

declaring themselves as Turks or Bulgarians began to grow. The current analyses show that those processes were even additionally intensified after the so called “revival process” and during the so called transitional period towards market economy in the beginning of the 1990s. These trends will continue to affect the Roma self-declaring in the years to follow.

Two periods in the dynamics of the number of Roma can be clearly defined after 1989: the first period corresponds with the last decade of the 20th century, and is featured by an increase in the number of Roma, due to limited Roma emigration; the second period overlaps the first decade of the 21st century, and is featured by a decrease of the number of Roma, modeled by an increasing emigration as a result of poor economic conditions and increased social insecurity in the country.

Unlike the Turkish ethnic group, the Roma people live dispersed among the general population and therefore no typical areas of high Roma settling density have been formed in the country.

Each particular Roma group is economically connected to an ethnically different environment, while the contacts between the various Roma groups often are totally lacking. Therefore, the integration process within the Roma ethnic community as a whole, is weak (Marushiakova, Popov, 1993, in bulgarian). One of the reasons why Roma live across the whole territory of a given country, not just in Bulgaria, is the specific character of their professions and crafting which they practice to make a living, but yet cannot support a large group of Roma. This forces them to split into relatively small units and to maintain closer economic relations with other ethnicities rather than with their own. It is those relations that contribute to the formation and transformation of the Roma ethnic self-consciousness, and make the estimation of the exact number of Roma difficult.

Despite the widespread opinion of the public that the Roma expand in territorial aspect, the number of settlements with Roma population has risen insignificantly – from 1857 right after The Unification of Bulgaria in 1885 to 2069 by 1992, and that number is almost unchanged till the last census of 2011. The significant increase of the relative share of Roma in those settlements, however, is another issue.

It is as early as the first censuses that certain areas with high concentration of Roma population stand out. The highest territorial concentration of settlements with Roma presence is observed in Northeastern and South Central Bulgaria, where half of the settlements with presence of Roma population are located throughout the whole discussed period.

Throughout the first part of that period – between The Liberation and the end of WWII - the Roma population number grew by 90 %. The highest growth rate was detected in Southwestern Bulgaria (by 158 %), South Central Bulgaria (by 119%) and in Northwestern Bulgaria (by 90,3 %). The smallest growth was calculated in Northeastern Bulgaria (because within that period, in the years between 1920 and 1940, South Dobrudzha area was not a part of the Bulgarian territory and the Roma, just like the Bulgarian population, migrated to the nearest adjacent Bulgarian territories, which on their hand, showed some of the highest population