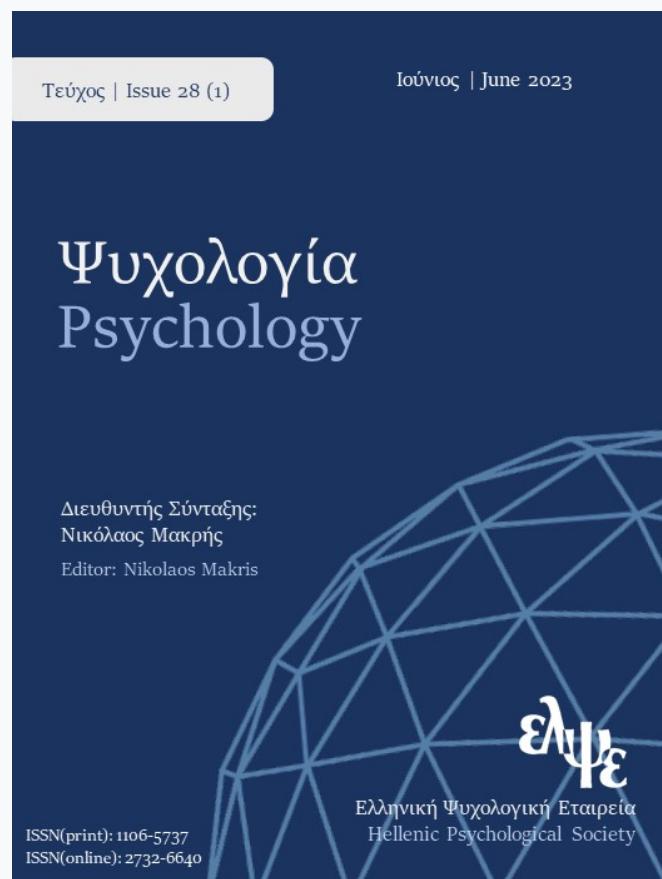


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# Exploring marginalized and privileged gender identities: the expectations of Muslim Roma adolescents on their future employment and family life

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## KEYWORDS

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Muslim Roma minority,  
Gender identity,  
Gender relations,  
Adolescents' expectations,  
Intersectionality

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## ABSTRACT

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The aim of the present study is to explore the expectations of adolescents of a minority (i.e., of Roma and Muslim cultural backgrounds from the area of Thrace)<sup>1</sup> and majority status (i.e., dominant group) on their future employment and family life as well as on gender relations. Ninety-one adolescents participated in the study (51 from the dominant group and 40 from the minority, 45 boys and 46 girls). While all participants from the dominant group attended the 3rd grade of Gymnasium or the 1st grade of Lyceum only 8 Muslim Roma participants did so. Adolescents were asked to fill in a questionnaire and to write a short essay titled "A day in my future family". Data were collected in written from the participants of the dominant group and orally from those of Muslim Roma origin. In addition to the statistical analysis, and with respect to the data from the essay, a thematic analysis was carried out in order to identify the adolescents' images of their future life in both the private and the public sphere. The results of the study reveal the multiple gender identities that are constructed by culturally diverse, with respect to gender and social status, groups of adolescents. They, also, suggest that the participants' views are shaped by the marginalized or privileged categories in which they belong to. Finally, results show that as boys and girls of both the minority and the dominant groups project themselves in the future, they try to actively construct the social context they will live in, to position themselves within it and to provide meaning to gender relations.

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## Introduction

The aim of the present study is to explore the expectations of adolescent boys and girls of minority (i.e., of Roma and Muslim cultural backgrounds from the area of North-eastern Greece) and majority status (i.e., dominant group) on their future employment and family life as well as their views on gender relations. This is a question of special interest since many of the existing studies on gender do not take into consideration the fact that the groups of girls and boys under study are not homogeneous in relation to social and cultural backgrounds. Moreover, they exclude adolescents of Muslim religion and/or Roma background, two groups of Greek citizens that are of minority status.

Regarding gender relations in family and work, existing studies have shown that the participation of women in the public sphere and wage labor does not lead to a transformation of gender relations in the private sphere and in the family (for a review of the relevant literature see Deliyanni-Kouimtzi, 2007; Deliyanni-Kouimtzi, & Sakka, 2005; Koroneou, 2007). In addition, the most important difference observed between men and women

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<sup>1</sup>The Thracian minority is the only officially recognized minority in Greece and its position is guaranteed by the Treaty of Lausanne (Dragonas & Fragoudaki, 2006). The Thracian minority is not an ethno-culturally homogenous group. These are Greek citizens who are either Roma or of Turkish or Pomak origin. Moreover, it is accorded religious but not ethnic status.

concerns their beliefs about women's right to work, as many men seem to prefer a family model in which the man will provide the living and the woman will care for the children and the household (Arnot & Arizpe, 1997; Cerrato & Cifre, 2018; Chovanec, 2021; Connell, 1987; Lomazzi et al., 2018).

With respect to gender identities during adolescence, research in Greece shows that there is a difference between boys' and girls' perceptions and expectations about family life and their role within it (Deliyanni-Kouimtzi, 2007; Deliyanni-Kouimtzi, & Sakka, 2005; Koroneou, 2007; Sakka, 2007; Sakka & Deliyanni-Kouimtzi, 2006). At the same time, young girls are increasingly insisting on greater gender equality in the family and for the broadening of male identity, while their male peers do not share these views to the same extent (Athanasiadou, 2007; Deliyanni-Kouimtzi, & Sakka, 2005; Koroneou, 2007; Sakka & Deliyanni-Kouimtzi, 2006).

As for the Thracian minority community, the few existing studies are discussing the position of women and gender relations within the Muslim family in Greece while mainly focusing on the accounts of adult women (i.e., Kanakidou, 1996; Katsiani, 2020). There are no studies concerning gender identities in general and gender identities during adolescence in particular with one exception. According to Sakka (2012), the expectations of adolescents of both the dominant and the minority groups about their future profession and their family life seem to partly reflect the different values and different orientations reproduced in different cultural contexts. At the same time, however, the observed differences seem to be determined by the different starting points of each group which are related to their social position (minority-majority) as well as to the gender of the participants. Interesting as it is the above data focused on a sample of adolescents that belongs to the higher strata of the Muslim minority of Thrace, with no Roma background.

The main contribution of the present study is that it focuses on Muslim Roma adolescents. This is a very unique group because it belongs to several broader groups which are both marginalized and highly stigmatized. As several authors have pointed out, the Muslim Roma community face discrimination and social exclusion in many ways: as members of the Roma community in Greece<sup>2</sup> and as members of the Thracian minority as well as members of the subgroup of Muslim Roma within the Thracian minority community and members of the lowest social strata. Muslim Roma women suffer even greater discrimination as a result of traditional gender power relations and subsequent patriarchal practices (Alexandridis, 2016; Nova-Kaltsouni, 2004; Terzopoulou & Georgiou, 1996). In addition to the above, the study, also compares adolescents of both the dominant and minority (i.e., Muslim Roma) group, an approach which allows the exploration of minority adolescents' perceptions in relation to the existing realities they are faced with as those are expressed by adolescents of the dominant group (Sakka, 1996).

### ***Membership in groups or categories, gender identity and gender relations***

In the context of socio-psychological research, gender along with nationality, culture, race or religion, and socioeconomic level are considered to be sociological categories based on which economic and social privileges, resources and benefits are unequally distributed (Chrysochoou, 2004; Dines & Humez, 2003; Quina & Bronstein, 2003). As such, these categories mark a person's place in society, influence their experience, and shape their perceptions and practices. At the same time, they provide the members of each category with a social identity (Chrysochoou, 2004; Hogg & Vaughan, 2017).

Moreover, the above categories are socially constructed in the sense that they acquire meaning in the respective cultural context in which they are structured. Thus, people who participate in the same cultural context "share common systems of social categorization and common perceptions of the social status, importance and relationships of these categories" (Chrysochoou, 2004, p. 42). Additionally, it is known from socio-psychological research that groups holding a low social status become the target of prejudice and discrimination. This is especially true for the categories of "gender" and "race", since together combined with the category of "age" they activate prejudice and discrimination, thus constituting the "most widespread bases of stereotyping" (Hogg & Vaughan, 2017, p. 446). At the same time, the relations of inequality that exist between groups are linked to social

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<sup>2</sup> As Chatzisavvidis (1996) points out, the whole of the Roma of Greece does not constitute a single ethno-cultural and linguistic entity. The differences between them are many and concern their country of origin (Romania, Albania, Turkey, etc.), their degree of assimilation by Greek society, religion, the type of settlement (residents or travelers), etc.

identity, in the sense that people's position in a system of social organization determines the resources they have (Hogg & Vaughan, 2017).

With respect to gender, according to feminist approaches and more recent approaches in social psychology (social-constructionist approaches), it is also socially constructed. The individual, as an active social actor, gives meaning to his/her identity in a creative way depending on the communication condition in which he/she finds himself/herself each time. In this context, identity is constructed and re-constructed constantly as a speaker places himself/herself in specific positions related to the above categorizations and/or others. According to Connell (1987), social identity formation can be understood as a plan of work that the individual develops using a variety of resources (e.g., collective perceptions of what it means to be male or female, a member of the workforce or middle class, etc.) and aiming at the integration of diverse and contradictory issues (e.g., the demands of various institutions such as family, work etc.). Moreover, as Shields (2008) suggests "...identity, such as gender or social class, may be experienced as a feature of individual selves, but it also reflects the operation of power relations among groups that comprise that identity category" (p. 302). These power dynamics can influence gender identities as well as the individuals' experiences.

