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SOCIALLY MARGINALIZED ENVIRONMENTS, UNEMPLOYMENT AND MEDIA

Oto Moravčík¹ & Jarmila Vidová²

Abstract

In any society, regardless of its homogeneity and heterogeneity, there are minority groups, or those that require special attention and treatment because of their social and cultural characteristics, physical appearance, or because they have a lifestyle which differs from the dominant group and this causes them to be allocated the social status of minorities. The ongoing transformation of the economy since 1989 is now a major effect which continues to affect economic development. The planned economy and socialist market economy was replaced with the principles of free enterprise and the market mechanism. The market economy is closely tied to the labor market, which we view as the meeting point of labor supply with labor demand, resulting in labor costs – or wages. Position in the labor market is one of the most important factors through which an individual integrates into the social fabric.

The aim of this scientific article is to describe the role of the media and outline its potential use in order to achieve changes in behavior and increase education levels in socially marginalized environments and resulting in greater social inclusion.

Keywords

Ethnic Minorities, Unemployment, Community Center, the Roma Minority, the Media, Social Groups, Social Exclusion, Social Inclusion

I. Introduction

Marginalization in the labor market affects a large part of the Roma minority, is often a primary source of poverty and ultimately means exclusion from better living standards and opportunities to succeed at a particular company. While high unemployment is a major problem for most of the Roma minority, residents of segregated Roma settlements are

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particularly disadvantaged, since their chances for employment are generally limited to seasonal and casual labor.

The marginal status of Roma in the labor market is influenced by several factors which affect the country as a whole. These include, for example, the radical loss of heavy industry, which employed large numbers of Roma under the previous regime, the disintegration of peasant cooperatives, changes in the structure of demand for unskilled labor in the labor market, and increasing competition from alien workforces. According to the National Labour Office, Roma have, since 1999 and the introduction of the recording of ethnic data, made up around 20% of all unemployed persons.

A particular characteristic of Roma unemployment is that it is basically long-term unemployment. Among the most important reasons for the high unemployment levels of Roma are low educational and qualification levels. This creates one of the riskiest categories of vulnerable social (long-term) unemployment: Roma youth who experienced a period of work and then became (long-term) unemployed without even having had the minimum work experience in the labor market. Long-term youth unemployment can lead to a culture of unemployment, which ultimately affects the labor market. Media campaigns calling for the education of the Roma minority could help to address this issue.

Society is significantly influenced by the media. Mass media has become one of the most effective mechanisms used by globalization movements in the contemporary world as a means of bringing about the globalization of culture. The media today creates common models, ideals or even language – crossing national cultural borders in the process. Media activity modifies and partially suppresses cultural identity built up over years and levels differences. The word media has its origins in Latin and suggests the concept of an intermediary. Denis McQuail counts the following as the most important forms of media: print media (books and newspapers), movies, broadcasting, radio broadcasting, television, music recording and new electronic media. H. Marshall McLuhan, Canadian theoretist and media literary critic, rhetorician and professor of English literature, renowned as the founder of media theory, argues that the media can be considered as raw materials or natural resources, exactly the same as coal, cotton and oil.

Mass media is significantly involved in the shaping of public opinion, attitudes and lifestyles. Theories on the functioning and behavior of individuals affected by levels of media coverage have for a long time been described by sociologists, psychologists, teachers and theorists of mass communication (Bandura-Walters, 1973, Eron et al., 1972, Thomas et al., 1977; Braun, 1981, Hapala, 1995, and many others). Most authors agree that the public role of the media is threefold (Hagen, 2004): informative function, a function to allow individuals and groups to disseminate facts and opinions and its position to criticize those who exercise power, or undermine democracy. If we had to clarify the role of the mass media, it would primarily be its informational effect, as a means to raise public awareness, education and training.

In every society, regardless of its homogeneity or heterogeneity, there are minority groups, those that require special attention and treatment because of their social and cultural characteristics, physical appearance, or because they have a lifestyle different from the dominant group. Leaving aside the causes of the social status of minorities, it is essential

that the media respect this fact. The importance and role of the media in marginalized social research is precisely the subject of the present scientific article.

