

Sinti and Roma at school – The opinion of teachers

Results of a survey by the Documentary Centre
of German Sinti and Roma, Heidelberg 2004

Pursuant to Article 12 of the European Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities¹, the signatory states have obligated themselves to inform students in their educational institutions about the history and present-day situation of national minorities. The Framework Convention was ratified by the German Bundestag in 1997 and is therefore German law. As a result, Sinti and Roma were recognized as a national minority, just as the Sorbs, Frisians and Danes. The federal structure of the Federal Republic transfers the implementation of the education policy aspects of international conventions to the area of responsibility of the Federal States and their respective Ministries of Culture and Education. The initiative of the Documentary Centre in carrying out a survey of teachers in secondary schools in Germany must be seen in this context. We wanted to know whether or to what extent teachers have accepted the subject of "Sinti and Roma".

The aim of the survey was to take stock of what teachers in Germany know and communicate about Sinti and Roma, their views on the latter and minorities in general and whether or to what extent they are interested in the topic of "Sinti and Roma" and if they would also be prepared to learn more. Furthermore, we were interested in their assessment as to whether the climate in schools is considered to have a positive or negative impact on children and young people from the minority - a significant factor for their academic achievement.

School is often the first place where children of Sinti and Roma are confronted with prejudice. The image of the so-called "gypsy" serves as a standard projection figure for the misunderstood foreigner in society, or whose personification of nature supposedly plays no part in the process of civilization, whereby the attributed characteristics are conventionalized as typical qualities of the overall minority. The National Socialists attempted to legitimize their crimes of genocide against the minority with racist stereotypes transformed into prejudices. The continued stigmatisation of the Sinti and Roma, who have had their home in Central Europe for more than 600 years, as supposed "foreigners" and the "scapegoat thesis" which is deeply rooted in the consciousness of the majority populations in Europe and is accessible at any time still provide the basis for discrimination, marginalization and racistly motivated acts of violence against persons belonging to the minority. As a result, the educational work on the historical bases and the present-day conditions of antiziganistic tendencies must be in the interest of both the Sinti and Roma and the majority population. School plays an important role in this respect as do the teachers, whose authority in professional concerns is not only important for educational achievement, but "surprisingly, has an even stronger impact on social competence."²

The Ministries of Culture and Education of the Federal States were rarely active in the question of improved educational support for Sinti and Roma children. The results of the PISA studies and the

¹ Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, ETS No.: 157 of 1st February 1995. <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/ger/Treaties/Html/157.htm>, last accessed 14.12.2011.

² Melzer Wolfgang/Al-Diban, Sabine: Vermittlung von Fachleistungs-, Sozial- und Selbstkompetenzen als zentrale Bildungsaufgabe von Schule. [Communication of Subject, Social And Personal Competence as a Central Educational Task of School.] In: Melzer, Wolfgang/Sandfuchs, Uwe (eds), Was Schule leistet. Funktionen und Aufgaben von Schule [What School Does. Functions and Tasks of School], Weinheim and Munich 2001, p. 37-64, here p. 43.

increasing number of migrant children, especially in the bottom education segment, had attracted too much attention. In the nineties, several countries followed the recommendations of a resolution of the Council of Europe on the "educational support of the children of Sinti, Roma and occupational travellers" of May 1989 and created appropriate programmes and initiated and supported projects.³ However, most of the projects were limited in time and were only implemented with the financial support of the EU. Several institutional bodies – e.g. specific departments in the teacher training institutes – had not been in existence since the beginning of the noughties or had been transferred to other departments, usually with responsibility for refugees and migrants. In several Federal states, the Regional Offices for Questions concerning Foreigners (RAA)⁴ devoted themselves to the extracurricular pastoral care of Sinti and Roma. As the name of the Regional Offices implies, the projects mainly concern the educational integration and promotion of migrant or asylum-seeking Roma.

There have only been a few statistical studies on the issue of antiziganism. A frequently cited study was a representative survey of the attitudes towards Jews and other minorities carried out in Germany by the Emnid research institute on behalf of the American Jewish Committee in 1994.⁵ Questions about stereotyped patterns were asked using the pejorative term "gypsy", and the results showed that the respondents were most hostile towards Sinti and Roma compared with other groups (Arabs, Vietnamese, Turks, Poles, Africans, etc.). Around 64 percent did not want "gypsies" as neighbours (a measure of social distance) and almost 38 percent thought that "gypsies" aroused animosity in the population as a result of their behaviour. The Arabs were ranked second as undesirable neighbours with 45%, and just under 20% thought that Turks were to blame for the hostility directed at them.

In the area of education, a survey in North Rhine-Westphalia from beginning of the 1990s, which dealt exclusively with Sinti and Roma and had the aim of evaluating a "problematic" situation, is interesting.⁶ Although it was recorded in the evaluation that "German Sinti and Roma (...) [were] educationally integrated to a large extent", the authors also pointed out that "differences between German and foreign Sinti and Roma [were] not addressed" in the survey,⁷ i.e. no difference was made between refugees from the former Yugoslavia, foreign and German Roma and Sinti, something which represented different starting points with regard to compulsory school attendance and for a pedagogical and didactic approach, and also required different concepts. Some questionnaires were returned unanswered, since affiliation to the minority could be "at most supposed", but not "determined" beyond doubt. It seems that the reasons for educational failure are traditionally looked for in the cultural background of supposedly underachieving pupils with their own ("different") standards and value systems. The distance of the parental generation and grandparent generation to the

³ Thomas, Christina: Integration durch Achtung und Anerkennung. [Integration through Respect and Recognition.] In: Hornberg, Sabine (publisher): Die Schulsituation von Sinti und Roma in Europa [School Situation of Sinti and Roma in Europe], Frankfurt am Main 200, p. 140ff. Hornberg provides a tabular overview of measures of the Federal states and discusses some selected examples.

⁴ The organization of the RAAs varies from state to state. Whereas the RAAs are public institutions in North Rhine-Westphalia, e.g. the RAA in Berlin is organized under association law. The various RAAs have formed a Federal working group in the meantime.

⁵ The American Jewish Committee: Einstellungen gegenüber Juden und anderen Minderheiten [Attitudes towards Jews and other minorities], New York (1994), GESIS Datenarchiv, Cologne. ZA2418 Data file Version 1.0.0, doi:10.4232/1.2418, p. 5, Survey by: Emnid, Bielefeld.

⁶ Begegnung und Verständnis. Schulische und schulbegleitende Maßnahmen für Kinder aus Sinti- und Romafamilien. [Encounter and Understanding. Educational and Extracurricular Measures for Children from Sinti and Roma Families.], published by the Ministry of Culture and Education of North Rhine-Westphalia, Frechen 1993.

⁷ Ibid p. 9.

institution of "school" perceived by teachers should also not be interpreted as an indication of a negative attitude towards education, but must be considered and evaluated as a collective historical experience. A new handout for North Rhine-Westphalia prepared in collaboration with the regional association of German Sinti and Roma was published at the end of 2011.

Questionnaire and random sample

In terms of method, we selected the form of a standardized questionnaire. This would include all the essential elements of our survey, but would also be condensed to the extent that it could be filled in by the teachers without taking too much time. A total of 39 questions and Likert-scaled complexes of questions were provided, which resulted in 108 variables. An open answer was possible for some items.

Subdivided into topics, the various sections of the questionnaire deal with teaching and the level of knowledge, prejudices and attitudes and sympathy ratings in schools and the prospects of interest in the topic in the future. We asked other questions about the school situation, student orientation and the frequency of contact with parents, in order to be able to evaluate the assessments of the respondents. Finally, socio-demographic data was requested at the end. Individual questions were optimized in discussions with educationists and a pre-test in the Heidelberg area. Dispensing with the use of interviewers not only ensured the implementation of the survey but also the greatest possible anonymity of the respondents. After the returns were received, the envelopes were separated from the questionnaires. No conclusions could therefore be drawn about the senders, refusers or the schools written to.

Sampling was carried out in stages through Federal state selection and proportional representation according to the number of teachers in each type of school. The sampling procedure was representative for the Federal Republic, since in principle every teacher in a secondary school in Germany could have received our questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed over the Federal States in accordance with their percentage share of school types and teachers who are employed there. A total of 400 schools were written to and 3,200 questionnaires distributed. 397 questionnaires or approx. 12.4 percent were returned, whereby the distribution of teachers over the individual types of school approximately corresponded to the national distribution.

Table 1: Distribution of teachers over the types of school in the survey compared with the national distribution in the school year 2003/2004 according to data of the Federal Statistical Office

School type	Survey %	Fed. Stat. Office %
Secondary general school	17.1	19.5
Multitrack schools	7.4	9.2
Intermediate secondary school	20.0	19.6
Comprehensive school	14.6	10.9
Grammar school	41.0	40.9
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>

With regard to the subject combinations of the respondents, there was a clear focus on social studies in a wider sense and on German, with more than 61 percent of the returns. With 13.5 percent, other languages were just in front of mathematics and natural sciences with 12.7 percent and subjects such as sport, art and music also with just over 12 percent.

