statistically significant differences were noted, they are not qualitative – no matter the place or the way of living, the Roma are not included in the labor market on a bigger scale and they usually perform undeclared and temporary work. Besides, the share of Roma involvement in paid work does not reflect labor market trends in a particular

region. Regardless of trends and the employment situation of the general population in the region, the Roma ethnic community is mostly unemployed and socially excluded. Positive differences in the total work activity were recorded in Istria and Primorje. In that region, the Roma more often perform declared work than their compatriots from other regions. The higher representation of active persons in the region is largely explained by the higher representation of jobs related to waste collection and secondary raw materials. Still, this conclusion should be taken with caution because it is unclear whether there is a greater willingness to list these activities (although not offered as a possible category of answers). In other words, we do not know to what extent respondents generally classified these jobs in the most numerous category of "elementary occupations and simple jobs". Finally, the residents of segregated and remote settlements are at a disadvantage in relation to those living in closer contact with the majority, non-Roma population. The majority of Roma living in segregated settlements far from the settlements of the general population state that they have no experience of performing paid work. When we talk about the levels of social exclusion of the Roma in the labor market, it is evident that the most excluded residents are the ones living in segregated and remote settlements and they remain a strong symbol of the position of this ethnic community in Croatian society.

## Individual sociodemographic predictors of work activity

So far, we have been able to see that some individual sociodemographic characteristics are related to the work activity of our respondents: women perform paid work significantly less often than men, and significant differences were found in regard to age, type of settlement and level of education. We will continue to deal with sociodemographic predictors of work activity using multivariate statistics. More specifically, many sociodemographic characteristics of people are interconnected and have a cumulative or interactive effect on their status in society. For example, if women are on average less educated than men, these two characteristics may together unfavorably affect their status in the labor market, with a remaining question: which of these characteristics, level of education or gender, significantly predicts a person's employment status. The following individual sociodemographic characteristics will be the focus: gender, age, level of education, segregation and remoteness of the settlement in which the person lives, the size of the household in which the person lives, total household consumption, household poverty and total household income. In doing so, we will be interested whether we can predict a person's work activity based on the above characteristics and which characteristics alone contribute to that prognosis on a larger scale. Our goal is to gain a clearer insight into the predictors of Roma work activities in Croatia in order to define specific social policy measures.

Socioeconomic characteristics of the household in which a person lives, and their own demographic characteristics are significantly related to work activity (Table 19). The following characteristics make a significant independent contribution in the differentiation between the active and non-active population: gender (Table 20), level of education (Figure 89), total number of household members in which the person lives, monthly household income (Table 21), household consumption (Table 22) and hunger as an indicator of poverty (Figure 88).[227]

**TABLE 19. Individual sociodemographic predictors of work activity: results of the logistic regression analysis[228]**

| Sociodemographic characteristics | B | Wald | *p* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | 1.590 | 155.384 | .000 |
| Age | -0.006 | 1.421 | .233 |
| Level of education | 0.379 | 18.450 | .000 |
| Segregation and remoteness of settlements | -0.028 | 0.168 | .682 |
| Household size | -0.063 | 9.046 | .003 |
| Total household consumption | 0.000 | 14.176 | .000 |
| Hunger in the household | -0.286 | 35.521 | .000 |
| Household income | 0.467 | 13.542 | .000 |

*Note: Level of education = without education (1); incomplete primary school (2), completed primary school or higher education (3); Segregation and remoteness of settlements = segregated and remote settlement (1), segregated settlement (2), integrated housing (3); Household size = number of household members with whom the person lives, including children; Total household consumption = from 0 HRK (1) to more than 12,000.00 HRK (10); Hunger in the household = how often has an individual or the members of their household gone to bed hungry in the past month (from 1 – never to 4 – 4 times or more); Household income = the total monthly income regardless of its source – up to 3,000.00 HRK (1), more than 3,000.00 HRK (2); Criterion = answer to the question: Have you done any paid work (in cash or in kind) during the past week?*

Over the past week, 31.3% of men and only 8.7% of women performed some form of a paid work.[229] In addition to men working more often, more educated people worked more often as well.[230] Work activity is associated with higher consumption,[231] i.e. lower poverty.[232] Households of active persons spend on average more than 1,000.00 HRK per month, although they have the same number of household members as households of persons who declare themselves as non-active.[233]

227 Coefficient of multiple determination, R2=.21; chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 333.81; df = 8 ; p<.01.

228 All significant independent predictors of work activity will be presented later on and described at the univariate level to clearly portray the trends.

229 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 199.81 ; df = 1 ; p<.01.

230 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 70.7 ; df = 2 ; p<.01.

231 t = -5.44 ; p<.01.

232 Chi-square test, $\chi^2$ = 57.55 ; df = 3 ; p<.01.

233 It should be emphasized that the data on average consumption do not represent the data well given the substantial differences in consumption.

In addition, household members in households with active persons are much less likely to be hungry and most of them (67.4%) live in households where household members never go to bed hungry. This is not the case with households of non-active people. Hunger is present in half of these households. In addition, households of active persons have on average higher monthly incomes. Segregation and remoteness of settlements is not an independent determinant of work activity, nor is the age of a person.

**TABLE 20. Differences between men and women in the rate of performing paid work (%)**

| | Non-active | Active |
|---|---|---|
| Male | 68.7 | 31.3 |
| Female | 91.3 | 8.7 |
| Total | 80.0 | 20.0 |

*Note: The obtained data consist of answers to the question: Have you done any paid work (in cash or in kind) during the past week?*

**TABLE 21. Differences in the active population regarding age, household size and monthly household consumption – average values (M) and corresponding standard deviations (SD)**

| Sociodemographic characteristics | Work activity | M | SD |
|---|---|---|---|
| Age | Ne | 35.22 | 13.26 |
| | Da | 33.98 | 11.46 |
| Number of household members | Ne | 5.89 | 3.2 |
| | Da | 5.72 | 3.07 |
| Household consumption | Ne | 3 177 | 3056.07 |
| | Da | 4323 | 4219.32 |

*Note: The obtained data consist of answers to the question: Have you done any paid work (in cash or in kind) during the past week? The difference in average age is not statistically significant.*

**TABLE 22. Differences in the monthly income of active and non-active households (%)**

| | Non-active | Active |
|---|---|---|
| Up to 3,000 HRK | 63.3 | 36.7 |
| More than 3,000 HRK | 48.5 | 51.5 |
| Total | 60.3 | 39.7 |

*Note: The obtained data consist of answers to the question: Have you done any paid work (in cash or in kind) during the past week?*

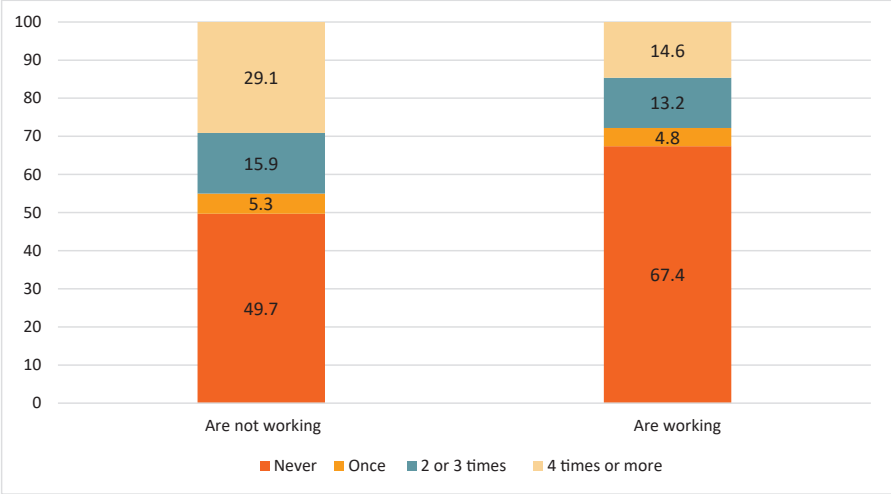


FIGURE 88. Relative share of respondents who have personally or whose household members went to bed hungry in the past month (%)

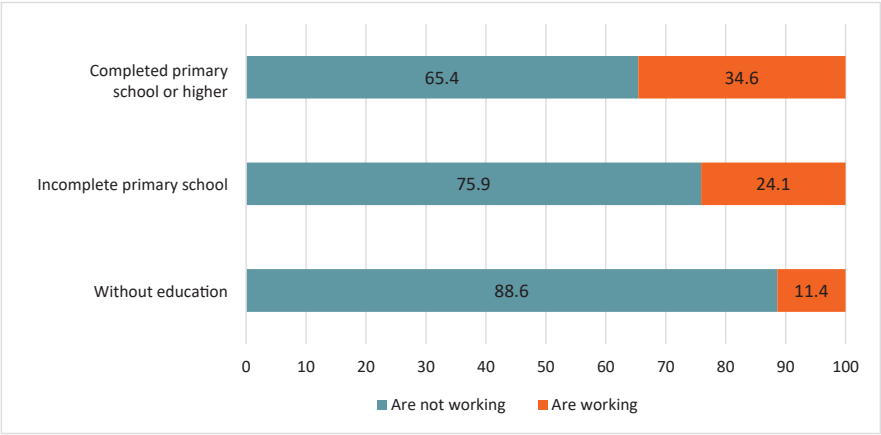


FIGURE 89. Relative share of active persons at different levels of education (%)

Based on the analyses of individual sociodemographic predictors of Roma work activity in Croatia, we can conclude that the work activity is considerably related to indicators of a person's socioeconomic well-being: **people who work report higher consumption, higher incomes and lower levels of extreme poverty (experience of hunger).** Active persons also come from households with less members. When interpreting the results, it is important to emphasize that the data are correlational and as such do not allow for conclusions about the cause-and-effect relationships between work and economic well-being. Nevertheless, it is clear that work and so-

cioeconomic well-being are considerably connected. The segregation and remoteness of settlements as such does not explain the level of engagement of their residents in paid work. Housing in segregated and remote settlements is associated primarily with a higher level of poverty, and thus social exclusion. These are the reasons for the earlier, at the univariate level, established differences between the work activity of the inhabitants of segregated and remote settlements and the rest of the Roma population. Although the segregation and remoteness of settlements of this ethnic community in relation to the general population may not be the cause of poverty per se, the question is whether the process of social integration (and inclusion in the labor market is an important part thereof) can be carried out while maintaining the spatial divide between the Roma and non-Roma population.

An important predictor of work activity is the level of education and gender of the person. Although the general level of education in the research sample is extremely low (19% of persons are without education, and only 12% have completed the level of education after primary school – usually a three-year secondary vocational school), education is significantly related to work, and the completion of primary school is a personal resource when positioning in the labor market. **However, most persons who have completed some form of secondary or higher education do not perform paid work (62.4% of them)** (Table 23). **There is a significant difference noticeable in the employment status of the jobs they perform – the majority (58.6%) do jobs under a signed employment contract, while this is true for 39.3% of the total sample of active persons** (Table 24)**.** Therefore, we can say that the results of Roma inclusion in the education system are positive, but of limited scope. Education clearly brings shifts in the rate and quality of employment; however, the low employment rate of educated Roma shows failure and indicates discrimination, and probably a limited motivation of new generations to persist in education. Finally, these results provide clear guidelines for social policy. **Educated Roma should be more involved in employment through special and targeted measures.** Primarily, Roma secondary education should be linked to apprenticeship and work through a system of vouchers, traineeships, employer incentives or state employment guarantees after the successful completion of education.

