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Social Exclusion versus Culture – Determinants of Romani settlement Dwellers' Social behaviour. Research project

Introduction

This contribution deals with: the scientific goals for the whole duration of the Scientific Grant Agency of the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic and the Academy of Science project; its characteristics; its realization outputs and output users; a description of the applied methods, with explanation; and the project team.

Stereotypes and prejudices against difference, ethnicities and ethnic minorities are widespread in normal society and are supported by a mass-media campaign that society accepts as fact. An extended period of spreading these prejudices can lead to individual negatives being ascribed to a specific group of people or minority. A lot of negative characteristics (laziness, crime, abuse of the social system, etc.) are ascribed to the Romani or to inhabitants of Romani settlements.

We try to show whether these differences are cultural or if the cause of these social pathological phenomena is the Roma's expulsion from society. We can only become a society in which every individual feels themselves an equal human being if we all cooperate together. Society must be built on principles where every person recognises differences and understands them.

Information and knowledge about individual cultures has a strong influence on forming attitudes and opinions. This is important when wanting to remove negative stereotypes and negative intercultural interaction.

It is not easy to accept different cultural traditions and to open hearts and minds to other people. This is a long-term process and it is not always successful. But it is the start of a long process that will lead to mutual understanding, better coexistence and better quality of life.

Project summary

The project goal is a research of intercultural relations between settlement dwellers and the majority; the quality of mutual interactive processes; and an assessment of determinants influencing their coexistence, primarily in the social exclusion prism. It tries to summarize the empirical fragments according to the 'grounded theory' method. It is an approach intended to gather theoretical fragments of whether the identity of the Romani nation, the ethnicity of the Romani, their cultural values, habits and traditions, and Romahood or 'romipen' are the decisive factors influencing their behaviour.

The main focus lies hereby on social-pathological and socially unaccepted phenomena and whether the reason for this behaviour is a consequence of segregation. The problem at the present time is the social exclusion, in-group, of the settlements. The causality of these effects unsuited to 'romipen' is breakdown of family cohesion, crime, usury, and "entrepreneurs" – wealthy families that deepen these problems.

Scientific goals

1) To investigate whether multiple attributes (negatively perceived by the majority) deriving from the cultural dependency of the Romani ethnic minority are ethnic features or facets of social exclusion and poverty. Ignorance of the living conditions of settlement dwellers causes misunderstandings, misapprehension, stereotyped communication barriers, prejudices, and leads to open conflict. An accurate portrayal of the current state of Romani life strategy is an insight into their daily life. We assume that through an approximation of the daily life of a settlement dweller and the life problems they face, the view of the majority can be influenced. The intention is not to romanticize the life of the Romani. The aim is to search for the reasons of the current functionality of the social structure and its functions, and to investigate the real reasons for the mooching of so-called 'businessmen' who capitalize on the poverty of settlement dwellers. Our next goal is to find answers to the question of the disintegration of family cohesion in the sense of the Romani multi-generation family and the origin of social-pathological phenomena in the community – youth crime, gambling and prostitution. These phenomena were once taboo in the Romani community.

2) To gather information about Romani history (in the outskirts of a village and a town) by analysis of historical documents – chronicles. A diachronic perspective is an important tool for an explanation of existing social relationships and for an understanding of cultural differences. This aim will be fulfilled by the support of self-governing bodies and by cooperation with the state and district archives in Levoča.

3) To search for convenient strategies and activities leading to an improvement in the Romani condition and a negation of stereotyped barriers in majority society.
4) To identify the decisive social, cultural and economic factors that influence interaction processes between the Romani ethnic population.
5) To approximate the expectations and ideas of settlement dwellers and their perspectives for the future.

Description of the project

According to Radičová (2005), two strong phenomena have developed. First is the phenomenon of so-called multiplied or double marginalization, which means that Romani live segregated in marginalized territory. Multiplied marginalization creates a closed community with a homogenized structure, where only one pattern of social behaviour and one life strategy exist. This life strategy is the second phenomenon: the phenomenon of multiplied cultural dependency, which is externally expressed by massive passivity, resignation, apathy and, of course, aggression. These are all typical features of reproduced poverty and not features of ethnicity.