Most of the teachers who returned the questionnaire had 25 years of service or longer. They made up more than 39 percent of the returns. 24.5 % of the respondents had less than ten years of service and the rest, 36.5 % of the respondents, could look back on ten to 24 years of service. Just over half were women teachers with 51.5 percent, something which also approximately corresponded to the German Federal average of 2003.

Contact with Sinti and Roma children in schools.

The question as to whether Sinti and Roma children had been taught in the class is not without significance for the hypothesis that contact with members of a minority increases the willingness to engage thematically with the minority. Since our survey was not geographically restricted to areas with a high population density of Sinti and Roma, a relative importance with regard to other complexes of questions is attached to the question about contact - since it can be important e.g. for the association of diverse circumstances whether Sinti and Roma children are in school or not - as well as an "absolute" importance, which will be outlined in the following.

First of all, we made a distinction between German Sinti and Roma and Roma of foreign origin, since e.g. linguistic and socio-cultural problems occur in the educational integration of migrant children which require a different pedagogical support than is the case for German children.⁸ We can therefore

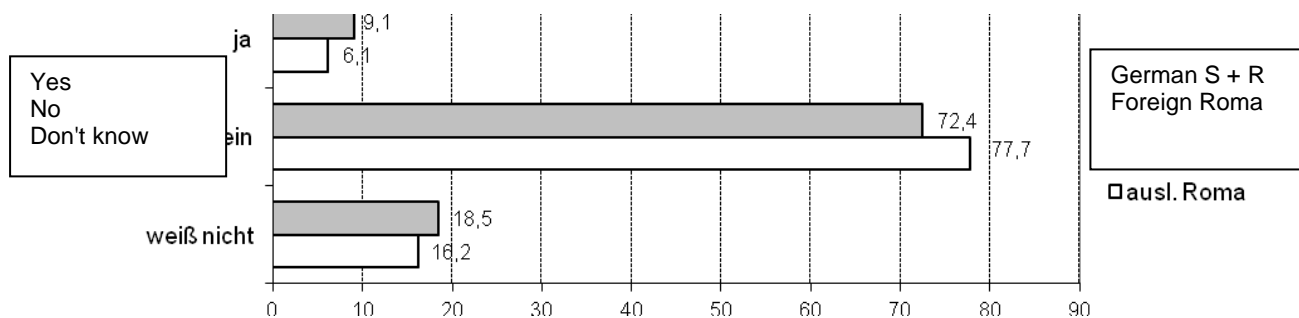
⁸ Simmer, Helge/Edmunds, Martin: Probleme im Zusammenspiel von Kindern aus Sinti- und Roma-Familien einerseits und der Schule andererseits. [Problems in the interaction of children from Sinti and Roma families on the one hand and the school on the other.] In: Begegnung und Verständnis [Encounter and Understanding], published by the Ministry of Culture and Education of North Rhine-Westphalia, Frechen 1993, page 9. The almost arbitrary description of behaviour patterns and pedagogical concepts are problematic in this consideration, which is based on a survey. As a result, no distinction is made between foreign and German Roma in the presentation of the problem situations, but the needs of foreign Roma are mainly considered in the pedagogical concept.

assume that contact of teachers with foreign Roma children results in different experiences, which also have a variable effect on the answers to certain corresponding questions in the survey.

Furthermore, we did not ask the question about contact as a simple alternative question but as an option which takes the circumstance into account that the affiliation of children to the minority irrespective of their origins can at most be assumed but apparently not established. All the more surprising is the result that much less use was made of the option "I cannot say" than we had assumed.

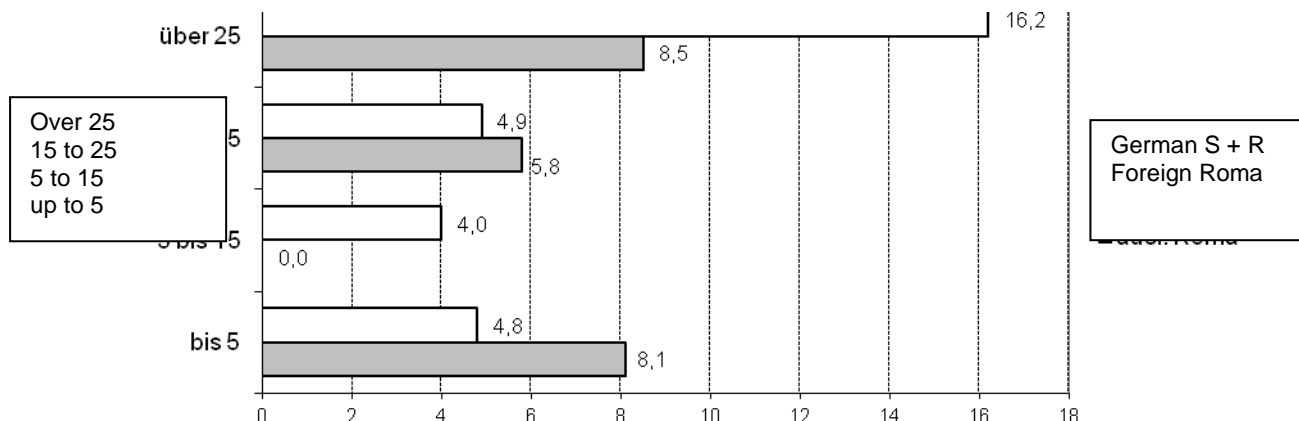
The results in detail: 9.1% of the respondents had taught German Sinti and Roma children in their class. A high percentage, if an estimated population of 70,000 German Sinti and Roma is assumed. 72.4% ticked "no" and only 18.5% of teachers made use of the option "I cannot say". The picture looks similar for Sinti and Roma children of foreign origin: 6.1% answered yes, 77.7% no and 16.2% of the respondents didn't know whether they had taught foreign Roma children in the classroom or not.

Diagram 1: Contact with children from the minority (percent)



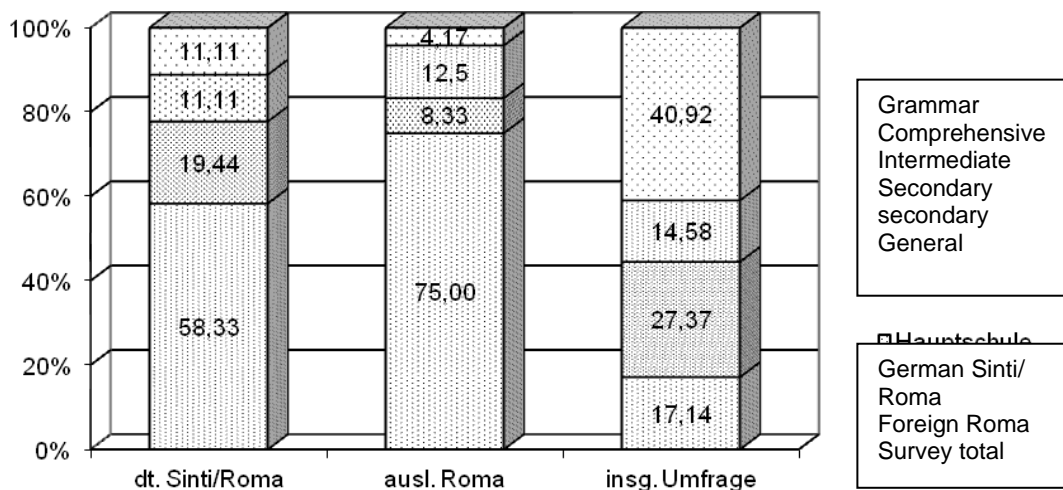
The high percentage of negative answers is also irritating. Although it cannot be ascertained whether the respondents assumed they had noticed there were children from the minority in their class, the finding indicates that the majority of teachers were well aware that there were Sinti and Roma children in their class or not. If we disregard the fact that some of the respondents may actually not be able to remember, a comparison with the service length structure shows that - logically - older teachers are disproportionately more likely to have taught Sinti and Roma children in schools. The positive answers are broken down in the following diagram according to the graduated length of service.

Diagram 2: Length of service and contacts (percentage of "yes" answers)



Whereas there is no conscious contact with Sinti and Roma children, neither German nor foreign, in the new Federal states (here: Brandenburg and Saxony), in the west the focus is on secondary general schools in large cities. More than 60% of German Sinti and Roma children and more than 70% of foreign Roma children go to school in cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants. Half of German Sinti children and a good third of foreign Roma children go to school in cities with more than half a million inhabitants. Well over half the contact of teachers with German Sinti and Roma children (58.33%) is in secondary general schools. At 75% the percentage is even higher in the case of Roma children from other countries.