**TABLE 23. Rate of active population with completed secondary or higher education (%)**

| | Active | Non-active |
|---|---|---|
| Completed secondary or higher education | 32.1 | 62.4 |
| Total sample | 17.4 | 82.3 |

*Note: The obtained data consist of answer to the question: Have you done any paid work (in cash or in kind) during the past week?*

**TABLE 24. Rate of declared work among persons with secondary or higher education [%]**

| | Without a contract | Occasionally under a contract, occasionally without a contract | Under a contract |
|---|---|---|---|
| Completed secondary or higher education | 33.2 | 7.1 | 58.6 |
| Total sample | 56.5 | 5.1 | 37.6 |

*Note: The obtained data consist of answers to the question: Have you done any paid work [in cash or in kind] during the past week?*

Another significant difference in the work activity is the one between men and women. Less than 9% of women report performing paid work in the previous week, while the percentage of men is significantly higher at more than 31%. This vast difference between the work activity of men and women, as we will see later, is noticeable throughout all generations and is greater than the differences observed in other European countries.

## Female

*The employment of women is crucial for achieving their economic independence and is a self-sustaining element in the fight against poverty that reduces inequality and domestic violence. Roma women face multiple gender-specific barriers in employment: traditional patriarchal gender roles in Roma ethnic communities and the inability to organize care for children outside the family. With a low level of education, living in separate settlements without contact with the majority population and facing discrimination, the employment of Roma women in many cases becomes impossible [EU FRA 2014]. Therefore, the European Commission believes that women's resources should be used much more intensively and efficiently [European Commission, 2010].*

There are very few active women. There are only around 100 of them in the entire sample. Sociodemographic correlations of women's employment follow a pattern that is valid for the entire sample and the men [Table 25]. Among active women, the majority completed at least primary school, and those without education are a minority. They most often come from households that are dispersed, i.e. integrated into the majority settlements, and the least often from segregated and remote settlements [Figure 90]. As in the total sample, women's work activity is associated with better financial status of households: more than half come from households with a monthly income of more than 3,000 HRK and their average monthly consumption is 4,830 HRK [SD = 5,437].[234] Also, most women have signed employment contracts with an employer, but the difference compared to men is not statistically significant.[235] Women are more likely to work in the public

234 We once again stress that the data on average consumption do not represent the data well given the substantial differences in consumption.

235 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 3.44$ ; df = 2 ; n.s.

and state sectors than men, but this difference[236] is not statistically significant either.[237] **The results suggest that women's work activity is a positive indicator of the socioeconomic condition of the household.**

**TABLE 25.** Sociodemographic characteristics of active men and women [%] [238]

| | Male | Female |
|---|---|---|
| Without education | 6.4 | 11.7 |
| Did not complete primary school | 32.8 | 27.9 |
| Completed primary school or higher | 60.8 | 60.4 |
| | $\chi^2 = 3.98$ ; df = 2 ; n.s. | |
| Aged 16–29 | 46.3 | 40.5 |
| Aged 30–55 | 49.8 | 53.2 |
| Aged 56 and over | 3.9 | 6.3 |
| | $\chi^2 = 1.99$ ; df = 2 ; n.s. | |
| Remote and segregated settlement | 87.1 | 12.9 |
| Segregated settlement | 77.4 | 22.6 |
| Integrated housing | 70.1 | 29.9 |
| | $\chi^2 = 16.383$ ; df = 2 ; $p<.01$ | |
| Monthly household income up to 3,000 HRK | 47.7 | 47.6 |
| Monthly household income over 3,000 HRK | 52.3 | 52.4 |
| | $\chi^2 = 0.00$ ; df = 1 ; n.s. | |
| Work in the private sector | 40.2 | 29.7 |
| Work in the public or state sector | 23.9 | 31.7 |
| Self-employed | 6.4 | 9.9 |
| Employers | 2.1 | 2.0 |
| Work within the family | 6.4 | 9.9 |
| None of the above | 21.0 | 16.8 |
| | $\chi^2 = 7.63$ ; df = 5 ; n.s. | |
| Without a written employment contract | 46.3 | 41.2 |
| Under a written employment contract | 48.4 | 56.7 |
| Sometimes under a written employment contract | 4.5 | 2.1 |
| | $\chi^2 = 3.44$ ; df = 2 ; n.s. | |

*Note: The obtained data summarize differences in the sample of respondents who answered in the affirmative when asked: Have you done any paid work [in cash or in kind] during the past week? Next to the number of persons, we state the gender percentage in brackets, except for the type of settlement when we state the gender distribution of active population within a particular type of settlement. After each cluster of data, the results of testing the statistical significance of differences between men and women are listed.*

236 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 7.63$ ; df = 5 ; n.s.

237 Due to the large difference in the number of active men and women [408 M and 111 F], it makes sense to comment on the trends in the results. The test of significance of some differences depends on the size of the tested sample, as well as on the differences in the size of the tested samples.

238 The data show the differences between certain demographic groups.

We can conclude that women's work activity follows the same sociodemographic patterns as the one of men, but the difference in the employment rate between men and women is large in all demographic categories, making the national data specific in this regard. They deviate from the trends in the general population of the Republic of Croatia, but also from the differences recorded in European surveys of the Roma. According to the Croatian Bureau of Statistics, in 2017 in the Republic of Croatia, the employment rate for men was 53.9%, and for women 46.1% [CBS 2017]. In a survey conducted in 11 EU Member States, the difference in the survey employment rate between men and women aged 16 and over is smaller, at 21% for women and 35% for men. At the same time, the differences between men and women are smaller in the former socialist countries [Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia], which generally have a longer tradition of women's inclusion in the labor market. For example, in the Czech Republic, the survey employment rate of women is higher [36%] than the rate of activity of men [33%]. Researchers warn that the difference in the rate of inclusion of women and men in the labor market is smaller in urban areas where the Roma live integrated with the non-Roma population [FRA, 2014]. In our study, we also found a significant difference in the employment rate of women with respect to segregation and remoteness of settlements. **The largest difference in the work activity rate between men and women is among the inhabitants of remote and segregated settlements, and the smallest among the Roma who live integrated with the non-Roma population.**[239] This finding supports the previously described association of women's economic activity with positive indicators of their personal socioeconomic well-being as well as the well-being of their households. The large difference in the work activity rate between women and men can be considered as an indicator of social exclusion of the Roma ethnic community, and its mitigation as an indicator of the process of social inclusion.

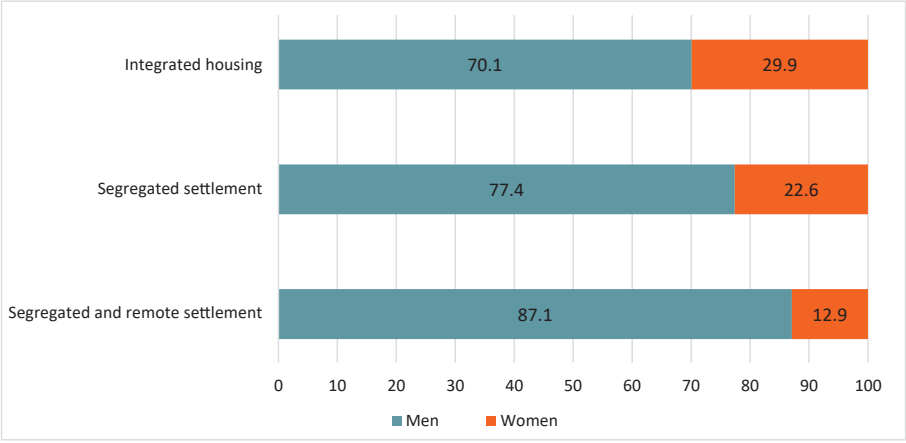


**FIGURE 90. Relative share of women in the active population [%]**

239 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 16.383$ ; df = 2 ; $p<.01$.

## Youth

> *Inclusion policy will also need to be evaluated according to a dynamic criterion, more specifically, according to its impact on the reproduction of socially excluded persons. Simply put, a successful inclusion policy has two pillars: weakening the mechanisms of deprivation [economic, labor, and sociocultural] and reducing the risk of the children of socially excluded persons ending up excluded themselves. In the first case, we are talking about social measures that encourage employment, growth of living standards and social cooperation, and in the second about activities aimed at socially excluded families.*
>
> Matković and Štulhofer, 2006: 10.

Youth is at the center of social policy measures aimed at the social inclusion of excluded communities. Their inclusion in the educational system and the labor market is usually easier due to the still preserved psychophysical capacities,[240] greater adaptability and faster learning. The results are long-term because they are mostly people who are just starting a family and becoming parents. Also, as we analyzed in detail earlier in this book, the younger generations were on average more educated than the older ones and were more involved in compulsory schooling. Due to greater involvement in the education system, they should have better psychological and social capital than the older generations, and through a successful transition from school to work, their involvement in the labor market should be higher.

The aim of this chapter is to analyze in more detail the work activity of young people and to determine how many Roma in the Republic of Croatia belong to the so-called NEET category, i.e. young people aged 16 to 24 who are neither in school nor employed or involved in any professional training. We will compare the results with international data and data collected in other age groups within the surveyed sample. The main goal is to determine whether the position of young Roma in the labor market differs from the older generations of that ethnic community. Generational differences in the survey employment rate between younger and older members of a population are a good indicator of the success of previous social policy measures because they provide an answer to an important question: *Is the position of the Roma in Croatia changing, how fast are these changes and are they moving in the desired direction?*

240 The concept of social exclusion has been used extensively for the last three decades and has largely replaced the term poverty which is the basic dimension of social exclusion. Poor communities or classes of society primarily suffer from various forms of deprivation, and poverty excludes them, not giving them equal opportunities for development and is detrimental to their well-being and health (Mathieson et al., 2008).

Figure 91 shows the differences between young Roma aged 16 to 24 and older members of that ethnic community. Only 5.2% of young people aged 16 to 24 state that they are employed full time, which is true for 8.5% of persons aged 25 to 65. 9.5% of persons have a occasional, temporary or part-time job, and the same applies to those over 24 years of age (9.1% of them have such a job). There are very few self-employed persons aged 16 to 24 (0.9%), as well as in the elderly population (2.6%). There is a large share of housewives (15.9%) and a small share of women on maternity leave (2.9%). Housewives are more represented in the older population and their share is 24.4%. A relatively small number of individuals aged 16 to 24 are included in the education or training system (14.9%), with the majority being secondary school pupils. 438 respondents (45.8%) state that they are unemployed, similar to the elderly population (42.5%). We can consider them a NEET group. At the same time, the average representation of members of the NEET group in the EU was less than 20%, and Roma 63% (EU-MIDIS II 2016). If we add together persons from the sample aged 16 to 24 who are employed, self-employed or on maternity leave and those who are involved in some form of education or training, their share is 36.7%. The remaining majority, **63.3% of them, can be considered a NEET group.**

The share of persons who define their status as unemployment is slightly higher among young people aged 16 to 24 than in the older population (45.8% : 42.5%), however, as we will soon see, young people are less likely to register with the Croatian Employment Service, and the differences between men and women are greater in the NEET group – unemployed women aged 16 to 24 are less likely to register with the Employment Service than older unemployed women.

