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## *The Social Position and Fertility of Roma Women*

Béla Janky

### **Introduction**

This study investigates changes in the life chances of Roma women over the decade and a half that has passed since the regime change.<sup>1</sup> The primary focus will be on problems facing young women, especially the issue of fertility, and on the interconnections between integration into the education system and integration into the labour market. The analysis will primarily rely on the results of the nationwide representative Roma Survey of 2003, which was led by István Kemény. Data will also be used from earlier nationwide and various other Roma surveys carried out under the supervision of Kemény, as well as data published by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (HCSO).

A number of studies have recently been published which have included the results of the 2003 survey in their analysis of the chances of the Roma population in the labour market and in education.<sup>2</sup> The findings of these publications will be mentioned only briefly, as the central topic of the present study is the data on demographic behaviour, with special reference to links between integration into the labour market and integration into the education system. Although a few publications related to fertility have already emerged based on the data of 2003,<sup>3</sup> these are only concerned with the most elementary tendencies or a specific aspect of the problem. This study introduces some new measures that show the connections between the demographic behaviour of Roma people and their integration status in what is partly a new light.

We start with a theory that was put forward in the American literature and that has been used as a working hypothesis in several Hungarian studies. This states that, as one of the consequences of the narrowing sphere of

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<sup>1</sup> The source of most of the data analysed here is the nationwide representative Roma Survey of 2003, which was led by István Kemény. I am also indebted to him for his help and advice on studying the demographic behaviour of Roma people. Previous research related to the present study was supported by a Ferenc Deák research grant from the Hungarian Ministry of Education.

<sup>2</sup> See Kemény and Janky (2003), Kemény, Janky and Lengyel (2004), Kertesi (2005).

<sup>3</sup> Janky (2005a), Kemény (2004).

labour market opportunities following the regime change, the age of child-bearing for some Roma women has fallen steadily. Also, the number of children is generally increasing, which in itself contributes to the inability of these families to break out of dire poverty. The theory contends that this marginalized group becomes sharply demarcated from the group of more fortunate Roma people, who adjust their demographic behaviour to the better chances of integration open to them: they have children later in life and have fewer of them, and they make an effort to adapt to the habits of the ethnic majority in other respects as well.

In this study we argue that the theory needs some modification. Although the chances of integration do indeed have a noticeable influence on demographic behaviour, the pattern of changes occurring under various circumstances depicts a more complicated picture than would be predicted by the theory. Neither the increase in the number of births nor the fall in the age of child-bearing reveals unambiguous widespread trends. Instead, what we see is little or no reduction in the number of births and little or no postponement in the age at which people living in less promising environments start having children. Also, changing trends in the age of child-bearing may be dissociated from the development of the number of births in adulthood. That is, we need to deal with two separate phenomena, which can often be interpreted in unrelated contexts.

In the rest of this paper the original theory and Hungarian research related to it will be presented first. Next, we shall investigate the assumption that changes in circumstances have led to the emergence of an underclass. With this in mind, we shall look at changes in young Roma women's chances of labour market and education integration over the one and a half decades since the regime change. In the last section trends in fertility will be analysed. Finally, at the end of the same section, our major conclusions will be presented.

### **Underclass and fertility**

In an earlier study published in a previous volume of *Changing Roles* (Janky, 1999), we pointed out, using data from the 1993 Roma Survey, that the high incidence of teenage motherhood among Roma women could prevent the mothers from obtaining qualifications minimally required for integration into the labour market. It may also have the effect of preserving the dominance of the role of women as (usually desperately poor) mothers looking after several children and never participating in the labour market. Following Kemény (1999) it was also shown that the steadily decreasing size of cohorts completing primary education in Hungary could open the way to secondary schooling for the Roma population, provided job opportunities in densely Roma-populated areas showed a substantial improvement.

As will be discussed later, the labour market chances of the Roma have not improved in the ten years that have passed since the previous Roma survey. The results of recent research suggest that the reason behind the deterioration in the life prospects of Roma women in the 1990s was not simply that relatively low fertility and, above all, delayed child-bearing are prerequisites for successful labour market integration today. The studies demonstrate that, in certain Roma communities, not just does fertility not decline to meet the changing labour market conditions, but the number of children actually increases under these hopeless circumstances. What is worse, the age of child-bearing falls in these communities.