Motivated by the abovementioned thesis, we define the goal of this work. One of the major problems of current Slovak society is coexistence with settlement dwellers. This population group is marked as problematic both by the laic and professional community. This is predominantly the reason why this has been a subject of a great number of scientific works and research. The basic question at the heart of our work was formulated: "Are the attributes ascribed to the population of the segregated settlements characteristics of their culture or are they elements of social exclusion?" Based on the goal formulation, the aim of the project was created.

Within the Slovak and Czech republics, the abovementioned problem is described in the work of Navrátil et al, *Romani in Czech Society* (2003); the main thesis is social exclusion of minorities with the focus on the exclusion of the Romani. The contribution of this work is mainly perspectives on the social inclusion of Romani – the antipole of social exclusion. In addition, this work provides models of social work as a tool for the negotiation of the phenomenon of Romani ethnic minority exclusion. An equally important work in the Slovak Republic realized by a team of Slovak experimentalists under the leadership of Vašečka, Šebesta and Radičová is: *Poverty in, and social care for, the Romani community in the Slovak Republic* (2002).

The work that deals with measuring poverty and social exclusion is: *Yearbook – Questions of Measuring Poverty*. Articles for this yearbook were initially prepared for a seminar named *Questions of Measuring Poverty*, which was held in October 2004 by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation and Methodological Section of the Slovak Sociological Association of the Slovak Academy of Sciences. During this seminar the

professionals agreed on the common usage of Slovak words *začlenenie* and *vyčlenenie* as translations of the terms *inclusion* and *exclusion*, respectively, which are used in European documents about the struggle with poverty. Začlenenie as a translation of inclusion is becoming a more widely used word and became an official translation with the declaration 'A Decade of Roma Inclusion: 2005-2015'. We simultaneously prefer the usage of the term 'social exclusion'.

A very good response was also experienced by the recently published work: *Roma Settlements in Eastern Slovakia from the Terrain Anthropological Research Point of View* by Czech authors Jakoubek and Hirt (2008). Measurement of incomes and living conditions of households in the Slovak Republic is also a task undertaken by the Statistics Institute of the Slovak Republic – EU SILC.

Description of applied methods and their explanation

Grounded theory and social network theory
A grounded theory is a theory inductively derived from examined phenomena which the theory represents. So we do not start with a theory that we would consequently validate. We start with an examined sphere and we leave space for important elements to appear. Social network theory is based on studying relationships between individuals until these social threads create a complex social network.

Scientific principles and qualitative research
Researchers who work with grounded theory think that principles of good science should be followed, but that it is necessary to modify their definition to fit the facts of qualitative research and social effects which need to be understood. These usual scientific principles are: verifiability, harmony between theory and observation, generalization, coherence, reproducibility, accuracy and verifiability.

Strauss and Corbin (1999) think that it is important to realize we collect samples of cases not individuals. We want to gather facts about what people do or not do in terms of process or interaction; about the group of conditions that are necessary for this process or interaction, and its aberrances; and how conditions change over time, or stay the same, and what their influence is.

Due to this reason we have decided to work directly in the segregated, separated and also integrated habitations of Romani – their natural habitat. We will conduct a semi-structured interview in every locality and we will also perform active observation. Interviews will be processed via a method by which data are analysed and consequently put together in a new way – coding. This central process is a process of creating theory from data.

Analytical practices of grounded theory are suggested:
a) mainly to create a new theory not only to verify theory;
b) to add criticism, which is important for 'good' science;
c) to help the analyst overcome prejudices and assumptions that are brought to the research process, which could be developed during the research process and would arrange grounding and solidity and develop sensitiveness and integration for creating a rich, final, explanatory theory which would precisely approximate reality.

Analysis in grounded theory consists of three main types of coding: open coding, axial coding and selective coding. These codings are summarized in a system called a conditional matrix.