*In 2013, the Council of Europe adopted a recommendation on the Youth Guarantee, calling on all Member States to provide quality employment, continuing education, professional training or traineeships for those under 25 years of age. In order for these measures to be successfully implemented in the Roma ethnic community, Member States should ensure that all young Roma are systematically registered with the state employment services which carry out these measures (FRA, 2018: Opinion 17).*

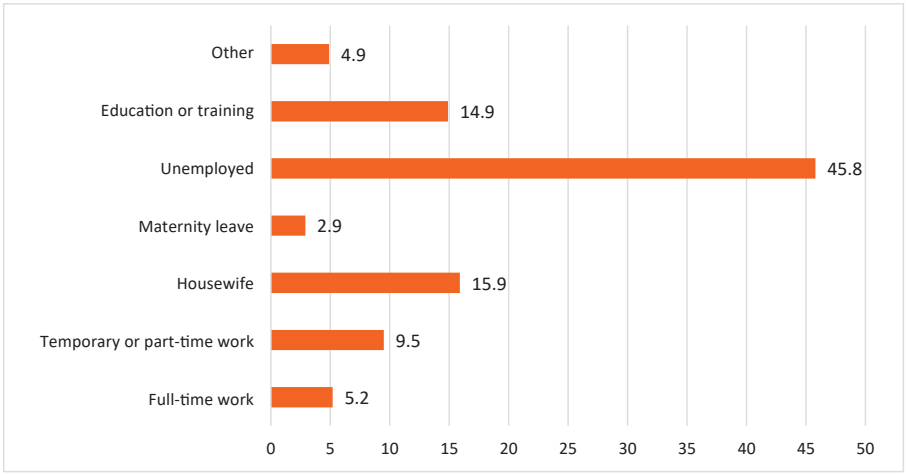


**FIGURE 91. Relative share of persons of different status in the 16–24 age group [%]**

The NEET category includes 569 adults or 22% of the adult population, 76% of the population of young adults up to 24 years of age or 86% of young women. 45% of persons in this group never perform paid work. Again, we get a significant difference between men and women[241] – almost 30% of young men and 60% of women never work[242] [Table 26].

**TABLE 26. Experience of paid work of adults up to 24 years of age [%]**

| | Perform paid work | Never perform paid work |
|---|---|---|
| Male | 70.6 | 29.4 |
| Female | 40.4 | 59.6 |
| Total | 69.4 | 30.6 |

*Note: This refers to the total work experience, not current employment.*

In particular, we analyzed the work activity of young people aged 16 to 24 who are not in the education system and do not have the status of an employed person [N = 672]. **18.5% of them are active – *during the past week they did some paid work***. This is slightly less than the general adult population where a positive response is given by 20% of persons. When looking only at adults, this percentage is slightly higher and amounts to 19.3%. **The employment activity of women in the younger population is still low – 8.4% and reflects the picture of gender**

241 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 53.5$ ; df = 1 ; p<.01.

242 Data on the total paid work experience is presented only for adults, since younger people did not have the opportunity to gain that experience, so the results are too distorted in the direction of underrepresentation of paid work experience.

**differences in the general population (8.7% of adult women are active).** This age group does not differ from the general population in the rate of employment and sociodemographic determinants of employment. Differences in relation to the general adult population are present in the legal regulation of work because the youth more often state that they are involved in the work that is reported.

**Almost half of young people aged 16 to 24 regularly (46.8%) or at least occasionally (3.2%) sign an employment contract with an employer, which is more common than in the general population.** Yong people most often work in the private sector (46.5%), followed by the public or state sector (20.2%), and there is a smaller share of those with an unknown employer – in the general population 32.5%, and 14.9% in young people aged 16 to 24. Of the 38 persons who did not categorize paid work into any of the offered categories, but answered "something else", again the largest number (11 answers) listed jobs related to waste: bulky waste (4), collection and sale of iron (6) and collecting bottles (1). **As in the general population of the Roma, the collection of waste and secondary raw materials is represented in the youngest category of the working population.**

We have already established that the representation of Roma women in paid work is extremely low. It is particularly worrying that the difference between men and women in terms of representation in paid work has not changed through generations. Unemployed men are significantly more likely to register with the Employment Service in all age groups (Figure 92). In the age group from 24 to 65, the majority of unemployed men (50.7%) are registered with the CES, which is true for 44.5% of unemployed women.[243] In the NEET group, only 40.2% of men state that they are registered with the CES and so do only 32.8% of women. The difference in the representation of women is again significantly lower.[244] **Based on the collected data, we can conclude that greater social inclusion of youth through registration with the Croatian Employment Service takes place primarily in the male population, while most young women have not even taken this necessary first step.**

243 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 6.89$ ; df = 1 ; p<.01.

244 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 5.33$ ; df = 1 ; p<.05.

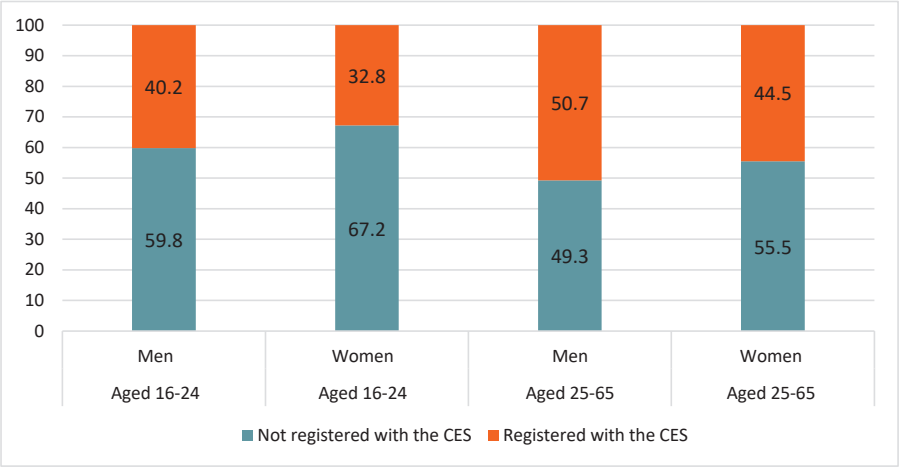


**FIGURE 92. Relative share of unemployed women and men registered with the Employment Service: comparison between members of the NEET group and the elderly [%]**

Most people over the age of 55 never perform paid work, which is a significantly higher share than in the other two age groups (Figure 93).[245] The disparity between men and women is the same in all age groups.

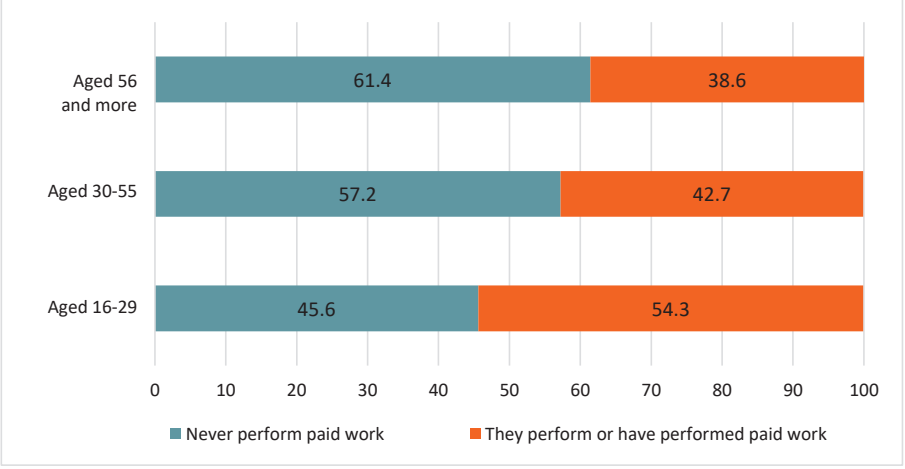


**FIGURE 93. Relative share of persons with work experience in paid work by age groups [%]**

Finally, we can conclude that our data does not indicate significant and qualitative generational differences in the survey employment rate, work experience and women's involvement in paid work. **The employment rate in all age groups is**

245 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 36.12$ ; df = 4 ; p<.01.

**extremely low, as is the inclusion of Roma women in the labor market. This data is surprising and indicate the failure of previous social integration measures, and the results of greater inclusion of Roma youth in the compulsory education system are particularly disappointing. It has not led to greater integration into the labor market and to a reduction in the employment status gap between men and women.** Roma youth are less active than the middle-age generation, and this is especially true for women. Like their parents, they generally perform simple jobs for private employers, and appear to be equally involved in probably undeclared work related to the collection of waste and secondary raw materials. Positive shifts were recorded in the rate of registered work and registration with the Employment Service in the male population. However, **the registration rate of young unemployed women is lower than that of the middle-age generation.** The reasons for such findings should be examined because they probably lie in the way social rights are regulated for young mothers.

The results presented in this chapter follow the previous conclusions from the analysis of sociodemographic predictors of Roma employment status and work activity and point to the need for stronger links between the education system and the labor market, professional training programs and support for young people in job search and job retention. We will deal specifically with this topic in the next chapter.

## 4.3. Activities of unemployed persons, job search methods and attitudes towards employment

All previous data that we have analyzed consistently show that the vast majority of the Roma in Croatia are unemployed and that in this sense there are no significant qualitative demographic differences[246] – employment status of an employed person refers to less than 10% of members of this ethnic community. There is a slightly bigger percentage of active persons, but they represent a minority in every demographic group. Through analysis of their work activities and the form of work they perform, we dealt with a minority of the surveyed sample. In this chapter, we will analyze activities related to job search and some aspects of Roma work motivation in the Republic of Croatia, covering the majority of the adult population. We will pay special attention to the registration of the unemployed with the Croatian Employment Service, active job search and the use of active employment policy

246 Numerous analysis we have conducted show significant statistical differences in employment status and work activity between certain demographic groups of the Roma ethnic community. For example, there are differences between regions or differences with regard to the level of education. However, these differences are quantitative in nature – they show a bigger or smaller representation of a particular group. They do not show qualitative differences – we cannot conclude that a certain demographic group, for example persons who have completed more than compulsory primary education, are qualitatively different from other sociodemographic clusters – in no analysis did we record that the majority of the Roma population is employed or close to statistical picture which we record in the general population of Croatia.

measures. As before, we are interested in the overall scale of registration of unemployed persons with the Employment Service, regional differences and individual sociodemographic determinants of registration. In analyzing attitudes towards employment, we will pay special attention to the attitude towards employment of women who are still strongly underrepresented in paid work.

Interpretation of the results and recommendations for social policy will be based on knowledge about the psychological significance of job search as a recursive self-regulatory process [Kanfer, Wanberg and Kantrowitz, 2001; Klehe and van Hooft, 2018; Virkes, Maslić Seršić and Lopez-Zafra, 2017], low or insignificant correlation between job search intensity and successful employment [Šverko et al., 2008; Tomas and Maslić Seršić, 2017], but also on current examples of the practice of supporting the Roma in job search. In the latter case, we will present the personal experiences of people who directly support unemployed Roma in their job search. We single out their experiences in special frames. They are an illustration of theoretical knowledge and complement it.

