



Roma Education Fund

ANNUAL REPORT 2010



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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Dear Readers,

I would like to thank you all for your valuable contributions and support towards the work of the Roma Education Fund (REF). 2010 saw a number of important developments in the life of REF. The foundation has expanded its approach to act as an implementing and lead agency through the European Union Roma Pilot on Early Childhood Education and with four Structural Funds projects in Romania. The legitimacy of REF's interventions over the past five years has been key to changes in the discourse and overall political environment regarding Roma education in Europe. REF is widely recognized for its active role in the European Union's Roma efforts, a role that has raised the importance of Roma education across the region.

In addition to these new developments, REF has continued to support educational projects and programmes with a grants budget of 2 million Euros. The grant-giving component of REF will continue to play a critical role in supporting access to education and the improvement of its quality at all levels. Through the Scholarships Programme, about 800 Roma students have received scholarships to support their studies at the higher education level. The foundation's Policy Development and Capacity Building component has played an important role in creating and strengthening the competencies of our implementing partners and on policy development. Activities under this programme heading provided us with specific knowledge on existing gaps in Roma education and where progress in addressing them is existing or lacking. Our work with academics, Roma NGOs and other concerned agencies provided us with a broad, interdisciplinary perspective on the issues that Roma are facing; these partners give REF valuable guidance on how we can best use our resources to address the persistent deficiencies in Roma education.

It is important to address the institutional changes and transition that REF managed in 2010 that have proven to be critical in the life of the foundation. One of these changes was the end of the exchange programme of World Bank secondments for REF's Executive Director position; in its place, the process of selecting a new Director commenced in 2010 and was concluded in mid-October. The preparation work, selection process and transition period from one Director to another brought additional challenges to the foundation. I am very happy and confident that we have managed to pass through the process with success.

With all of our accomplishments, REF faced new challenges in 2010 that have and will continue to demand creative and innovative management. We have made great strides towards our targeted one to one EU to bilateral donors funding ratio, leveraging 1.8 million Euros in new funds from the European Union. Representing 36 percent of programme support funds, these resources were strategically invested in Roma early childhood education and utilized to cofinance Structural Funds projects in Romania. In providing critical support to Roma university students in more than fifteen countries, we will also work to improve the outreach and functioning of the Scholarships Programme, which will remain one of REF's key services in the foreseeable future. We need more of this innovative investment of energy and time to broaden the existing support for Roma education.

Moreover, after five years of operations, it is imperative that we assess the impact of REF's work in strengthening the inclusion of Roma in the field of education. By collecting data through the important work of our partner organizations (namely The Open Society Institute, UNDP and UNICEF), we will be able to improve impact metrics in the next two years, both in the countries covered by the Decade for Roma Inclusion and the other countries where REF works. We will also gain a more accurate perception of REF's impact on both policy and legislation as well as their subsequent implementation by their respective states. This is the mission and the mandate given to the foundation from the very beginning, and I am confident that all of us will do our best to accomplish REF's goals. The year 2011 will bring REF one step further in ensuring that even more Roma children have access to quality education.

Before ending my note, I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to some of the people that REF enjoyed working with until 2010 and also welcome new members to REF's extended institutional family.

In August 2010, the mandate of Tobias Linden, REF Executive Director since 2008, came to an end. I would like to thank Toby personally for his professionalism in managing the foundation with great energy and dedication. I have had the opportunity to work closely with him during the past two years and have been impressed by his meticulous and thoughtful approach as well as his collegial management style.

Tamar Manuelyan Atinc has served as the World Bank representative on the REF Board from 2007 to 2010. Having worked with Tamar in the REF Board and Executive Committee, I would like to express my gratitude and special thanks to her active involvement and support in the work of the foundation. Her knowledge on the human development sector as well as institutional management has helped the foundation to further develop its operational tools and target indicators for the upcoming years.

Christian Petry has served in the REF Board since early 2005 as the representative of the Network of European Foundations. Christian's mandate came to an end in December 2010, and I would like to express my sincere thanks for his strong commitment and active advocacy for the inclusion of the Roma over so many years. He is exemplary in this regard, and REF Board members have been privileged to work with him.

Last, but not least, I would like to welcome the new members of REF's Board who joined us in 2010: Henna Huttu, Roma representative from Finland; Katarina Mathernova, World Bank Advisor; and Lisa Jordan, Executive Director of the Bernard van Leer Foundation. All of them are very experienced and committed to supporting the inclusion of Roma in Europe and the overall goals of REF. I look forward to working with them in the coming years.

In closing, I will say that 2010 has added many stories to REF's institutional memory as we continue to learn from our work on Roma inclusion. The true progress of our work can be found in the day-to-day successes of the Roma people, though most of these stories remain untold. Let's make sure that in the coming year, more and more people and institutions come to hear those stories – from us, from the people we work with and from Roma themselves.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Costel Bercus', written in a cursive style.