Durst (2001a) carried out fieldwork in an especially disadvantaged settlement in the north of Hungary. One of the major findings of his work was that teenage Roma women today set greater store by family values and start families earlier than women of previous generations. Ladányi and Szelényi (2004) report similar demographic processes following their research in the northwest settlement of Csetény.<sup>4</sup> Durst adopts Kelly's (1998) hypothesis concerning North American ethnic ghettos and argues that the reason for this process is that, in a hopeless labour market situation, early child-bearing is "*the only path to adulthood, to earning the respect of others and to gaining self-esteem*" (Durst, 2001a: 81).

It must also be mentioned that, according to the findings of Fleck and Virág's (1999) study of the Beás Gypsies in Southwest Hungary, in the past decade or two local youths of child-bearing age have made concerted efforts to adjust their patterns of child-bearing to those of the majority society. In another study, using data from a settlement not far from his previous research location, Durst (2001b) found that, in this particular situation, the Roma population are characterized by a strong drive to assimilate, including a desire to adjust their child-bearing habits to the behaviour of the majority population.

The studies discussed above were carried out in settlements at the extreme ends of the spectrum. Their results, however, are revealing, even though they may not reflect the tendencies that hold for a wider section of the Roma population. This is because they draw attention to processes that may, at present, only be observed in a narrow, exceptionally disadvantaged group, but that may spread to a wider section of the population as the social exclusion of Roma people intensifies. If this process does indeed become characteristic of a broader group, the success of any endeavour to assist the integration of the Roma would be in danger of failure even over a relatively long term. The reason for this is that women who have children at the age of

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<sup>4</sup> We must note that both Durst (2001a) and Ladányi and Szelényi (2004) present the data on births in a way that may potentially exaggerate the magnitude of the changes they assume to have taken place (see Janky, 2005b for details). Nevertheless, their explanations are presumed to be valid in our paper.

sixteen now and generally (young) families with a large number of children may become dependent on social assistance and temporary (council) jobs for a lifetime because they missed their chance to obtain a certificate of secondary education ('érettségi') or specific qualifications required for participation in the labour market. The large family and poverty make it impossible for them to get a second chance at a later stage. It is, therefore, an essential task to estimate the size of the group where, going against the national flow, the level of fertility has increased over the decade and a half since the regime change.

According to some interpretations of the research findings indicating an increase in fertility and earlier child-bearing, the phenomenon could indeed hold for a relatively broad section of the Roma population. Ladányi and Szelényi (2004) argue that the kind of social exclusion affecting the Roma that has emerged over the past decade and a half more or less corresponds to the notion of an 'underclass' discussed by Wilson (1987). He used the term to characterize the position of the group of black Americans living in urban ghettos and excluded from the labour market. The theory holds that those of the Roma who successfully escape from dire poverty become middle-class-like and strive to conform to the non-Roma environment both in choice of housing and in lifestyle, including child-bearing habits.

### **Labour market position and education**

The data on the labour market position of the Roma indicate that, for the majority of the group, any sort of permanent job is out of reach and will remain so for the foreseeable future. The results of the two most recent Roma Surveys show that the employment rate of the Roma has remained fixed at an exceptionally low level ever since the regime change (*Table 1*). Furthermore, only part of this employment is made up of full-time, legal work bringing in regular wages (Kemény, Janky and Lengyel, 2004). Kertesi (2005) also points out that a substantial proportion of those with jobs work in unstable forms of employment (often associated with the social benefit system) which, while temporarily providing employment, recreate unemployment at a later stage. Very few people are given the opportunity to acquire long-term sources of income with real prospects for the future.

*Table 1* also shows that the employment rate was lower for women than for men during the period of state socialism. This difference is, in large part, explained by high fertility. It is worth noting that a similar proportion of women as men lost their jobs in the second half of the 1980s. That is, the rate of women's employment continues to be considerably lower than the employment rate for men.

## Changing Roles

*Table 1*

The employment rates of Roma men and women between 1971 and 2003 (%)\*

	1971	1978	1987	1993	2003
Men	85.2	77.3	74.4	28.8	29.2
Women	30.3	47.0	49.3	16.3	16.3
<i>Overall</i>	<i>n.d.</i>	<i>62.0</i>	<i>62.0</i>	<i>22.6</i>	<i>22.7</i>
N	n.d.	2875	3888	4842	3081

*Source:* Nationwide Representative Roma Survey of 1971, 1993 and 2003.

\* The percentage of women aged 15–54 and men aged 15–59.

n.d.: no data.