Diagram 3: Contact according to school type (right-hand bar is the distribution of the respondents over the school types, whereby intermediate secondary schools and multitrack schools were summarized here)



This finding reflects the frequently expressed assumption that the Sinti and Roma children are disproportionately perceived in the lowest formal education segment. This applies to foreign Roma children to higher degree. A comparison of the survey results with the actual distribution of the teachers over the types of school gives an impression of the quantitative extent of this trend. Around 40% of all teachers nationwide taught in grammar schools in the school years 2003 and 2004. Around 11% of our respondents nationwide stated that they had taught children of German Sinti and Roma in grammar schools and around 4% children of foreign Roma. On the other hand, just under 20% of teachers nationwide taught in secondary general schools. Just under 60% of our

respondents had taught Sinti and Roma children and 75% children of foreign Roma. However, this fact does not allow any conclusions about the actual number of Sinti and Roma children in the various levels of education. Particularly in the higher levels of education, experience has shown that it must be increasingly assumed that families do not openly admit to ethnicity, in order to prevent disadvantage.

"Sinti and Roma" as a topic in lessons

The first block of the questionnaire dealt with teaching and level of knowledge of the topic of "Sinti and Roma". First and foremost, we wanted to find out the extent to which and how the topic is considered in lessons. As a supplement, we included two other less specific topics in the survey, whose contents are linked and - under didactical-pedagogical aspects - have a comparable objective target. On the one hand, this concerns the topic of minorities in general. In this respect, we left it to the respondents as to how far the term was to be conceptualized or which groups should be included. The memory and the admittedly extremely subjective feeling of the respective teacher of having considered this topic in lessons in one form or another are decisive. On the other hand, we included the area of the formation of prejudice and stereotyping, which has an analytical quality in addition to the thematic reference.

In order to gain an impression of the extent to which the three topics of "Sinti and Roma", "Minorities" and "Stereotyping" are included in lessons, we not only asked whether one of the topics was taught but also wanted to know how the topics were introduced to the lessons and the thematic context in which this happened. Moreover, we were interested in how teachers rated their own knowledge and that of their pupils of the history and the present-day situation of the Sinti and Roma. Finally, the question as to whether or in what respect it is significant whether the respondents stated that they had taught Sinti or Roma is of relevance.

More than two thirds of the respondents stated that they had presented (approx. 2002/2003) the topic of minorities (76.9%) and the formation of prejudices and stereotyping (80.2%) in the last two years. This order of magnitude was to be expected on account of the relative lack of definition with a simultaneous high presence in social studies subjects, which approx. 43 percent of the respondents taught. The question about "Sinti and Roma" produced a surprisingly high proportion of positive answers: almost 31 percent of the respondents had included this topic in their lessons. We can evaluate this as an indication that the subject has been frequently included in syllabuses and education plans and also that one third of teachers are interested in the topic in one way or another.⁹

⁹ The syllabuses and education plans of Baden-Württemberg and Hesse for the subject of history, which have very different structures and recommend mentioning Sinti and Roma, even compulsory for the 10th grade in Hesse, are referred to here as typical examples. It is worth mentioning that the 2004 education plan for secondary general schools in Baden-Württemberg does not mention Sinti or Roma once, otherwise the number of mentions increases in both Federal States for the higher grades. Incidentally: the term Jew or Judaism is mentioned incomparably more frequently: 55 times in the syllabus for grammar schools in Baden-Württemberg compared with twice for Sinti and Roma.

Table 2: Topic in lessons - Frequency and percentage of the various topics

Topic	Minorities			Prejudice formation / stereotyping			Sinti and Roma		
	Number	% total	% valid	Number	% total	% valid	Number	% total	% valid
yes	303	76.32	76.90	315	79.35	80.15	122	30.73	30.73
no	91	22.92	23.10	78	19.65	19.85	275	69.27	69.27
No ans.	3	0.76	-	4	1.01	-	0	-	-
Total	397	100.00	100.00	397	100.00	100.00	397	100.00	100.00

Whether requirements from the syllabuses or education recommendations were ultimately the reason for dealing with one of the topics only played a secondary role. We wanted to find out who started the initiative. In most cases, it was attributable to the teachers themselves. A look at other motives for the selection of a topic showed that on average a little more than one third of the teachers had taken a specific school-based or extracurricular event or also remarks from students as a reason to present the subject areas of minorities and stereotyping and formation of prejudice in lessons. The topic of "Sinti and Roma" on the other hand was almost exclusively discussed because of the individual lesson planning of the respondents. A specific event or an initiative of the pupils was a reason for only 2.9% and 4.7% of the respondents respectively to refer to Sinti and Roma in lessons.

However, what is the position if we only consider the teachers who stated that they had taught Sinti and Roma? A brief look at the results provided the following picture:

Table 3: Motive for teaching and contact of the respondents with children

Contact with	Reason for the lesson %	
		yes
German Sinti/Roma	specific event	16.1
	from students	11.1
Foreign Roma	specific event	8.3
	from students	4.2

The table shows the percentage of the respective motive for teaching of the respondents who have taught children of German and foreign Sinti and Roma respectively. The results for no contact and "don't know" omitted here make up the total to 100%.

On account of the low numbers of cases, only a tendency can be formulated that a specific event or an initiative from students resulted in the topic of the minority being addressed in lessons is considerably higher in percentage terms. It is even more than 50 percent in the case of a specific event. There was no conspicuous cluster of the motive "from students" (last line in Table 3) solely for the respondents with experience of teaching with Roma of foreign extraction, which could mean that those concerned or their classmates saw less reason to provoke the addressing of the topic of the minority in lessons than in classes without the discernible participation of persons belonging to the minority.

More detailed information about the 30% of the respondents who discussed the topic of Sinti and Roma in lessons of their own accord – whether to comply with the syllabus or for other motives is a matter of secondary importance here – is not available. The above-mentioned tendency that disproportionately more women teachers than male teachers have addressed the topic is continued here. In addition to this, the more senior teachers are more likely to have addressed the topic of Sinti and Roma in lessons in the previous one to two years than their younger colleagues.

Table 4: Breakdown according to gender and length of service of the respondents who have discussed the topic of "Sinti and Roma " in lessons (values in percent)

Topic of S+R	Women teachers/years of service				Male teachers/years of service			
	up to 5	5 - 15	15 - 25	over 25	up to 5	5 - 15	15 - 25	over 25
yes	18.2	20.0	40.4	53.4	23.3	20.0	15.7	31.3
no	81.8	80.0	59.6	46.6	76.7	80.0	84.3	68.8

Also in their case, the proportion of those who have taught children of German Sinti is also higher than those who had not addressed the topic. Just under 15% said yes, 67.8% said no and 17.4% could not say whether this was the case or not. The percentage of teachers who had not presented the topic of Sinti and Roma in lessons was considerably lower with 6.6% positive answers. 74.5% said no and 19% did not know whether German Sinti children had been in one of their classes. The numbers are closer together for contact with Roma children from other states. The difference between the two groups is just over 3 percentage points (8.3 to 5.1% yes answers). On the other hand, it becomes clear that the majority of respondents who have discussed the topic of Sinti and Roma in lessons and had contact with Sinti and Roma children of German and other extraction in school teach in secondary general schools. Their share is 55.6% with regard to German and 90% with regard to Roma children of other extraction. The statistical value of the comparative figures in the diagram are only of limited value, however, on account of the low numbers of cases and the depth of differentiation.

Engagement with the topic of Sinti and Roma distributed over school types is as follows:

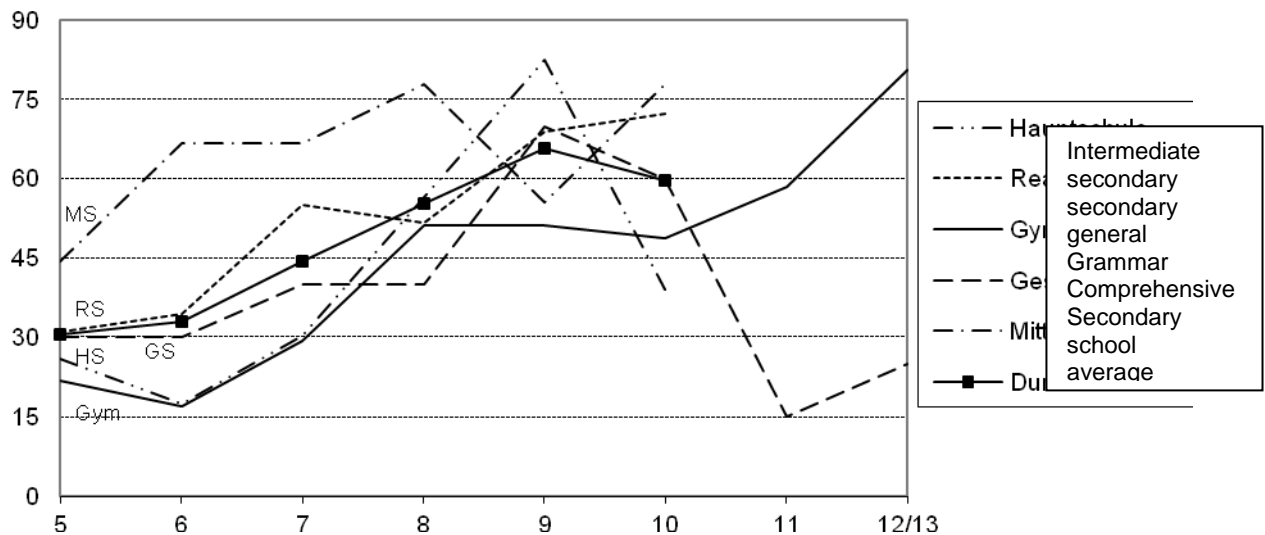
Table 5: Topic of Sinti and Roma in lessons depending on school type