Costel Bercus
Chairman of the Board



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The Roma Education Fund (REF) was created in the framework of the Decade of Roma Inclusion in 2005. Its mission and ultimate goal is to close the gap in educational outcomes between Roma and non-Roma. In order to achieve this goal, the organization supports policies and programs which ensure quality education for Roma, including the desegregation of education systems.

Through its activities, REF promotes Roma inclusion in all aspects of the national education systems of countries participating in the Decade of Roma Inclusion, as well as other countries that wish to join in this effort.

OBJECTIVES
OF REF
HIGHLIGHTS
OF 2010



OBJECTIVES OF REF/ HIGHLIGHTS OF 2010

At the Roma Education Fund (REF), 2010 was a year of hard work, progress and a broad range of accomplishments on every scale. The following pages offer a glance at just some of the notable moments of the year for REF and will guide you to more in-depth views of our work in the main body of the report.

The highlights of the year are organized by the main objectives of REF, which are:

- Expanding access to pre-school education through information campaigns, assistance with registration processes and work with parents to promote pre-school attendance.
- Implementing integration and desegregation of Roma students coming from segregated schools and classrooms and from special schools into mainstream schools, as well as eliminating all segregated classes and schools.
- Increasing access to secondary, tertiary and adult education through scholarships, mentorship, adult literacy courses and career advice for secondary school students.
- Ensuring access to compulsory education through the involvement of parents in education, initiatives to reduce drop-outs and provision of free textbooks and other educational materials.
- Improving the quality of education through curriculum reform; the introduction of Roma language, anti-bias and tolerance teaching; and the training of school staff.

REF's new website

In late autumn 2010, REF decided to bring about a structural and visual change represented through its website. As of December 2010, the renewed website is ready and in function, with new features and structures that make it more informative and user-friendly. One of the objectives of REF is to make information about Roma education easily accessible and available.

www.romaeducationfund.org

For more on REF communications, visit the Communications and Cross-Country Learning chapter on page 68.

Expanding access to pre-school education through information campaigns, assistance with registration processes and work with parents to promote pre-school attendance.

PREPARATORY PRESCHOOL PROGRAM WITH OSCE AND UNICEF

There is now a body of large-scale aggregate studies that clearly illustrate the relationship between early intervention and improved school performance. Research demonstrates that early education and care is a good investment, but only if it is of a high quality, revealing that poor early education can actually do more harm than good.¹ Project research has proven that children who participate in well-conceived Early Child Development (ECD) programmes tend to be more successful later in school, are more competent socially and emotionally and show higher verbal and intellectual development during early childhood than children who are not enrolled in high quality programs. Ensuring healthy child development, therefore, is an investment in a country's future workforce and capacity to thrive economically and as a society. Integrated programs for young children can modify the effects of some of the most entrenched causes of poverty including socioeconomic and gender-related inequities.²

In Serbia, one of the countries in which REF works, not all children are provided with compulsory and universal pre-school education. In 2010, recognizing this unmet need in Serbia, REF mobilized its partnerships and reputation as an important stakeholder in ensuring access to education for Roma children. The result was the implementation of a programme managed jointly by OSCE, UNICEF and REF that seeks to expand coordination among agencies working to improve Serbia's education system and to improve all children's access to the Preparatory Preschool Program. The strategy of this collaborative programme was to increase knowledge transfer, ensure that resources are spent more efficiently and to address the needs of a greater number of localities.

The development and implementation of this programme began in spring 2010, when REF started a campaign to promote the enrolment of Serbian Roma children in both the Preparatory Preschool Programme and the first grade of elementary school. A variety of posters and leaflets were designed and distributed to all Roma communities in a nationwide awareness-raising campaign. The network of Ministry of Education offices and other agencies (including elementary schools and preschools, public health centers and centers of social welfare) joined in these efforts by focusing on enrolment procedures.

¹ Early Childhood Education and Care, European Commission, June 2009

² <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTCY/EXTECD/0,,menuPK:344945~pagePK:149018~piPK:149093~theSitePK:344939,00.html>

Additionally, REF and its partners have been working on improving the local implementation of new policies and regulations in order to ensure that the Preparatory Preschool Programme is available to all children; concurrently, information is being disseminated about new education legislation and Serbia's Anti-discrimination Law. In 2010, OSCE, UNICEF and REF provided training to more than 30 NGOs, 180 Roma teaching assistants and representatives of municipalities who had previously participated in REF preschool programs in Serbia. Acknowledging the achievements of REF, OSCE and UNICEF, the Ministry of Education joined the campaign and began developing a set of expert competencies for educational advisors and education inspectors. These competencies cover the areas of Roma education improvement, the protection of children against discrimination and the prevention of segregated education. Training sessions focused on the identification of key obstacles to the successful inclusion of Roma children in Preparatory Preschool Programmes, the personal motivations of people promoting these initiatives and ways to motivate parents to send their children to educational institutions.