*Job search is a non-routine and complex activity – it is not rehearsed [relies to a small extent on an automated scenario], it is independently organized and given [no externally set goals and control of activities], has a delayed goal [finding the desired job], it is extrinsically motivated – the process does not include activities whose content encourages intrinsic motivation [includes negative emotions, obstacles, arduous activities, Kanfer et al., 2001]. Successful job search requires complex skills, developed self-awareness, emotional resilience and self-discipline. In other words, a jobseeker must be well aware of the opportunities in the labor market, their own potentials and limitations. The job seeker should be able to present themselves to employers in the best light, without giving up after successive failures and rejections. They should set goals, define plans, analyze the outcomes of their actions, and learn from failure. Research has shown that success in job search depends very little on the intensity of the search, but primarily on the quality of the described process, and the results are greatly influenced by circumstances such as discrimination, human and social capital and the labor market situation [Maslić Seršić and Vukelić , 2012; Šverko et al., 2008; Wanberg, Hough and Song, 2002].*

*Today, even universities have programs with the aim to teach students job search skills and give them the social and emotional support in the process. The need for this support by the long-term unemployed and socially excluded individuals does not need to be emphasized. However, it is important to point out that it is not justified to shift the responsibility for job search failure solely to the individual. Failure to employ job-seeking members of the Roma national minority is a failure of the wider community they belong to.*

## Activity and status of unemployed persons

A total of 1,183 respondents stated that they are registered with the Croatian Employment Service, which is slightly less than half of unemployed persons aged 16 to 65 (43.7%), but only 29.8% of unemployed persons state that they are actively seeking employment, and 5.1% state that they are starting their own business. If we look only at the sample of persons registered with the Croatian Employment Service, then these percentages are slightly higher, but still less than half of the respondents are actively seeking employment (49.7% of persons registered with the CES), and 5.3% are trying to start their own business. Significant differences were found in regard to gender and age of unemployed persons (Table 27). Women are less frequently registered with the Service[247] and the difference between men and women is even greater within the sample of people who are actively seeking employment.[248] Differences between age groups were also noted. Older people over the age of 55 are rarely actively seeking employment[249] and are less likely than younger people to register with the Croatian Employment Service (Figure 96).[250] Some regional differences in the representation of the registration of unemployed Roma with the Croatian Employment Service were also identified (Figure 94), as well as differences regarding the segregation and remoteness of the settlement in which the person lives (Figure 95). The largest share of unemployed persons is registered with the Employment Service in Slavonia and Central Croatia.[251] The lowest number of unemployed persons living in segregated and remote settlements is registered with the Employment Service.[252]

**TABLE 27. Representation of unemployed persons registered with the CES by gender (%)**

| | Registered with CES | Not registered with CES | Actively seeking employment | Not seeking employment |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Muškarci | 47.1 | 52.9 | 38.4 | 61.6 |
| Žene | 40.6 | 59.4 | 21.8 | 78.2 |
| Ukupno | 43.7 | 56.2 | 29.8 | 70.2 |

Although women are strongly underrepresented in paid work compared to men in all age groups, it is interesting that more than 40% of them are registered with the Croatian Employment Service, and 21.8% state that they are actively seeking employment. One of the reasons for the relatively high share of Roma women reg-

247 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 11.69$ ; df = 1 ; p<.01.
248 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 89.46$ ; df = 1 ; p<.01.
249 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 22.26$ ; df = 2 ; p<.01.
250 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 13.8$ ; df = 2 ; p<.01.
251 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 154.92$ ; df = 5 ; p<.01.
252 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 58.33$ ; df = 2 ; p<.01.

istered with the CES is certainly motivated by the exercise of social rights, in this case especially the right to maternity benefits. At a general level, we can conclude that **a large number of Roma persons are registered with the Employment Service, and for men this share is close to half of the sample aged 16 to 65.** This means that almost every other person is registered and that the Croatian Employment Service is a place where adult Roma come into contact with Croatian society and its institutions. Thanks to these registrations, directly or indirectly (through family members or neighbors), society has contact with adult residents of this socially excluded ethnic community. But the question arises – to what extent has the potential of the Croatian Employment Service been used to include the Roma in the labor market or has its role remained primarily administrative?

*I come from a working-class family. I remember the ringing of my parents' alarm clock, going to work, preparing lunch, waiting for the paycheck to arrive. Our Roma beneficiaries do not have such an experience. There are no employed people in their family or immediate environment. That is why their work motivation is difficult to develop – there is a lot of insecurity, fear, avoidance. These are people who come from remote and isolated communities, who live in poverty and unfavorable environment. They give up at the very beginning of the job search process more often than the majority of the population – they make various excuses in order to cancel the meeting, give up, do not persist in the activities they started... They often register with the Employment Service in order to exercise their social rights, not to actively seek employment. On the other hand, there are barriers set by employers themselves. There are immense prejudices. Many employers do not want to hire Roma.*

*In our work, we mostly focus on Roma youth, those who are now starting a family. Their children should have a worker model. We encourage them to finish at least primary school. We used to refer them to other educational institutions but now we have the opportunity to implement the education of unemployed people for the completion of primary school and the acquisition of the first profession through the Measures of Active Employment Policy. It is a good program that we are implementing in cooperation with the Ministry of Science and Education. There is also the possibility of on-the-job training where a person is trained on the job for six months with the aim of acquiring the practical knowledge and skills needed to perform the tasks of a particular job. The training may be conducted for the purpose of obtaining a certificate by the employer or an official document. The institute finances the mentor, the costs of financial aid and transportation of students, but also the cost of theoretical classes if they are conducted in an educational institution. Upon completion, the student receives a certificate from the employer or an official document to certify the competency for a specific job. In*

*addition, the employer decides whether to offer employment afterwards. It is an opportunity for both beneficiaries and employers to get to know each other, gain security and reduce prejudice. Recently, one guy completed such training and continued to work for the same employer. Sometimes he stops by, we talk and joke. Examples like this maintain my work motivation. It is a great pleasure when we succeed.*

*When the implementation of the Action Plan for Roma Inclusion started, we barely gathered people for public works. When the practice showed that public works are less arduous than the jobs offered to them on the labor market, we got the opposite situation – they do not accept the offered jobs because they are waiting for public works. Today we do not offer public works to the youth. It does not make sense. We need to work intensively with young people, involve them in further education, encourage them to seek employment. One young married couple has been working in tourism for years. They were so-called permanent seasonal workers. He is now employed in the metal industry. Seasonal jobs suit you while you are young and free. When you start a family, you look for security, you are no longer mobile. I think they succeeded because they had each other, they were supportive. We were just mediators.*

*The number of unemployed people in our local community has more than halved. But that is true for the majority population, not for the Roma. Their number of unemployed persons remained the same. Now their unemployment seems even higher to me. The labor market is demanding, sometimes cruel to everyone. I think there is a need for a transitional phase, something like social entrepreneurship, programs that would be a transitional step and allow the Roma to gradually integrate into the free labor market. It would be an opportunity to acquire work skills and habits related to regular employment. Employment opportunities in the public sector and local government units should be used to a greater extent. The Roma have the right to claim priority recruitment but are often not aware of it. There was a young man with high education in our area. We planned to hire him at the Employment Service. He did not apply for the job.*

Advisor, Croatian Employment Service[253]

253 The authors thank the Croatian Employment Service for its openness and willingness to share experiences. The interview was conducted in February 2020.

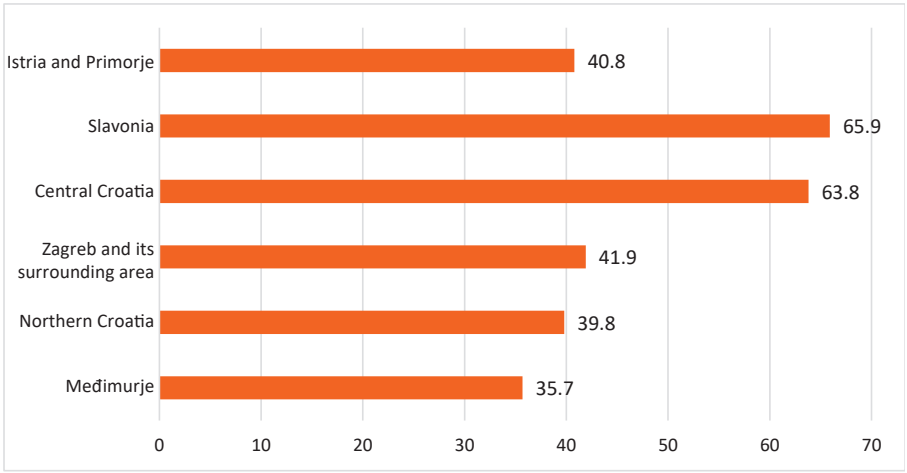


**FIGURE 94.** Relative share of persons registered with the CES in different Croatian regions [%]

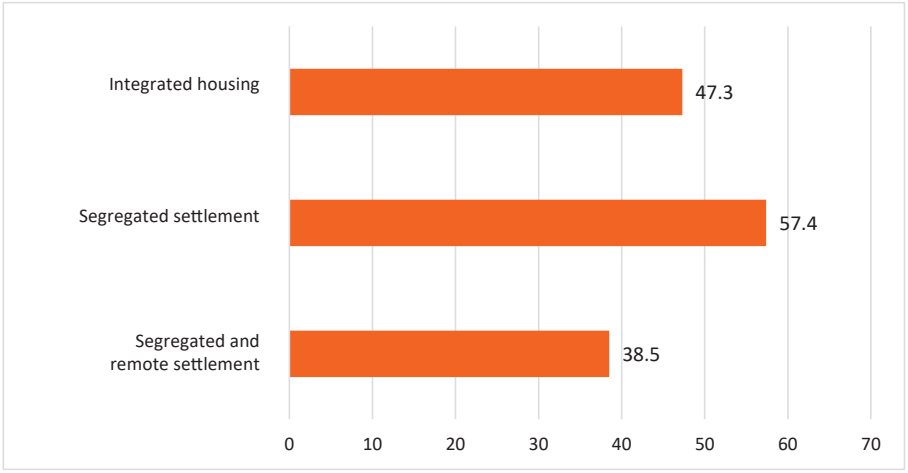


**FIGURE 95.** Relative share of persons registered with the CES with regard to segregation and remoteness of housing in relation to the general population [%]

Croatian regions differ significantly in the registration of unemployed Roma with the Croatian Employment Service. Central Croatia and Slavonia stand out with the majority of unemployed persons of Roma ethnicity registered – more than 60% of them. Other regions do not differ significantly – the share of registered persons ranges from 35.7% in Međimurje to 41.9% in the city of Zagreb and Zagreb County.