	Sec. general	Int. secondary	Grammar	Comprehensive	Secondary (Sn)	Total
yes	34.33	37.18	25.62	35.09	31.03	31.20
no	65.67	62.82	74.38	64.91	68.97	68.80

If we further differentiate the positive answers to the question about the topic of Sinti and Roma according to class levels, a subdivided picture of variably rising curves depending on school types is obtained. However, this rise is linear on average and clearly shows that the topic more frequently becomes the subject of lessons, particularly in secondary general and intermediate secondary schools up to the ninth school year. In grammar schools, on the other hand, the curve is flatter in lower secondary education and steeply rises towards the end of education. The low values for upper secondary education in the comprehensive school are naturally to do with the fact that the secondary

general and intermediate secondary school are integrated and the relationships here distort the picture, respectively the entry point is logically now lower without the intermediate secondary and secondary general school track. However, the rise from grade 11 to 12/13 in turn corresponds to the finding in the grammar school sixth form (the curves have a comparable upward gradient).

Diagram 4: The topic of "Sinti and Roma" according to class (ordinate values are "yes" answers in percent)

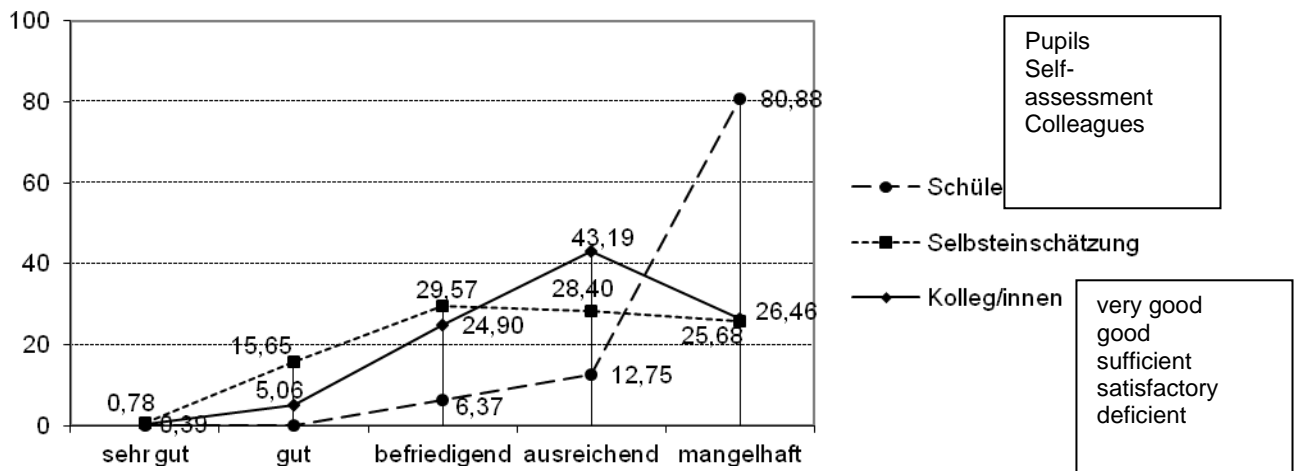


The subject combinations of those teachers who have dealt with Sinti and Roma in lessons are also not very surprising. Combinations of social studies subjects and German are disproportionately represented.

Linking of the answers to questions about the topics with socio-demographic data also did not show very many distinctive features. Neither the Federal state nor the class sizes have a statistical connection. Only the comparison with the political sizes of towns or cities reveals that the topic of "Sinti and Roma" is considered more frequently in German large cities than in smaller communities. The number of cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants is almost 10% above the mean value. A distinctive feature which incidentally does not apply to the two other topics of "Minorities" and "Formation of prejudice and stereotyping". There are no significant deviations from the average values of the random sample here.

In quantitative terms, the result of the question about the taught topic of "Sinti and Roma" is a positive surprise. In qualitative terms, however, this contrasts with a very low general degree of knowledge of the topic with 30.7% positive replies. We asked for a personal assessment of the individual knowledge and that of the pupils in the questionnaire. A comparison of the assessments from teachers who have discussed the topic of Sinti and Roma in lessons with those who have not touched upon the topic provides a little bit more information about the intensity and quality of the acquisition and communication of the material, as seems to be the case from the retrospective of the respondents. The result of this comparison is as follows:

Diagram 5: Assessment of the knowledge of the history and present-day situation of the Sinti and Roma (the series values add up to 100 percent)



The teachers' assessment of their knowledge of the history and present-day situation of the Sinti and Roma is about half a mark (0.62) higher for teachers who have studied the topic and discussed it in lessons than that of their colleagues who have not done this in the last few years. On a scale along similar lines to the German school grades from "very good" to "deficient", the mean value of 3.84 - i.e. a good "sufficient" or "4 plus" – was increased to 3.22 or just about "satisfactory" or "three minus".

The difference is much lower in the grading of the knowledge of the pupils. It is just 0.22 points. The assessment by the teachers who had presented the topic of Sinti and Roma is an average grade of 4.61. A mean value of the pupils' knowledge of 4.83 is obtained without lessons in the subject in the last few years - almost a deficient, the worst grade in our survey.

An examination of the relationship of the state of knowledge of the topic Sinti and Roma with the two other topics of Minorities and Formation of prejudice and stereotyping showed no statistical distinctive features. Only the self-assessment of the knowledge of Sinti and Roma by teachers was some 0.2 points higher if they had discussed the topic of the formation of prejudice and stereotyping in lessons.

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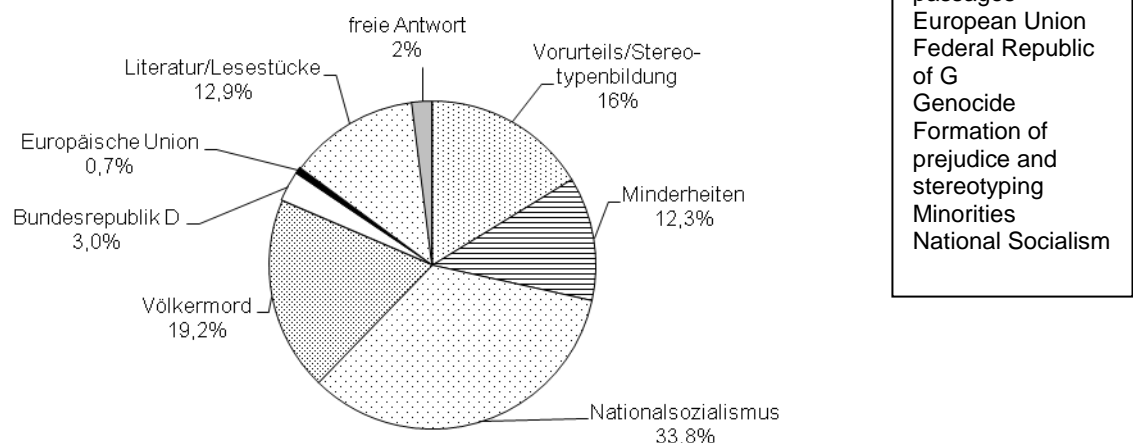
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If the respondents had to deal with the topic of Sinti and Roma very frequently in lessons, it is conspicuous that the influence on the general knowledge of this is nevertheless very low. Only

concrete engagement with the topic of Sinti and Roma - so as it seems - causes a slight improvement in the knowledge in the self-assessment of the teachers. On the other hand, the communication of knowledge obviously scarcely takes place, as the slight difference in the assessment of the knowledge of the pupils shows. Whether general problems with the communication of knowledge are reflected in the result, possibly the frustration about the widespread unwillingness of the pupils to learn, or a lack of interest in the topic of Sinti and Roma means that the learning success is low, can only be speculated on.¹⁰