At this point it should be mentioned that questions regarding the views of adolescents coming from culturally diverse groups on gender relations and on their future plans concerning professional and family life are of special importance. Only recently research on gender, both in Greece and abroad, has considered the category "ethnicity" or "ethnocultural/cultural origin" as an important factor that shapes the experiences of men and women in combination with a third category, that of "socio-economic stratification" (for example: Dines & Humez, 2003; Malikiosi-Loizou, 2012; Quina & Bronstein, 2003; Sakka, 2012).

Moreover, today it is well accepted that identity is more complex than originally thought. As it has been pointed out by Bhavnani & Phoenix (1994, as cited in Figgou, 2012) "... neither racism nor identity can be defined in the singular, and it is rhetorically and practically more effective to speak of identities as well as racisms" (p.239). The notion of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991) reflects the above consideration and points to the necessity of understanding the consequences of one's belonging to different social groups and categories with different access to power on identity in general and on gender identity. Gender identity is, thus approached as a consequence of being a member of many intersected categories. In other words, these identities should not be regarded as fixed and transcendental entities but should be understood in conjunction with the ways in which ethnocultural/cultural origin and socio-economic status intersect with the experience of being a man or a woman, a boy or a girl. Subsequently, these multiple identities can shape the individuals' experiences in general and their experiences of gender relations in particular (e.g., Shields, 2008).

Within this frame of thought, and in addition to the above, these intersected categories seem to be sources of disadvantage or oppression. As Carastathis claims (2014) "In feminist theory intersectionality has become the predominant way of conceptualizing the relation between systems of oppression which construct our multiple identities and our social locations in hierarchies of power and privilege" (p.304). Since access to privileges and power is different for each one of the intersecting categories, discrimination against women may vary according to the other categories that intersect with gender (Crenshaw, 1991).

### ***Roma in Greece: education, occupation and family***

Gypsies, Tsigani or Roma or Travelers are a special cultural group. Through the years, they have managed to maintain their cultural and social specificity, preserving their identity. Moreover, their customs are kept alive, thus composing a different philosophy of life and operation. According to Dousas (1997) and Chatzisavvidis (1999) it seems that Roma in Europe show strong differences both in their social organization and in matters of religion and language. This diversity is due to the fact that the gypsy groups followed different routes, settled in different areas and came into contact with different cultures. The numbers, however, of Roma who remain marginalized are quite high.

Throughout Europe, including Greece, Roma live in conditions of marginalization and social exclusion. Dikaiou & Kioseoglou (1993) among others, point out that changes in "consumer ideology" (p.: 473), economy and technology in Europe pushed the Roma population to the margins. Roma people in Greece lived literally in the margins of the society whereas the Greek State started registering them as citizens only after 1978 (Dousas, 1997; Mavrommatis, 2000). In the relevant literature, it has been pointed out that it is a group with a special cultural tradition and culture, which, despite the pressure for assimilation it received, managed to maintain its

cohesion and diversity (Nova-Kaltsouni, 2004; Trubeta, 2001). Allied to introversion and endogamy, they have remained a distinct group and have preserved the morals, customs, practices and values of their tribe, while at the same time they do not belong in a homogeneous group (Komis, 1998). More importantly, however, they remain marginalized and socially excluded (Alexandridis, 2016; Baka & Triga, 2002; Nova-Kaltsouni, 2004).

Two significant indicators of marginalization are education and employment. With respect to education, many Roma children are not enrolled in primary education or attend only occasionally. In the secondary school, things are even worse, while their absence is almost complete in the University, except for very few exceptions (Alexandridis, 2016; Papakonstantinou, 2007; Sakka, et al., 2008). As Liegeois (1994) aptly puts it the most important problem among Roma youth is their education, or rather their lack of education. Only from 1995 onwards did the Greek state begin to adopt new measures aimed at improving the education of Roma and minority children both at the administrative level and at the content level with rather positive results, on a small scale though (Askouni, 2006; Nova-Kaltsouni, 2004). In the context of the above, the education of girls is shorter than that of boys, while in many cases girls were kept away from the nine-year compulsory education (Alexandridis, 2016; Mavrommatis, 2000). According to Zahos (2007) and Alexandridis (2016), it seems that, even in more recent studies, girls are the ones who participate less in all levels of education, drop out more often and do not continue their studies since they are considered to be ready for marriage from the ages of 12-13 years old. As pointed out by the above authors, factors such as the socio-economic and educational level of the family, the place of residence, combined with the gender of the adolescents and the expectations of the parents for the future of their children determine the educational choices of adolescents in general and girls in particular.

As far as employment is concerned, it seems that opportunities are very limited for Roma since they have been forced by economic and social factors to move to larger cities. A consequence of that is the increase of unemployment as well as the disappearance of Roma traditional occupations -e.g., musician, itinerant merchant, basket maker, blacksmith, potter, coppersmith, etc. This combined with their lack of education resulted in many engaging in seasonal work in the agricultural sector and in the gyro trade - mainly clothes in weekly street markets or annual trade fairs (Dousas, 1997; Terzopoulou & Georgiou, 1996; Trubeta, 2001).

With respect to women, the percentage of those who work is very low. Unfortunately, statistical data is scarce. Roma women, due to all the factors mentioned above, have few options when it comes to work. In most cases, without even a primary school diploma, they work as land workers, seasonally and without insurance, or as house cleaners, also without insurance (Trubeta, 2001). As Dousas (1997) points out, the fact that Roma women live under relatively adverse conditions, that they marry in adolescence and almost immediately become mothers-most often of many children-drastically reduces the period of their lives in which they are able to work even in the above sectors. As a consequence, they remain financially dependent, to a large extent, on their husbands. According to Alexandridis (2016) this situation is even worse for Muslim Roma women. The author suggests that Muslim Roma women face even harsher discrimination than Roma women in general.

In relation to family life and women's position and role, it should be mentioned that the basis of the Roma social structure is the organization into clans (φάρα) – extended families or relatives. These kinship groups are organized patrilineally (Nova-Kaltsouni, 2004). As the author points out, the term "extended family" does not mean a group of relatives who all live together under the same roof, but mainly small groups of relatives who live next to each other (p. 3). Moreover, contrary to the Western standards where the individual and his needs are placed in the first line, in the gypsy society groupness takes precedence over individuality (Nova-Kaltsouni, 2004; Trubeta, 2001).

The role of women within this society seems to be quite degraded and attached to traditional norms. Starting from the patrilineal organization of the gypsy society, it becomes clear that a woman's position is in second place. Characteristic points that indicate the degradation of women include, among others, the settlement of the couple after marriage in the man's place of residence, the emphasis on the paternal line of kinship, the representation of the family by a male member, the purity test for the girl and the limitation that this brings about in terms of socializing and mixing in the public sphere (Alexandridis, 2016; Terzopoulou & Georgiou, 1996).

At this point, it is necessary to point out that while it is often suggested (e.g., Kanakidou, 1996) for the Thracian minority that the Muslim tradition is the one that determines the division of roles within the family, reinforcing the patriarchal structure and function, for the Roma it seems that it is rather the social context in which they live in as well as the habits and the tradition of the group they live with. We might say, however, that religion in this case seems to reinforce the reproduction of traditional views and practices. It seems that culture

specific and religious values and norms are mixed in a way that the dividing line can hardly be drawn (Alexandridis, 2016; Okcay, 2004; Trubeta, 2001).

### ***Muslim Roma from Chrysoupoli, Province of Nestos***

The Muslim Roma adolescents who participated in the study live in the province of Nestos, in the Municipality of Chrysoupolis. About 1700 individuals live in various municipal districts of the Municipality. The larger number of them are permanent residents while only a small percentage are travelers who move to other areas from the end of March until the end of the agricultural period. Their standard of living varies. There are families who live in modern buildings but there are also families who live in cabins without electricity or water supply. As for their jobs, according to statistics from the Prefectural Committee of People's Education (N.E.L.E., 2007) most Muslim Roma are seasonal land workers or collect and resell old iron for recycling. In most cases, they primarily rely on welfare benefits. A consequence of the above is the fact that the vast majority are uninsured and live under poor conditions (Medical and Social Center of Chrysoupolis, 2014).

The Roma of the area are primarily Muslim whereas their mother tongue is Turkish (Medical and Social Center of Chrysoupolis, 2014). As far as children's education is concerned, most of them enroll and attend classes in elementary schools although the drop out numbers are rather high (e.g., Alexandridis, 2016; Medical and Social Center of Chrysoupolis, 2014).

### **The present study**

The present study focuses on Muslim Roma adolescent boys and girls and explores their expectations regarding their future employment, family life and gender relations within the family. Taking into account that Muslim Roma adolescents constitute a highly marginalized group, their intersecting identities -related to different access to power- are compared to those of the dominant group. This comparison is expected to cast light on the ways in which social categories such as minority status, culture and socio-economic level, as they intersect with gender and with one another, shape the adolescents' expectations and experiences. For the purposes of the present study, both quantitative and qualitative data were collected.

### **Methodology**

#### ***Participants***

Ninety-one adolescents who reside in the area of Chrysoupolis participated in the study. Of the 91 adolescents, 40 (44%) were of Muslim Roma origin and 51 of them (56%) were members of the dominant group. Participants of the dominant group were approached through their school while the same process was followed for the Muslim Roma adolescents who attended either Primary or Secondary School. The Muslim Roma adolescents who did not attend school were approached through the Medical and Social Center of Chrysoupolis.