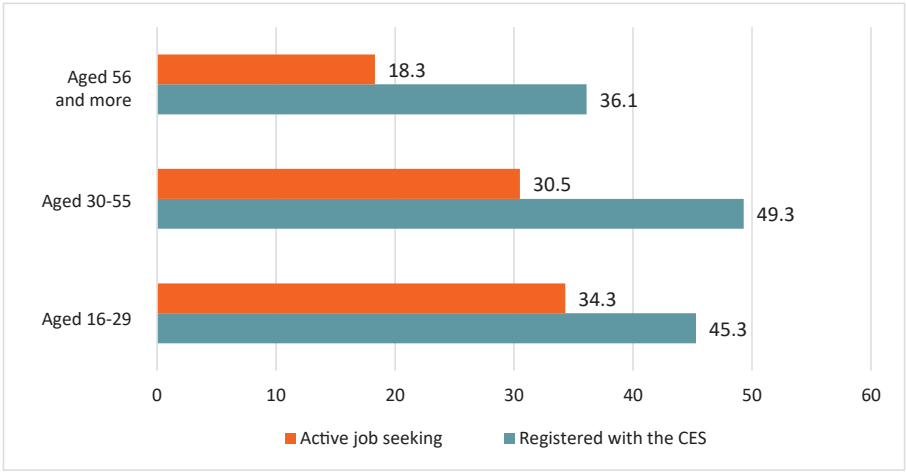


**FIGURE 96. Relative share of persons registered with the CES in different age groups (%)**

Although young unemployed persons are less likely to register with the Croatian Employment Service than middle-aged persons, they are more likely to actively seek employment than the elderly. Among the youth, the difference between the number of registered persons and those who are actively seeking employment is the smallest. However, in all age groups, **the share of people who are actively seeking employment is relatively small and reaches a third of the unemployed only among young people.** This figure is worrying and indicates the discouragement of the Roma and their passivity in the labor market. A minority of the unemployed state that they are actively looking for employment, and probably only a small proportion of them do so proactively and in a quality manner.

Individual sociodemographic characteristics significantly predict active job search,[254] and independent predictors show a similar set as in predicting work activity. Men, more educated persons and younger people, as well as those coming from smaller households are more likely to be actively seeking employment. Various indicators of economic well-being or poverty do not make a significant independent contribution in predicting active job search (Table 28).

254 Chi-square test, $\chi^2 = 145.798$ ; df = 8 ; p<.01.

**TABLE 28. Individual sociodemographic predictors of active job search: results of logistic regression analysis**

| Sociodemographic characteristics | B | Wald | *p* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | -.825 | 77.991 | .000 |
| Age | -.010 | 6.901 | .009 |
| Level of education | .272 | 14.961 | .000 |
| Segregation and remoteness of settlements | .007 | 0.014 | .906 |
| Household size | -.053 | 10.355 | .001 |
| Total household consumption | .001 | 0.022 | .882 |
| Hunger in the household | .027 | 2.241 | .134 |
| Household income | .000 | 4.216 | .040 |

*Note: Level of education = no education [1]; incomplete primary school [2], completed primary school or higher education [3]; Segregation and remoteness of settlements = segregated and remote settlement [1], segregated settlement [2], integrated housing [3]; Household size = number of household members with whom the person lives, including children; Total household consumption = from 0 HRK [1] to more than 12,000.00 HRK [10]; Hunger in the household = how often has an individual or a member of their household gone to bed hungry in the past month [from 1 – never to 4 – 4 times or more]; Household income = the total monthly income regardless of its source – up to 3,000.00 HRK [1], more than 3,000.00 HRK [2]; Criterion = choosing the answer "actively seeking employment".*

Active employment policy measures were adopted by the Government of the Republic of Croatia[255] in order to encourage the employment of the long-term unemployed and vulnerable groups. They are aimed at job seekers themselves, but also at employers who are stimulated by tax relief or vouchers for hiring new employees, maintaining jobs and preventing layoff. Thus, for example, state aid with the aim of encouraging the employment of the unemployed was introduced. The aid is available to entrepreneurs who operate for profit. There are self-employment benefits granted to unemployed persons who decide to start their own business and are registered in the records of the Employment Service. Business expansion grants are grants awarded to businesses that have already received self-employment support and whose contractual obligations have expired but have proven that they have fulfilled all obligations towards the Employment Service. Public works are works based on community service initiated by the local community or civil society organizations. Public work must be non-profit and uncompetitive to the existing economy in the area. Priority is given to programs in the field of social welfare, education, protection and preservation of the environment, as well as maintenance and utility works.

255 Active policy measures are published on the website of the CES and the Ministry of Labor and Pension System and are available at http://mjere.hr/mjere//.

Although almost half of adult unemployed persons were registered with the Employment Service (N = 1,145), only 690 of them answered questions about the use of certain active policy measures implemented by the Ministry of Labor and Pension System and the Croatian Employment Service (Table 29). **A significant share of these persons used the measure that got them involved in public works (18.3%),** while a very small number of persons used other measures. This data is consistent with CES data, which also shows a small share of unemployed Roma involved in certain active policy measures, with the exception of involvement in public works - according to CES records, 630 Roma were involved in public works in 2018, and 626 in 2017 ([G]OHRRNM, 2019). Of the 665 unemployed persons surveyed, more than half of them state that additional education would help them find a job, and most of those who believe so are also ready for additional education. Based on this data, we can conclude that the described measures did not catch on and did not prove to be effective for job seekers of Roma ethnicity. This is confirmed by two facts: **(1) only about half of the persons registered with the CES answered this set of questions, and (2) among them, a very small number used certain measures.**

**TABLE 29. Use of certain active employment policy measures**

| Measure | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Employment support | 16 | 2.3 |
| Job retention training | 19 | 2.7 |
| Self-employment | 11 | 1.6 |
| Professional training | 27 | 3.9 |
| Acquisition of skills for persons without work experience | 31 | 4.9 |
| Occupational training without entering into employment | 13 | 1.9 |
| Public works | 126 | 18.3 |
| For employers – maintaining jobs | 2 | (of 63) |
| For employers – hiring seasonal workers | 5 | (of 58) |

*Note: The percentages we quote refer to the relative share given the number of respondents who answered this set of questions – N = 690.*

The measures adopted by the Government of the Republic of Croatia are socio-political in nature and aim to cover broad sections of the vulnerable population in the labor market. When we talk about the Roma, these measures are poorly used and the reasons for their non-use should be investigated. The reasons might be the lack of information of potential beneficiaries or the weaknesses of certain measures due to which there is no interest of employers or potential employees. In the end, we can conclude that the Croatian Employment Service is certainly a place of contact of adult Roma with the institutions of Croatian society, but the social policy measures implemented by the CES do not ensure the process of their social inclusion, at least not to a greater extent. Of course, this does not mean that the

CES, primarily through individual counseling work and group support programs, does not achieve some positive results. However, they are of limited scope, as we have been able to see from all the data so far. First of all, a very small number of the Roma manage to establish employment.

In addition to the activities of the Croatian Employment Service, there are numerous civil sector programs that focus on support in job search and employment of vulnerable groups and the long-term unemployed. Many of these programs are funded by European Social Fund projects.[256] Some of them are intended to empower the Roma in the labor market, and some include various vulnerable groups, including Roma. They provide intensive support in job search, offer the acquisition of soft skills and networking, hire professionals and volunteers. The work methods are based on modern knowledge in the field of psychology, social work, career behavior and often offer a method of social mentoring.[257] There are more and more such projects in Croatia and their effects on the social inclusion of the Roma should be monitored in the future.[258] The disadvantage of these programs is their time limit. Numerous projects fail to achieve the so-called self-sustainability, that is continuity of started activities. Therefore, social policy institutions should use ESF projects primarily as an addition to their activities and as a means of testing innovative solutions.

*I had one mentee of Roma nationality. It was a woman who lives in a marital union and has a daughter who attends the 3rd grade of primary school. The mentee has completed 4 grades of primary school and as a result of the mentoring process she decided to enroll and complete the remaining grades of primary school (5–8) in order to be a role model for her daughter and open new employment opportunities. At the moment, her goal is to get a job as a cleaner, and her long-term goal is to become independent with her daughter and leave her husband (there were reports of physical assault). During the mentoring process, I worked on her empowerment, increasing her self-confidence and building a positive self-image. There is an obvious need for continued support even after leaving the project, especially in connection with the completion of school and further development.*

Note of a social mentor in the ESF project

256 The European Social Fund (ESF) is one of the EU structural funds (along with the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Cohesion Fund) whose main goal is to reduce disparities in living standards in EU Member States by promoting economic and social cohesion. The ESF is aimed at encouraging entrepreneurship, helping employees find better jobs and establishing fairer opportunities for all EU citizens in their employment (http://www.esf.hr/europski-socijalni-fond/).

257 Social mentoring emphasizes the social component within the role of mentoring, and the goal is to influence the social status of the individual through the mentoring relationship. Social mentoring is a method of involving and empowering vulnerable and marginalized groups in the society (Arnould, 2011).

258 The authors thank the Institute for Labor Market Development for its openness and willingness to share experiences. Data from the notes of social mentors working on projects of social inclusion of vulnerable and marginalized groups in the labor market were collected in February 2020.

*I carried out activities with the Roma as part of the project and I have really positive experiences. In the first period, two Roma women were included, S. M. and N. J. N., while the second period included S. T. and her husband D. T. It was necessary to invest time in the process of building trust because the beneficiaries, as they put it, until that point never felt that the institutions they reached out to treated them with respect and support. It is necessary to additionally motivate beneficiaries with "small additional jobs" that they should do for themselves even if they are not sure that they can do them. They seek support such as recognition of primary school certificate (5th grade completed in Serbia with one user, translation of certificate etc. ) or additional checks and contacts of the adult education school for enrollment in the continuation of primary school etc. When referring beneficiaries to elected representatives of the councils of the Roma national minority (county, city, municipal), there is resistance because they have had unpleasant experiences so far. It was necessary to use the available channels of support from the competent social worker at the Center for Social Welfare, to contacts in associations where they can exercise certain rights and foundations etc. Telephone contact was more frequent (which was not recorded) and they asked for clarification of the letters they received from institutions etc. so that it would be easier for them to respond to what was asked of them.*

Note of a social mentor in the ESF project

## Attitudes towards employment

Attitudes and behavior are not symmetrical phenomena, and their connection can be shaped by various factors related to the characteristics of the individual or the situation in which they find themselves. This ultimately means that people do not always behave in accordance with their attitudes. Furthermore, attitudes can be the cause of a behavior, but also its consequence. For example, changes in behavior imposed by some external circumstances (legislation or norms of ethical behavior) may change attitudes (for an overview see: Chaicklin, 2011; Kraus, 1995). Although they do not have to be a strong predictor of behavior, positive attitudes towards equality in the labor market in a population are always desirable because they show readiness for change, serving as an indicator of openness to social policy measures. That is why the subject matter of our research was the attitude of the Roma towards employment.

We analyzed attitudes towards women's employment because there is a pronounced underrepresentation of women in all forms of work within the Roma national minority. The results provide the opposite picture of the behavior itself (the actual representation of women in paid work) and are an indicator of the general

positive evaluation of employment and paid work. **Most adults have a positive attitude towards women's employment** [Figure 97]. For 76.9% of persons it is acceptable for a woman to earn, for most it is acceptable for a woman to earn more than men [60.8%] and for a woman with children to be employed [60.1%]. However, it should be noted that expressing a positive attitude towards women's employment is socially desirable, so the results are likely to be distorted in the direction of greater representation of positive attitudes. Despite this assumption, more than a fifth of the respondents expressed a negative attitude towards the employment of women who have children, as well as towards the situation in which a woman earns more than a man. Future research should determine how negative the attitude towards maternal employment is determined by the impossibility of organized childcare and whether it can be changed by greater involvement of children in nurseries and kindergartens.