The presumption that the low learning success can be explained by the topic itself tends to be underpinned by the answers to the question about the wider thematic correlations, in which the history and the present-day situation of the Sinti and Roma are taught. We wanted to know from those who have discussed Sinti and Roma as a topic in which thematic context they had done this. We selected the possible answers in such a way that all the important areas, in which the topic of Sinti and Roma makes sense, were covered. These include the historical areas of Nazis and genocide, the social science analytical categories of Formation of prejudice and stereotyping and Minorities and the two political structural concepts of the Federal Republic of Germany and European Union relating to the present day. Literature/reading passages were indicated as a possibility for addressing the topic in linguistic subjects. The answers are distributed as follows:

Diagram 6: Context in which the topic of "Sinti and Roma" was taught



With just over 50%, the historical topics are in first place, followed by the social science analytical topics. Literature and reading passages were mentioned relatively frequently with 13%, namely by 89.7% of women teachers who also teach German. An indication that passages, in which Sinti and Roma play a role, are read with some regularity. On the other hand, there are hardly any current political references to the topic of Sinti and Roma. Reference to the topic of Roma or Sinti is made neither in lessons about the Federal Republic (3%) nor the European Union (1%), in spite of the

¹⁰ On the motivation and development of learning competencies in pupils cf.: OECD-Bericht: Anwerbung, berufliche Entwicklung und Verbleib von qualifizierten Lehrerinnen und Lehrern (Länderbericht: Deutschland), [OECD report: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers (Country report: Germany)], September 2004, p. 33. Available at: http://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/pdf/PresseUndAktuelles/2004/Germany_Country_Note_Endfassung_deutsch.pdf, last accessed: 26th March 2012.

importance which it has had e.g. in connection with the granting of minority rights in the enlargement of the EU to the east and accession negotiations. The persecution of Roma in Kosovo and the associated debate on asylum heard by a broad section of the public was politically explosive and a theme in the media for a long time. There would therefore have been enough substance in the current political issues, in order to be able to examine the aspect of Sinti and Roma in lessons, at least briefly.

A conspicuous feature which deserves closer examination is the large difference between the areas of "National Socialism", which 34% mentioned, and "genocide", which 19% have taught in connection with the topic of "Sinti and Roma". The interrelation of the contents of the subject areas led us to expect that almost the same value would be obtained except for a statistically random deviation. The difference of 15% is significant and means that just under 45% of the teachers who presented Sinti and Roma in National Socialism apparently exclude the minority in the topic of "genocide". Conversely almost all of the respondents (98.3%) who have approached the topic of Sinti and Roma under the aspect of genocide logically also this did under the concept of National Socialism. This difference undoubtedly cannot be explained solely through the relationship of an overriding epochal term (National Socialism) with the partial event, under which it takes place. We can assume that the topic of "genocide" is largely only taught using the example of the Jews, which is still prescribed by many syllabuses and course books and is also a topic of public discussion to a very high degree.

There are no statistical distinctive features in respect of personal contact with children from the minority. The experience of contact has apparently had no impact on the make-up of the topic. But it can be said that longer-serving teachers tend to bring the National Socialist genocide of the Sinti and Roma up for discussion in lessons than their younger colleagues.

Examination of the question about the assessment of the situation at school with regard to racism and xenophobia provides a further conspicuous difference between the two groups which is worth mentioning. The more problematic the position is regarded, the more frequently the genocide of the Sinti and Roma plays a role in lessons. Or: the teachers who deal with the topic under the heading of National Socialism but not under genocide tend to be of the opinion that racism and xenophobia are not threatening factors at their school.

There is something else which plays a role, however - what has happened, what has occurred for teachers to use one or more of the three topics for closer consideration in lessons?

We therefore asked about school-based or extracurricular events in the questions, and for details to be specified in an open answer. 82% of the respondents who answered with "yes" here made use of this option and stated a total of 187 reasons. Just under 45% of the teachers mentioned events in school or in the classroom. The other 55% referred to political and socio-political events and situations (in other words, large-scale political situations).

It must be emphasized that events have a random and therefore arbitrary character in this context. They are neither normally distributed over a period of time nor are they in any way representative of the spectrum of social issues. Furthermore, the reporting in the media determines the extent and intensity of a news item and helps shape opinion to a high degree.¹¹ A circumstance which does not

¹¹ See Heitmeyer, Wilhelm (publisher), *Deutsche Zustände* [German affairs], volume 3, Frankfurt a.M. 2005, page 156 f.

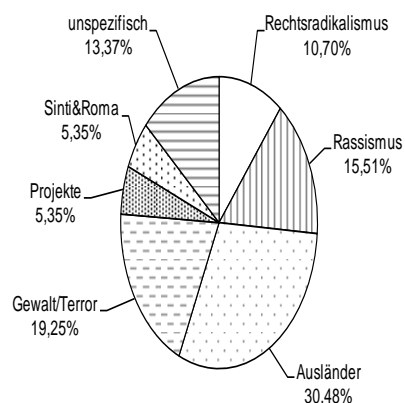
makes it any easier for educationists to communicate certain topics in lessons with the required objective perspective. Nevertheless day-to-day political events also describe extracts from reality which are, or seem to be, of lasting importance and deserve being addressed in lessons and can be of importance as a springboard and an example for lesson contents. It is therefore hardly astonishing that almost 10% of the teachers who answered here explicitly mentioned the terrorist attack in New York of 11th September 2001, although the event took place more than two years before the date of the survey. Together with subsequent events such as the "Iraq war" or "Islamist terror" and terrorism, the 11th September was used as a reason to include the topic of Minorities (something like more than 70%) or Stereotyping (more than 95%) in lessons by just under 20% of the respondents.

In order to be able to use the answers statistically, we grouped the various things mentioned in categories according to their general importance. Apart from the 11th September, which we placed with some other statements in the category of terror and violence, five other groups appeared to be appropriate: hostility towards foreign residents and xenophobia, racism, right-wing radicalism, school projects and Sinti and Roma. Everything else was classified under "non-specific". The selectivity between the categories is not always pronounced on account of their thematic closeness to each other. For example, Xenophobia e.g. always includes racist aspects and political right-wing extremism and neo-Nazism are both quasi constitutive. The vast majority of the answers revolve around the topic of "foreigners", whereby xenophobic incidents as well as socio-political debates such as e.g. the so-called "headscarf judgement" were included for this. The topic of hostility towards foreign residents and xenophobia came first by a wide margin with 30.48%, followed by terror and violence with 19.25%. Events with a racist background or thematic reference to racism formed the next largest category with 15.51%. Approximately 2/3 of the things mentioned in this group are to do with anti-Semitism in one way or another. Both nationwide debates (e. g. as a result of the Möllemann affair) and the desecration of a Jewish cemetery as an event which happened in the direct environment of the school contributed to the topic of Formation of prejudice and stereotyping (almost 100%) being focused on in lessons.

Neo-Nazi activities and the emergence of political right-wing extremism were a reason for a topic in lessons for 10.7%. Non-specific events which cannot be assigned to any category (such as the bullying of pupils or abuse not explained in more detail) made up 13.37% of the things mentioned. The last 12% or so are divided equally into teaching projects, such as trips to memorial places or visits to exhibitions, and concerns in connection with Sinti and Roma. A comparison with results of the assessment of the problem situation in the school with regard to xenophobia and racism surveyed at another point showed that teachers who have reacted to certain events with teaching contents regarded this situation considerably more critically than their colleagues. In particular, 18.9% of those who had dealt with xenophobia and foreigner issues rated this situation as more problematic compared with 7.1% of the others. The same applies to the teachers who mentioned Sinti and Roma as a reason (30 to 8.2%). Astonishingly, the situation only looks different if a racist incident or the topic of racism in general was mentioned. Here only 4% (compared with 9.1%) regarded the position at their school as problematic.¹²

¹² The relationship of the individual categories, in particular those of racism and hostility towards foreign residents and xenophobia, reveals an interesting observation in comparison with other studies, which does not mean a strict validity check of the sample, but nevertheless shows that the results reflect the reality of society as a whole. Amongst other things, racist, anti-Semitic and xenophobic attitudes are measured and compared in the study on group-focused enmity in the comparison years 2002 and 2003 published by Wilhelm Heitmeyer. After a rough estimate and comparison of the racist and anti-Semitic attitudes with xenophobia, a ratio of 1:2 is obtained, which is approximately the same result as in our sample if anti-Semitism

Diagram 7: Events as a reason for topics (minorities, stereotyping, Sinti and Roma)



- Non-specific
- Sinti and Roma
- Projects
- Violence/terror
- Right-wing
- extremism
- Racism
- Foreigners

We will consider the 5.35% mentions with respect to Sinti and Roma in somewhat more detail. The mentions themselves are divided exactly equally into events with a "gypsy stereotypical" background (abuse, negative reports in the press) and situational descriptions (Sinti children in the class, at the place of residence). The reactions of the teachers are different, however. Whereas the mentions of situational conditions mainly led to engagement with the topic of Sinti and Roma, "gypsy stereotypical" events followed the thematic discussion of minorities and formation of prejudice and stereotyping. The individual's knowledge of the history and present-day situation of the Sinti and Roma was assessed by this group at half a grade higher than that of their colleagues (2.9% compared with 3.4%) and almost 2 grades higher than that of the pupils, whose average of 4.6 hardly differed from the general assessment of the pupils' knowledge. Half of the teachers in this group taught at secondary general school and in a large city almost without exception. Needless to say there is also considerably more contact with Sinti and Roma than in the case of the other teachers. 40% of them have taught German Sinti children compared with 8.3% of the other respondents. The difference with regard to Roma children of foreign extraction is less clear with 10% to 6%.

is taken as an individual category and Sinti and Roma are included with racism (Heitmeyer, Wilhelm: Deutsche Zustände [German affairs], no. 2, Frankfurt-on-Main 2003, p. 20 ff.). This means that xenophobia has approximately twice as many "followers" in Germany as racism and anti-Semitism - a ratio which is reflected in the thematic structuring of the lessons based on events.