About half of the participants ( $N=45$ ) were boys and half ( $N=46$ ) were girls. Adolescents were between the ages of 12 to 18 years old and there were no differences between groups with respect to age. There were, however, significant differences between groups with respect to education, as was expected. Adolescents of the dominant group had a higher education level than the Muslim Roma group (Table 1). More specifically, among adolescents of the dominant group, 22 (43%) attended High School and 29 (57%) attended the Lyceum. The overwhelming majority of Muslim Roma adolescents ( $N=18$ ; 45%), however, did not attend school at all. Thirteen (33%) attended the last two grades of Grammar School, 8 (20%) attended High School and only one (2%) individual attended the Lyceum. There were no statically significant differences between boys and girls.

In agreement with our previous study concerning adolescents from the Muslim minority group and those of the dominant group (Sakka, 2012), the two groups of participants also differed in terms of the age at which their fathers and mothers married and in relation to the socioeconomic level of the family as defined by parents' educational level and occupation (Table 1). More specifically, the age of marriage for the Muslim Roma fathers was significantly lower than that of the adolescents' fathers belonging to the dominant group. The vast majority ( $N=28$ ; 76%) of Muslim Roma adolescents indicated that their fathers married between the ages of 15 to 20 years old whereas only 4 adolescents (8%) of the dominant group indicated the same for their fathers. Similarly, the

age of the mother of Muslim Roma adolescents was significantly lower than that of the mothers of adolescents belonging to the dominant group. The majority of the Muslim Roma adolescents (N=34; 92%) indicated that their mother married between the ages of 15 to 20 years whereas only 10 adolescents (20%) of the dominant group indicated the same (Table 1).

**Table 1**

*Demographic data, per group: Mean, Standard Deviation and KW $\chi^2$  values*

	Groups		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	KW $\chi^2$ (1)	p
	Dominant Group	Minority Group						
Adolescents' education <sup>1</sup>	3.90	.73	1.85	.97	53.36	.00		
Father's age of marriage <sup>2</sup>	2.73	.78	1.38	.76	38.84	.00		
Mother's age of marriage <sup>2</sup>	2.36	.94	1.14	.54	38.74	.00		
Father's education <sup>3</sup>	4.38	1.40	1.10	.30	70.09	.00		
Mother's education <sup>3</sup>	4.71	1.35	1.15	.36	70.14	.00		

\*Note. <sup>1</sup>(1) no education; (4) Lyceum, <sup>2</sup>(1) 15 to 20 years old; (4) 30.1 to 40 years old, <sup>3</sup>(1) did not graduate from elementary school; (6) University graduate

Finally, in agreement with existing research (e.g., Dikaiou & Kioseoglou, 1993; Papakonstantinou, 2007; Trubeta, 2001), the educational and the socio-economic level of the families of Roma adolescents seemed to be rather significantly lower than that of the parents of those in the dominant group, a fact that reflects the marginalization of the Muslim Roma participants. More specifically, according to the adolescents' reports, with respect to fathers' education (Table 1), Muslim Roma fathers were of a lower educational level compared to the fathers of the dominant group. The vast majority of Muslim Roma fathers (N=36; 90%) were considered illiterate since they never graduated elementary school whereas about half of the fathers of the dominant group (N=24; 48%) completed their studies in higher education (graduate of a Technical School or University). Similarly, with respect to mothers' education, Muslim Roma mothers were of a lower educational level compared to the mothers of the dominant group. The vast majority of Muslim Roma mothers (N=34; 85%) did not graduate from elementary school whereas about half of the mothers of the dominant group (N=27; 53%) have completed their studies in higher education (graduate of a Technical School or University).

In parallel to the above, with respect to father's occupation and according to the participants' accounts (Table 2), three out of ten of the fathers were unemployed. In addition, most Muslim Roma fathers of those who were employed were workers (i.e., drivers, sailors, construction workers, etc.), or small business owners. On the contrary, with respect to fathers of the dominant group, none were unemployed and only 2 individuals were retirees. Moreover, most fathers were employees in the private/public sector, workers and specialized technicians or freelancers without a degree. Finally, 9 individuals (18%) worked as teachers and police or army officers whereas a very small number of them were freelancers with a university degree.

According to the participants' accounts, Muslim Roma mothers were mostly engaged in domestic work as housewives or they were unemployed (Table 2). Only a small number worked as workers or owners of a small business or as farmers. In contrast to the above, most mothers in the dominant group were employed with the exception of a small number who were housewives. Among those who were employed, most worked as employees either in the public or the private sector, whereas smaller numbers worked either as teachers and workers or farmers. The rest of the mothers were freelancers with or without a degree or worked in a high-prestige job.

Taking into consideration the above findings with respect to parents' education and occupation, we could say that the participants of the dominant group belonged to average to low-income families with a few exceptions. The Muslim Roma adolescents, however, seemed to come from families who lived under very poor conditions.

**Table 2**

Data on fathers' and mothers' occupation, per group: Frequencies and percentages

Occupation	Father's occupation				Occupation	Mother's occupation				
	Groups		Groups			Groups		Groups		
	Dominant Group	Minority Group	Dominant Group	Minority Group		Dominant Group	Minority Group	Dominant Group	Minority Group	
	f	%	f	%		f	%	f	%	
1. Freelancer with a university degree	3	6%	0	0%	1. High prestige job	1	2%	0	0%	
2. Freelancer w/out a university degree	7	15%	2	5,0%	2. Freelancer with a university degree	4	8%	0	0%	
3. Police or army officer	3	6%	0	0%	3. Freelancer w/out a university degree	1	2%	0	0%	
5. Employee in the private/public sector w/out a degree	10	20%	0	0%	4. Employee in the private/public sector with a degree	1	2%	0	0%	
6. Teacher	6	12%	0	0%	5. Employee in the private/public sector w/out a degree	17	35%	0	0%	
7. Specialized technician	7	15%	0	0%	6. Teacher	7	15%	0	0%	
8. Worker - small business owner	8	16%	19	48%	7. Farmer-worker	5	11%	7	18%	
9. Farmer-/cattleman	3	6%	6	15%	8. Retiree	1	2%	0	0%	
10. Retiree	2	4%	0	0%	9. Unemployed	0	0%	5	12%	
11. Unemployed	0	0%	13	32%	10. Housewife	11	23%	28	70,0%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>	

### Instruments

To investigate the adolescents' views and expectations, quantitative and qualitative data were selected through:

(I) a structured questionnaire that examined, among other things: (A) adolescents' expectations about their future occupation, and (B) their expectations for their future family. The construction of the questionnaire was based on an existing one investigating the adolescents' transition from school to the labor market and to adulthood as they are shaped by the male and female identity (Deliyianni-Kouimtzi & Sakka, 2003).

(A) The adolescents' expectations about their future occupation were explored by 1 and 2. Specifically, adolescents were asked, among other things, to indicate: (1) the type of profession they would like to do in the future through an open-ended question as well as (2) their expectations about the characteristics of their future occupation by indicating, on a five-point scale, the extent to which the predefined characteristics apply to them. Responses from the open-ended question were subjected to categorization by two independent judges (Oppenheim, 2000). Inter-judge reliability was rather high ( $r = .91$ ). Moreover, data from the *Scale of Expectations* about the characteristics of adolescents' future job were subjected to a Factor Analysis in order to construct respective composite variables based on the mean of the items loading each factor (.50+). Only the factors that had Eigen value above 1 were used (Table 3). Composite variables were subjected to further statistical analysis. The Factor Analysis using principal component analysis and Varimax rotation revealed four factors explaining 63.06% of the variance.

**Table 3***Adolescents' expectations about the characteristics of their future job, per group: Factor Analysis*

Items	F1	F2	F3	F4
1. To be creative	.50			
2. To be satisfying	.61			
3. To be interesting			.86	
4. To have flexible hours	.70			
5. To leave enough free time	.72			
6. To allow the combination of career-work and family		.67		
7. To enable me to spend time with my family	.63			
8. To give power and prestige	.82			
9. To provide charm		.81		
10. To cultivate responsibility		.73		
11. To offer independence	.65			
12. To provide opportunities for contact with other people		.60		
13. To provide potentials for advancement or development		.50		
14. To provide security			.77	
15. To offer financial security		.75		
16. To bring a lot of money			.82	
Eigenvalue:	5.59	2.14	1.27	1.0
% of variance explained:	34.95	13.40	7.93	6.79

\*Note. F1: Personal fulfillment-allowing the combination of work and family, F2: Prestige -providing opportunities for advancement, independence and/or communication, F3: Financial security, F4: Financial strength

(B) The adolescents' expectations for their future family were explored by 3, 4 and 5. Participants were asked to specify: (3) the age at which they wish to create their own family based on a six-point scale (*1=I don't wish to create my own family, 2=15-20 years old, 3=21-25 years old, 4=26-30 years old, 5=31-35 years old and 6=36 and above*); (4) the number of children they would like to have; and (5) the conditions that, in their opinion, should be in place for them to create themselves a family indicating on a five-point scale, their degree of agreement with predefined categories of conditions. In order to determine differences between the two groups and between boys and girls of each group, the non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis test was used in all of the above variables except one: To identify differences between groups and between boys and girls in the data derived from the open-ended question concerning the type of profession adolescents would like to do in the future, only frequencies and percentages were calculated due to low frequencies per category of answers and the fact that these were categorical data.

(II) an essay. Participants were asked to write an essay titled "A day in my future family". Essays of this type have been used in previous studies, both in Greece and abroad, to investigate the ways in which boys and girls understand gender relations in the family as well as their own place within it (Halldén, 1997; Deliyianni-Kouimtzi & Sakka, 2004; Koroneou, 2007; Sakka, 2012).