Cumulatively, the programmes and initiatives that REF and our partners are undertaking will ensure that Roma children in Serbia benefit and thrive through quality early childhood development.

Removing Enrolment Barriers in Albania
Implementing 'A Good Start' in Hungary

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Implementing integration and desegregation of Roma students coming from segregated schools and classrooms and from special schools into mainstream schools, as well as eliminating all segregated classes and schools.

BULGARIA: THE SCALING-UP OF DESEGREGATION PROJECTS

Desegregation projects in Bulgaria started 10 years ago as an initiative of one Roma non-governmental organization in the town of Vidin. Little by little, through applying the same approach, desegregation processes were undertaken in a dozen additional Bulgarian localities. Between the years 2000 and 2010, NGOs working on desegregation projects have managed to integrate 3,000 to 3,500 Roma children into mixed and mainstream schools. Considering the benefits realized in these communities when quality education was provided in a multicultural environment, REF has decided to work towards scaling-up these desegregation projects.

In a time of decentralized systems, the role of the municipality has become crucial for the existence and development of local communities. Local municipalities are the institutions responsible for attracting resources (financial support from the central government, EU funds, etc) and for providing citizens with accessible and quality public services. Decentralizing school budget systems is also dependant on the municipality. Budgets are often dispersed to individual schools using complicated formulas through a per capita funding scheme. This means that the greater the number of children in the school, the larger the budget the school receives. While the Municipal Council in Bulgaria is empowered to make decisions regarding the municipal budget, some municipalities have already changed the formula for calculation of the school budget, attributing additional weight to schools that apply multicultural approaches to education. These multicultural approaches facilitate the building of a positive learning environment, which is a precondition for a successful school experience and quality education for all students, regardless of ethnicity. One critical factor needed for this is the political will of the local decision makers.

Within this context and through the belief that the provision of equal access to education is a service that should be provided by the state, REF has approached official institutions in Bulgaria (including the Ministry of Education, Youth and Science; the Center for Educational Integration of Children and Students from Ethnic Minorities; and the Municipality of Sofia) in order to involve them as leading partners and implementers.

In 2010, the Centre for Educational Integration of Children and Students from Ethnic Minorities (an executive body under the Ministry of Education, Youth and Science) received a grant from REF to work towards institutionalizing the desegregation process. In order to achieve their target of 1 800 school students with increased academic performance, the Centre will work with local municipalities from different regions in the country, mainly from rural areas. Together, they will build successful partnerships between

local authorities, Roma NGOs, schools, parents, students and children for sustaining and stabilizing their roles in the provision of quality mainstream education.

Additionally, REF has supported the implementation of an advocacy project, implemented by the Centre for Interethnic Dialogue and Tolerance, entitled 'Amalipe.' This project aims to incorporate standards for educational integration and other normative texts in national legislation. These standards will subsequently regulate the education of elementary, primary and secondary schools. Within the framework of the project, a coalition of NGOs articulated and proposed these standards and was involved in the draft of the new Act on Education, an effort that was welcomed by the Ministry of Education. The final adoption of these documents lies with the Council of Ministers in Bulgaria and will hopefully take place before the beginning of the academic year 2011–2012.

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Piloting Grassroots Desegregation in the Czech Republic	page 43
CEDEFOP: Moving Out of Segregation, a Roma Support Programme	page 59
Anniversary of the DH Case, a Debate	page 71

Increasing access to secondary, tertiary and adult education through scholarships, mentorship, adult literacy courses and career advice for secondary school students.

THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY AND REF COOPERATION – RAP

The Roma Access Programme (RAP) has proven to be a highly effective mechanism for supporting exceptional Roma individuals in their pursuit of the skills and competencies they require to be future advocates and policy makers. By preparing future Roma leaders for international graduate school, RAP aims to kick-start the building of a critical mass of Roma who are capable of working across borders, conducting advocacy on the international and local stage and, most importantly, going on to nurture other young Roma.

RAP works to achieve these goals by:

- Preparing Roma students for graduate programs in their chosen field of study within the humanities and social sciences.
- Raising their English to a level adequate for post-graduate study through intensive English language training.
- Training students in post-graduate level academic writing and study skills.
- Involving them in the core degree programmes of Central European University (participation in CEU Master's level classes).
- Giving students the opportunity to improve their knowledge of Romani language, history and culture.¹

Testimonial on the Impact of RAP, by Orhan Usein

'The Roma Access Program was a unique experience for me to improve my English language and academic writing capabilities. Starting with the specific tutoring in the fields of International Relations and European Studies (IRES) and Public Policy, which introduced me to the recent debates and most important facts, through the opportunity to audit courses in both the Public Policy Department and the IRES department, which in addition, assisted me in making a clear decision regarding my specific area of interest, I gained a lot from this Program. Moreover, it helped me enrolling in the MA Program IRES at CEU through the Academic Writing Courses, which were focused on critically analyzing texts, structuring your own arguments and drawing conclusions necessary for developing your ideas. All this is of great importance to my professional development since it helps me to successfully obtain my MA degree. I am positive that the knowledge I gain from my MA Program is mostly based on the academic skills I acquired during the Roma Access Program.'