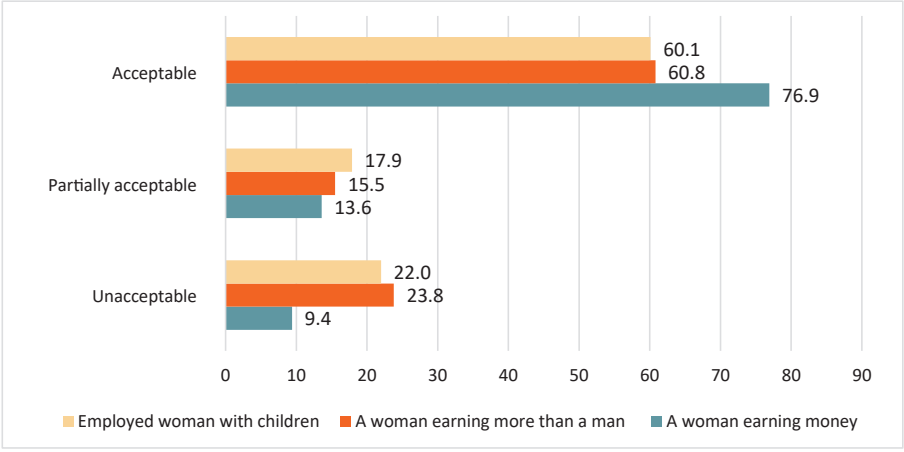


**FIGURE 97. Relative share of attitudes towards women's employment [%]**

Individual sociodemographic characteristics explain a small but significant part of individual differences in attitudes towards the employment of women with children [Table 30].[259] Positive attitudes towards employment of women with children are related to indicators of socioeconomic well-being and gender. Gender, level of education, household income, together with segregation and remoteness of housing make a significant independent contribution to the prediction of attitudes – women, more educated persons, persons from households with higher total incomes and those who do not live in segregated and remote settlements have a more positive attitude towards women's employment. Interestingly, work activity and age are not significant independent predictors of this attitude. In the analysis of predictors of certain forms of work behavior and status, the type of settlement in which a person lives did not prove to be a significant independent predictor.

259 Corrected coefficient of multiple determination, $_{adj.}R^2$=.070 ; df=7 ; p<.01.

The bivariate relationship between housing and observed variables was explained by poverty indicators associated with segregated and remote housing. When we talk about attitudes, then individual characteristics of socioeconomic status are less important than the type of housing. Obviously, the inhabitants of remote and segregated settlements have less contact with the attitudes, values and experiences of the non-Roma population, so their value system is more homogeneous. It is also interesting to note that the connection with age is not significant, which is another indicator of the lack of differences between the younger and older generations of the Roma when considering their employment status, work activities or representation of women in paid work.

**TABLE 30. Individual sociodemographic predictors of attitudes towards employment of women with children: results of linear regression analysis**[260]

| Sociodemographic characteristics | ß | *p* |
|---|---|---|
| Gender | .152 | .000 |
| Age | .009 | .838 |
| Work activity | -.009 | .298 |
| Level of education | .137 | .001 |
| Household income | .119 | .004 |
| Household size | -.069 | .099 |
| Remoteness and segregation of the settlement | .148 | .000 |

*Note: Level of education = without education [1]; incomplete primary school [2], completed primary school or higher education [3]; Segregation and remoteness of settlements = segregated and remote settlement [1], segregated settlement [2], integrated housing [3]; Household income = the total monthly income regardless of its source – up to 3,000.00 HRK [1], more than 3,000.00 HRK [2]; Criterion = unacceptable [1], partially acceptable [2], acceptable [3].*

260 N = 705

## 4.4. Experience of discrimination against Roma in the labor market

*Discrimination during employment and at work is regulated by positive EU and Croatian laws. However, research conducted by the CES (2010) shows that information on these laws and on the very concept of discrimination is insufficient for both employers and unemployed persons. The most known discrimination is related to a person's gender and disability, so more than 55% of employers and 45% of unemployed persons know that this form of discrimination is punishable by law in Croatia. Less than half of employers and about 40% of the unemployed know that ethnic or religious discrimination is punishable by law.*

Research participants had the opportunity to answer the question: *Do they feel that in the last year they have been discriminated against or disadvantaged because of some personal characteristics by a person or organization?*[261] Of the 308 people who answered the question related to discrimination at work, 238 (77.8%) answered that they believe that they have not been exposed to discrimination at work in the last year. Of the 350 people who answered the question, 156 (45.7%) felt that they had been discriminated against when seeking employment. When we talk about the phenomena of discrimination, it is almost exclusively about the experience of discrimination on the grounds of nationality, while the declared experiences of discrimination on the grounds of gender or age are rare and negligible in the overall sample.

On average, respondents disagree with the claim that others see Roma as lazy and slackers (Figure 98). On the agreement scale in the range from 1 to 5, the average grade is M=2.32 (SD=1.66) and expresses disagreement with the stated statement. However, the distribution of answers is extremely asymmetric – as many as 55.6% of respondents do not agree with it at all, and 20.7% completely agree. Individual sociodemographic characteristics explain a small but significant part of individual differences in the perception of this attitude of others about Roma (Table 31).[262] Significant independent contribution to the prediction of this perception is made by household income, along with segregation and remoteness of housing – people coming from households with higher total incomes and those living in segregated and remote settlements on average agree more with the statement that others see Roma as lazy and slackers. Gender, age, work activity and level of education

261 The issue covered various areas of discrimination, including discrimination at work, in employment and job search.

262 Corrected coefficient of multiple determination, $_{adj.}R^2$=.0523 ; F=3.304 ; df=6 ; p<.05.

are not significant independent predictors of this perception of the attitudes of others. Again, the remoteness and segregation of housing in relation to the general population proves to be a significant independent predictor of this attitude, which indicates a greater homogeneity of attitudes of Roma living segregated in relation to the general population.

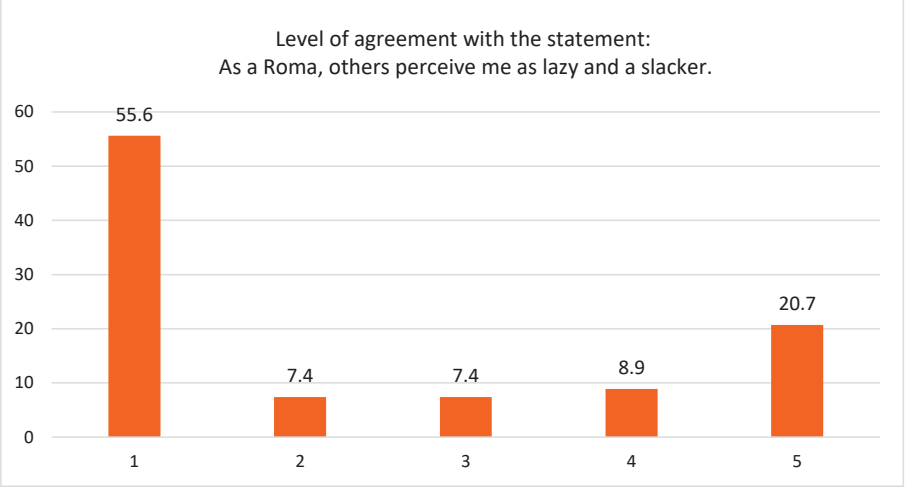


**FIGURE 98. Relative share of people who to some extent agree with the statement that others see Roma as lazy and slackers [%]**[263]

Findings related to the experience of discrimination at work and in job search, as well as answers related to the perception of work habits of Roma of the majority population, were not as expected for several reasons: (1) very few respondents answered questions related to discrimination in the labor market; (2) more than 20% of those who responded stated that they thought they had been discriminated against; (3) more than half of the respondents did not agree at all with the statement that other Roma were seen as lazy and slackers. The credibility of these findings should certainly be checked because they are not consistent with qualitative data and the results of numerous studies on prejudice and social distance towards Roma. There is a possibility that there was a spontaneous selection of respondents in the sample of persons who answered questions about discrimination, with a bigger representation of those who do not have experience of discrimination. Furthermore, given the low average level of education and inexperience in participating in research on attitudes and values, there is a possibility that a large number of participants did not understand the issue and assessed their own attitude, without expressing an opinion on the attitude of others towards Roma.

263 Number 1 means I completely disagree, and 5 means I completely agree.

In any case, the findings on the experience of discrimination should be checked in future research, and the data should be based primarily on a qualitative methodology – asking the Roma to qualitatively describe this type of experience without categorizing it as discrimination.

**TABLE 31. Individual sociodemographic predictors of the perception of attitudes of others towards Roma: results of linear regression analysis**[264]

| Sociodemographic characteristics | ß | *p* |
|---|---|---|
| Gender | -.044 | .292 |
| Age | -.072 | .107 |
| Work activity | -.042 | .298 |
| Level of education | .066 | .134 |
| Household income | .128 | .002 |
| Remoteness and segregation of the settlement | -.102 | .015 |

*Note: Level of educationl = no education [1]; incomplete primary school [2], completed primary school or higher education [3]; Segregation and remoteness of settlements = segregated and remote settlement [1], segregated settlement [2], integrated housing [3]; Household income = the total monthly income regardless of its source – up to 3,000.00 HRK [1], more than 3,000.00 HRK [2]; Criterion = others see the Roma as lazy and slackers [1–5].*

> *A boy applied for a job, he found it in the newspapers, where it was written that it was possible to arrange a phone call for a job interview. Everything was great over the phone and when the conversation was about to end, the boy just asked if they mind that he comes from a Roma settlement. There was silence and the voice on the other side said, "How will my customers react when a Roma delivers food to their house?"*
>
> RNM representative

264 N = 705

## 4.5. Work status as a determinant of psychosocial well-being

One of the main premises of contemporary theories of human psychosocial well-being is based on the important and irreplaceable function of employment. As we explained at the beginning of the chapter, employment is the way in which modern people achieve the economic well-being and independence associated with the availability of social goods (for an overview see: Feather, 1990). Other than that, employment also has a direct psychosocial function because it satisfies our need for purpose, determines our social identity and status, provides the possibility of a time structure, and forces us to engage in regular activity. Through employment, we expand our social horizons and connect with other people. Work gives us the opportunity to learn and fulfill our potentials (for a review see: Jahoda, 1982; Warr, 1987) Many studies have shown that unemployment is associated with impaired psychophysical well-being on individual and social levels. The high unemployment rate is accompanied by the increase of domestic violence, alcoholism, suicide and mental illness (Chaicklin, 2011; Wanberg, 2010). In our research, we have already shown that the work activity of the Roma is related to indicators of their psychosocial well-being. However, we have also found that the Roma in Croatia generally perform precarious and temporary, often undeclared simple jobs. Accordingly, we can rightly assume that Roma employment does not bring the psychosocial well-being it should, which certainly affects their work motivation. Having difficulties finding a job that ultimately does not offer the opportunity to meet material and psychosocial needs, does not connect with other people and does not help with the inclusion in Croatian society can be disappointing and lead to decline in work motivation. Therefore, we conclude the data analysis related to the employment status and work activities of the Roma with the findings on the connection between work and self-assessment of psychophysical well-being and general health.