Data were subjected to an inductive thematic analysis in order to understand the images that adolescents construct regarding gender relations as well as their expectations about their future lives. This choice was deemed necessary, given that the essays of the Muslim Roma adolescents were particularly short because many of them do not speak Greek well. It was therefore necessary to use a flexible analysis method in order to use and thoroughly explore all available data. As is well known, thematic analysis is a method of analyzing qualitative data and allows the detailed elaboration of participants' perceptions and beliefs as they discuss a topic. Themes were derived directly from the data in order to allow patterns of responses to emerge since similar data have not



been analyzed before. Every theme consists of categories that were created by the initial coding of the data (Smith, 1999). In other words, data were organized into codes, codes into categories and categories into themes.

## Procedure

Data collection, for those adolescents who attend school, took place in school in written and lasted a total of 3 teaching hours. For those who do not attend school, data collection took place at the premises of the Medical and Social Center of Chrysoupolis (2014). The questionnaire was completed through an interview with the assistance of an interpreter. Both the researcher and the interpreter were trained in this type of interview beforehand. The participants were also, asked to verbally develop the topic of the essay. The oral elaboration of the topic was carried out in Greek with the presence of an interpreter whose help was requested whenever needed. The participants were not asked any questions during the elaboration of the topic and their responses were recorded verbatim.

Finally, data were collected in two phases for those who attend school as well as those who do not. The first phase concerned the completion of the questionnaire either in writing or orally while the second concerned the elaboration of the essay (written or oral).

## Results and discussion

### *Adolescents' expectations about their future occupation*

It is reminded that, in order to investigate the participants' expectations about their working life in the future, they were asked to indicate the type of profession they would like to pursue as well as the characteristics of this profession.

In particular, in the question "What job would you like to do in the future" (Table 4), most adolescents in the dominant group indicated that they would like to have a profession in areas that require a university degree (e.g., teaching, health sector, sciences and engineering, financing, management and Law as well as Arts). Moreover, about 3 out of 10 indicated that they would like to have a job in the security forces. This is not the case, however, for Muslim Roma adolescents most of whom indicated that they would like to work in the future as specialized technicians, clerks, farmers or workers. It is interesting to note that 1 out of 10 adolescents indicated that they wish to work in the armed forces in the future and an equally small number indicated professions that require a university degree (e.g., Health professions, Financing or Management or Law). Therefore, in accordance with previous studies (Sakka, 2012; Sakka et al., 2008), it seems that minority adolescents, in contrast to those of the dominant group, consider the pursuit of a profession as a skilled craftsman to be a more feasible goal than that of a teacher or a scientist.

The fact that some Muslim Roma participants seem to hold higher aspirations, indicating that they will choose a profession concerning the Security Forces or the Health Sector makes us wonder whether these results reflect the aspirations of at least two different subgroups of Muslim Roma adolescents. We believe that this is a question that needs in-depth investigation, but both the demographic data and the small number of participants in the present study limit our ability to answer it. It becomes obvious from the above findings, however, that Muslim Roma adolescents in this study are laying the ground for social exclusion. Since they do not take advantage of the public good of education for all the educational, socio-political, and cultural reasons that have been discussed in the relevant literature, they limit not only their prospects but their aspirations as well.

In addition to the above, differences between boys and girls were observed in several cases (Table 4). The girls of the dominant group seemed to choose the teaching profession, professions concerning Financing, Management, and Law as well as Health professions to a greater degree compared to the boys of the same group. Moreover, Muslim Roma girls seemed to choose to work as clerks or as saleswomen to a greater extent than boys whereas Muslim Roma boys seemed to prefer the occupation of the specialized technician and/or that of the farmer or the worker to a greater extent than girls.

The lack of additional differences between boys and girls of the dominant group seems to show that, contrary to existing studies, participants envision having a future profession independently of existing gender stereotypes for occupations. Therefore, contrary to the repeated findings that boys and girls often tend to choose occupations that have been considered traditionally either male or female respectively, regardless of their academic

achievements (among others: Deliyanni-Kouimtzi & Sakka, 2005; Deliyanni-Kouimtzi & Sakka, 2007; Koroneou, 2007; Maragoudaki, 2007) our results show that this is not always the case. Could we suggest that participants through their choices or preferences negotiate old stereotypes? Limitations of the present study (i.e., small number of participants, difficulties with data collection in the Muslim Roma group) do not allow us to conclude that boys and girls are moving towards occupational choices which are free of gender biases. Taking into consideration, however, that participants of the dominant group come from average to low-income families with a few exceptions, whereas the Muslim Roma adolescents seem to come from families who live under conditions of poverty, we may conclude that it is the financial insecurity the one that dictates the participants' choices. The fact that participants of both groups envision themselves in occupations that have high or rather high absorption rates (Security Forces and teaching professions for the dominant group and the professions of specialized technicians or farmers for the Muslim Roma group) makes us argue that this might be the case. In today's society where the professional future of most is uncertain, most adolescents seem to think realistically, planning to follow studies or further training that will eventually ensure a secure salary.

With respect to the characteristics of their future occupation, participants expected that their future occupation will primarily ensure financial security and secondarily financial strength. Participants also expected to a rather high degree that their future occupation will contribute to their personal fulfillment and will provide them with sufficient time to combine work and family life. According to the Kruskal-Wallis test, significant differences were observed in all but one case (Table 5). Specifically, Muslim Roma adolescents when compared to the adolescents of the dominant group seemed to expect to a lesser degree, that their future job will give them financial security, or personal fulfillment, allowing the combination of work and family. Moreover, most of them did not mention that their future job will give them prestige or provide them with opportunities for advancement, independence and/or communication with others. It seems, therefore, that Muslim Roma adolescents may have the same priorities as those of the dominant group. They seem, however, less certain as to what to expect from their future job besides financial security and strength. Qualitative data may assist further with the understanding of the above findings.

Significant differences between boys and girls were observed in the Muslim Roma group but not in the dominant group with respect to financial strength [ $KW\chi^2(1)=6.52; p=.01$ ]. Boys (Mean=4.20; SD=1.12) more than girls (Mean=3.50; SD=.85) indicated that their occupation will give them, among other things, financial strength in the future. Muslim Roma girls, therefore, do not seem to prioritize financial strength as much as boys. In doing so, however, they seem to put their priorities concerning personal fulfillment in a second place, hoping for a job that will allow them personal fulfillment as well as the combination of work and family life. Contrary to the Muslim Roma boys, thus, the Muslim Roma girls seem to wonder whether their future job will allow them to fulfill their roles as wives and mothers.

On one hand, it is well known that personal fulfillment as a professional value has traditionally been linked to women (Bournoudi & Psalti, 1997; Stogiannidou et al., 2007). Moreover, girls' desire to combine work and family life is a recurring pattern since many girls feel the pressure that it is rather their responsibility to take care of their family, even when they are employed. Consequently, they hope that in their adult life, they will be able to respond effectively to both their roles as working mothers and wives (Athanasidou, 2007; Deliyanni-Kouimtzi & Sakka, 2005; Sakka, 2007). On the other hand, boys still adopting the role of "provider" and still considering themselves responsible for the financial support of the family (Deliyanni-Kouimtzi & Sakka, 2005; Mac an Ghail, 1996) think of financial strength, to a greater extent than girls, as a desirable feature of their future work (Bournoudi & Psalti, 1997). To what extent do the above expectations reflect different orientations in the ways in which adolescent boys and girls of Muslim Roma origin understand themselves and their social-family relationships? Qualitative data will assist further with the understanding of the above findings.

### ***Adolescents' expectations about their future family***

It is reminded that, in order to understand the adolescents' views on family and family life, they were asked to answer a series of questions about the conditions they believe should exist for starting a family, including the desired age for starting a family.

As it is shown in Table 6, in the question regarding the desired age for starting a family, the Muslim Roma adolescents indicated that they prefer to have their own family at a younger age than the adolescents of the dominant group. Moreover, both groups indicated that they wish to have up to two children. Significant

differences between sexes were observed in the Muslim Roma group but not in the dominant group [ $KW\chi^2$  (1)= 6.31;  $p=.01$ ]. More specifically, girls (Mean=2.20; SD=.41) indicated a younger age for getting married than boys (Mean=2.72; SD=.74). It seems, therefore, that, in accordance with previous research concerning women or girls of the Muslim minority, the pressure to marry young is stronger for girls than for boys (Basit, 1997; Kanakidou, 1996; 1997; Sakka, 2012).

**Table 4**

*The adolescents' views on the occupation they wish to follow in the future, per group and sex: frequencies and percentages*

Types of occupation	Groups				Sex			
	Dominant Group		Minority Group		Boys		Girls	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1. Security Forces (army, police)	13	28	3	10	9	23	7	18
2. Engineering / polytechnic professions	5	11	---	---	3	8	2	5
3. Teaching	11	23	---	---	1	3	10	26
4. Science	8	17	---	---	4	10	4	11
5. Financing, Management, Law	4	9	1	3	1	3	4	11
6. Health Professions	10	21	2	7	4	10	8	21
7. Artistic professions	6	13	---	---	1	3	5	13
8. Computer Science	2	4	---	---	1	3	1	3
9. Specialized technicians	1	2	7	23	8	20	---	---
10. Clerk -salesperson in the private sector	---	---	8	26	2	5	6	16
11. Farmer-worker	---	---	10	32	8	20	2	5

\*Note. (1) No; (2) Yes. Group and sex percentages were calculated per column for each item.