The issue of national minorities has been one of the main themes of European and global politics since the fall of the ideological division in the world at the end of the 20th century. Stronger negative effects gradually began to rise to the surface, associated with the emergence of European nation-states in the second half of the 19th century.³ The emergence of problems of national minorities depends on the existence of a national majority that deliberately or unknowingly excludes other ethnic groups, both recognized and unrecognized, from the process of decision-making, or restricts their opportunities in life. Minorities in the theoretical context refers to different groups in society, differing by national, ethnic, religious and linguistic identity, a multiplicity of factors which may cause inequalities in society. There are several definitions of ethnic minorities. Gabal (1992) defines a minority as a group of people who as a whole does not accept the national identity of the country in which they live. Fabjan (1993) sees it as the sum of all individuals who are discriminated against or disadvantaged on the basis of their character. In general, all definitions refer to the historical, cultural and emotionally perceived membership of a particular group. Mutually different groups thus differ only slightly in terms of the institutionalization and organization of their territorial existence, its legal framework and the historical rate of occurrence of a subjective sense of group belonging.

Smith (1991) considered a minority population to be one with a common origin, sharing cultural elements linked to the history of the territory or country and having a measure of solidarity. Minorities can have superior, although not pertaining, power and status, have adequate access to power and status, or have fewer rights, privileges and opportunities. It is ethnic minorities which, in the modern European state, require special attention from a political point of view, as their relationship to the state in which they live is a special problem in the field of theoretical discussions of minorities' perceptions of their qualitative and quantitative nature. Minorities can therefore be understood in the context of a civil or collectivist perspective. The individualistic concept of minority defines it as the sum of those individuals who are united by a common awareness of belonging. On the other hand, the collectivist perception of minorities see them in the context of supra-individual units affected by objective facts and features, vide Pritchard (2001). Ultimately, it is the perspective used which determines the concepts behind the legal protection of minorities. The individualistic perspective acts to create safeguards for the individual, as a member of a specific minority. The primary subjects of this protection are therefore single representatives of each group, while the group as such is protected as a sum of individuals, with the protection of minorities seen as a concretization of human rights. This is implemented through passive measures and active discrimination against the development of a separate cultural identity. By contrast, the collectivist perspective protects minorities as a whole in their relations with external groups, on the basis of a functional complex of economic, social, political and settlement relationships and structures. Under this initiative, minorities have the right to their own arrangement of these social spheres,

³ Minorities in the theoretical context refers to different groups in society, differing by national, ethnic, religious and linguistic identity, a multiplicity of factors which may cause inequalities in society.

in a figurative sense, and to autonomy and self-determination⁴. Trends in Europe in terms of the rights of minorities to protection have been subject to many changes over the centuries and were allocated a certain amount of geopolitical balance of power in the region, something which is reflected in the conduct of international organizations and their standards for the legal protection of minorities.

In the Slovak Republic, ethnic minorities officially account for more than 10% (unofficially almost 20%) of the population. The most numerous national minority in Slovakia was, according to census of 2001, the Hungarian minority (9.7%), followed by the Roma minority (1.7%), and Czechs (0.8%), while other minorities, which do not even represent 1% of the population, include the following: Ruthenian, Ukrainian, German, Jewish, Polish, Moravian, Croatian, Russian, Bulgarian, and Serbian. In 2010, 430,000 Roma were living in the Slovak Republic, with forecasts that this number could reach 530,000 to 550,000 by 2025.