¹ <http://web.ceu.hu/sep/spo/roma.html>

Orhan Usein is a young man from Macedonia. He graduated from the CEU Roma Access Program in June 2010. Currently, he is pursuing an MA degree at the Department of International Relations and European Studies at CEU under the sponsorship of a Full CEU Fellowship for Master's Students.

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Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) in Macedonia	page 61



Ensuring access to compulsory education through the involvement of parents in education, initiatives to reduce drop-outs and provision of free textbooks and other educational materials.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

In 2010, REF supported two projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina that focused on encouraging and supporting parental involvement in student education. Entitled 'Educational Inclusion of Roma Children into the Regular School System in Tuzla Canton' and 'Development of the Roma community in Tuzla Canton,' these projects ensured parental involvement through a variety of project activities.

Opportunities for parental involvement were incorporated into these projects in two main ways. One group of opportunities entails parental involvement through parent-teacher meetings, parent-teacher individual information meetings and participation in Parents' Councils. The second group includes parental involvement in different activities such as workshops, tribunes, round tables and open door days.

Although parent-teacher meetings are important and are often the most frequent forms of parental involvement, more active parental participation is found in the Parents' Councils. Engagement with the school through appointments to these councils enable parents to participate in decision-making processes about school life. Prior to these two projects, there was only one Roma parent appointed to a Parents' Council in one primary school out of 13 project primary schools in Tuzla Canton.

The implementation of activities through these two REF-supported projects resulted in the appointment of one Roma parent in the Parents' Council per project school. Additionally, both Roma and non-Roma parents participated in five tribunes, two round tables, 17 workshops and two open door days.

As a result of these efforts, Roma parents in Bosnia and Herzegovina have been encouraged to participate in school life in proactive ways and opportunities for their different engagement in their children's education have been created.

Step by Step Roma Children Will Succeed

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Providing Textbooks in Albania

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Confession of One Roma Girl

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Improving the quality of education through curriculum reform, introduction of Roma language teaching, anti-bias and tolerance teaching and the training of school staff.

ROMANIA: INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW LAW OF EDUCATION

In addition to our work supporting projects and programmes directly addressing the education needs of Roma, REF acts on the need for legal and systematic education reform. We work to ensure that the real education needs of Roma are communicated to policy makers and that laws are actively and effectively implemented.

On 28 October 2010, after more than three months of debates, discussion and critiques brought by Romanian opposition parties, civil society and teacher's syndicates, the Romanian Government adopted the new Law of Education. Following are some of the main changes found in the new law:

1. Compulsory education was increased to total 10 years, from age 6 to 16.
2. Preparatory classes in primary education were introduced, which established compulsory education from the age of six (starting with the 2012–2013 school year).
3. A ninth year will be added to the eight-year public school structure, which will be applicable for the first time to students starting the fifth grade in 2011–2012.
4. A standard cost per pupil and a new principle of funding known as 'following the student' was introduced (this provision applies in 2012). This new funding scheme will be composed of a per school funding base plus complementary and additional funding.

Additionally, according to the Romanian Government, national education funding will be allocated annually from the state budget and the budgets of local authorities (starting in 2012) at a level of at least 6 percent of GDP each year. Schools can also collect and use local revenues towards education.

With its official adoption on 10 February 2011, no one can yet be sure how Romania's new Law of Education will affect the national education system and, subsequently, Romania's ethnic minorities. There are some concerns that it may, in fact, result in a lowering in the quality of education, particularly in rural areas where no secondary education will be developed to EU standards. This is due to myriad reasons including socio-economic factors, infrastructure deficiencies and a lack of local resources (both human and financial). The children coming from ethnic minorities, such as Roma, will not benefit from the development of better education systems unless the persistent problem of school integration is addressed. Additionally, due to the fact that teacher salaries remain very low, the number of available professors will be much lower, potentially resulting in increased teacher resignations as they look towards changing their professions.

In conclusion, only through ensuring the new Law of Education is fully understood by all relevant stakeholders, well-implemented and monitored will we see a true improvement in the chances of all children of ethnic minority groups to advance academically and have a chance to achieve greater societal success. REF and our Romanian counterparts continue to ensure that the legal successes in Romania in 2010 result in positive results in 2011 and beyond.

REF's Policy Development and Capacity Building Programme

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Follow Up to the Strasbourg Decisions

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The Story of an AGS Beneficiary

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PART I PROGRAMMES OF REF



PART I: PROGRAMMES OF REF

In order to achieve our mission and objectives, REF invests time and funds directly into the Roma community through five major programmes. These programmes are:

- **Project Support Programme** which finances projects and programmes – page 27
- **REF Scholarship Programme** which is the largest tertiary scholarship programme for Roma students – page 45
- **Policy Development and Capacity Building Programme** which supports activities that help create a framework for dialogue with governments and civil society on education reform and Roma inclusion – page 57
- **Communication and Cross Country Learning Programme** which includes activities to promote the exchange of knowledge on education reforms and Roma inclusion – page 68
- **Reimbursable Grant Programme** to help Roma NGOs and local governments access EU funds for the purpose of Roma education – page 72

On the following pages, you will find details regarding the progress and achievements in each of these programmatic areas in 2010.