**Table 5**

*Adolescents' expectations about the characteristics of their future job, per group; Mean, Standard Deviation and  $KW\chi^2$  values*

Groups of characteristics Composite variables	Dominant	Groups		Minority	Group	$KW\chi^2$ (df)	p
		Group	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
1. Personal fulfillment-allowing the combination of work and family	4.10	.50	3.54	.77	14.21	.00	
2. Prestige -providing opportunities for advancement, independence and/or communication	4.06	.60	2.97	.70	35.33	.00	
3. Financial security	4.61	.67	4.28	.76	5.16	.02	
4. Financial strength	4.22	.58	3.95	1.07			

\*Note. (1) *Absolutely disagree*; (5) *Absolutely agree*

**Table 6***Desired age of marriage and desired number of children, per group: Mean, Standard Deviation and KW $\chi^2$  values*

Desired age of marriage & desired number of children	Groups		Group	KW $\chi^2$ (df)	p
	Dominant Group	Minority			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Desired age of marriage*	3.82	.82	2.52	.68	41.05 .00
Desired number of children**	3.04	.86	3.28	.99	

\*Note: \*(1) Do not desire to have a family; (2) 15-20 years old; (3) 21-25 years old; (4) 26-30 years old; (5) 31-35 years old; (6) 36 and above years old, \*\*(1) Do not desire to have children; (2) One child; (3) Two children; (4) Three children; (5) More than three children

With respect to adolescents' views on the conditions of starting a family for a young person (Table 7), the two groups differ in all cases but one. Muslim Roma adolescents indicated that the most important conditions for starting a family is primarily for someone to own a house and have a steady job. Secondly, he/she should be financially comfortable and independent. The least important conditions seem to be prioritizing family above work and completing his/her studies. On the contrary, adolescents of the dominant group indicated that the most important conditions for the young person are to have a steady job and to be financially independent. The second important condition is for the person to be financially comfortable and to have completed his/her studies whereas the least important conditions are to own a house and to prioritize family over work.

These results are similar to those of other studies showing that adolescents from different social groups plan their adult lives in different ways (Arnot & Arizpe, 1997; Deliyanni-Kouimtzi & Sakka, 2005; Sakka, 2012; Sakka & Deliyanni-Kouimtzi, 2006). While both groups, when planning their future life, indicate that it is necessary to have a stable job before starting a family, adolescents of the dominant group also consider financial independence as an almost equally necessary condition. On the contrary, Muslim Roma adolescents emphasize owning their own home. This differentiation may be related to the different perceived goals and needs of each group. It may also be related to the different starting points of the adolescents in terms of the social position of each group (minority-dominant). However, given that the issue of financial independence is raised in this case by the dominant group, to what extent can we say that adolescents of the dominant group are oriented towards more individualistic goals whereas Muslim Roma participants are oriented mostly towards survival or the need for improving living conditions for their future family? Qualitative data may help us answer this question.

At this point, it is interesting to note that the only statistically significant difference between sexes found, concerns the dominant group [KW $\chi^2$ (1)=3.87;  $p=.04$ ] where girls indicated to a greater extent (Mean=4.65; SD=.61) than boys (Mean=4.35; SD=.59) the need to have a stable job before starting a family.

In conclusion, the results of this part of the study show that adolescents of different social groups plan their adult lives in different ways. Specifically, adolescents' expectations about their future occupation seem to partly reflect the choices that each group perceives to be available in the labor market for them, and partly the adolescents' perceived resources. Moreover, it seems that adolescents of both groups expect to find a job that will eventually ensure them a secure salary. Muslim Roma adolescents, however, seem to limit their prospects by planning to mainly follow manual jobs that do not require any schooling. Within this context, adolescents seem to have different starting points for their adult life with the Muslim Roma adolescents expecting to remain in the lower ranks of society.

Moreover, all adolescents seem to expect that their future profession will not only provide them with the necessities, but also provide them with financial strength. Muslim Roma girls, however, to a greater extent than those of the dominant group, seem to feel the additional pressure for combining work and family.

With respect to adolescents' expectations for their future lives within marriage, it seems that the pressure to start a family at a young age is stronger for the Muslim Roma girls compared to the Muslim Roma boys or the girls and boys of the dominant group. In addition, securing a stable job is considered by both groups to be a basic condition for starting a family. At the same time, however, the observed differences in the conditions required for family formation (i.e., the emphasis placed by Muslim Roma adolescents on owning a house and by adolescents of the dominant group on securing financial independence) appear to be determined not only by the different orientations adolescents of each group might have but also by the different starting points of each group which are related to their social position or their gender (minority-dominant; male or female).

The above results offer important information regarding adolescents' expectations of their future lives, but they do not show the ways in which they define themselves in relation to the other sex, nor the ways in which they understand their future relations between them. So how do participants present themselves as future adults in the public and private spheres as well as the relationships they develop with the other sex? To what extent do the above differ for each group? Finally, in what ways do adolescents manage the categories of 'gender', socio-economic level, and 'social status' as they project themselves into the future? These questions will be partly answered by the analysis of the quantitative data.

**Table 7**

*Adolescents' views on the conditions for a young person to start a family, per group. Mean, Standard Deviation and KW $\chi^2$  values*

Conditions	Groups		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	KW $\chi^2$ (df)	p
	Dominant	Group						
1. To have finished his/her studies	3.92	1.09	2.08	1.05	36.90	.00		
2. To have found a steady job	4.53	.61	3.95	1.22	4.32	.03		
3. To be financially independent	4.08	1.02	3.50	1.15	7.28	.01		
4. To be financially comfortable	3.96	.87	3.65	1.31				
5. To have his or her own house	3.57	1.17	4.30	1.02	11.12	.00		
6. To put his/her family above his/her work	3.45	1.19	2.92	1.18	3.99	.04		

\*Note. (1)Absolutely disagree; (5)Absolutely agree

### **Adolescents' expectations of gender relations**

As has already been said, the qualitative analysis of the essays aimed at presenting the adolescents' images of gender relations as those were constructed by the participants as well as their expectations about their future work and family.

According to the thematic analysis, two themes emerged: (1) Gender relations in the public sphere and (2) Gender relations in the private sphere. It is reminded that the themes were derived directly from the data whereas every theme consists of categories that were created by the initial coding of the data.

**Gender relations in the public sphere: Adolescents' expectations about their future profession and professional life.** A general finding drawn from the data of the present study is that, in the public sphere, the two issues which are under negotiation are related to the type and characteristics of the profession that the participants wish to follow in the future as well as the employment of women. Consequently, the two categories that emerged concern (a) the participants' professional choices, and (b) women's employment. More specifically, with respect to future employment, the two groups of participants agree that employment is a key component of adult life. It seems, however, that they see limitations in their professional development. For boys, these limitations are related to their social status (minority-majority), while for girls they are related, apart from social status, to gender category as well.

In particular, the two groups of boys differ in terms of their professional choices and the characteristics of their work. Muslim Roma boys describe their future work in a general way, emphasizing mainly the elements of economic survival and the difficult conditions of life. In this context, they consider that they will work hard, with all that this entails. It is interesting that Muslim Roma boys when talking about their future job, they do not mention any specifics, which is not the case with the adolescents of the dominant group. In contrast, boys in the dominant group appear to be preoccupied with anxiety about the financial rewards their occupation will offer, overemphasizing this issue as well as those of professional achievement and financial independence:

*"To have a job." (Muslim Roma boy)*

*"I will have money to live with my family" (Muslim Roma boy).*

*"After I work hard at my job I will return home" (Muslim Roma boy)*

*"At my job I'll go back to the car to see who's committing violations, who's going over the speed limit, and I'll give them a tip..." (boy, member of the dominant group)*

*"... I imagine myself as a successful pharmacist ... a person fully respected and recognized" (boy, dominant group)*

In accordance with our previous study (Sakka, 2012) which involved minority adolescents of non-Roma origin in comparison to nonminority, Muslim Roma adolescents seem to have much lower expectations about their education and career, than their peers of the dominant group. Contrary to this study, however, Muslim Roma boys seem to have even lower expectations about their education and career since the minority but non-Roma adolescents of the 2012 study expressed the desire of obtaining a degree and taking up a profession accordingly. It seems therefore that Muslim Roma adolescents limit themselves to occupations that do not require any further education or training. At the same time, what they are looking for is not a job that will please them or that will bring them moderate to high financial benefits, but any job that will provide them a living. Lack of education, thus, seems to fuel social exclusion and this in turn perpetuates low educational attainment.