Developing qualities and dimensions of categories

When a category is developed, we first start with its qualities, which can consequently be spread to individual dimensions. Every category has several universal qualities and every quality changes within the dimension of a scale. It means that every category has its dimensional profile. Several dimensional profiles create a formula or pattern. A dimensional profile provides concrete qualities of a phenomenon in concrete conditions.

Open coding divides data and enables the specification of some categories, their qualities and their location on dimensional scales. Axial coding is used for composing and creating a connection between category and subcategories in a new way. In axial coding we focus on determining a category by the conditions which cause it, by context, strategy of action and interactions by which it is carried out and the consequences of these categories.

Paradigmatic model

A) CAUSAL CONDITIONS B) PHENOMENON C) CONTEXT D) INTERVENTION E) STRATEGIES OF ACTION AND INTERACTION F) CONSEQUENCES

Looking for differences and different variables in research conducted using grounded theory is as important as looking for evidence that supports our questions and statements. Careful research of these differences brings variability and solidity to our theory. Selective coding is the skeleton of the story and grounded theory. It is necessary to explain the empirical grounding of the research and check the validity, summary and contribution in the closing part of the thesis. The group of questions that represents the group of criteria for evaluation of the empirical grounding is necessary for checking our work.

These questions are (Strauss and Corbin, 1999):
– Are notions systematically built into mutual relationships?
– Do we have enough notion bonds?
– Are categories created correctly?
– Is there enough variability built into the theory?
– Are wider conditioning influences built into the explanation of the surveyed phenomenon?

Analysis of the network analysis was made at Manchester's School of Functionalistic Anthropology (Max G. Gluckman). Strauss, Anselm L., and Corbin, Juliet (*Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory*, 1990) are considered to be the founders of grounded theory.

Realization outputs

The outcome intended for the professional preparation of students will consist of academic scripts with a schematic description of research methods. We would like to emphasize that the publication is intended for the general public and the aim is to negate stereotyped barriers and prejudices. The content will consist of presentations about research outcomes, which form the real world of poverty in Romani settlements.

Practical utilization of the project will be ensured by its presentation to the general public as a book. Furthermore, a campaign will be organized to influence public opinion about the Romani. The realization of the outcome will be a realization in social practice.

The campaign itself will not be a part of the project. We need to add that without media presentation of the project, the purpose of the project will be fulfilled only partially. The point is to help and improve the situation of the Romani also in the laic part of the social spectrum. The campaign will focus on stereotyped barriers of integration of socially excluded groups (mostly segregated and separated Romani settlements) and the possibilities of overcoming their marginalization.

Effectiveness would be ensured by the data collection of negative stereotypes and prejudices about the Romani ethnic minority, and by raising awareness among the general public about the living conditions of marginalized persons. This goal will be fulfilled by using data obtained from the realization of the project.

We will submit to the public the overview of stereotyped awareness, alternatively the perception of stereotyped barriers to the integration of marginalized people. The outcome will consist of the creation of a new conceptual model of social communication without barriers, without stigmatization of the socially excluded in the public space as a possibility to overcome barriers to integration, alternatively one of the forms of social protection and prevention of social exclusion.

4 timetable for each individual year of research

– January 2011-April 2011: National Archive of the Department of Home Affairs (Levoča, branch office Poprad – Spišská Sobota); analysis of historical sources – chronicles and summarization of knowledge about the Romani of Eastern Slovakia. Meetings with historiographers studying the Romani in Slovakia – Mrs. Zuzana Kollárová and Mrs. Anna Jurová – were held. Topics about Romani history were discussed.

The selection of a convenient research location was determined by the typology of Romani settlements. The typology was developed by Radičová (2001) and she defines three types of Romani settlements: segregated, separated and integrated. The aim of the first part of the project is to ensure the coverage of all three settlements types and choose the research location. Access to the town chronicles was enabled by the leaders of local authorities.

– May 2011-August 2011: Content analysis of town and village chronicles under the leadership of the chronicler.