Opinion polls indicate long-term tension, prejudice and aversion on the part of the majority to minorities. The status of minorities in the Slovak Republic, and the problems affecting them, are a long-term priority on the political agenda and in public debate in Slovakia, and there is no reason to regard this trend as secondary, or solvable in the short term. The problems are only being compounded by the continued exclusion and segregation of the Roma. Due to the double marginalization of the Roma, the situation can be expected to deepen regardless of the processes of globalization or European integration and irrespective of the improving economic situation in Slovakia; Roma living in segregated Roma settlements will remain in a state of deprivation and the gulf between the majority population and the Roma will remain open. This trend will be reversed only if the majority and its representatives accept the costs of financing social programs and the accompanying investment in infrastructure. Otherwise, poverty will be reproduced in Slovakia at an extremely rapid pace and we will not succeed in preventing the formation of visible pockets of poverty (the “Hungry Valley” of Moravčíková and Kučírková, 2006).

The demographic behavior and reproduction of the Roma population differs from the reproductive behavior of the majority population. The most obvious manifestation of this is the different age structure of the Roma compared to the rest of the population. It can be assumed that the number of Roma in Slovakia, as well as their share in the total population, will increase. In terms of potential threats, there is a rather dangerous trend towards the gradual dominance of ethnic Roma in some districts of Slovakia and the possible migration of marginalized regions of the majority population. Changes to the unfavorable prognosis can be influenced by the media and the education of the younger generation.

II. Ethnic minorities. Roma in the media in the Slovak Republic

Marginalization is, according to Moravčíková and Kučírková (2003), a socio-economic process in which some social groups, social spaces, cities and regions become marginalized from major economic, social and civilizational streams. It is associated with the

⁴ Gabal (1992).

slowdown and stagnation of their overall development as a result of their recession and differentiation from society and there is reflected in their economic, social and civilizational backwardness. The result of marginalization is marginality, which in turn translates into structural and situational characteristics and opportunities for development. Leimgruber (1994) has earmarked four main objective approaches: geographical, economic, social and environmental. Mehretu and Sommers (1998) added the political and cultural approach. Subjective approaches dominated sociological works in the past, but geographical research is increasingly gaining in importance. The idea is that marginality arises as a result of human decisions and is not fully rational, i.e. is not based only on objective information, and therefore it is necessary to take into account the research and perspective of the observer. For Leimgruber (1994), these perceptual approaches are divided into internal “persons directly affected by marginality” and are seen from the perspective of other external groups. Leimgruber’s (1994) approach to social marginality can be described as follows: *“marginality refers to a group of people whose socialization process was somehow impaired or to individuals within a group or multiple groups, and in none of them were fully integrated.”* The earmarking of groups in given social structures can acquire a dual nature. First, voluntary earmarking due to the desire to follow their own specific rules or an unwillingness to adapt to surrounding social norms and seek integration into the surrounding social standards and integration into the surrounding social system, such as the segregation of Roma communities in isolated settlements on the edges of villages (Leimgruber, 1994).

On the other hand, exclusion can also be forced upon minorities by the majority society based on various criteria (such as race, religion, way of life), conservatism and a reluctance to accept differences from mainstream society, which then acts as the rule for all except those thus controlled. An example would be the racial segregation of African Americans in the U.S. from the 18th century to the 20th century and, in Slovakia, the attitudes of the ultra-national “Slovak Congregation” group against minorities (including Hungarians, Roma, and Jews). The consequence is that these groups face a greater risk of poverty (Rochovská, 2004, Džambazovič, 2007), depression, a decline in active participation in public life, increased socio-pathogenic episodes and a subsequent tendency towards social marginality. Marginalized groups are often concentrated in specific areas where they are concentrated voluntarily (such as, “China Town” in U.S. cities, or the district of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg in Berlin, also called “Little Istanbul”) or displaced by the majority society (Arabs in urban areas). It the intersection of social marginality and spatial marginality which is the focus of Gurung and Kollmair (2005), the socio-spatial approach of defining the human dimensions of marginality and the attempt to understand the processes of exclusion, inequality, human resources and spatial segregation.

The media has a great political, social and cultural impact. Its basic function is the transnational public good. (Lužica, 2007) The role of the media should be, in education, culture, popular science, youth and other areas, to provide regular and systematic information about the activities of the majority as well as ethnic minorities. With regard to the Roma minority, its history, culture, tradition and contemporary life, the goal of television should be to develop mutually positive relationships between the Roma and the majority of

citizens and lead to greater tolerance, understanding and seek to correct opinion regarding this minority.