Only very few Muslim Roma adolescents described images of working life that reflected higher career expectations. Again, these jobs do not require any education but they are based on the ownership of a store and have better financial prospects. Moreover, interestingly enough, Muslim Roma adolescents seem to be preoccupied with rewards that are family or community-oriented:

*"I will have a computer shop, an internet café." (Muslim Roma boy)*

*"I will work as a car mechanic, in my own store." (Muslim Roma boy)*

*"I will have a job and leave it to my son" (Muslim Roma boy)*

*"To have a job, for example, tinsmith and be able to take care of my family" (Muslim Roma boy)*

*"...and to have a factory for them to come and work" (Muslim Roma boy)*

On the contrary, boys of the dominant group appear to choose professions that require either university studies or some kind of training. Furthermore, they seem to be preoccupied with the financial rewards their occupation will bring them, overemphasizing this issue. In addition to that, however, they are also preoccupied with individualistic rewards such as professional recognition, financial independence, and the acquisition of prestige:

*"I also imagine, ... and having enough money ..." (boy, the dominant group)*

*«To have financial independence ...» (boy, dominant group)*

*"I would like to hold a permanent position in the army because it is a prestigious profession..." (boy, dominant group)*

The above descriptions seem to reflect the different positions in which participants of both groups place themselves in the professional hierarchy. To what extent does the observed differentiation reflect the different opportunities that the two groups of participants perceive they will have in the future? Our results show that this might be the case at least as far as the relation of education with the participants' future profession is concerned. Moreover, to what extent does the lack of job descriptions by the Muslim Roma boys reflect the collision between their expectations and desires on one hand and the realities they are facing on the other? Our data do not allow us to answer this question. As we had previously suggested, however, "positioning oneself as a worker in low- or high-prestige jobs may reflect the different representations of masculinity that may be cultivated in different cultural contexts, including those defined in terms of social status and socioeconomic status of the parental family" (Sakka, 2012, p.205). Muslim Roma boys, having been exposed to a limited number of jobs or jobs that do not exist or are not common anymore (i.e., junk dealer, peddler, etc.), are probably hesitant in describing something that they do not know well enough. It is a question that needs further, in-depth investigation. Finally, in accordance with other studies (Nova-Kaltsouni, 2004; Sakka, 2012), the above descriptions seem to also reflect the individualistic orientation of the adolescents of the dominant group and the more collective orientation of those in the Muslim Roma group. As Nova-Kaltsouni (2004) points out, for the Muslim Roma community, the group and the concept of "we" precedes individuality and the concept of "I".

As for the women's employment, the girls of the two groups seem to differ from each other on the issue of women's work per se, as mostly in the Muslim Roma group there were girls who constructed images of family life where women do not work but they are "good wives and mothers". Considering that many of the girls come from households where the mother does not work, it could be said that the woman's work is still be an issue of negotiation for most of Muslim Roma girls. According to Dousas (1997), Roma girls are trained from childhood

to become good housewives and mothers whereas domestic chores are considered to be exclusively a woman's duty. Moreover, if we take into account their low educational level (Papakonstantinou, 2007) their professional options are dramatically reduced. Most of them work seasonally as uninsured land workers, (Dousas, 1997; Trumpeta, 2001), so it is probably desired by the participants of this study that the husband will be able to support his family and therefore, they won't have to work. In this context, marrying someone who will be able to provide the necessities may be considered as an indicator of upwards social mobility:

*"I'll be home looking after my kids and my house" (Muslim Roma girl)*

*"I'll be at home with my kids. My husband will be at work" (Muslim Roma girl)*

*"When I wake up I will make food for my children and I will dress them to play. I'll do the house chores for which I am responsible and I 'll cook lunch again" (Muslim Roma girl)*

*"I will have my own house. My husband will work and I will look after my children at home 'like a lady'." (Muslim Roma girl)*

At this point, it should be mentioned that these data contradict the findings of Sakka's study (2012) in a minority population. The minority girls expressed a desire to study and work. Clearly, the standard of living and education of those girls was higher than that of the Muslim Roma girls given that they were already attending a private high school. Again, it seems that a vicious circle appears to be created in this way, where lack of education fuels social exclusion and this in turn perpetuates low educational achievement. Therefore, Muslim ideology is not the only factor influencing the lives of Muslim Roma girls as well as the representations of the self. Could we conclude that the prevailing conditions of social exclusion hinder the process of modernization of the ideas and values of the Muslim Roma community in this and other levels? Once more our data do not allow us to answer this question with certainty.

What they show, however, very clearly is that Muslim Roma girls are pressured not to work not only by their extended family or the broader Muslim Roma community but by the boys of the same age as well. The majority of Muslim Roma boys in the present study stated that their future wife will not be employed and some even indicated that they do not want their wife to work, placing her at home taking care of the children. For most Muslim Roma adolescents, thus, work is a duty, perhaps even a right, exclusively for men. As it has already been pointed out, the experiences of Muslim Roma adolescents are different, and, as far as the distribution of gender roles is concerned, traditionally oriented (Chatzisavvidis, 1996; Nova-Kaltsouni, 2004):

*"My wife will be at home with the children" (Muslim Roma boy)*

*"... and my wife will not work, she will be at home and take care of the children and me. I will bring the money" (Muslim Roma boy)*

The number of the Roma girls who expressed a desire to work in the future is very low. It seems, therefore, that some Roma girls try to claim a different role, from the one imposed on them by social imperatives.

*"I am married with children. I have my own house and my own job." (Muslim Roma girl)*

*"I imagine myself with kids and a job" (Muslim Roma girl)*

*"I'll do the housework or go to work" (Muslim Roma girl)*

*"I'll wake up and go to work" (Muslim Roma girl)*

On the contrary, all girls of the dominant group consider work as part of their future life and, in several cases, give concrete descriptions of their future job. Thus, they seem quite certain about what they want to do in the future:

*"To work in a job that gives me security is stable and gives me a lot of money" (girl, dominant group)*

*"I would like to have a profession that will provide me with a fairly high income" (girl, dominant group)*

*"... I would like my job to offer me good money and stability" (girl, dominant group)*

It seems that they are concerned with the issues of stability, security, and financial rewards, just like the boys of the same group. Many of them also mention success and financial wealth:

*"I would like to live with my partner and our child in a big house, full of comforts so that when we come home from work we are comfortable and in a nice environment." (girl, dominant group)*

*"Well, to my family I would like to offer everything, money..." (girl, dominant group)*

*"Also, I want to have a successful and good job that can give me financial comfort" (girl, dominant group)*

Most of the girls in the dominant group relate their future job to their future studies. They probably consider that studying and obtaining a degree is a prerequisite for a successful professional career:

*«After studying and getting my degree it will be easier for me to find a job that will satisfy me and make me financially independent» (girl, dominant group)*  
*«...to work on what I have studied» (girl, dominant group)*

In a similar way to the girls of the dominant group, boys of this group take it as a given that their future wives will be working even though they consider themselves the breadwinners of their future families. Only very few of them want their future wife to not be working when they start a family.

*“My wife and I both work” (boy, dominant group)*  
*“My wife and I will go to work...” (boy, dominant group)*  
*“I want my wife and me to go to work in the morning...” (boy, dominant group)*

In their descriptions, girls of the dominant group place themselves in jobs that will not have high demands, emphasizing the satisfaction they will derive from their work as well as the financial independence they will gain. Therefore, in agreement with previous studies in the Greek area, what seems to mainly interest some young women is to improve their lives as women and they believe that they will achieve this through their studies and the acquisition of qualifications (Deliyianni-Kouimtz, & Sakka, 2005; Koronaiou, 2007):

*“I would like to be financially independent, have a nice pleasant and stable job and a big family” (girl, dominant group)*  
*“...first I will have a secure job and then a family.... I would like to be an independent woman who will have fun with my career and my friends” (girl, dominant group)*

**Gender relations in the private sphere: Adolescents' expectations of family and family life.** A second finding of the present study is that, in the private sphere, the three issues which seem to be under negotiation (i.e., categories) are the issues of (a) marriage, (b) role division in the public and private sphere, and (c) relation with either the nuclear or extended family.

Regarding their future family, both boys and girls in both groups seem to wish to have a family sometime in the future with the Muslim Roma adolescents, as it was shown by the quantitative data, wishing to have a family earlier in life. The participants of both groups, through the images they construct about their future lives, seem to place themselves in various positions and negotiate their relationships with the other gender within the framework of the gendered division of roles. In most images participants construct, children are included as well:

*“I imagine having a wife, an old friend of mine from elementary school, and two children of the same age (one boy, one girl)” (boy, dominant group)*  
*“I imagine my future family of four.” (boy, dominant group)*  
*“I hope that one day I will have my own family. I imagine having two children...” (girl, dominant group)*  
*“...I sit at home with my wife and children” (Muslim Roma boy)*  
*“...I will take my wife and my children to go for a walk...” (Muslim Roma boy)*  
*“When my children wake up I will dress them...” (Muslim Roma boy)*

There were, however, adolescents - few in number - who either indicated that they do not wish to start family, or that it is not in their priorities:

*“To be honest, my dream is not to have a family” (girl, dominant group)*  
*“...I am not currently in favor of marriage” (girl, dominant group)*  
*“I can't imagine because I'm not married, and I don't want to be” (Muslim Roma boy)*

In the private sphere, what seems to be under negotiation among the boys is the broadening of women's role in the public sphere and the broadening of men's role in the private sphere. For the girls of both groups, in addition to the above, the reconciliation of professional and family life emerges as a central issue. However, the majority of girls strongly advocate the issue of the man's participation in taking care of the house and the children. The two groups construct, however, very different images of family life.