– September 2011-October 2011: Anamnesis of previous interviews – creation of questions blocks, which were absorbed by each researcher prior to the fieldwork.

– November 2011-December 2012: Field research in Romani settlements. During this timeframe regular working appointments of the research team (at least one appointment per month) are planned and the collected materials will be sorted and analysed. These appointments will also be used for sharing information, knowledge and observations.

– January 2013-March 2013: Process of open coding (more detailed description about the coding process is described in section 2.1: Description of applied methods and their explanation).

– March 2013-April 2013: Axial coding.

– May 2013-June 2013: Selective coding, construction of the story scheme, matrix of conditional effects.

– July 2013-September 2013: Process of theory construction and summary. In the closing part of the work the empirical basis of the research and the validity control (such as the summary and the contribution) will be described. A set of corresponding questions with the group of evaluation criteria of the empirical basis are used to control our progress. These questions according to Strauss and Corbin (1999) are: Are the terms created? Are the terms systematically inscribed in interrelation? Are there enough term linkages and are categories revised well? Is the theory variable enough? Was the process carefully considered? Are the theoretical deductions verifiable?

– October 2013-December 2013: Preparation of the publication, reviews and printing. Preparation of the publication addressed to students – university scripts with the visual description of research methods. Preparation of publication addressed to public with the aim of negating stereotyped barriers and prejudices.

Publication

In 2009, he successfully defended his dissertation mentioned above, with excellent academic results. In the same year he was appointed as deputy director of the Institute of Romani Studies. During the two years at the department he produced:

– two professional books published by foreign publishing houses: "Social exclusion and culture of Romani national minority in a town of Poprad and Hornád river valley villages: History (Part one)."– Prague: Hnutí R, 2011 and: "Social exclusion and culture of Romani national minority in a town of Poprad and Hornád river valley villages: Field research (part two)."– Prague: Hnutí R, P. 2011. – 115.

– scientific thesis: Culture and social exclusion, 2010. In. Globalization and crises in modern economy: The 1st Scientific volume. – Klaipeda: Klaipeda University, 2010. – ISBN 978-9955-18-507-9, P. 66-70.

– scientific thesis published in domestically reviewed omnibus volume: "Social exclusion and ethnicity of the Romani national minority of the Huncovce village", 2009. In. Jaroslav Balvín, Mária Záhumenská, Multidimensional size of education and social work in Romani communities: scientific studies published within the project APVV-20-049105. Academic and practical intelligence of Slovak population Romani children. – Nitra: UKF, 2009. P. 334-367.

– two contributions at foreign scientific conferences: "Poverty versus culture." 2010. In. Social work risks: omnibus volume from conference VII. Days of social work, Hradec Králové 1. a 2. October 2010. – Hradec Králové: University of Hradec Králové, 2010. P. 86-94. a "Poverty and ethnicity": (research of Hornád river settlements), 2011. In. Politics a paradigm of social work. – Zlín: UTB, 2011. – P. 107-113.

– four contributions on domestic conferences: "The picture of life of the Roma people in the chronicles of the town of Poprad and the villages in the Hornád river valley", 2008. In. III. international scientific conference of PhD. students – Psychology and Social work branches of study – Nitra: UKF, 2008. – P. 146-151. and "Volunteer hospice activities – House of Peace at Saint Bernadette", 2009. In. IV. international scientific conference of PhD. students – Psychology and Social work branches of study, Nitra 3.4. 2009. – Nitra: UKF, 2009. – and Poverty versus culture, 2010. In. Scientific international conference in Kosice 2010. – Košice: UPJŠ, 2010. P. 146-156.

Subjects

At present his academic career is especially focused on the problems of socially excluded communities – the Romani minority, as well as poverty and social exclusion, social and health care. He is a sponsor and a teacher of the following subjects: Romani religiousness; the history of the Romani people; social anthropology; culture and social exclusion; community social work; work methods with recipients of social benefits; modern social theories; and hospice care.