PROJECT SUPPORT PROGRAMME

Introduction

In 2010 and similar to previous years, REF continued to accept grant applications from both public and private entities. REF focused its grant-making activities on the countries participating in the Decade of Roma Inclusion while also considering relevant proposals from outside the Decade (such as Kosovo and Moldova).

Detailed criteria for assessing project eligibility and performance are contained in REF's Operational Guidelines (available on REF's website). Grants awarded to date have generally supported activities falling into one of three categories:

1. Grants aimed at education-related systemic reform and at scaling-up successful pilots.
2. Grants that pilot and test Roma educational interventions that can be scaled-up, or which directly influence policy changes.

3. Grants that support the analysis of Roma-related education issues and which help develop policies and institutional capacity.

Step by Step Roma Children Will Succeed

In 2010, the NGO Tarna Rom from Chisnau, Moldova managed the second year of its project Step by Step Roma Children Can Succeed. The aim of the project was to increase the enrolment of children from Roma communities in primary education through improved cooperation between institutions on all levels. In addition, the project worked to increase consciousness about the importance of education in Roma communities and institutionalising the position of school mediator. This has been the first attempt to systematically involve school mediators in direct academic intervention, an effort currently being made in five localities (Schinoasa, Drochia, Chetrosu, Ursari, and Parcani) in Moldova. These efforts by Tarna Rom are based on models developed in Romania and other countries.

Following are the project's results for the 2009–2010 academic year:

- 12 Roma mediators were trained through the project; of the initial ten mediators employed in five localities, seven remain active.
- 233 children from the targeted locations were enrolled in the first grade and received school supplies.
- 372 pupils from primary, secondary and high school were provided with services by school mediators.
- 70 Roma students who dropped out of school were re-enrolled.
- Through program outreach, more than 400 Roma families from five localities were supported by the school mediators.

Results from the first two years show that the program works successfully and that the participation of Roma in the targeted localities has increased. Following this success, the next step in improving the education system will focus on the quality of education in each of the localities.

Trends Observed

From 2005 to 2010, REF supported 226 grant requests out of 613 submitted, which constitutes a 37 percent approval rate. In 2010, REF received 118 new project application requests, a 27 percent increase compared to the previous year. This considerable increase in grant requests has had an impact on the subsequent percentage of applications approved; in 2010, the REF Board approved 36 grant requests, a 12 percent decrease compared to 2009. Table 1 reflects the data on these trends over the last six years.

TABLE 1. Project proposals received and approved, 2005–2010

Incoming project proposals	Years					
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Received	67	130	107	105	86	118
Change from previous year	n/a	+48 percent	-18 percent	-2 percent	-18 percent	+27 percent
Approved	12	49	34	54	41	36
Change from previous year	n/a	+75 percent	-31 percent	+59 percent	-24 percent	-12 percent

Interpreting the figures of incoming project applications demonstrates that REF has, in its five years of existence, become a legitimate implementing agency of education projects designed for Roma student inclusion. This has resulted in a growing awareness of REF as a resource, partially contributing to the above-mentioned increase in the number of project applications received.

In 2010, REF's Board continued to support projects which were not only of sufficient quality, but also considered to have strategic importance in the given country. Programme priorities reflect those identified in the Country Assessment developed each that country, taking into account relevant changes in political context, the views of stakeholders, current and new issues that needed to be and lessons learned through REF-supported experiences and best practices. Approximately 30 percent of the application forms were approved for funding by the REF Board in 2010 on the basis of their ability to sufficiently meet granting eligibility criteria and fulfill country and organizational priorities.

As changes in the educational environment, legislation and political situation are ongoing, the practice of regularly re-evaluating and redefining programme priorities is expected to continue in the coming years.

For more information on REF's Country Assessments, see page 61.

Total project financing

From 2005 to 2010, the REF Board approved a total financial commitment of 23,335,225 Euros through our grant programme. As of 31 December 2010, REF had 49 active projects in the implementation phase. An additional 24 projects in twelve countries were completed during the course of the year. In 2010, REF's financial contribution (commitment) was about 23 percent lower compared to the previous year (see

Tables 2–4); however, the number of beneficiaries increased by 20 percent, which illustrates that REF is becoming more efficient and successful in sharing project costs with the project grantees (see Tables 5 and 6).

A complete list of all active grants in 2010 can be found in the Annex.