In particular, the life perspectives presented through the participants' essays show that the boys in both groups place themselves in the position of the "breadwinner" and the "head" of the family. In this context, they plan their future keeping in mind the financial security of the family, a perspective which is linked to the traditional division of roles within the family (e.g., Deliyanni-Kouimtz & Sakka, 2005; Koronaiou, 2007). The two groups of boys, however, differ on the issue of women's employment. Most Muslim Roma boys, when describing their family life, refer to their spouse either in an abstract way or by presenting her as a mother rather than a working wife. They go so far as to explicitly state that they will not let her work. On the contrary, most of

the boys in the dominant group, in agreement with previous studies (e.g., Deliyanni-Kouimtzi & Sakka, 2004, 2005; Koronaioi, 2007; Sakka, 2012), either state that they would like their wife to work or describe instances of family life where their wife works:

*"In the morning we will get ready for work..." (boy, dominant group)*

*"I imagine that my wife will also work and have a good job that will get enough money and so we will buy things..." (boy, dominant group)*

*"My wife will be home with the children" (Muslim Roma boy)*

*"... and my wife will not work, she will be at home and take care of the children and me. I will bring the money" (Muslim Roma boy)*

Of particular interest is the differentiation between the two groups in terms of the description of the roles of the two genders in the family. The boys and girls of the dominant group seem to raise issues about the role of women that are not presented by Muslim Roma adolescents. For example, the girls, as they describe daily activities of their married life, in agreement with previous studies (Deliyanni-Kouimtzi & Sakka, 2004; Koronaioi, 2007; Sakka & Deliyanni-Kouimtzi, 2006), place themselves in the role of housewife and mother, but report that household chores and childcare are the responsibility of both parents, thus expecting men's participation as well. In this context, they consider the care of the house to be primarily a woman's responsibility and see the man's contribution as "help with household chores", in contrast to the care of the children, which is seen as a responsibility that should be shared by both spouses:

*"I will have my children and my husband to look after us and be responsible to his children and his wife" (girl, dominant group)*

*"So we will be together to exchange views, to discuss if there is something that concerns us and in general, to be with each other in whatever is needed" (girl, dominant group)*

*"...also, sharing tasks with my partner..." (girl, dominant group)*

*"Then I will do the housework with the help of the husband." (girl, dominant group)*

The boys of the dominant group describe images of family life placing themselves in the role of the father who, while not participating in the care of the house, actively participates in raising the children. In this context, and in agreement with previous studies (e.g., Deliyanni-Kouimtzi, & Sakka, 2005; Koronaioi, 2007; Sakka, & Deliyanni-Kouimtzi, 2006), boys seem to accept the broadening of the father's role by associating fatherhood with childcare, a traditionally "female" responsibility:

*"There will be days when I 'll have time off and, so, I'll have more time for my children and my family" (boy, dominant group)*

*"...then I'll take my kids to a park to play, and in the evening someone I know will look after them so I can spend some time with my wife" (boy, dominant group)*

*"...later I'll help the kids with their homework so they'll be prepared for school the next day" (boy, dominant group)*

*"... to spend many hours with them (the children) and my family... resting, playing and talking, then the children should be prepared for school with or without my help..." (boy, dominant group)*

*"Now my wife has gone abroad for a job, and I have taken time off from work for the children..." (boy, dominant group)*

In the Muslim Roma group, girls describe their role as future wives and mothers by describing their family responsibilities towards their children and husband. In this context, they do not seem to share the views and plans of their female peers of the dominant group for more equality in the distribution of roles and responsibilities within the family. Even those who describe themselves as working housewives and mothers do not seem to place themselves, as the majority of their peers of the dominant group do, in a family context that will be governed by the "principle of reciprocity" between the two spouses (Deliyanni-Kouimtzi & Sakka, 2004). On the contrary, they describe scenes of family life where the role of the "good" wife and mother dominates:

*"In the morning I wash the dishes, drink coffee and do chores. I go to the shops, shop and cook." (Muslim Roma girl)*

*"I'll do the housework or go to work" (Muslim Roma girl)*

*"I will have a job, but I will primarily take care of my family" (Muslim Roma girl)*

The impression thus created is that minority girls construct images of family life different from those of girls in the dominant group, in which the man is "absent from the home", while they take responsibility for the

home and the children. These images of female identity are probably related to a traditional culture in the context of which the woman is confined to the home, while the man is "out for work" (Deliyianni-Kouimtzi & Sakka, 2004, 2005; Koronaioi, 2007).

In the same group, boys differ from girls by describing scenes of family life which are very traditional. They often make no mention of their duties as parents and husbands, probably believing that their responsibilities as spouses and parents are limited to work. Some reach to the point of presenting both spouses as living parallel lives: The men are going to work and the women are taking care of the house and the children.

*"I'll get up and drink coffee to go to work. From work I will go home, have lunch, take a bath and sleep. In the evening I will go for a walk around the neighborhood with friends and go back to sleep" (Muslim Roma boy)*

*"When I wake up I'll go to work and then I'll go home to eat and sleep. When I wake up I'll watch TV and go back to sleep" (Muslim Roma boy)*

The above descriptions are usually very brief. A possible interpretation for the lack of detailed descriptions by the Muslim Roma adolescents, in addition to the well-known difficulty of expressing themselves which has already been pointed out, is the different structure of the gypsy society, which in many ways resembles the Greek, pre-industrial society (Alexandridis, 2016). Within this context, Muslim Roma boys and girls may not be familiar with the structure and function of the nuclear family they try to imagine for their future family life. This becomes more clear when both boys and girls present stories where visitations to parents or grandparents are common:

*"...we'll go for a walk to grandma's with the kids" (Muslim Roma girl)*

*"I will wake up early, do my chores, look after my children and go for a walk to my grandmother's...I will make dinner for us to have" (Muslim Roma girl)*

The above findings are in agreement with existing literature on Muslim Roma family life. As several authors point out, the boundaries of the family, as they are placed in Western societies, are not known in Gypsy society. Relatives - grandmothers, grandfathers, etc. all play an important role in the lives of the individuals. Moreover, the roles of children are not clearly differentiated from those of adults. Mainly boys are often called to help with their father's work, and mainly girls are being asked to raise their younger siblings (Nova-Kaltsouni, 2004; Terzopoulou & Georgiou, 1998).

In the same group, other boys differ from girls by describing scenes of family life in which, on the one hand, they clearly place themselves in the position of the head and/or the "breadwinner" of the family, while, on the other hand, they present themselves as fathers who are responsible both for providing material goods for their children as well as their education and wellbeing. It seems, therefore, that Roma boys are not a homogeneous group. In general, one might say that their views are in line with traditional norms to a greater extent than those of adolescents of the dominant group. However, although many Muslim Roma boys adopt the model of the man whose only obligation to his family is to meet the needs of survival, there are also those who take it a step further by participating in child rearing and /or in household chores or responsibilities:

*"I'm going to prepare dinner with my wife..." (Muslim Roma boy)*

*"I'll go get food and put it in the children's bags for school. Then I will take them to school..." (Muslim Roma boy)*

*"When I come I will be with my children, I will have my wife close and I will take care of them." (Muslim Roma boy)*

A general conclusion drawn from the data of the present study is that the group of adolescents of the dominant group, to a large extent, construct images of their future family life, in which both spouses work. In agreement with existing studies (e.g., Deliyianni-Kouimtzi & Sakka, 2005, 2007), it seems that, although boys are still concerned with their role as "breadwinners", most boys and girls construct more complex images about their future roles and their duties as husbands and parents.

On the contrary, for most Muslim Roma adolescents, work is a duty, perhaps even a right, exclusively for men. Both boys and girls in the Muslim Roma group, therefore, seem to construct a gender identity that incorporates a lot of elements of the traditional gender roles. Within this context, the division of roles in the family for the majority of Muslim Roma adolescents largely follows the typically traditional division, according to which the man's position is in the public sphere with an obligation to ensure the economic survival of his family, while the woman's position is limited to the private sphere, taking on the duties of a housewife and of child-rearing.

Taking both parts into consideration, with regard to gender relations in the public sphere, it seems that adolescents construct images of masculinity and femininity trying out different professions or jobs and different positions in the professional hierarchy. The descriptions above also show that male participants of both groups place themselves in different positions in the professional hierarchy. The observed differentiation seems to reflect the different opportunities that the two groups of participants perceive they will have in the future and the different representations of masculinity that may be cultivated in different cultural contexts.

While discussing their future employment, adolescents also seem to try out different family roles as well. More specifically, boys seem to negotiate the role of the sole breadwinner of the family while girls seem to negotiate the issue of employment. According to the results, it seems that the adolescents of both groups differ to a high degree from one another since the images constructed by those of the dominant group show a greater variety while the images of the Muslim Roma participants seem to be quite limited and traditionally oriented. Muslim Roma girls' self-representations as working or non-working probably reflect the different female identities that coexist in the minority. Moreover, they may be limited by the Muslim Roma culture, the position of the Muslim Roma community in Greek society, the gender of the participants, and the socio-economic level of the family of origin.

In any case, in agreement with the existing literature (e.g., Chatzisavvidis, 1996; Deliyianni-Kouimtzi & Sakka, 2005, 2007; Nova-Kaltsouni, 2004; Sakka, 2012; Trubeta, 2001), on one hand, Muslim Roma adolescents seem to mainly identify with the traditional values and perceptions regarding the division of labor both in the public and private spheres. On the other, participants of the dominant group construct more broadened gender identities, but also more complex images of their future. In the context of all, the above, relations between groups and between genders in the public sphere seem to be unequal, with the Muslim Roma group being at the bottom of the job hierarchy. Gender inequality in the private sphere seems to be higher in the Muslim Roma group since most women do plan to be financially dependent on their husbands.

## Conclusion

A general conclusion that emerges from both the quantitative and qualitative data is that the participants of both groups describe images of their future lives that are totally different. Consequently, in agreement with existing studies in Greece and in other countries (Arnot & Arizpe, 1997; Deliyianni-Kouimtzi & Sakka, 2005; Sakka & Deliyanni-Kouimtzi, 2006; Sakka et al., 2008), it seems that adolescents of different social groups plan their adult life in different ways and construct different images of gender relations.

In particular, the expectations of adolescents of both groups about their future profession and about the conditions required to create a family seem to partly reflect the different values and different orientations cultivated in different cultural contexts (e.g., adopting less or more individualistic goals). At the same time, however, the observed differences between the two groups seem to be determined by the different starting points of each group, starting points related to their social position (minority-majority, marginalized or privileged) as well as to the gender of the participants, their socio-economic level and their cultural background. In this context, it seems that the participants' understanding of the different access they have to privileges and power, affects the images they construct of their future selves as men and women and contributes to the differentiation of the two groups from one another.

