

# **Cultural Awareness in Jósika Miklós Secondary School of Turda**



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## Abstract

In our study 54 students took part, of which 23 female, 21 male. The age range was between 16 - 18 years. The students had to answer questions concerning cultural awareness, minorities and cultural diversity and local culture. The study was created in order to survey the student's attitude towards their minority status, their relationship with other minority and the majority and at the same time their knowledge regarding cultural values of their surrounding.

Results show that students are very aware of their minority status, they cultivate good relations with the majority and the Hungarian minority but they have almost no contact with the Romany people. They had mediocre knowledge about their cultural heritage.

## Subjects and methods

### A minority in the heart of Europe

The Hungarian minority of Romania is the largest ethnic minority in the country, making up 6.5% of the total population, according to the 2011 census. Most Hungarians of Romania live in the area, known as Transylvania, that was, before the 1920 Treaty of Trianon part of Hungary. In Transylvania Hungarians make up 18.9% of the population. Our survey was conducted in a minority school.

We used digital surveying, the basic questionnaire was created by the Coordinator School and it was personalized for our purposes. A student digitalized it in Google Form and created the <http://comenijosika.blogspot.ro/> blog for easier access. This student did not take part in the survey.

Filling the questionnaire took place after classes in the IT lab of our school. The students were divided into two groups, because of the lab's capacity.

The students had an hour to their disposal to answer the questions.

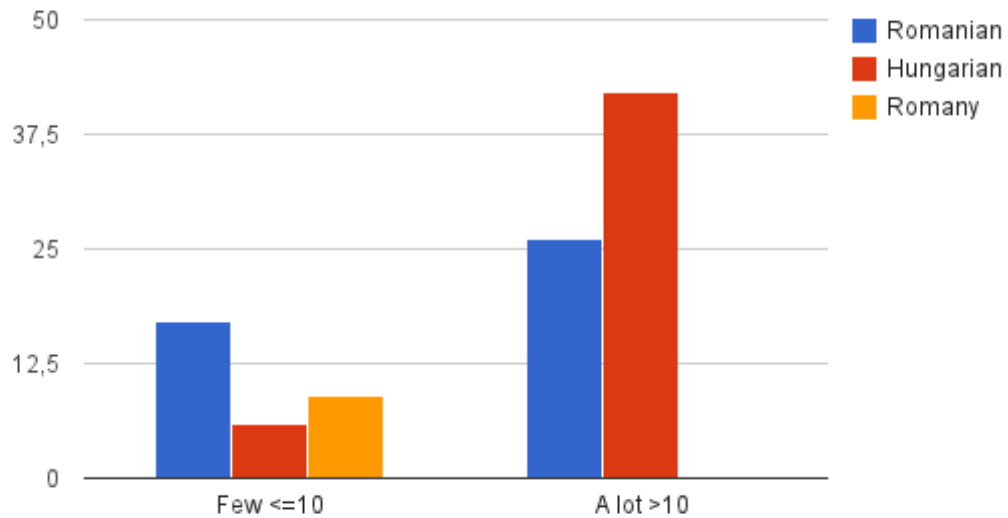
Number data was evaluated using *Show summary of responses* menu of Google Docs while written data was evaluated by eye.

## Results

Regarding the minority status, students think that minorities have to adopt to the majority's values (diagram 1). 91% of them thinks that minorities shouldn't be bothered about their differences in work ethic in school (diagram 2). 80% of the students think that minorities have equal access to education in Romania (diagram 3). When talking about discrimination in the country 78% of the youth answered that there is one (diagram 4), though when asked about the town's attitude towards integrating the minority in the towns everyday life, opinions were equally distributed (diagram 6). Is it important to involve minorities in cultural events? 83% answered yes (diagram 5).

In this part of the study we were interested in, if there is a relation between the students and the majority as well as minority. Half of the students participated in events organized by other ethnic groups and the other half did not (diagram 7). 61% of the students have a few while 31% have a lot of friends who belong to another ethnic group, only 6% answered negatively (diagram 8). The next diagram shows what percent of the students have fewer than 10 and at the same time more than 10 Hungarian, Romanian and Romany

friends.



The questionnaire revealed that the students have poor knowledge about cultural issues. Firstly we measured their interest in culture, 70% said that they are interested a bit, 11% is absolutely interested and 13% cannot be bothered. Half of the students did not know that there are organizations that deal with the issues of cultural minorities (diagram 13). Some of the students think that minorities have no effect on the culture of Turda. Most of them thought that the Hungarian minority has a positive while they consider that Romany people have a neutral or negative impact. 52 of our students did not know the origins of the town name while 2 of them knew it. Sadly the children had no knowledge about the three most important symbols of Turda.

When asked about the religious composition of the town, they have shown their awareness of religious diversity (diagram 12). Interestingly most of the students were aware of the majority's cultural heritage, 55% named one to three items while 33% could not name any (diagram 14).

Majority of the students think that the shopping malls in the nearest city are useful and important in their everyday life. They go there for shopping and entertainment. However some of the students consider that the malls have a destructive effect on small businesses. 35% of the students did not give answers to this question. The majority of our students have visited at least once the Catholic church, the History Museum of Turda, the Reformed church but only 33% of them visited the House of Jósika (diagram 16 - 18). Students are not so familiar with Museums in out of town (diagram 18 -19).

Asked what they know about Jósika Miklós, of whom our school is named, most of the students showed a deep understanding of the importance of this historical figure. Only 8 students did not know anything of him or did not want to answer. When asked which institution is named after him 42 students answered correctly while 12 have chosen "I don't know." 76% of the students were able to name the person after whom the most prestigious school was named, in Turda, namely Mihai Viteazul. Interestingly the students were aware of Mihai Viteazul's connection to the town.

Half of the students were aware of the fact that famous people are originated from Turda. Less than half know after whom the library was named of. However when asked about the connection between him and the town the students did not know the answer. Nowadays students do not frequent libraries (diagram 20). Neither national events are in

their everyday schedule. However they are very interested in concerts (diagram 22). The Turdafest is the most important celebration for the students, however many of them mention the Minority Days as well as different concerts.

Regarding students' interest in cultural fields please look at the following diagrams 23 - 27.