State law, which allocates to the Roma national minority the same rights as other minorities, inter alia to develop their language, culture and art, is enshrined in the highest legislative measures, namely the Constitution of the Slovak Republic, Article 12, Chapter 2, and provides for the equality of all citizens, regardless of nationality, religion, creed and social competence. Articles 34 and 35 regulate the right of national minorities to learn the official state language, the right to establish and maintain educational and cultural institutions, receive information in their mother tongue, the right to use their mother tongue in official interactions, and to participate in addressing matters concerning national and ethnic minorities. This right manifests in the form of various legislative measures. The existence of an independent media in modern democratic society is a necessity and a prerequisite for the free dissemination of ideas and to ensure freedom of expression. The mass, especially nationwide, media have an essential role in civil rights education, to promote a spirit of tolerance, overcome and combat discrimination and anti-racism. The specific impact of the media derives from its ability to change society. The mass media have a significant impact on people's thinking, shape public opinion and help to create the value system of society (Cangár, 2003).

Until 1989, Slovakia had 25 national periodicals, but none were Roma-produced. The Roma media in Slovakia since 1990 has sought to meet several goals in order to operate inside the Roma community and strengthen its national pride and human and civic pride.⁵ It also aims to interact with the non-Roma majority and provide enough information to help eliminate the prejudices and stereotypes inherent in the historical perception of the Roma. At the same time, however, it attempts to meet the needs of the Roma minority that arise from the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. Last but not least is the development and preservation of customs and the Romani language (Hrvolová, 2006). Slovak Radio has, since its inception, been a critical phenomenon in our social, cultural and political life. In 1991, Slovak Radio national-ethnic editors in Presov began broadcasting programs for ethnic minorities. Presov's editors began to broadcast for the Roma minority on 31 December, 1993. The program structure consisted of news broadcasts in Romani (30 minutes per week), a Roma cultural revue (every two weeks) and a Roma magazine (monthly).⁶

⁵ According to data from the Institute of Journalism Studies in Bratislava, there were 54 national titles in 1991, seven of which were about the Roma (IVO 2000). First to be issued was the magazine, *Roma*, from November 1990, followed by *Romipen* magazines, *Nevipen*, *Roma revue*, *Lulu*, *Romane Vasta*, *Termipen*, *Sama daj*. Not all were written in the Roma language, but in a combination of languages, with some only published in Slovak.

⁶ The first editor of Roma minority broadcasting on Slovak Radio was Ing. Igor Dužda. In 2010, its studios broadcast almost 12 hours a day during the week; on Saturday, studios in Bratislava and Kosice broadcast four hours, the studio in Banská Bystrica broadcast 3.5 hours. On Sunday, the studio in Bratislava broadcast one hour, with one and a half hours in Banská Bystrica, and in Kosice, two hours. Radio Patria – the editorial office of the national-ethnic broadcaster – aired 520 hours in 2010; Radio Regina in Košice aired 208 hours over the weekend. Regina participated in the creation of radio programs of news, current affairs, literature and drama, and music. Media Inc. Ltd., the independent studios of Radio Regina broadcast 18,754 hours of their own programming in 2010.

Based on the data in Table 1, we can conclude that the largest number of broadcasting hours in 2010 was for the Hungarian minority, at 4,380 hours (85.73%), Roma broadcasts lasted only 126 hours, which is only 2.47%. The editors of national-ethnic broadcasting last year broadcast six hours of direct transmission consisting of liturgy from Greek Catholic and Orthodox churches.