The connection between work activity and economic well-being has already been confirmed, which is especially true for employment of women. In this part, we will analyze the link between work and work status with well-being in a strict sense – self-assessed general health.[265] To determine whether work is a significant independent predictor in assessment of general health, we conducted a two-step hierarchical linear regression analysis (Table 32). The first step included sociodemographic control variables: gender, age, level of education, household income and parental status. As expected, these variables were significantly associated with general health assessments.[266] Age, household income and the segregation

265 In this study, respondents rated their general health on a scale of 1 to 5, with a score of 1 meaning completely weakened and poor general health and a score of 5 indicating excellent health.

266 Corrected coefficient of multiple determination, $_{adj}R^2 = .23$; $F = 42.166$; $df = 6$, $p < .01$

and remoteness of the settlement in which a person lives made a significant independent contribution to the prediction of health. As expected, younger people, those with higher household incomes and those who do not live in remote and segregated settlements rated their health better. In the second step of the analysis, we entered variables related to work activity: current employment[267] (registered and unregistered), number of working hours per week, existence of an employment contract and years of work experience in any form of paid work. These variables significantly contributed to the overall explained variance of the criteria.[268] This means that this set of variables explains the further differences in self-assessments of health, even when we control other sociodemographic characteristics. Work activity and weekly working hours made a significant independent contribution. Persons who do paid work for several hours a week, assess their general health better.

Also, persons with different forms of employment notably differ in their assessments of general health.[269] Post hoc analyses showed that persons working in an unknown form of employment rated their health lower than other groups (Figure 99).

**TABLE 32. Individual sociodemographic and work predictors of general health self-assessment: results of hierarchical regression analysis**

| Sociodemographic characteristics | ß | *p* | ß | *p* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | -.058 | .061 | -.039 | .212 |
| Age | -.461 | .000 | -.494 | .000 |
| Level of education | .049 | .117 | .034 | .277 |
| Household income | .119 | .000 | .094 | .003 |
| Remoteness and segregation of the settlement | .074 | .020 | .068 | .031 |
| Parental status | -.055 | .089 | .059 | .067 |
| R=.482 ; $_{adj}R^2$=.23 ; F=42.166; df=6, $p$<.01 | | | | |
| Employment (registered and unregistered) | | | .065 | .038 |
| Weekly working hours | | | .071 | .024 |
| Holding an employment contract | | | -.022 | .473 |
| Total years of work | | | .050 | .208 |
| $_{\Delta}R^2$= .014 ; F=3.816 ; $p$<.05 ; R=.496 ; $_{adj}R^2$=.237 | | | | |

*Note: Level of education = no education [1]; incomplete primary school [2], completed primary school or higher education [3]; Segregation and remoteness of settlements = segregated and remote settlement [1], segregated settlement [2], integrated housing [3]; Household income = the total monthly income regardless of its source – up to 3,000.00 HRK [1], more than 3,000.00 HRK [2]; Criterion = general health self-assessment [1–5].*

267 As before, it was determined by the answer to the question: *Did you do any paid work (in cash or in kind) during the past week?*

268 Difference in the coefficient of multiple determination, $_{\Delta}R^2$ = .014; F = 3,816; $p$ <. 05.

269 ANOVA, F=4.98 ; df=5; p<.01

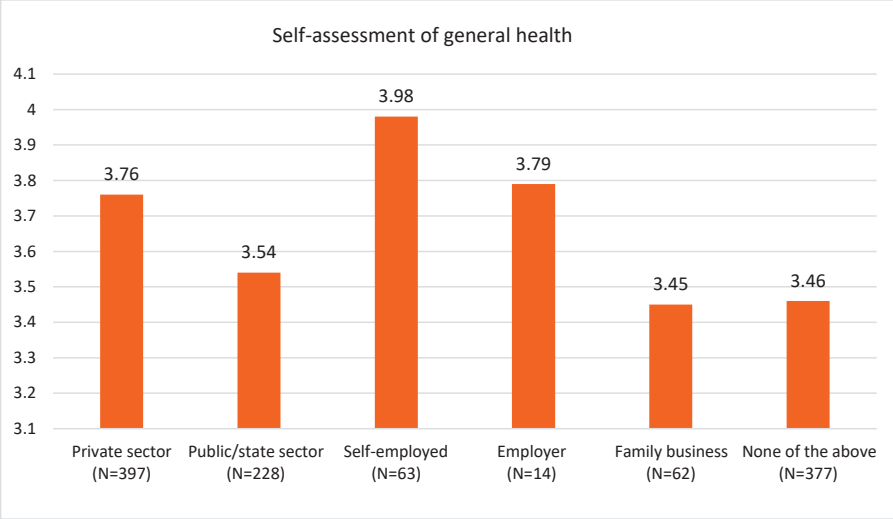


**FIGURE 99. Average assessment of general health in regard to the employment type**

We can conclude that paid work is positively associated with self-assessed general health. This connection should not be interpreted causally because paid work through its economic and psychological function can result in better general health, but also vice versa – better health can be the cause of an individual's higher work activity. However, significant differences between persons who do different forms of work speak in favor of the assumption that quality jobs lead to greater psychophysical well-being. In any case, this study did not identify the negative effects of paid work on the economic and psychophysical well-being of the Roma, despite the fact that these are mostly precarious simple jobs.

# 5. Conclusions and recommendations

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## 5.1. Education

The research conducted by Ecorys Hrvatska d.o.o. and the Center for Peace Studies for the Office for Human Rights and the Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia has given the most detailed results so far in the field of Roma education. It provided an instrument for decision-makers at the national, regional and local levels in Croatia and other stakeholders in the implementation of measures and activities in education, that can help them identify both key challenges and responses to those challenges that will facilitate positive changes in education status of RNM members in Croatia, and thus their position on the labor market and their overall social status. On the first level of identifying challenges and recommendations for better adaptation of the education system to make it more inclusive of RNM members and to provide equal conditions for education for all Roma, we can identify low levels of education, with **unfavorable material and financial conditions** that prevent access to quality content and activities in the field of education. If we put these challenges in the context of preschool education, they are evident in **insufficient progress of implementing measures of early childhood development,** which entails poor progress in Croatian language acquisition, insufficient socialization in a learning environment and poor development of graphomotor skills. There is also the **challenge of achieving formal conditions for access to preschool education** due to the undercapacity of the preschool education system in Croatia, as well as the **too short duration of preschool education,** which is compulsory in its current scope and fails to reduce the negative effects of growing up in socially and economically deprived communities.

In total, less than a third of Roma children are included in preschool education. **The prescribed annual duration of the program of 250–550 hours per year before starting primary school does not guarantee mitigation of social and material deprivation** to which children are often exposed in Roma settlements, **which implies the need for urgent changes in the scope and content of preschool education.** Also, due to the still low infrastructural capacity of the pre-

school education system in Croatia, kindergartens are often accessible only to children of employed parents, which most often disqualifies Roma children from attending kindergartens and gives them access only to preschool, which we have already found insufficient to cancel out the delayed inclusion in organized education. This indicates the **need to increase the capacity of preschool education, with inclusion criteria that would positively discriminate RNM members.**

The results show that there are two subjective reasons which affect the decision of parents or guardians to include the child in preschool education – statement that the child is too young to join the education system, and the fact that there is a person who can take care of the child in their own home. **Subjective reasons for non-participation in preschool education should be weakened as much as possible by actions of raising awareness of the Roma population about the importance of early childhood development, especially in terms of peer socialization and development of skills needed to join primary education (such as graphomotor skills).**

There are several factors that limit the participation of RNM members in education, which apply to all sections of education, from preschool to secondary school, starting from the **spatial segregation of the Roma population** which hinders access to educational institutions and affects the quality and regularity of participation in educational activities. **Segregation in education**, which is still largely evident in the formation of exclusively or predominantly Roma kindergarten, preschool and primary school groups and classes. This builds on the issue **the discrimination of RNM members by peers from the majority population and teachers,** which further weakens **the level of peer socialization** in terms of exposure to the influence of the majority population, which is one of the factors leading to low educational goals of Roma pupils and children and ultimately early drop out.

The challenges that RNM members are facing when it comes to better educational achievements also relate to **the attitudes, norms and values of the Roma population in the field of children's rights and education**, which on one hand still insufficiently motivate children to acquire work habits in learning, and on the other encourage and tolerate early marriage, housework of girls and work of children of primary school age. These limiting factors have been strengthened by the **lack of awareness of the importance of achieving** not only compulsory but also secondary education for Roma girls and boys. **The participation of RNM members in preschool and primary education, and thus in secondary education, could be facilitated by hiring experts – assistants in the community who would build a partnership between parents and representatives of institutions and work and raise awareness of the importance of education in Roma communities.** Speaking of assistants, in order to achieve better educational success of RNM members,

**the funding of assistantship programs within compulsory education should be increased,** so that the current share of primary school pupils who have teaching assistants, which is only 26.4%, increases to the level where a significant change in the educational success of Roma pupils can be achieved.

In addition to the subjective reasons for non-participation of children in preschool education, two objective reasons were identified – financial, due to severe material deprivation of the household, and the excessive distance of the kindergarten from the residential area. The distance is particularly pronounced, and the number of children in the localities grows with the distance from preschool infrastructure. **The measure of subsidizing transport to kindergartens and primary schools reduces the negative effect of spatial segregation of Roma settlements,** but this is still not expressed to the extent that would have an effective impact on the participation of Roma children in preschool education. **There is a need to think of a more inclusive financing of transport for RNM, as well as additional assistance in terms of organized escort of younger children in transportation.**

The inclusion of the Roma in education is still unsatisfactory in primary education, where the problem lies not only in the non-100% initial inclusion in compulsory education, but also in the still belated inclusion in primary education. This happens both due to parental neglect (for which there are sanctioning instruments, but they are rarely applied) and failure to regularly enroll the child in the first grade of primary school, and due to the child's unpreparedness for primary school (often due to non-participation in preschool education), which is why children are often placed in special programs. A recent trend, which decreases the better educational achievements of RNM members, refers to the **placement of Roma in special programs without a thorough psychophysical ability assessment** of a **child**, often only on the basis of insufficient command of the Croatian language. **Special programs, in particular for children who participate in them due to lack of knowledge of the Croatian language and thus miss the early socialization, further deprive Roma children in relation to socialization in peer groups** and in acquiring knowledge and skills that would help them catch up with their peers from the majority population. The participation of RNM children in such programs should be reduced to the necessary minimum. Furthermore, **there is still a low rate of inclusion of Roma children in individualized programs within regular education that would help Roma children not only to compensate for the difference in initial conditions compared to most of their peers, but also to achieve better educational success, which should be facilitated by motivating and educating their teachers.** This also affects the formation of low self-expectations and educational aspirations, which in turn are part of the reasons for early drop out. Early school drop out is reflected in the number of illiterate young Roma population (almost 4% of young people) and in the perpetuation of intergenera-

tional patterns of poverty, social exclusion and exclusion from the labor market. Spatial segregation of Roma settlements and segregation in preschool and primary education adds to the exclusion of young RNM members. As many as 21% of pupils attend ethnically segregated classes, which is a devastating fact, the worst situation being in Međimurje, where almost half of Roma children attend ethnically completely segregated classes. **Data on ethnic segregation collected at the level of preschool, primary and secondary education institutions, attached to the findings of this study, should be a strong indication for decisive action in the area of complete abolition of ethnically segregated departments or classes.**

Some of the programs that take place within regular education indicate an increased socialization and integration effect, which especially refers to the participation of children in extracurricular activities. This form of education still has a low share in the Roma population, with just over a third of Roma children participating. **In order to increase the share of Roma children participating in extracurricular activities, a package of measures and activities should be designed to: 1) reduce material deprivation of Roma children so that they can participate in this type of activity, 2) raise the material standard of schools to include more RNM children in extracurricular activities, 3) increase the awareness of Roma parents about the importance of involving children in extracurricular activities and 4) increase the capacity of teaching and professional staff conducting extracurricular activities.**

The participation of children in extended stays, which also significantly increases children's chances of successfully completing regular schooling, is still underrepresented in the Roma population – data show that just over a quarter of Roma children participate in extended stays.**The share of children participating in extended stays should certainly be increased because extended stays, in addition to helping socialization in peer groups, also bridge some aspects of material deprivation of Roma households** [such as meals offered during extended stays] **and increase school success by helping with homework and learning. School success is also an area of compulsory education in which better results would be desirable,** and which cannot be achieved if all the above prerequisites are not met. The majority of Roma in primary education achieve "good" success, which qualifies them only for enrollment in three-year secondary vocational schools.