TABLE 2. Annual project financing, 2005–2010

2005–2010						
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Committed	3,352,595	5,592,141	4,616,061	3,229,615	2,773,112	2,055,069
Contracted	2,208,856	6,190,978	4,437,800	3,453,046	2,402,296	1,945,612
Disbursed	1,048,245	3,852,621	4,797,243	4,429,848	2,701,429	2,467,656

TABLE 3. Annual project financing by country, 2010

2010						
	Albania	Bulgaria	Croatia	Czech	Hungary	Macedonia
Committed	54,998	437,929	55,000	126,732	315,997	149,779
Contracted	54,998	437,929	55,000	104,650	236,487	114,015
Disbursed	104,094	436,694	210,000	60,872	160,437	245,420
	Montenegro	Romania	Serbia	Slovakia	Others	Total
Committed	0	389,389	115,625	0	409,620	2,055,069
Contracted	0	362,539	65,342	184,652	330,000	1,945,612
Disbursed	0	560,000	260,663	153,962	275,514	2,467,656

* At certain years the disbursed amount of grants can exceed the contracted and committed amounts for the actual year due to accrual disbursement schedules.

TABLE 4. Annual project financing by country, 2005–2010

2005–2010						
	Albania	Bulgaria	Croatia	Czech	Hungary	Macedonia
Committed	487,567	5,622,292	640,690	668,005	2,192,446	2,930,375
Contracted	432,569	5,286,222	640,690	491,737	1,796,939	2,749,150
Disbursed	366,505	5,182,331	522,940	383,967	1,645,229	2,547,468
	Montenegro	Romania	Serbia	Slovakia	Others	Total
Committed	378,734	4,453,091	2,980,040	1,284,007	1,697,979	23,335,225
Contracted	378,734	3,693,056	2,814,132	1,347,999	1,110,853	20,742,080
Disbursed	378,734	3,429,662	2,723,495	1,287,309	829,402	19,297,041

TABLE 5. Funds leveraged by country, 2010

	REF's Contribution	Applicant's Own contribution	Third Party Contribution	Total
Albania	54,998	16,175	–	71,173
Bulgaria	437,929	70,510	–	508,439
Croatia	55,000	200,408	–	255,408
Czech Republic	140,724	608,226	2,408	751,358
Hungary	295,834	–	103,209	399,043
International	330,000	–	119,170	449,170
Macedonia	75,461	21,800	–	97,261
Romania	292,539	29,635	32,000	354,174
Serbia	115,625	2,000,000	–	2,115,625
Slovakia	120,660	–	6,600	127,260
Total	1,918,770	2,946,754	263,387	5,128,911

TABLE 6. Funds leveraged, 2005–2010

Year	Total Co-financing	Total Co-financing/ Total Project Cost
2005	1,764,584	41%
2006	2,060,144	34%
2007	1,023,197	31%
2008	2,235,695	57%
2009	841,858	40%
2010	3,210,141	63%

Mentoring and tutoring activities in REF projects

Mentoring and tutoring are built on trust and one of their primary goals is to make a young people (or persons new to a field of endeavor) more confident in their abilities and talents. The benefits of tutoring and mentoring relationships come for the students as well as the tutors and mentors themselves. While the mentee or protégé gains from the knowledge and experience of the mentor/tutor, the mentor/tutor gains a great deal of satisfaction from helping another person to achieve his or her potential and has the opportunity to develop their teaching skills.

The Roma Education Fund supports mentoring and tutoring activities in several projects. Currently, REF is successfully implementing our scholarship programme with tutoring components in three countries – Serbia, Macedonia and Romania. Mentoring has also proven to be valuable during new project implementation and when the Roma students are placed in a new academic environment. In these instances, mentors can help Roma students with social integration. Tutoring activities integrated in REF-supported projects are a good tool for decreasing the educational gap between Roma and non-Roma children at the primary, secondary and even university level.

Projects by Country

In 2010, REF supported 36 grant requests in the countries of the Decade of Roma Inclusion¹. Tables 7 and 8 show the grant demands and processing by country in 2010 and throughout the life of the grant programme.