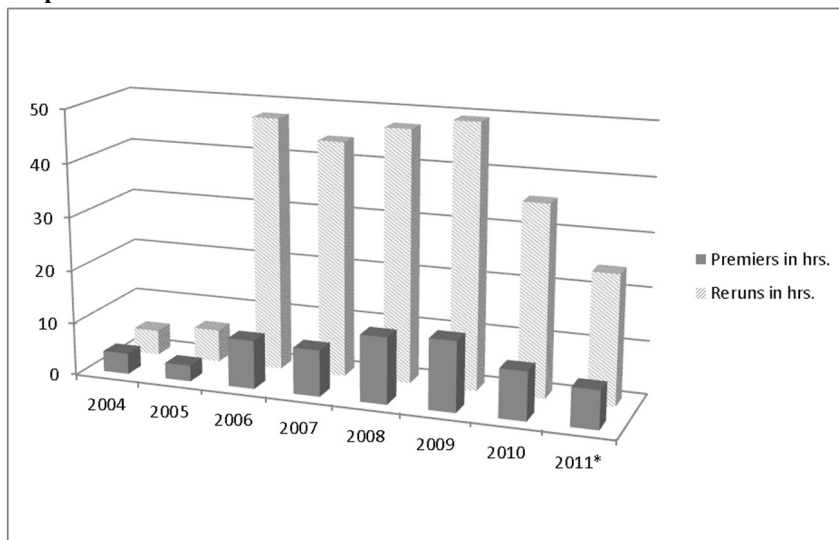
Table 1: Number of hours broadcast for nationalities and ethnic groups in 2010

Nationalities and ethnic groups	% share	Hours
Broadcast in Hungarian lang.	85.73	4,380
Broadcast in Russian lang.	5.36	274
Broadcast Ukrainian lang.	5.50	281
Broadcast in Roma lang.	2.47	126
Broadcast in Czech lang.	0.31	16
Broadcast in Polish lang.	0.31	16
Broadcast in German lang.	0.31	16
Total	100,00	5 109

Source: Annual Report of Slovak Radio, 2010

The year 2010 was the last year of operation of Slovak Radio. From 1 January, 2011, Act. 532/2010 of the the Radio and Television of Slovakia came into force and Slovak Radio became one of its constituents. This led to a significant shift in thinking about the future of public service media. Law 532/2010 regarding the Radio and Television of Slovakia legislated that radio and television broadcasters must provide programming in their mother tongue for minorities and ethnic groups living in the Slovak Republic (Vaščíková, 2006). A milestone in broadcasting for various ethnic minorities was 20 January, 1992, when the independent Ruthenian-Ukrainian magazine was first broadcast. One month later this was followed by a separate Roma magazine, then named Romale. Hungarian magazines already enjoyed a firm position on the TV screen by that time. Broadcasts in German were added in 1993 and in 1998 there followed a separate magazine for the newly-created Czech ethnic minority living in Slovakia. The first Polish magazine came to the screen in 1999. Attempts were then made to codify the Ruthenian language, with the separation from Ukrainians being recognised in Slovak television broadcasts. So the Ruthenian and Ukrainian national magazine aired separately. Since 2001, other ethnic groups have regularly been represented: Jewish, Bulgarian, Croatian and others. 2010 has shown that ethnic groups have their stable and unalterable place on Slovak television.

Slovak Television (now RTVS) provided space in previous periods for broadcasts on national minorities, as evidenced by information from the Department of Controlling RTVS. Graph 1 compares the available information on the length of airtime for the Roma minority from 2004 to 2011. The total broadcast time was a total of 326.0 hours, with the most hours broadcast in 2009 and the least in 2004. Reruns exceeded first runs by several times; first runs accounted for 66.7 hours, while reruns accounted for 259.3 hours (Graph 1).

Graph 1: Total broadcast time

Source: Department controlling RTVS, 2011

Note: 2011* – broadcast from 1.1.2011 to 31.10.2011

The RTVS program structure remains unchanged, but it is the intention of producers and editors in the coming period to improve awareness about the life of the Roma community, its needs and possible solutions to its own problems, and raise awareness of other people in Slovakia of the life of the Roma community and create the conditions for increased sensitivity towards the Roma community. Although a greater effort is being made to produce programs for ethnic minorities, these efforts are usually influenced by the amount of funds intended for programs of this kind out of the RTVs budget.