The results of the Roma surveys lend support to the hypothesis that, for the great majority of young Roma women, labour market integration is beyond hope and, consequently, they place a greater emphasis on status attainment through child rearing, which in turn further reduces their chances of ever integrating in the future.

For the correct interpretation of fertility data it is important to note that changes in labour market opportunities have displayed different patterns in various regions of Hungary. The situation is exceptionally favourable in Budapest, and there has been noticeable improvement there since the Roma Survey of 1993. The Transdanubian region is characterized by better opportunities than the east of the country but little improvement has been observed there either.

The situation is more complex as regards schooling. Opportunities for continuing education after the eight grades of primary school improved for the whole of the population in the 1990s owing to the combination of a general expansion of secondary school places, the introduction of normative funding (i.e. funding based on school roll size) and various demographic trends taking place in the country. The effects of this process surface in Havas, Kemény and Liskó's (2002) research results as well. In the first half of the 1990s half of all Roma children who completed primary school went on to secondary education, mostly to 2- or 3-year vocational training schools. By the end of the decade the figure was three-quarters.

It must be noted, however, that the improving indicators in level of education are accompanied by a growing gap between Roma and non-Roma youths. Most vocational training qualifications are less marketable today than completed primary education was in the 1970s. Reasonable opportunities are more likely to be open to people with certificate of secondary education (henceforth CSE). The results of the 2003 survey reveal, however, that only one twentieth of young Roma people aged 20–24 possessed this qualification and a further 2% were still attending secondary schools at the time of questioning.

The proportion of those entering secondary education is no higher for women than it is for men, in spite of the fact that, just as in the non-Roma population, the performance of Roma girls at school surpasses that of boys, as shown by the results of the 1993 survey. There is no evidence of the strategy pursued during the socialist era in families of relatively low social status, mostly living in rural areas, where girls were encouraged by the parents to complete (non-vocational) secondary education with CSE while boys were expected to learn a trade and start work early. According to the results of the survey of 2003, Roma boys are just as likely to go on to secondary education as are Roma girls.

The survey also reveals that those who have children earlier than their peers are substantially less likely to continue with their studies. Between 1990 and 2002 only 3% of Roma women who had had children before the age of 18 had, or were in the process of getting, qualifications higher than primary school. Among those who had been aged at least 18 at birth of first child the figure was 27%.

In summary, the data on education, as well as the labour market situation, support the hunch that Roma women get insufficient motivation to reduce their fertility or postpone child-bearing. Nevertheless, the data on births are hard to reconcile with the predictions that follow on from the underclass hypothesis.

## **Fertility**

The total fertility rate (TFR)<sup>5</sup> calculated from the data on live births to Roma women of various ages approximates to the value of the indicator estimated using the relevant data from the census of 1930–31 (*Table 2*). At the same time, Roma women have their first child earlier and also stop having children earlier than the total Hungarian population did during the years following the First World War.<sup>6</sup> In the decades after the 1920s, the fall in the number of births in Hungary is explained primarily by a tendency to withdraw earlier from child-bearing. The proportion of women who had children before the age of 20 remained essentially constant.<sup>7</sup>

The 1990s saw the start of the process of deferring child-bearing among Hungarian women. Compared to the typical age of 25–26 years of 15 years

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<sup>5</sup> For the definition of the indicator see the first footnote of the paper by F. Kamarás on page 92 of this volume (editors).

<sup>6</sup> In the first decades of the 20th century only a very low proportion of women continued to go to school after the age of 14. The low incidence of teenage mothers in the period is therefore unlikely to be the consequence of the delaying effect of education.

<sup>7</sup> Hungarian women had their first child at a younger age than was typical of women in Western or Southern Europe. At the same time, the total fertility rate was no higher in Hungary than in Western countries (Pongrácz and S. Molnár, 1994).

## Changing Roles

ago, Hungarian women today have their first child at the age of 27–28 (Spéder, 2004). The situation is quite different among the Roma population. The average age for a Roma woman to have her first child is 20 years, and there has been no noticeable change in this respect for the past few decades. Three in ten Roma women become mothers before they reach the age of 18 and around two-thirds have their first child at the age of 20 at the latest.