¹ Including Moldova

FIGURE 1. Distribution of REF beneficiaries by country, 2010

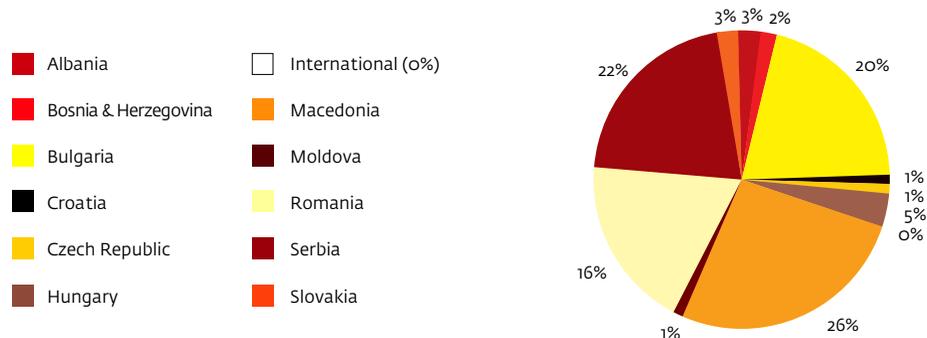


TABLE 7. REF Project application requests by country, 2010*

	Country													Total	
	Albania	Bosnia & Herzegovina	Bulgaria	Czech Republic	Croatia	Hungary	Kosovo	Macedonia	Moldova	Montenegro	Romania	Serbia	Slovak Republic		International
Received	5	11	21	10	6	12	1	12	2	1	22	6	7	2	118
Rejected	0	1	11	1	3	4	0	3	0	0	18	1	4	1	47
Approved	1	0	7	6	1	6	0	7	1	0	4	2	0	1	36
Contracted	1	0	7	6	1	6	0	2	0	0	3	2	2	1	31

* Figures might not match arithmetically due to the following reasons: school year cycle differs from calendar year; some projects arrived in the last part of 2010.

Table 7 indicates that the largest demand for grant funding in 2010 came from Romania and Bulgaria; these two countries are reported to have the largest Roma population among the countries included in the Decade of Roma Inclusion. An increase in the demand for funding in 2010 was seen in the Czech Republic, where 60 percent of the total requests were supported. Macedonia and Serbia continued to be among the countries with the highest number of REF beneficiaries. In 2010 the total number of beneficiaries increased to 92,921, which is a 20 percent increase compared to 2009.

FIGURE 2. Grant requests by country, 2010

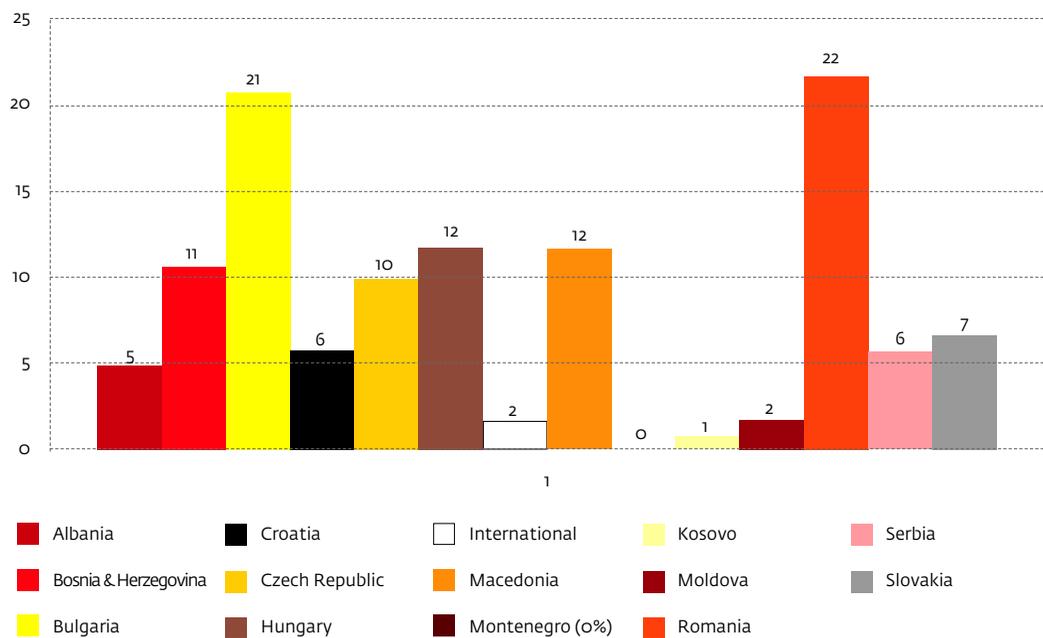


TABLE 8. Project application requests received by country, 2005–2010

Project application requests	Country												Total
	Albania	Bulgaria	Czech Republic	Croatia	Hungary	Kosovo	Macedonia	Montenegro	Romania	Serbia	Slovak Republic	Others*	
Received	17	153	25	15	57	5	65	9	92	89	41	47	613
Rejected	6	69	9	8	24	1	35	3	55	25	25	28	288
Approved	5	70	12	3	31	2	20	2	27	43	13	10	238
Contracted	5	70	10	3	30	2	15	2	25	43	12	9	226

* Includes Bosnia and Herzegovina and Moldova

Figures might not match arithmetically due to the following reasons: some projects are in the pipeline and some under revision.