III. Analysis of the impact and importance of television in socially marginalized environment

Support for marginalized groups in society is one of the primary tasks of the government as well as NGOs. The most numerous and specific group in Slovakia are members of Roma communities. Television should support the production of programs broadcast to national minorities. The aim of this part of the article is, through the scientific interpretation of research results, to highlight the influence of television on socially marginalized groups and their development. To fulfil this objective, we have chosen to study a community center which brings together people from ethnic minorities with different mother tongues. We conducted a survey to find out how community residents view the impact of television broadcast programs on their development, including their opinion on the quality of the programs broadcast.

Television – mainly through public service, as prescribed by law – provides an image of them in their native language. The programs are in the native language of the minorities but subtitles enable them to be watched by members of the majority. We examined whether the majority of society paid them sufficient attention because of television coverage. Also, whether marginalized groups, in particular Roma, find that television programs create an accurate image of their identity.

The research respondents were residents of a community center at which, during our research, there were 250–520 people, mostly Roma, with mental and physical disabilities, or were less educated, with diverse means of communication and expression in their mother tongues of Slovak, Hungarian and Roma (we used three languages in the questionnaire, to ensure sufficient understanding of the issues). The 50 participants were residents aged 15 to 65 years. The research reached only a small percentage of the population, because of the limited size of the device and frequent changes of the residents in the community center. The residents of the community center must be registered for work. Based on the well-functioning co-operation of the community center with the Institute for Romology, those who do not work are provided with work. During its six years of existence, the community center and the Institute for Romology has managed to find jobs for its occupants, who may then pay their earnings for accommodation in the center.

Research was conducted with the help of community social workers over three years, 2009, 2010 and 2011. Given the fact that some people were not literate in the Slovak language, the respondents were questioned in Slovak, Hungarian, and Roma languages. Many of these people claimed to be of Hungarian nationality, and not Roma, which is also of concern, as they are not an excluded majority society; on the contrary, they have been incorporated into the society jointly with another minority. In the survey, we tried to be as objective as possible, in order to avoid generalizations. This was particularly the case in terms of the specification of direct knowledge of the phenomena and processes based on the uniqueness of the object of study, which played a particularly important part in understanding, empathy, acceptance and role play with an emphasis on everyday situations. The research was conducted by questionnaires and also through interviews. The interviews included additional questions aimed at finding out what the residents of the community center considered their biggest problems, how to engage in work, what is the unemployment rate, or whether they have problems paying rent and energy (gas, electricity), the social services in Dunajska Streda⁷ considered inadequate for Roma, the amount of income in the household and the type of school attended by their children.

The research results

The survey involved 50 respondents out of a total of 250 to 520 people, which was in the range of 11.11–20% of the total population centers. The percentage completed of the survey each year was 100% – out of the 50 questionnaires, 50 questionnaires were returned. The respondents were aged 18–70 years and we divided them into six age scales: in the first age range, the respondents were 18–25 years of age; in the second age range

⁷ Dunajska Streda is a city south of Bratislava where the community center is located.

were respondents of 26–35 years of age; in the third age range were respondents of 36–45 years of age; in the fourth age range respondents were 46–55 years of age; in the fifth age range respondents were 56–65 years of age; in the sixth age range respondents were 66–70 years of age.