Knowledge

Whether or to what extent different aspects which were asked about in our survey have an impact on the knowledge of the history and present-day situation of Sinti and Roma, and also conversely, as to whether and how the level of knowledge corresponds to the polled opinions and assessment, is of importance for the - also quantitative - assessment of the respective results. For example, we have already seen how little effect the discussion of the topic of Sinti and Roma in lessons has on the level of knowledge of the pupils according to the assessment of the teachers (who nevertheless had given lessons on this) and how marginal the effect is on the self-assessment of the respondents.

The use of the results as relativistic quantities also constitutes the actual value of the complex of questions about the levels of knowledge of pupils and teachers, since the question about what the knowledge should cover in the first place is not very specific. "The history and present-day situation of the Sinti and Roma" is rather general and the respondents must decide how extensive this knowledge should be and what should be subsumed under it. Nevertheless, preferences for levels of knowledge related to history or the present can be explored on the basis of various questions on specific topics in each case. Let's take our initial question about the knowledge of the recognition of Sinti and Roma as a national minority in 1997 (ratification of the European Framework Convention in the Bundestag), which is a question which relates very much to the present and which the majority (73.1%) answered with "yes". In the self-assessment of the level of knowledge, this knowledge is translated into an average grade of 3.47 compared with 4.17 for those who answered the opening question in the negative. If we compare this finding with the self-assessment of those who have presented the topic of Sinti and Roma in lessons (30.7% of the respondents), we discover that the average grade of 3.22 (respectively 3.84) is higher, if only by a quarter grade. In the context of the result that more than 50% discussed the topic of "Sinti and Roma" in a historical context, we can say that the teachers know far more about the history of Sinti and Roma than about present-day aspects of the topic.¹³

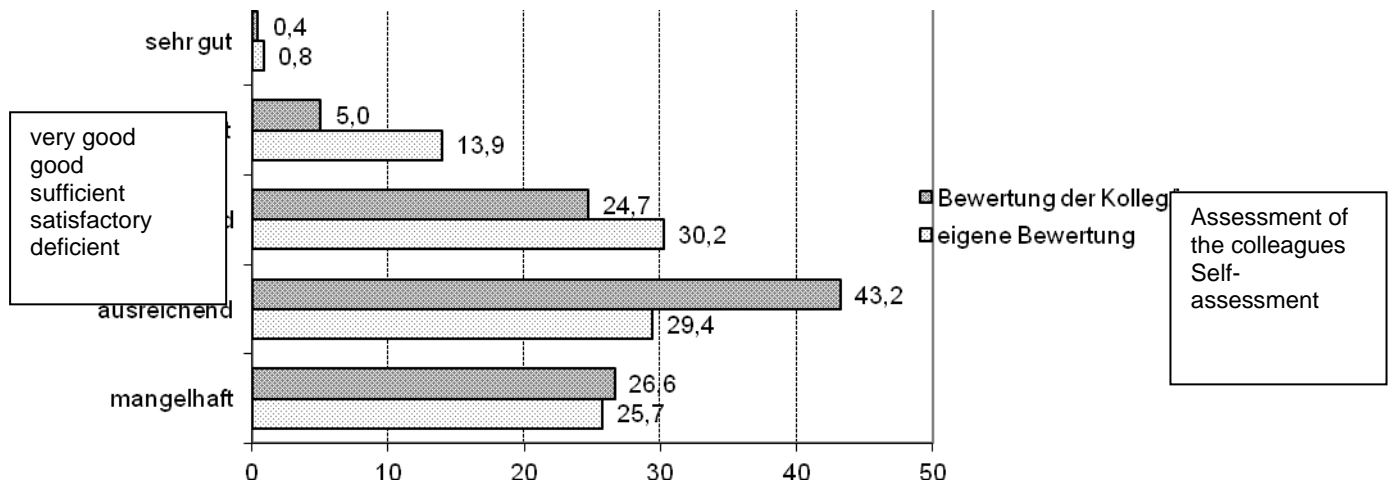
When drafting the question about the level of knowledge, we distinguished between so-called "me items" and "them items". First of all, we wanted to know how the teachers assess the level of knowledge of their pupils. They did very badly here with an average grade of 4.76. It is conspicuous that no single respondent awarded the grade "good" or "very good" and more than 70% of all respondents gave the worst grade "deficient". In order to understand the assessment, it should be mentioned that the subjective feeling of the respondents tipped the scale and a "deficient" grade not only corresponds to a "5" in a classroom test but can also mean that all the prerequisites for grading are generally not available. The individual benchmarks of the respondents for grading knowledge specific to history and the present are also relevant here. The low selectivity of the item which can be deduced from this can - *ceteris paribus* - be ignored through its use as a comparative quantity and not as an absolute one.

The self-assessment of the level of knowledge of the respondents resulted in an average grade of 3.65 and is therefore significantly above that of the estimated knowledge of the pupils. This result is

¹³ The ratio of the respondents' knowledge of the present and of history varies course. The benchmark for grading differs depending on the individual, for which reason we do not actually have any strictly interval-scaled values and the formation of average values is questionable. However, as shown above, they have a very practical value for the purposes of comparison as conventional "average grades".

qualified to some extent by the fact that we also asked about the external assessment of the same group of people in statistically speaking – i.e. the colleagues - and obtained an average grade of 3.91, which is a third of a grade worse. The following graph illustrates the two results:

Diagram 8: Assessment of the knowledge of Sinti and Roma (me and them items)



The close connection between the self- and external assessment of the teachers is underlined by a high positive correlation coefficient (0.6818). This means that the assessment of the level of knowledge of the colleagues depends on the self-assessment to a high degree: the lower the individual knowledge is estimated to be, the less the colleagues know. However, it should be added that the absolute value of self-perception is always on average lower (i.e. better) than that of the perceptions of others. As a rule, self-perception is of greater importance for our purposes.

Attitudes towards the minority

The second part of our survey is intended to determine whether or to what extent prejudices exist in schools in view of the teachers. This is of importance since, on the one hand, an atmosphere in the school contaminated by negative preconceptions and stereotypes means considerable disadvantages for the children and young people affected. Prejudice has a negative effect on learning behaviour and educational success. What is more: marginalization and the loss of solidarity in the class and a lack of acceptance by the teacher personality can increase the extent of mental stress from dislike of school to fear of school to complete rejection.¹⁴

On the other hand, we assume that the majority of teachers react sensitively to events to which they attach importance. The individual judgement and assessment of the mood in the class plays an important role in their pedagogical and didactic behaviour in lessons and in the school. In addition, there is the influence of teachers on the formation and the acquisition of social skills by young people, as a study confirmed some years ago.¹⁵

¹⁴ Eder, Ferdinand: Schul- und Klassenklima. Ausprägung, Determinanten und Wirkungen des Klimas an weiterführenden Schulen. [School and classroom climate. Characteristics, determinants and effects of the climate in secondary schools.], Innsbruck 1996, p. 79.

¹⁵ cf. above, footnote 2.

Initially we wanted to learn from the respondents how frequently they had encountered openly expressed prejudice. The meaning of 'frequently' was left to each individual to assess, also the categorization of "prejudice". Everybody should decide for themselves whether they attached a prejudicial character to a perceived statement or not. We differentiated this question into six items in accordance with possible senders and addressees of expressions of prejudice, whereby a very rough structure was taken as a basis. It consists of the groups who are more or less directly involved in or can have influence on school-based events: the pupils, teachers and parents. The groups, against whom prejudice can be directed are "Sinti and Roma" and, as already mentioned in the topic of lessons, "other minorities" in general. This term should be conceptualized as far as possible, so that, if necessary, expressions which not only refer to "conventional" xenophobic and racist stereotypes but also to e.g. sexist prejudice or religious intolerance are also considered. Here too it is necessary to set the frame of reference by the meaning, which each individual respondent assigns to a statement. The value range of the items is on four levels and extends from "very frequently" to "repeatedly" and "occasionally" to "never".