The list of courses, with a short description, taught by **PhDr. Michal Kozubík, PhD.** in the last two years:

Poverty and social exclusion

Syllabus:
1. Poverty – definiens
2. Spatial distribution of poverty
3. Social exclusion – mechanism and consequences
4. Endangered groups
5. Poverty and social exclusion of Romani marginalized communities
6. Living strategies of poor and marginalized groups
7. Social services as a form of poverty solution
8. Selected strategies of social inclusion and the poverty solution

Romani religiousness

Syllabus:
1. Holy Bible in the life of the Romani
2. Romani and religiousness
3. Christian influence on Romani life in Europe
4. Beatified Ceferino Jiménez Malla – the first beatified Romani
5. Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People
6. Sacramental life of the Romani
7. Romani and the pilgrimages

Community social work

Syllabus:
1. Community – term and characteristics
2. Sectors and types of communities
3. History of community social work
4. Dilemma of present community social work
5. Aim and stages of community social work
6. Community social work models
7. Community planning

8. Romani community
9. Social work in the Romani community
10. Streetwork and community social work
11. Personality and professionalism of social worker
12. Community work and community centre
13. Streetwork for Romani marginalized community needs

History of Romani

Syllabus:
1. Romani on the Indian subcontinent
2. Travel around Asia Minor to Europe
3. Romani in the Enlightenment
4. Nomadic way of life in the inter-war years
5. Efforts at elimination of nomadic way of life
6. Persecution in the Slovak Republic Army
7. Labour camps for Romani and so-called antisocial persons
8. Prison camp in Dubnica nad Váhom
9. Romani in the post-war period
10. Activity of the Romani Association in Slovakia

Culture and social exclusion

Syllabus:
1. Subject and methods of social and cultural anthropology
2. Trends in the present science of human, society and culture
3. Poverty and social exclusion measurement
4. Methodological questions of social exclusion research
5. Culture versus poverty
6. Difficulties in the social services provision field
7. Social exclusion dimensions
8. Social inclusion
9. Decade of Romani inclusion 2005-2015

These courses are attended by BA and MA students in full-time and extramural studies (mostly adult students). There are also several Romani students in each study level.

The Institute of Romani Studies (former the Department of Romani Culture) was established in April 1990 and as a unique educational and edifying institution of European and probably world-wide character creates opportunities to prepare a qualified Romani intelligentsia, as well as people with interests in these studies from

the majority social group with the aim of optimizing the sociocultural conditions of Romani people in the Slovak Republic.

The main goal of the Institute is the education of a new Romani intelligentsia as well as that part of the non-Romani intelligentsia which wants to further develop socialization tendencies and cultivate the Romani community. What is particularly significant is its influence in the area of scientific research, not only at a national but also at an international level.

The Institute of Romani Studies has recently supervised the preparation of university students, future specialists in work with the Romani community in the accredited study programmes Social Services and Counselling (BA.), Romani Language and Culture (BA.) Social Services and Counselling (MA., PhD.).

A description of the course: "History of the Romani" according to two high-achieving students:

1. *Monika Farkašová (second-year Romani student, bachelor's degree, Institute of Romani Studies; branch of study: Social Services and Counselling)*
– Studying is possible at your own chosen time and place on the internet with the basis study material, which reduces any necessary expenses for study.
– The possibility of studying whenever and wherever it suits you via the internet, with the appropriate study materials, reduces any further expenses.
– Study is not difficult, but the advantage is that the student can revise the curriculum.
– This type of study is not difficult, it is the opposite to impulsive learning, where a student has a tendency to forget most of the content.
– E-learning enables us to gain knowledge as well as review the subject issues. It encourages students to be able to classify gained knowledge and information and learn these in logical continuity.
– E-learning enables every student to have the time necessary for curriculum learning.
– After the test is conducted, every student will get feedback based on correct and incorrect answers, which will reveal areas of potential improvement.
– E-learning supports the development of IT skills, initiative and self-reliance of students, through finding necessary information related to a given theme.
– E-learning encourages students' sense of responsibility, self-assurance, self-belief and self-confidence.
– Within the discussion forum a student has the opportunity to discuss with a teacher any topic and problems with study.