The postponement of the age of child-bearing among all Hungarian women has been accompanied by a fall in the total fertility rate. From a rate of 1.8 in the early nineties, the value of the indicator in Hungary had decreased to 1.3 by the turn of the millennium. The figure is significantly higher for Roma women. However— contrary to the expectations voiced by several authors— fertility has not increased since the regime change. In fact, the value of the TFR decreased somewhat in the years preceding the 2003 survey (from 3.3 to 3.0). It is undeniable, however, that the rate of decline has not kept up with developments observed among the non-Roma population.

*Table 2*

The number of live births per 1,000 women in each age group and the total fertility rate among the Roma and the total population between 1921 and 2002

Period	Age groups							Total fertility rate
	15–19	20–24	25–29	30–34	35–39	40–49	15–49	
Total population								
1921	40.7	202.0	212.1	126.7*		25.2	116.8	3.8
1930–31	40.9	158.5	151.8	110.7	74.8	15.7	88.0	2.8
1969–70	51.0	162.2	111.0	52.8	19.0	2.3	56.6	2.0
1990–93	36.8	138.2	114.7	48.2	16.5	1.8	47.9	1.8
1995–98	28.7	89.3	99.4	49.2	17.0	1.8	40.2	1.4
1999–02	22.6	67.1	92.6	55.9	20.0	1.4	37.9	1.3
Roma population								
1990–93	137.0	217.8	141.6	98.4	51.9	10.4	111.7	3.3
1995–98	134.3	219.3	155.8	95.9	50.4	6.3	118.0	3.3
1999–02	120.8	218.1	133.7	64.1	48.6	6.7	102.0	3.0

*Source:* HCSO (1995, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2003), and the Roma Surveys of 1993 and 2003.

*Note:* The results of the 2003 Roma Survey are similar to the data referring to the years 1990–93 from the 1993 survey and the two surveys give the same total fertility rate for this period.

\* For the age group 30–39.

The TFR calculated for the total Roma population may be misleading in some respects. First, the mean values may obscure divergent tendencies.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> In his analysis of the results of the US census, Haines (2002) demonstrates that the demographic behaviour of the black population has been steadily approaching that of the white population. The difference between the two values of the TFR has by now become



Second, the potentially declining fertility of relatively older women may conceal an increase in the child-bearing rate of younger people. For these reasons, the proportion of women who have children before they are 18 will now be examined and we also attempt to demarcate the group whose most disadvantaged members led to the hypothesis of increasing fertility (*Table 3*).

The data on the child-bearing tendencies of women in the past one and a half decades are, therefore, broken down by region, with women living in villages in the north and east of Hungary at the time of the survey analysed separately.<sup>9</sup> Within this regional group we distinguish people living in households with no income from wages in settlements where less than 15% of the sampled working-age Roma are in jobs. An increase in the fertility rate can indeed be observed in these subgroups.<sup>10</sup>

It must be noted, however, that the selected regional subgroup and income subgroup make up, respectively, only a quarter and a tenth of the Roma population. Also, the available data cannot be taken to support the hypothesis that a growing incidence of underage motherhood is the main cause of increased fertility. The birth rates among 15–19 year-olds in the two subsamples have decreased. The proportion of women having their first child before they are 18 is rather high in the most disadvantaged group, but there is no evidence of a substantial increase in this measure. In the subgroups under the spotlight the greatest (and steadily growing) number of children are born to mothers in their early twenties.

In order to delve deeper into the development of the fertility of Roma women living in various social environments, and thus get a clearer idea of the above results, the child-bearing rates of the Roma population of Eastern Hungary are compared to the demographic behaviour of Roma women in the Central region and in the Transdanubian (Western) region. In contrast to the stagnation observed in the Eastern region, the fertility rate has decreased in the Transdanubian area to approximately the same extent as it has done for the whole population. The rate in the west was lower than the Roma average in the early nineties as well. At the same time, just as the increase in fertility in the most disadvantaged groups cannot be tied to the incidence of teenage motherhood, the fertility decrease here cannot be wholly attributed to the diminishing likelihood of early child-bearing (although there is a noticeable decrease in the 18–24 age group).

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negligible. This means that, even in the originating country of the proposal, the assumption of increased teenage fertility among a minority group drawn into the position of underclass is hard to support on the basis of comprehensive life-course fertility data for the whole of the ethnic group.

<sup>9</sup> This is where the Roma population is most deprived and is the location of the research discussed in the first part of the paper.

<sup>10</sup> It is reasonable to contend that fertility has not decreased among the population from which the sample was taken.