The next question range with comparable items should make the attitudes estimated from the teacher's point of view apparent. It sometimes happens that verbal utterances are not necessarily identical to the ideological statements of a person but "simply just talk" and are assessed between "harmless" and "meant seriously" in the perception of others. Conversely a racist attitude is not necessarily indicated by verbal statements of prejudice in everyday school life, but can be recognized through other non-verbal behaviour and attitudes.

We encounter a specific problem in the theme of our survey both with regard to the terminology "Sinti and Roma" and with regard to the relatively low number of the minority compared with the general population, which means there are few opportunities for contact. Negative expressions of prejudice towards Sinti and Roma have therefore been rarely observed by the respondents and it is highly probable that they have also not been linked to this terminology. The endonym of the minority is still rarely heard and stereotypical attribution is normally carried out under the exonym "gypsy". In this respect, a negative result could hardly be expected in the case of question about expressed prejudice, i.e. "never" or only "occasional" expressions of prejudice against Sinti and Roma have been noted by the majority. We were therefore particularly interested in the assessments of teachers about the attitudes of the groups involved in everyday school life.

The items of this complex of questions correspond to those of the previous one, the scale of possible answers is also on four levels and extends from negative to positive. Dispensing with a neutral middle value arises from the ambivalence of the possibilities for interpretation. There is a difference whether the middle between positive and negative is ticked because an attitude is assessed as indifferent, or because a neutral value was looked for here, in order to give expression to the lack of opinion or also because the respective topic was simply not considered relevant. A polarizing scale also contributes to a respondent behaviour which is possibly fixed for reasons of social desirability for a neutral value and tends to weaken at the expense of a higher non-response.¹⁶

¹⁶ Polarizing scales are generally used by Heitmeyer. With regard to the problem of social desirability which can only be empirically measured to a limited extent, see also Heitmeyer 2003, page 83.

In addition to this, we did not wish to determine precise, i.e. numerical values which assign an appropriate dimension to a positive or a negative attitude. Instead we were interested in the rough trends, which, amongst other things, can be gained from the comparisons between the manifest and latent prejudices and structures of prejudice, as well as the discussion of a more or less sympathetic environment in the school with reference to minorities.

The results in detail are as follows: in the case of openly expressed prejudice against Sinti and Roma, there were very few observations from all groups as expected. Most were "occasional" expressions of prejudice from pupils with 24.4%. The value was even lower in the case of teachers and parents at approx. 10%. "Very frequent" and "repeatedly" expressed prejudice is statistically insignificant in all three groups. 72.5%, almost 90% and over 85% respectively of the respondents in the respective groups reported "Never" prejudice towards Sinti and Roma.

Table 6: Expressions of prejudice against Sinti and Roma (in percent)

	Pupils	Teachers	Parents
very frequently	0.56	0.00	0.33
repeatedly	2.52	0.28	2.31
occasionally	24.37	9.97	10.89
never	72.55	89.75	86.47
	100.00	100.00	100.00

The expressions of prejudice against "other minorities" show another picture. As already mentioned, we did not further specify what or who is regarded as a "minority". Each respondent should decide this for themselves. Just under 55% of the colleagues of the respondents have "never" expressed prejudice against minorities, just over 40% of parents and the number even decreases to below 10% in the case of pupils.

Table 7: Expressions of prejudice against minorities (in percent)

	Pupils	Teachers	Parents
very frequently	2.60	0.00	0.62
repeatedly	22.14	2.42	9.97
occasionally	66.15	42.74	46.11
never	9.11	54.84	43.30
	100.00	100.00	100.00

Even though "very frequent" expressions of prejudice in schools altogether represent a barely perceptible dimension, the respondents have nevertheless repeatedly heard corresponding comments from well over a quarter of the pupils. Occasional occurrences of this kind make up well over half the mentions. In the case of colleagues of the respondents, however, the rating "repeatedly" was less than 2½ percent and "occasional prejudice" has been heard by slightly over 40%. However, somewhat more parents "repeatedly" expressed themselves prejudicially against minorities (10%), but here too the respondents recorded "occasional" expressions of prejudice in more than 45%.

The differences are clear. Whereas expressions of prejudice against Sinti and Roma were generally almost "never" or - much more rarely - "occasionally" heard for the above stated reasons, the frequency substantially increases in all three groups in the case of minorities. The difference is most pronounced in the pupils and is more than 60% in the mentions of "never" expressed prejudice. They are lowest in the case of the colleagues of the respondents, but nevertheless still with more than 35%. The difference is almost 43% in the case of parents.

These ratios are reversed in the case of attitudes towards Sinti and Roma and other minorities, even if not to a comparable extent. The values for Sinti and Roma are lower, i.e. "more negative" than for the other minorities on the rough four-level sympathy scale from negative to positive in all groups.

Table 8: Assessed attitudes towards minorities and Sinti and Roma

	Pupils		Teachers		Parents	
	S+R	Minorities	S+R	Minorities	S+R	Minorities
negative	5.85	4.18	0.47	0.00	3.11	1.27
2	39.02	34.03	11.79	6.88	34.16	30.93
3	45.85	48.66	53.30	57.50	47.20	53.81
positive	9.27	13.13	34.43	35.63	15.53	13.98
	99.99*	100.00	99.99*	100.01*	100.00	99.99*

* Rounding error

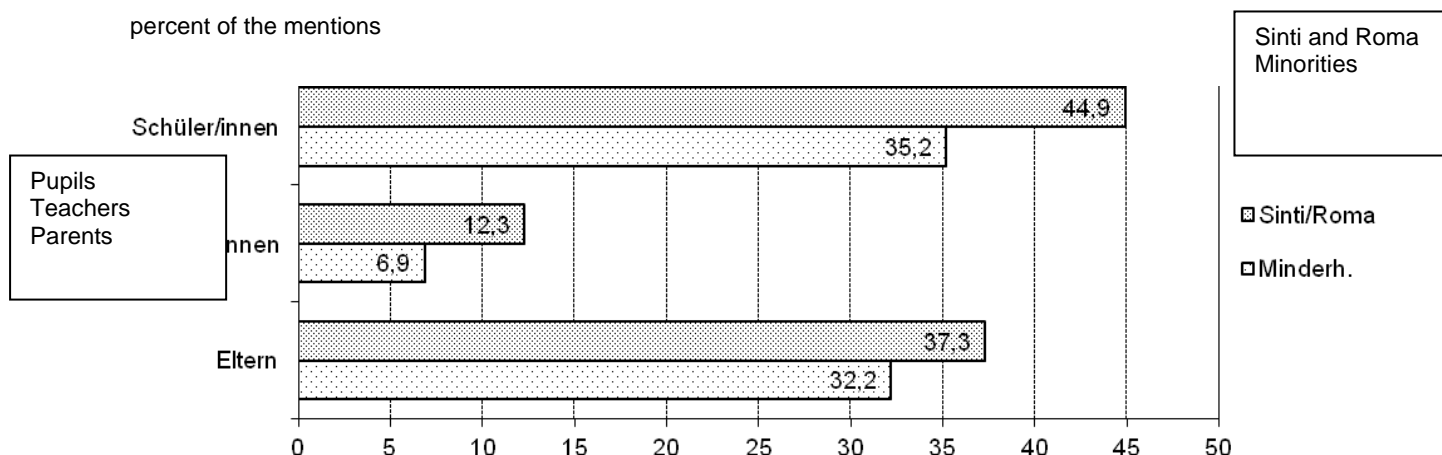
If we compare the sum total of the negative attitudes, i.e. the scale values 1 and 2 of the two target groups, we find a significant difference of 6 ¾ percentage points in the pupil group. The difference is slightly more than 5% in teachers and parents.

Table 9: Differences in the attitudes of negative scale values

	Pupils		Teachers		Parents	
	S+R	Minorities	S+R	S+R	Minorities	S+R
negative+2	44.87	38.21	12.26	6,88	37,27	32,20
Difference	6.66		5.38		5.07	

The absolute values of the attitudes of all groups assessed by the respondents show a distribution which is mainly around the theoretical mean of 2.5. The scale values 3 and 4 add up to more than 50% both for Sinti and Roma and other minorities. Since we are working with an ordinal scaled value range here, i.e. we cannot assume that the ranges between the values are the same size, we can consequently make no statement about the absolute size of a value. The ratio of the individual values to each other is therefore important. This means that only rarely heard expressions of prejudice are seen alongside relatively lower levels of sympathy in all groups. This ratio is most pronounced in pupils and between expressions of prejudice and the assessed attitude towards Sinti and Roma. The differences between statements and attitudes between other minorities are smaller, just as with the colleagues of the respondents. Parents rank in the middle, but were positioned considerably closer to the level of their children with respect to the levels of sympathy.