2. *Oľga Bieleschová (second-year student, bachelor's degree, Institute of Romani Studies; branch of study: Social services and Counselling)*

– The development of science and technology exerts pressure on traditional academic principles. Schools and universities have to respond to new trends in the area of pedagogical methods development.
– It is very important to have a vision related to the future of education, which would relate to the idea of educator Jan Amos Komensky: "Look for methods so that teachers would teach less and students learn more!"
– The Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra flexibly reacts to constantly changing teaching needs. I have had the opportunity for the first time to take a part in the e-learning course – 'History of Romani'.
– I find this form of study positive. It is based on relatively easy and fast ways of providing information to the students. It contains more than the curriculum included in the documents.
– The system includes blogs, profiles, messages, a news forum and a discussion forum on the topic. Learning is more fun thanks to the fact that we can develop our ability to discover, to solve problems (find the answers to questions) and to gain experience.
– Thanks to the fact that the study materials are colourfully illustrated and we have a lot of electronic sources, I find e-learning more effective than individual learning.
– I positively appreciate the fact that a student can choose his or her own rhythm in a comfortable home environment. Requirements for the successful understanding of the topic 'History of Romani' were set clearly and the evaluation of the test was defined specifically.
– I appreciate the psychological motive of class cooperation and the popularity of working on the internet. I have also improved my IT skills and can use the study materials for further studies at the university. I would like to continue with e-learning techniques in my further studies at the university.

Summary

We are in the second year of our project. We know both communities of the villages in Hornád Valley – Romani and the majority – very well. They have been living next to each other for centuries. Close but still far away. There exist very fragile relationships that need the contribution of both sides for their development. It concerns those people behind the Poprad River, railway crossing and football-playground, but also those living behind the road far away from the village and their citizens. Research into the root cause of the life pattern of the settlement population following their culture

(we are walking on thin ice, as they stop living their Romahood) as well as into social severance by the majority population is a basic question.

In segregated settlements of villages in Hornad Valley: Vikartovce, Kravany, Spišské Bystré a Hranovnica all the romantic associations with the life of the Romani such as colourful clothing, carriages, horses, dance, music, fire, laughter and lust for life are missing. The positive attributes of Romahood – romipen – are successively disappearing under the influence of increasing poverty. The negative feelings of the Roma are getting to the top of the agenda – feelings of injustice, isolation, incrimination by others for their own life – mostly the majority – and are perceived with great disapproval.

It is important to cling to researched areas and dimensions while researching culture vs. social segregation. Individual components among them might have a different meaning and explanation.

Dr. Kozubík shares these thoughts during lectures. The subject called 'Culture and Social Exclusion' was created on the basis of research. The content of the subject is grounded in research experience, which is summarized in the university textbooks: *Socially Excluded Communities in the Context of Culturological Theories*, which were published by Dr. Kozubik at the end of last year.

The most interesting research materials for students are particular statements of the people living in the socially excluded communities (especially in Romani settlements) as well as the photographs taken.

WORKING GROUP

Principal investigator – PhDr. Michal Kozubík, PhD.

PhDr. Michal Kozubík, PhD. is a graduate of the Institute of Roma Studies (former Department of Roma Culture), Faculty of Social Sciences and Health, Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, in the field of social sciences, focusing on the Romani community. In 2006, he achieved a master's degree with excellent academic results. Based on his extensive knowledge in the area as well as effort during his studies he was given an award by the Head of Faculty of Social Sciences and Health. Such an award is considered the greatest honour for a student. Thanks to the high standard of his work he was accepted as the first Phd. student ever of the Institute of Romani Studies.

Postgraduate study

During the third stage of higher education he was chosen to undertake a research of the history of the Romani community in the city of Poprad and villages nearby in the Spis region.

He gives a summation of the collected knowledge of the life of the Romani people in a specific area, compiled from important historical and ethnographic sources such as town and communal chronicles, and an overview of the affairs and events of communal life affected by the relationship between the Romani minority and the majority society.