**The socialization aspect manifested in the RNM population through the expression of attitudes, norms and values regarding education still has too great and negative effect on the inclusion of Roma children in the education system, as well as on successful completion of compulsory and secondary education. There is a great need for actions that will raise awareness on the importance of respecting children's rights and the importance of education.** Among the Roma population, there are still norms that consider children of primary school

age eligible to work, or for parents to arrange marriage for their children. It is shocking that this norm is advocated even by pupils and students, which shows the urgent need to raise the awareness of the Roma population about children's rights and the importance of education. These norms are mostly represented by RNM members of lower socioeconomic status and those from spatially segregated settlements, which is another indicator of the need for measures of spatial integration of the Roma population. Due to a combination of several circumstances mentioned, Roma children, more commonly girls, often drop out of school at the age of 15 (which is the legal age when compulsory education can be terminated) without completing primary education. According to these findings, **it is necessary to develop systems for monitoring the educational and employment status of young people who dropped out of school after compulsory education, with measures to encourage them to complete compulsory education and measures for inclusion secondary and higher education. A very low share of RNM members complete primary and secondary education in adulthood, or other adult education programs.** At the same time, adult secondary education is one of the weaker points in Roma education, because according to our data, only 3.9% of Roma completed secondary school in adulthood. **Monitoring, transparent evaluation and reporting on the educational progress of the Roma raises the question of the need to form ethnically disaggregated data with indicators that include elements of the overall socioeconomic and educational status.**

The low chances of the young Roma population to end the intergenerational transmission of poverty, underemployment and social exclusion are related to the fact that less than a fifth of young members have completed secondary education, as opposed to two-fifths of the majority population. Also, due to poorer school performance in primary school, the Roma mostly manage to qualify only for three-year secondary vocational schools, which almost automatically excludes them from enrollment opportunities in higher education institutions. The differences between the Roma and the majority population are even more pronounced when enrolling in and completing higher education (0.3% of the Roma versus 17% of the majority population). Reasons for dropping out of secondary school, in addition to the objective ones (financial reasons, marriage and pregnancy) include discriminatory behavior by peers and teachers, as well as non-supportive attitude of parents towards education. However, some RNM members do not see the point in completing secondary education because they do not see the chances for a change of perspective, i.e. for active inclusion in society and the labor market. **Based on the findings on the presence of discrimination on ethnic grounds, we must emphasize the need for widespread actions to combat discrimination and segregation.**

According to the results of the research, 12.0% of the Roma population is illiterate, and only 6.3% of Roma men and 3.9% of Roma women are included in adult education and training. 15.0% of Roma have completed secondary education, and 0.5% of RNM members from the sample have completes a three-year post-secondary or higher education. Bearing in mind these findings, it is **necessary to devise measures and activities that would increase the enrollment rate of RNM members in secondary, higher and adult education programs.** Funding for Roma participation in education is mostly provided by the state, and to a lesser extent by private donors. **Actions directed at private sector donors would increase the total amount of funding for the education of RNM members, which would increase not only the inclusion of the Roma in different levels of education, but also the quality of content and activities provided during schooling.**

In addition to the mentioned findings and elements that lead to low inclusion of RNM members in certain parts of the education system, **so called cross-sectional changes are needed because they relate to parental status, norms of the Roma population along with efforts and coordination of services in the field of education.** Primarily, there is a need for **greater investments and efforts in the area of parental competencies and sanctioning parents who neglect their parental duties** and contribute to their children dropping out of school. It is also necessary to **strengthen the capacity of institutions and responsible persons in the education system, as well as the exchange of information and examples of good practice,** in order to facilitate the transition to an effective education system for minorities in Croatia. In the current situation, there is still the issue of **unequal and unsystematic implementation of measures and activities in the field of education in different Croatian regions,** which largely depends on understanding the topics of education, along with the capacity and financial resources of the local self-government.

In concluding the recommendations, we must emphasize that there is already a quality system of recommendations in the field of Roma education. The weak point of this system is the lack of comprehensive, transparent and regular evaluation, together with reporting on Roma educational progress, especially in the case of early drop out. The current reporting system is built only on basic indicators, the data collected are fragmented and their collection, which is time-consuming, does not allow for decision-making regarding operational actions which could be taken at the time of identifying problems at the local level. **There is a noticeable lack of coordination of institutions and organizations at the national, regional and local levels, with still poor cross-sectoral and intra-sectoral cooperation. Therefore, measures that would result in greater coherence of the system, as well as regularity of horizontal and vertical intra-sectoral and cross-sectoral**

**information, and would enable design of measures or programs and their implementation, are necessary.**

## 5.2. Employment

Insights into the employment status and work activities of the Roma point to the following conclusions and recommendations:

**The survey employment rate of the Roma in the Republic of Croatia is extremely low (8.1%).** It is lower than the survey employment of the Roma in comparable European countries and does not show trends of positive changes – the available data do not show positive changes over time, and no differences have been found between older and younger generations. The analysis of national and international data does not show a link between macroeconomic trends in increasing the employment rate in the general population and Roma employment. The evident positive macroeconomic trends and increased offer on the job market are not a guarantee of a higher rate of Roma employment, so social policy makers should not rely on these trends, at least not significantly. **As this is a socially excluded ethnic community, special programs aimed at the social inclusion of adult Roma in the labor market are a necessity.** Only after their social inclusion, a positive connection between macroeconomic trends in Croatian society, as well as employment and the quality of Roma work can be expected.

Roma in the Republic of Croatia **mostly perform simple, temporary, precarious and undeclared work, and almost half of the adults do not have any paid work experience.** Work activities available to the Roma offer low work quality and do not provide material and psychosocial safety. Although there is a positive correlation between paid work and indicators of psychosocial and economic well-being, the differences between non-active and active Roma are not qualitative – **paid work does not offer a significant step forward in the quality of life.** These direct and indirect unfavorable work experiences do not provide a basis for encouraging work motivation among the Roma. A necessary precondition for greater proactivity and motivation of job-seeking Roma is a job offer that gives economic security and social inclusion through the regulation of employment status. In this sense, the potentials of the state and public sectors are still underutilized. They should be the target sector for the first step of stronger inclusion of the Roma in the Croatian labor market.

**The public and state sectors should aim to increase the share of Roma employees at the national and local levels.** Private employers should be financially stimulated to employ Roma. In addition, a broader social campaign should be launched with the aim of educating the population, breaking down attitudes and

prejudices against the Roma, and fostering solidarity. In doing so, we should rely on a positive campaign, and especially highlight positive examples.

The Roma should be informed and educated about their rights, support programs and illegal discrimination. This education should start as early as possible, already during education, and the objectives of education should be more clearly linked to employment and socioeconomic well-being.

When measuring the rate of Roma inclusion in the labor market, the quality of the work they perform in terms of economic security and social inclusion should also be taken into account. With the aim of greater inclusion of the Roma in the labor market and regulation of their employment status, **the content and requirements of undeclared legal jobs they perform, especially jobs related to the collection and sale of waste, metals and other secondary raw materials, should be analyzed in more detail**. These jobs should be institutionalized as much as possible or used for capacity analysis and employment in other related jobs.

Although there are significant quantitative differences between individual regions and counties and certain sociodemographic clusters in the employment rate, there are yet again no essential qualitative differences. Two findings should be noted: (1) large **underrepresentation of women performing paid work and persons living in segregated and remote localities** in relation to the general population and (2) equally **high (and higher!) youth unemployment rate** compared to older generations, or persons who have completed primary school or further education in relation to persons who have not completed primary school or have not been educated at all. These findings point to several recommendations:

Special social policy programs should be aimed at **including women in paid work,** and should be based on **changing the attitudes of the Roma towards women's employment** and the system of child care – kindergartens and extended stays in schools. A significant proportion of Roma who express a positive attitude towards women's employment is a psychosocial resource of the community that should be relied on in this process.

When we talk about the way of living (Roma settlements), the segregation and remoteness of the Roma in relation to the general population are a symbol of social exclusion of that ethnic community. That can also be a cause of further social exclusion for a better homogenization of the population living within those settlements, as well as their internal organization and structure. Special measures for integration of the Roma into the labor market should be aimed towards persons living in such settlements, while the target group (when speaking of the labor market) should be the youth.

Although the mass **inclusion of the Roma in the education system is certainly**

**a necessary and positive step, it turned out that it is not enough for their integration into the labor market**. At every step of this process, we should keep in mind that these are socially excluded pupils, as well as their families and other close people. The result is a lack of social capital that they can rely on during job seeking, employment and job retention. That is why it is important to make up for this shortcoming through **social mentoring, a strong connection between the education system and employers, along with professional assistance in career planning.**

To a large extent, through the Croatian Employment Service, the society managed to follow the recommendations of the European Commission regarding the registration of unemployed (especially young) Roma. As almost **every other Roma is registered with the Croatian Employment Service,** most Roma are directly or indirectly available to institutions, and therefore available for various social inclusion programs. However, active employment policy measures, as well as job search support, have not proved effective at the population level. The Roma rarely use these measures, are **often inactive in their job search, and successful employment and job retention are not linked to trends in the general population but are associated with the most successful individuals.** These findings point to two recommendations:

**Active employment policy measures** should be based on the interests and opportunities of the Roma, the interests and opportunities of potential employers and implemented in cooperation with persons who work directly in Roma employment support. Every step should take into account the fact that these are socially excluded people, and this primarily means that the way of informing them about the measures taken should be adjusted, and employers should be especially sensitized to their implementation.

**The Roma need intensive and long-term support in job search and employment**. This support can be best provided at the individual and group level in the form of social mentoring. Therefore, social policy measures should rely to a greater extent on European Social Fund projects and the civil sector. At the same time, institutions of the society should adopt innovative support programs for Roma employment, which should include various organizations in the field of education and employment.

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