

NGOST.

— NGOIZATION OF
SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION
AMONG ROMA YOUTH

NGOST.



NGOization of
school-to-work transition
among Roma youth

Project duration

September 2019 – August 2021

Project description

NGOST is a 24-month comparative research project conducted in three EU countries: Hungary, Slovakia and Spain. It aims at critically examining policies and programmes that support school-to-work transition (STWT) reaching out to Roma youth. It focuses particularly on the 'NGOization' of STWT programmes, that is the delegation of state functions to private entities, as a technique of neoliberal governance of minorities.

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NGOST's key objectives are:

- To **critically examine** policies and programmes related to school-to-work transition (STWT).
- To conduct a cross-country **comparison of the development** of STWT regimes, their focus and/or outreach to Roma youth, and the role of **non-state actors** (NGOs) in their operation.

- To investigate local **practices of STWT** through NGOs' actions, and gauge their impact, with a particular focus on the labour market opportunities and STWT experiences of Roma young people themselves.

- To elaborate **theoretical and analytical frames** to reflect on public policies dealing with the social inclusion of vulnerable minorities - particularly the Roma - through labour market inclusion.



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The negative effects of the recent global economic crisis and its aftermaths had a disproportionately adverse effect on young people's labour market opportunities, particularly those from ethnic minorities, such as the Roma. Investigating NGOization through an ethnographic lens, NGOST will offer insight into how the withdrawal of state institutions and the massive presence of non-governmental organisations in the STWT programmes, and the corresponding neoliberal ethos of *activation* and *self-responsibilisation*, shape young Roma people's chances on the labour market and their perceptions thereof. The case studies from three EU countries follow the three levels of inquiry: policies/programmes, key players' (institutions and organisations) actions and beneficiaries' biographical experiences.

Methodology and Field sites

The project relies on a qualitative research design, complemented with quantitative data collection. Fieldwork includes participatory observation both in Roma communities and in institutions and non-governmental entities, coupled with in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with decision makers, workers and programme beneficiaries. Also, focus group discussions are organised in parallel with a brief survey administered to all the contacted workers.

Cross-country comparison allows us to analyse how different school-to-work 'transition regimes' contribute to the governance of ethnic minorities in diverse manners within the neoliberal paradigm. Each country's transition system has distinctive features and internal logics. STWT research tends to emphasise the need to study the transition experiences of diverse social groups, among others, ethnic minority groups, and furthermore to explore within-group differences in the transition processes and outcomes. Nevertheless very few, if any, empirical studies have been conducted so far, that centre on non-immigrant ethnic minority groups. NGOST comparative research project aims to fill this gap.

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Center for Policy Studies (CEU)

is an academic unit within Central European University dedicated to providing independent public policy analysis and promoting greater use of social science research in policy making.

Research focuses on intersecting inequalities, policies for social inclusion and social justice, integration of minorities and migrant populations, territorial development and social cohesion, governance and policy actors.