Table 2: Age structure of selected respondents in the period 2009–2011

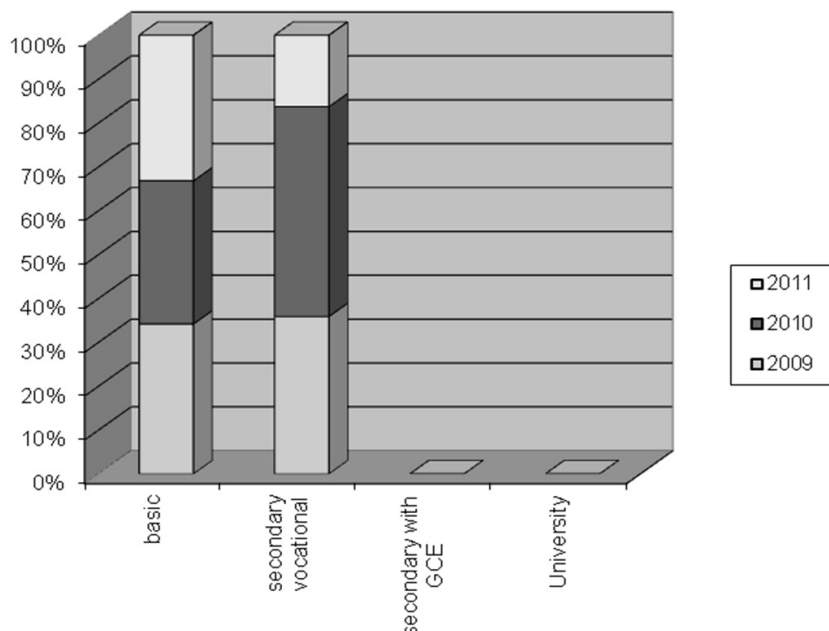
Age	Number			Portion in %		
	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011
18–25	9	11	12	18	22	24
26–35	7	9	6	14	18	12
36–45	14	12	13	28	24	26
46–55	9	7	11	18	14	22
56–65	5	6	4	10	12	8
66–70	6	5	4	12	10	8
Total	50	50	50	100,00	100,00	100,00

Source: Table prepared according to the survey

The indicators listed in Table 2 show that the largest number of respondents was, in 2009, represented by the third age range, with 14 respondents; the case was the same in 2010 and 2011. In 2011, compared to 2009, the population aged 18–25 years increased. In 2011, the population declined in the third age range (36–45 years) compared to 2009, from 14 to 13. The numbers of respondents in other age scales changed significantly. In 2009, the largest proportion were people in the third age range (ages 36–45), at 28%. The lowest proportion of residents were in the fifth age range (aged 56–65 years), at 10%. In 2011, out of 50 respondents who participated in the research, 26% were in the third age range (aged 36–45 years) and 24% in the first age range (aged 18–25 years), while 22% were aged 46 to 55 years. The numbers in other age scales accounted for smaller shares.

Out of the total number of respondents in 2011, 26 were males, or 52%, while there were 24 females, or 48%. In 2011, the total number of men decreased to 26, or 38%, from 35, or 70% in 2009. The highest number of women in our study was in 2010, at 62%, which was 100% more than in 2009. In 2011, the number of women decreased by 14%, to 48%. Regarding the educational composition of the population in the community center, out of the total number of 50 respondents in 2011, 47 had only basic education, representing 85.45%, three respondents had a secondary vocational school education, accounting for 5.45%. A secondary education with GCE was represented by zero percent. Three respondents had a secondary vocational education, representing a value 6%. A primary education was held by the largest portion of respondents, at 94% (Graph 2).

Graph 2: Educational structure of population centres (2009–2011)



Source: Graph prepared according to the survey

When asked when respondents watched television, it was natural that the largest audience was for programs after 7 PM – 34 respondents, or 68%, fell into this group. As with ordinary households – i.e. not only in this community center – the highest viewership is when people have time for themselves after work. The time after 7 PM is of course a period which includes news television programs on public television stations, commercial television stations or otherwise. A large share of the audience also watched in the afternoon after 3 PM. In 2011, 11 out of 50 respondents answered YES to this question, representing 22%. A smaller audience can obviously be found at night, accounting for 3, or 6%, with 2, or 4% answering that they watched television in the morning.

When asked: “Which kind of programs do you watch?” it was not difficult to guess in advance that the Roma population mostly watched entertainment and music programs, and this turned out to be the case in reality. Up to 43 to 48 of 50 respondents answered that they mostly watched entertainment and music programs. For sports, documentaries and children’s programs, the viewership was almost the same, ranging from one to three respondents for each type of program. There was also some viewership of various political programs, talk shows and talk shows with political overtones (see Table 3).

Table 3: Which kind of TV programs do you watch?