Diagram 9: The assessed "levels of antipathy" (scale values less than 2.5) of Sinti and Roma and minorities in percent of the mentions



We can record that, according to the assessment of teachers in schools in Germany, a similar picture of attitudes towards Sinti and Roma is apparent which other studies have shown for society as a whole. Sinti and Roma are located at the lower end of the scale of evaluations of sympathy, even if in our case the difference from other minorities is very small and the more positive attitudes generally prevail.

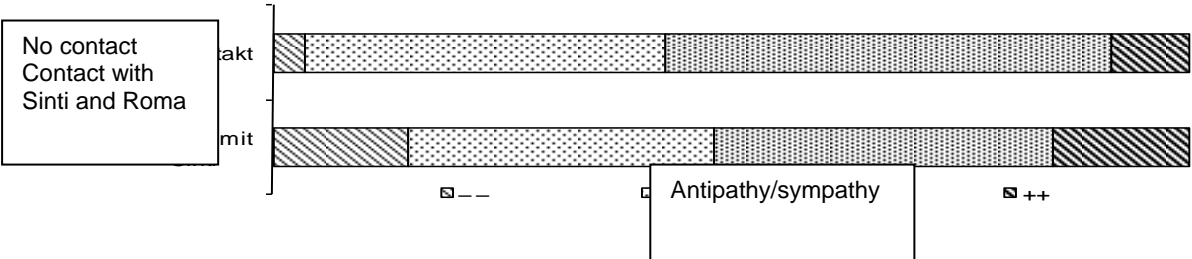
Comprehensive groups of questions about individual aspects of a topic are frequently drafted and submitted for response in empirical social research for the measurement of attitudes or opinions. As a rule, the answers remaining after a reliability check are added up case by case and summarized to form an index, in order to be able to map a specific construct. Such a battery of questions for establishing structures of prejudice would have gone beyond the scope of our survey, which is why we summarized

the results of the questions about the attitude towards Sinti and Roma, in order to obtain an abbreviated "sympathy" index.

In this regard, however, we must note that the proportion of those who only answered sections was very high at approximately 2 thirds, particularly in the case of the questions concerning assessment. Only answers to all questions can be summarized to form an index, however. The so-called item-non-response concerns a behaviour, which Pierre Bourdieu once described as a kind of "self-censorship" and "lack of opinion", which may be due to a missing neutral value, but can also be an informative element of surveys. Without wishing to dig deeper here, missing benchmarks or the suspicion of the respondents that they are declaring a prejudice could be the motive for omitting certain questions. A comparison with other items (contacts with parents, orientation of pupils, contacts with children from the minority, etc.) would not have been able to provide a clear-cut plausible explanation for the non-response in any case.

An interesting finding obtained using the "sympathy" index should be mentioned here. As the following diagram shows, contact with children from the minority contributes to the polarization of attitudes towards them. At least the teachers who stated that they had taught Sinti and Roma children see it this way. They assessed the attitudes either more positively or more negatively than colleagues who had not had or did not know if they had had any children from the minority in their class.

Diagram 10: The sympathy index and contact with children from the minority



As already mentioned, the opinion of educationists is reflected here, namely the opinion of the majority society. It would be misleading to interpret this finding as a behavioural measurement for Sinti and Roma children.

In-service training, textbooks and teaching materials

In conclusion, we will take a quick look at the results of our questions on in-service training, textbooks and teaching materials.

In-service training courses are offered to teachers, so that they can obtain additional information on specific topics and issues. Compared with further training, which is usually offered at an institute of higher education and has direct influence on professional advancement, in-service training courses offer communication at the knowledge level in the special subject or the didactical-pedagogical area. We asked about the frequency of participation in in-service training courses, the topics, etc., to what extent the attended courses were praised and criticised. Furthermore, we wanted to know what should be done better in future and also which topics should be offered in future.

On average, the respondents attended an in-service training course, with which the majority were satisfied or very satisfied, more than twice a year. In total, just under 60 percent said that the last in-service training course was satisfactory, almost 28 percent felt it was satisfactory, only approximately 13 percent were less or not at all satisfied. In particular, pedagogical-didactical aspects should have been better considered and there was also a lack of suitable course materials. Approx. 17-18 percent of the respondents stated this in each case. Approximately 15 percent criticized the selection of the speakers at the events. Criticism of the communication of technical knowledge and the organization followed with 11 and 12 percent respectively. As expected, the criticism corresponded positively with the expectations for future in-service training courses.

Table 10: What could have been done better / is particularly important for the future (multiple answers were possible, not all the possible answers were available for selection for "future")

Value labels	Criticism %	future %
Nothing	8.5	-
Organisation	11.6	-
Selection of the speakers	15.0	-
Selection of the topics	6.7	-
Pedagogical-didactical aspects	16.7	29.1
Communication of technical knowledge	10.9	21.0
Psychological aspects	7.4	15.8
Discussion forum	3.1	5.5
Suitable materials	17.8	27.2
or (free answer)	2.2	1.3

The topics of minorities in general and formation of prejudice and stereotyping were covered by about a third of the respondents in in-service training courses and slightly more than half are interested in participating in courses on these topics in future. On the other hand, only 3 percent of the respondents had so far been on an in-service training course on the topic of Sinti and Roma. However, 47 percent stated they would like to do this in future. The demand is there, but a suitable offer must first of all be provided.

Do textbooks still play a role today? We asked about the general importance of textbooks on a four-level scale from "very important" to "unimportant". Well over 80 percent of the respondents had this view. At the same time, we asked for an assessment of the presentation of the topic "Minorities in Germany" in German textbooks. On a scale from "very good" to "deficient", we obtained an average grade of 3.35 with a clear weighting on grade 3 with just under 40%, followed by "satisfactory" with 24.2 percent. Only 0.8 percent of the respondents gave a "very good", but almost 16 percent gave a "deficient".

We deliberately dispensed with the question about the presentation of the topic of "Sinti and Roma" in German textbooks, since we would probably have received hardly any answers. Several studies on textbooks were published in the 1980s and 1990s. Their findings ranged from a "complete absence of factual information" to "non-perception and disregard"¹⁷. A new study of the presentation of the National Socialist genocide published in 2006 records that the topic receives too little attention in the current German textbooks and, in addition to this, antiziganistic stereotypes and prejudices tend to be reinforced in some works rather than dismantled.¹⁸

Our respondents also make intense use of textbooks, which corresponds to the importance attached which to them. "Very intense" use was stated by a quarter of teachers. More than half, 54.7 percent, make intense use of textbooks, whereas only 18.6 make less use and .3 percent no use of textbooks. It is interesting that there is apparently no or only slight competition for collections of materials and lesson modules. Here too we can record that intense to very intense use of teaching materials was stated by almost 90 percent of the respondents.

Outlook

Our survey of teachers at secondary schools in the Federal Republic of Germany provides a clear picture of the importance of the topic of "Sinti and Roma" in lessons. It is a niche topic, to which almost one third of the teachers have devoted themselves, but not to that extent which they would have done e.g. in the case of topics relevant for examinations or required for successful completion of the school year. This indicates the stated low level of knowledge of the pupils and also of the respondents themselves. The contextualisation of the topic also has a structure with little differentiation, which is also an indication of its low importance. In any case, we can positively evaluate the general interest which the minority enjoys. Since the survey is a static snapshot of the opinions from the year 2004, further observation of this trend would be appropriate.

¹⁷ Schweiger, Egon: Zur Darstellung und Wahrnehmung der Geschichte und Gegenwart der Sinti und Roma in den Schulbüchern. In: Bausteine – "Zwischen Romantisierung und Rassismus". Sinti und Roma – 600 Jahre in Deutschland. [Concerning the presentation and perception of the history and present-day situation of the Sinti and Roma in textbooks. In: Modules – "Between romanticization and racism". Sinti and Roma – 600 years in Germany], published by the Landeszentrale für politische Bildung [state centre for political education], Baden-Württemberg, Stuttgart 1998, p. 56-62, citations from p. 58.

¹⁸ Stachwitz, Reinhard: Der nationalsozialistische Völkermord an den Sinti und Roma in aktuellen deutschen Geschichtsschulbüchern. [The National Socialist genocide of the Sinti and Roma in current German history textbooks.] In: Internationale Schulbuchforschung [International textbook research] 28 (2006), p. 163-174.

According to the assessment of the educationists, we obtain a picture of the attitudes of the majority society towards Sinti and Roma which places them at the lower end of the scale of evaluations of sympathy at school, in spite of the basically positively assessed attitudes. Contact with children and young people from the minority resulted in a more intense engagement with the topic of "Sinti and Roma" for many respondents. This initially applies irrespective of how the teachers assessed these experiences of contact. Here too the question remains as to whether or to what extent the events in eastern and western Europe in the last few years have raised awareness of the topic in schools in general and in educationists in particular.