Changing Roles

Table 3

The number of live births per 1,000 women in each age group and the total fertility rate in subgroups of the Roma population\* in various periods between 1990 and 2000

Period	Age groups					Total fertility rate	Mothers under 18 (%)**	
	15–19	20–24	25–29	30–34	35–39			40–49
All Roma								
1990–93	137.0	217.8	141.6	98.4	51.9	10.4	3.3	34
1995–98	134.3	219.3	155.8	95.9	50.4	6.3	3.3	22
1999–2002	120.8	218.1	133.7	64.1	48.6	6.7	3.0	29
Roma living in households with no income from wages in 2003 (45% of the sample)								
1990–93	134.0	224.6	152.5	74.1	56.1	14.0	3.3	36
1995–98	154.5	227.9	168.4	100.1	75.2	11.1	3.7	23
1999–2002	136.7	262.7	138.1	74.4	53.0	8.8	3.4	29
Roma living in northern and eastern villages in 2003 (25% of the sample)								
1990–93	191.8	216.0	171.3	60.8	10.9	0.0	3.3	38
1995–98	152.7	253.5	188.6	59.0	46.9	0.0	3.5	23
1999–2002	128.0	301.4	125.2	55.6	39.6	18.5	3.4	32
Roma living in especially disadvantaged circumstances in 2003*** (9% of the sample)								
1990–93	200.0	191.9	175.4	31.2	52.6	0.0	3.3	42
1995–98	176.5	247.1	171.7	52.6	31.2	0.0	3.4	27
1999–2002	162.5	357.2	133.3	53.8	37.0	0.0	3.7	46

Béla Janky: The Social Position and Fertility of Roma Women

Period	Age groups						Total fertility rate	Mothers under 18 (%)**
	15–19	20–24	25–29	30–34	35–39	40–49		
Eastern region (61% of the sample)								
1990–93	147.5	206.5	145.0	84.2	31.0	12.4	3.2	40
1995–98	132.1	232.3	160.7	90.8	65.7	3.8	3.4	23
1999–2002	127.1	255.7	133.9	69.6	58.6	8.1	3.3	29
Budapest and surroundings (14% of the sample)								
1990–93	142.3	292.4	188.2	159.7	38.9	17.8	4.3	33
1995–98	174.5	201.8	178.3	169.6	46.1	18.1	4.0	30
1999–2002	120.7	158.5	156.2	65.5	36.9	7.6	2.8	37
Transdanubian region (25% of the sample)								
1990–93	152.4	235.7	122.4	32.0	50.4	0.0	3.0	22
1995–98	117.7	200.3	127.5	74.9	18.9	4.6	2.7	15
1999–2002	104.9	152.0	123.0	51.1	36.9	3.4	2.4	27
Associated with the Olah culture**** (35% of the sample)								
1990–93	139.1	246.4	167.6	84.3	27.0	5.0	3.4	37
1995–98	145.0	229.6	184.5	106.5	61.9	3.7	3.7	20
1999–2002	107.0	231.2	147.8	65.5	64.8	2.4	3.1	29
Associated with the Beás culture**** (10% of the sample)								
1990–93	127.1	230.9	119.4	48.9	30.6	8.1	2.9	17
1995–98	113.5	210.0	110.2	78.2	75.6	0.0	2.9	5
1999–2002	97.4	240.6	134.5	40.9	48.1	7.3	2.9	20

Source: The Roma Survey of 1993 for data on the total Roma population 1990–93, the Roma Survey of 2003 for the remaining cells.

Notes: \* Based on place of abode in 2003 and on self-report. \*\* Percentage of women having their first child in the given period. \*\*\* People living in households with no income from wages in rural Northern or Eastern Hungarian settlements where less than 15% of the sampled working-age Roma inhabitants are in work. \*\*\*\* Those who speak an Olah or Beás dialect or consider themselves to be of Olah or Beás ethnicity.

The most prominent change can be observed in Budapest and the surrounding areas, although a considerable proportion of the Roma living in the capital city come from other regions. In the early nineties the population in the Budapest sample was characterized by an exceptionally high TFR of 4.3. At the end of the nineties this value began to fall sharply (the mean value for the four years preceding the survey was 2.8). However, the fall cannot, once again, be explained by a trend to defer child-bearing, since the proportion of teenage mothers in the capital and its surroundings approximates to the average for the rural Roma population. It appears, instead, that women in this region stop having children sooner today than they did a decade ago.