It deals with the quality of mutual interaction processes from the view of the chronicler regarding how his personal prejudices affect his point of view. He aims to alter a fragmentary perspective into a self-contained complex of knowledge about the ethnic minority of the Romani in the town of Poprad and the villages of the Hornád river valley.

He offers a close analysis of town and communal chronicles, the methodology of recording and the frequency of information about the culture, about the way of life of the Romani people emerging from these sources and drawn on the basis of positive or negative incentives. Parallels between the current and past life of the Romani are investigated, especially the quality of cooperation with municipal authorities, manifestations of friendship or, at the other end of the scale, manifestations of antipathy or even racism and open conflict.

He reflects upon the perspective of the analyst who tries to document the point of view of the majority population. He leaves a message which is supposed to inform, to educate but nonetheless to lead to mutual rapprochement and thus to create a communal life of higher quality. The dissertation itself was devoted to the problems of socially excluded communities in Eastern Slovakia. The subject of this dissertation thesis was intercultural relations between the Romani minority and the majority population, the quality of mutual interaction processes, determinants influencing this coexistence and above all the concept of social segregation.

He focuses on and analyses the theoretical self-contained complex of knowledge about the social segregation and culture of the Romani minority by Slovak and foreign authors. It was an approach intended to gather theoretical fragments of whether the identity of the Romani nation, the ethnicity of the Romani, their cultural values, habits and traditions, and Romahoodor 'romipen' are the decisive factors influencing their behaviour.

The main focus lies hereby on social-pathological and socially unaccepted phenomena and whether the reason for their behaviour is a consequence of segregation, exclusion from social activities and particular spheres of social life. The problem at the present time is social exclusion in-group of the settlements.

Scientific co – workers

Professional guarantee is ensured by the representatives of the principal investigator:

- **doc. PhDr. Rastislav Rosinský, PhD.** (Director fo the Institute of Romani Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences and Health Care, Constantine the Philospher University in Nitra – expert in the area of education of the Romani national minority) and
- **doc. PhDr.PaedDr. Lýdia Lehoczká, PhD.** (Associate Professor in Social Work – socially excluded communities, Romani identity).

and others co – workers

- **Prof. PhDr. René Lužica, ArtD**. (Romani history, anthropological field research, Ethnology);
- **PhDr. Katarína Vanková, PhD.** deals with intercultural and multicultural constants directed towards the comprehension of Romani ethnic identity. She is also a specialist in social politics, with a focus on the handicapped population.
- **Mgr. Ivan Rác, PhD.** (Institute of Romani Studies, Assistant Professor – social pathology);
- **Mgr. Dagmar Bellová, PhD.** (Institute of Romani Studies, Assistant Professor, Director of the Employment Office in Zvolen – social work with the unemployed, community social work);
- **PhDr. Andrea Solgajová, PhD.** (Assistant Professor and Deputy Manager of the Nursing Care Department, expert in health care for socially excluded communities);
- **Mgr. Mário Griesbach** (postgraduate student, field research)

Abstract

This contribution deals with scientific goals for whole period of this project, its characteristic, realisation outputs and output user and description of applied methods and their explanation. Stereotypes and prejudices against differences, nations and national minorities are spread in lay society and they are supported by massmedial campaign and society accepts them as the fact and the true. Long time period of spreading these prejudices can lead to ascribe individual negatives to specific group of people or minority of people. A lot of negative characters (laziness, crime and misusing of the social system, etc.) are ascribed to "Romany" or to inhabitants from settlements. We try to show if these differences are cultural or if the reason of these social pathological phenomenon is Romani's' expulsion of the society. We can become society where every individual will feel like an equal human being only in case we all will cooperate together. Society must be built on principles where every person knows differences and understands them. Information and knowledge

about individual cultures has a strong influence on forming attitudes and opinions. This is important when we want to remove negative stereotypes and intercultural interactions. It is not easy to accept different cultural traditions and to open our heart and mind for other people. This is the long time process and this process is not always successful. But it is the start of long process which will lead to mutual understanding, better coexistence and better every day life.