The above differentiation seems to also hold true regarding the ways in which adolescents, in their narratives about their future lives, give meaning to the relations of the two genders in the private and public spheres. Specifically, Muslim Roma adolescents appear to represent gender relations in at least two distinct ways. On one hand, most boys seem to adhere to the hegemonic representation of the man as the head of the family, and most girls seem to accept this role by placing themselves in a position of subordination (i.e., of the dependent wife and mother). In this context, women's employment is not accepted by boys and is not demanded by girls. This is a particularly traditional version of gender relations and the distribution of roles within the family, which is expressed to a very small extent by those adolescents of the dominant group who live in urban centers (e.g., Deliyianni-Kouimtzi & Sakka, 2004, 2005). Moreover, it seems to reflect types of family organization and functioning in the less advantaged subgroups of the minority population (e.g., Kanakidou, 1996) and in the Roma community in general (e.g., Nova-Kaltsouni, 2004; Trubeta, 2001).

On the other hand, some of the adolescents (although very few) describe slightly more equal gender relations in which women work and contribute to the family income and/or men contribute to the care of the children. In these cases, however, future adult women are being put by both the female and the male participants in the position of the "super-woman", that is, of the women who are equally efficient both at work and at home. In this context, the acceptance of women's work does not imply the acceptance of a different role for women. On the contrary, the woman's work role seems to be an extension of her traditional role as "conscientious wife, mother and daughter" and in this sense, it is an extreme version of the traditional distribution of roles (Kataki, 1985).

To what extent does the observed diversity in the ways in which Muslim Roma adolescents make sense of gender relations reflect the different types of family that coexist in the Muslim Roma community? Our data do not allow us to answer this question with certainty. However, we could say that this diversity may reflect the changes that have taken place in recent years in the political and social context in which Muslim Roma adolescents live (Askouni, 2006) or the changes that have probably taken place in the Muslim Roma community in the Nestos area or the different choices that individuals have or believe they have (Sakka, 1996; Trubeta, 2001). In any case, however, this is an important question that needs further investigation.

Similar to the above, gender relations are described by the adolescents of the dominant group as unequal, as boys place themselves in the role of the main "provider" of the family. However, in agreement with studies concerning the dominant group (see among others Deliyianni & Sakka, 2004, 2005), through the narratives of both boys and girls, the roles of the two sexes appear to be to some extent complementary, in the sense that it is acceptable and expected to expand the role of women through work as well as to expand the role of men through their participation in the care of children and/or the house. At the same time, the girls' demands from their spouse seem to be their financial independence and the man's participation in the care of the house where more and more men are concerned with the issue of free time, so they will be able to combine employment and taking care of the children and/or the house.

The second general conclusion that emerges, is that the categories "gender" (male-female), "social status" (minority-majority, marginalized or privileged), cultural background, and socio-economic level in addition to differentiating our data, are used in different ways by the participants who, as they, projecting into the future, try to make sense of gender relations and understand themselves as men and women. In this context, boys and girls seem to place themselves in different positions in the public (e.g., working-non-working) and private spheres (working, father, non-working or working, mother, etc.), and construct very different images of gender relations, depending on the choices they see as available in both the public and private spheres.

For example, on the one hand, boys in both groups position themselves as the male head and provider of the family, perhaps adopting the general stereotype and believing that this is (or should be) their role as men. On the other hand, the boys of both groups differ in terms of their professional choices. Thus, minority boys overemphasize the issue of economic and professional survival for themselves and their families, whereas adolescents of the dominant group place themselves in occupations that will provide them with professional recognition, financial independence, and allow them to live comfortably with their family.

At the same time, the girls of the dominant group choose to limit themselves to occupations that will ensure them free time for their family, as they place themselves in the position of employed, mother and housewife. The majority of girls, however, from this position raise the question of the man's participation in the care of the house and children within the framework of the principle of reciprocity, thus looking forward to more equal relations between the two spouses. In contrast, minority girls do not raise a similar issue and place themselves in the position of "good wife and mother", acknowledging male hegemony.

From the above, it appears that adolescents, in order to define themselves as adult men and women, place themselves in various positions in the public and private spheres, while at the same time negotiating various aspects of female and male identity (work, relationships gender, children, etc.). In this context we can say that, as the boys and girls of both groups project themselves into the future, they seem to be trying to structure the social context in which they live, to define their place within it, as well as to give meaning to their relationships with the opposite sex. Consequently, as Halldén (1997) points out, self-representation as male or female seems, on the one hand, to involve experimentation with the opportunities and possibilities provided within the adult conception of masculinity and femininity; at the same time, however, it seems to include experimentation with the perceived opportunities and possibilities provided in the socio-economic and cultural context in which the adolescents live in, as this is determined by the social position of each group.

In conclusion, we must say that a limitation of our study is the fact that the essays of the Muslim Roma adolescents were short, perhaps due to difficulties that have to do with the fact that Muslim Roma adolescents do not necessarily discuss such issues or issues of this sort do not need to be discussed since gender roles are clear cut for them. In addition to these difficulties may be due to the fact that the Muslim Roma adolescents are forced to describe types of family life which are not necessarily familiar to them, since most come from households where the majority of mothers do not work. Furthermore, as already mentioned, in no way do the participants represent the general population, since they all live in Chrysoupoli, in the Nestos Area of Greece. Moreover, the Muslim Roma participants comprise only one of the many subgroups of the Roma community in Greece since as is known, it does not constitute a single ethno-cultural and linguistic entity (Trubeta, 2001). One more limitation of our study is also the fact that the tools used were created in order to explore gender identities in the dominant group population, and therefore, may not be compatible with the Roma culture. The present study, however, is one of the first attempts to investigate the ways in which boys and girls from different cultural backgrounds express their perceptions regarding their future plans and life prospects in the context of gender relations. In this context, it highlights the multiple gender identities that are constructed by culturally different, in terms of gender, religion, and social status, groups of adolescents. Even more so, it highlights the ways in which the Muslim Roma adolescents cope with their minority status, essentially laying the ground for an adult life in the margins. This situation is even worse for Muslim Roma women who experience disempowerment from a very young age. It seems, therefore, that the intersection of gender, cultural background, and minority status has rendered Muslim Roma adolescents a distinctly marginalized group.

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# Διερευνώντας τις περιθωριοποιημένες και προνομιούχες ταυτότητες φύλου: οι προσδοκίες των μουσουλμάνων εφήβων Ρομά για τη μελλοντική τους απασχόληση και την οικογενειακή ζωή

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## ΛΕΞΕΙΣ ΚΛΕΙΔΙΑ

Ρομά μουσουλμάνοι,  
Ταυτότητα φύλου,  
Σχέσεις των φύλων,  
Προσδοκίες εφήβων,  
Διαθεματικότητα

## ΣΤΟΙΧΕΙΑ ΕΠΙΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΑΣ

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## ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Σκοπός της παρούσας μελέτης είναι να διερευνήσει τις προσδοκίες εφήβων της μειονότητας με καταγωγή Ρομά και μουσουλμάνων στο θρήσκευμα και εκείνων της κυρίαρχης ομάδας για τη μελλοντική τους απασχόληση και την οικογενειακή ζωή καθώς και για τις σχέσεις των φύλων στην ιδιωτική και δημόσια σφαίρα. Συμμετείχαν ενενήντα ένα άτομα (51 από την κυρίαρχη ομάδα και 40 από τη μειονότητα, 45 αγόρια και 46 κορίτσια). Ενώ όλοι οι συμμετέχοντες/ουσες από την κυρίαρχη ομάδα παρακολούθησαν την Γ' τάξη του Γυμνασίου ή την Α' τάξη του Λυκείου μόνο 8 Ρομά δήλωσαν ότι παρακολουθούν το Γυμνάσιο. Οι έφηβοι κλήθηκαν να συμπληρώσουν ένα ερωτηματολόγιο και να γράψουν μία σύντομη έκθεση με τίτλο «Μια μέρα στη μελλοντική μου οικογένεια». Τα δεδομένα συλλέχθηκαν γραπτά από τα αγόρια και τα κορίτσια της κυρίαρχης ομάδας και προφορικά από τους/τις εφήβους με καταγωγή Ρομά. Εκτός της ανάλυσης των ποσοτικών δεδομένων, πραγματοποιήθηκε θεματική ανάλυση προκειμένου να εντοπιστούν οι εικόνες των εφήβων για τη μελλοντική τους ζωή τόσο στην ιδιωτική όσο και στη δημόσια σφαίρα. Τα αποτελέσματα αναδεικνύουν τις πολλαπλές ταυτότητες φύλου που κατασκευάζονται από πολιτισμικά διαφορετικές, ως προς το φύλο και την κοινωνική θέση ομάδες εφήβων. Επίσης, δείχνουν ότι οι προσδοκίες των συμμετεχόντων διαμορφώνονται από τις περιθωριοποιημένες ή προνομιούχες κατηγορίες στις οποίες ανήκουν. Τέλος, τα αποτελέσματα δείχνουν ότι καθώς τα αγόρια και τα κορίτσια των δύο ομάδων προβάλλουν τον εαυτό τους στο μέλλον, προσπαθούν να δομήσουν το κοινωνικό πλαίσιο στο οποίο θα ζήσουν, να τοποθετηθούν μέσα σε αυτό και να αποδώσουν νόημα στις σχέσεις τους με το άλλο φύλο με ένα δυναμικό τρόπο.