	Number			Portion in %		
	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011
Music and entertainment	43	45	48	86.0	90.0	96.0
Children	1	0	0	2.0	0.0	0.0
Sport	2	3	1	4.0	6.0	2.0
Documentary	2	1	1	4.0	2.0	2.0
Political	2	1	0	4.0	2.0	0.0
Total	50	50	50	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Table prepared according to the survey

The answers to the question “Do you think TV represents the Roma minority accurately?” were more interesting. There were many answers to the question: strongly disagree: 8 to 16%; disagree: 1–2%; unsure: 19–38%; agree: 21–42%; fully agree: 1–2%. The responses to the question show that respondents are dissatisfied with the programming and content, with most feeling that they broadcast negative information relating to Roma issues.

We expected the answers given to the question “What program on Roma would cheer you on TV?”. Music is an important aspect of life for the Roma, and, in 2009, 54% respondents said they would like more music programs; in 2010, the number was 41% of respondents, and 98% in 2011. More entertainment programs on television were wanted by one respondent, i.e. 2% out of the total respondents. Other types of programs, such as documentaries, the respondents had no interest in, with a response of 0%.

In our study, we were interested in the effect or impact the TV programs they watched had on the population in the center. In 2009, entertainment programs were watched by a lower percentage of the population, considering that they are relaxing and that the rest of the population consider them educational and instructive. 2010 changed mainly insofar as these programs fulfilled a more aesthetic function and also promoted learning. The selection of programs also depended on educational attainment. As the population centers only have basic education, their preference was for watching entertaining music programs. It can clearly be seen that the programs watched are seen as a means of entertainment and to provide a temporary escape from everyday, and that there was no desire to reflect on the content while viewing. The selection of programs was also dependent on the low educational level of the Roma population of the community center. This level affected the interests of the respondents as well as the programs watched.

IV. Conclusion

Each of us encounters the media, whether printed or electronic, every day, no matter what level of society we come from. The media is part of our daily life, not only informing us, but to some extent also affecting us, whether we want to admit it or not. Slovak Television must, according to the Constitution (Article 12 on the rights of national minorities and Chapter 34 to disseminate and receive information in their mother tongue), fulfil a public service function by offering information about the lives of ethnic minorities in their

native language. Representatives of national minorities living in Slovakia have the opportunity to broadcast not only to promote their identity, but also to discuss their problems. Broadcasting for national minorities on Slovak Television has continued for over 20 years. The Roma minority in Slovakia is a group which is heavily affected by mass media, especially television broadcasting. The media image of the Roma is part of the attitude of the majority towards the Roma community, including its degree of acceptance of their characteristics, habits and cultural attitudes, and also includes attitudes towards other national minorities living in the same culturally-mixed region.

The aim was to monitor the impact of television on the Roma minority. The research showed that television has an impact on the respondents and that they mainly watch TV shows for music and entertainment and have no interest in watching other programs. The fact that television programs have an impact on their development can also be seen by the fact that they give names of serial characters to their children, try to find an escape from reality in an ideal world and identify with the lives of TV heroes. Experience shows that, even if the Roma minority has a problem with obtaining sufficient funds for the purchase of equipment or accessories, such as satellite receivers and the like, they are nevertheless determined to receive television signals.

The ideal situation would be the existence of Roma TV, for which the Roma themselves would prepare the program structure and participate in the creation of programs, thus ensuring their authenticity. This would hopefully eliminate the possibility of their being dissatisfied with broadcast content and broadcast programs.

The creation of separate Roma television fiction by Slovak Television would be a move away from commercial broadcasting and towards the creation of more specific programs that contribute to pluralism and cultural diversity. We favor the idea of Marc Raboy that communication with the public shall be such as to meet the needs of public culture with global reach and local experience, and therefore to be geographically accessible, acting in its content, dedicated to ethnic groups and respecting the cultural development and democratization of society. We might also have contributed, by this research, in influencing the decision-makers of these programs, leading to new programs for minorities in society and informing them about the work of some of the Roma, their achievements and thus contributing to changing their lifestyle.

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