Analysis of the three regions of Hungary can only give a very sketchy picture of the interactions of social environment, motivating factors and fertility behaviour. Nevertheless, we can see that the fertility rate remains high in the relatively underprivileged Eastern region, while the decrease in fertility in the Transdanubian region, with its more favourable prospects for the Roma population, keeps up with the tendencies observed among the non-Roma population. This does not mean, however, that the Roma population has assimilated to the ethnic majority in terms of fertility behaviour (or in any other respects). The characteristically highly fertile population living in the region of the capital city and its surroundings has quickly changed its demographic behaviour. These people typically moved from Eastern Hungary to the region of Budapest, where exceptionally favourable labour market conditions awaited them, which further improved in the course of the 1990s. It is not the case, however, that the Roma population of Budapest with incomes characteristic of the lower-middle class has adjusted its demographic behaviour to that of the majority—the decrease in the number of births has not even reached the fertility level of the Transdanubian Roma, who live in far more disadvantaged circumstances. Although women in their late twenties have fewer children, young women still do not delay the start of child-bearing. A lower fertility rate is accompanied by a relatively high level of education in the Transdanubian region, but this does not hold for the Budapest region.

A specific group of Transdanubian Roma, the Beás people, deserve special attention. Compared to other Roma groups, it was at a later point that the Beás Roma settled in villages, began to attend school and started to work. Those who considered themselves Beás in 2003 are characterized by a low proportion of teenage mothers relative to the 1980s and other Roma groups and by a steadily improving process of integration into education—in the context of highly unfavourable labour market opportunities and income conditions (cf. Fleck and Virág, 1999).<sup>11</sup> The TFR, however, has not

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<sup>11</sup> In another study we used regression analysis in an attempt to establish causal relations between the determinants of early child-bearing (Janky, 2004). The results of the estimates

decreased among them, in contrast to other Roma groups of the Transdanubian region. In order to fully understand the changes that have taken place in the demographic behaviour of the Beás people, their history at the time of the socialist era would need to be analysed in detail.

The data corroborate the hypothesis that fertility is strongly affected by labour market chances, but this has less of a bearing on the timing of the birth of first child. This does not mean, however, that the timing of the birth of first child only depends on the slowly changing traditions of individual communities. Looking at any classification of the Roma population, it is evident<sup>12</sup> that, in the mid-nineties, the proportion of teenage mothers fell for a few years before rising again (although in most cases to a lower level than in the early 1990s).<sup>13</sup> The decrease coincides with the period when there was a sharp increase in the number of available places in secondary education. The data suggest that some of the young Roma women reacted to this, postponing marriage. It might have been the lack of success in education and later in the labour market experienced by this generation that subsequently led to the return to the previous proportions. This explanation, however, must remain speculative, and further investigation is needed to understand the phenomenon.

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In summary, we observed 'middle-way' or 'mixed' trends, rather than sharply delimited, divergent processes, as regards the demographic behaviour of various Roma groups. The problem is not rooted in an increase in fertility or in the incidence of teenage motherhood. What we find, instead, is that in the eastern region of Hungary, which is home to the majority of the Roma population, the traditional high fertility rate and large proportion of very young mothers have failed to decline or have not declined enough to allow secondary education and subsequently labour market integration to be a viable alternative for most Roma women, even in the context of favourable education and labour market policy changes. In contrast, the data for Budapest show that, given highly favourable labour market opportunities,

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indicate that labour market chances have a minimal direct role and the effect of segregation is also limited. Roma women living in settlements and regions with better prospects are, on the whole, approximately as likely to become mothers at such a young age as those living in the Roma-populated villages of futureless ghetto-like regions. Beás attachment proved to be the variable with the strongest effect. Among Beás Roma, the proportion of women having their first child before they are 18 is substantially lower, and this difference cannot be attributed to the effects of other determining factors included in the study. This analysis, however, is based on the cross-section analysis of all births over the decade and a half following the regime change.

<sup>12</sup> Even though the decrease may not be statistically significant for some of the groups.

<sup>13</sup> Analysis of yearly data confirms the assumption that the time of the decrease falls within this period.

adult Roma women adjust their family-planning strategies without delay. The marked decrease in the proportion of teenage mothers in the period between 1995 and 1998 indicates that improving prospects in schooling can also effect very quick changes in long-standing habits—so long as they provide real hope of integration.

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Béla Janky: The Social Position and Fertility of Roma Women

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