Scaling-up successful interventions

In line with REF's long-term objectives, scaling-up successful interventions continued to be a priority in 2010. REF has successfully scaled-up early childhood interventions in five Decade of Roma Inclusion countries (Slovakia, Romania, Hungary, Serbia and Macedonia) through financial contributions of the European Commission in Brussels². Following are some additional examples of REF's efforts to scale-up existing successful projects in 2010:

- Significant progress was made in 2010 towards desegregation in Bulgaria when the REF Board approved a project proposal from the Center for Educational Integration of Children and Pupils from Ethnic Minorities (CEICPEM) led by the Ministry of Education in Bulgaria. This initiative is expected to be a landmark in institutionalizing the desegregation process in Bulgaria.
- In Serbia, REF cooperated with the Ministry of Education in the design and implementation of the Delivery of Improved Local Services Program (DILS). DILS is supported by a World Bank loan and targets 55 municipalities in order to include Roma children into quality public education services.
- In Croatia, REF has partnered with Medjmurje County to scale-up preschool interventions throughout the county. The main objective of the programme is to create sustainable conditions for the full integration for all Roma children from the age of 5.5–6.5 into heterogeneous pre-school and primary education throughout Medjmurje County; this will be accomplished through a long-term and systematic approach to pre-school education and upbringing.

² For more information please see below the chapter on the 'A Good Start' project on page 77.

– In Macedonia, REF's four years of experience in providing secondary education support through scholarships and mentorship for Roma students was institutionalized through the transfer of this work to the Ministry of Education and Science.

Providing Textbooks in Albania

The government of Albania, through a decision of the Council of Ministers, decided to provide free textbooks for Roma and other children from poor families. Under this scheme, parents must first purchase the book and claim reimbursement. Because most Roma parents cannot afford the initial cost to buy the books, they do not benefit from the scheme as it is currently structured. In the last two years, several Roma NGOs have mobilized resources to purchase books on behalf of the parents and then claim reimbursement. Although this has helped some Roma parents to benefit from the measure, the involvement of NGOs is limited and dependent upon the availability of donor funds. Until now, the government has not found a way to implement its decision more effectively. Therefore, it is necessary to support the government to find the proper revisions to the reimbursement scheme in order to ensure that it benefits Roma parents and children as intended.

Education indicators

The evaluation of REF's grant programme is based on a set of nine education indicators. These indicators were developed and are monitored by REF staff and support the Five Education Benchmarks for Europe³. Table 9 provides a list of these nine indicators and the corresponding number of active beneficiaries supported by REF interventions in 2010. This data is generated from the approved grant applications and project implementation plans.

3 http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc34_en.htm

TABLE 9. REF's nine grant programme indicators

REF Indicators 2010	Number of beneficiaries by indicator
Parents school participation*	50,136
Early school leaving	15,522
Desegregation	9,331
Participation in pre-school education**	8,034
Upper secondary completion rates of young people	5,303
In service teacher training	3,125
Roma employment within REF projects	553
Higher education graduates	482
Prevention/reversal of enrolment in special education	435
Total	92,921

* AGS figures included

** The figure includes the project beneficiaries of the Good Start Project (AGS)

As the table and graphs illustrate, the indicators of early school leaving (17 percent), desegregation activities (10 percent) and participation in preschool education (9 percent) are applicable to a large proportion of REF-supported beneficiaries. In addition, parental participation is a leading component of most REF-financed projects. Parental participation has been identified as an effective tool in decreasing student drop-out rates and in increasing enrolment rates in public preschools and compulsory education systems. Working with parents and communities has also led to increased participation in adult education projects, as many parents of REF beneficiaries expressed interest in completing their own primary or secondary educations.

The following charts illustrate the distribution of beneficiaries by country and indicator. The figures also highlight the impact of REF-supported programs for a selection of indicators in 2010. Shown in Figure 5, Romania and Macedonia are traditionally the most highly impacted countries with more than 50 percent of all beneficiaries on early school leaving.

FIGURE 3. Total number of REF beneficiaries by indicator, 2010

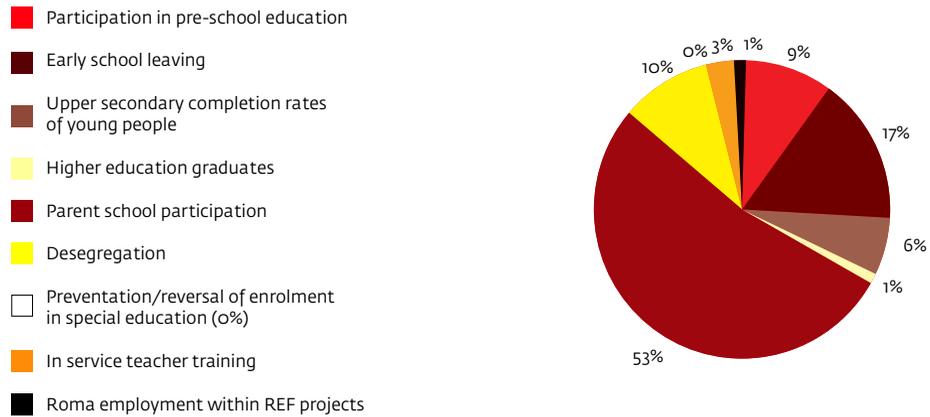


FIGURE 4. Total number of REF-supported beneficiaries by indicator, 2005–2010

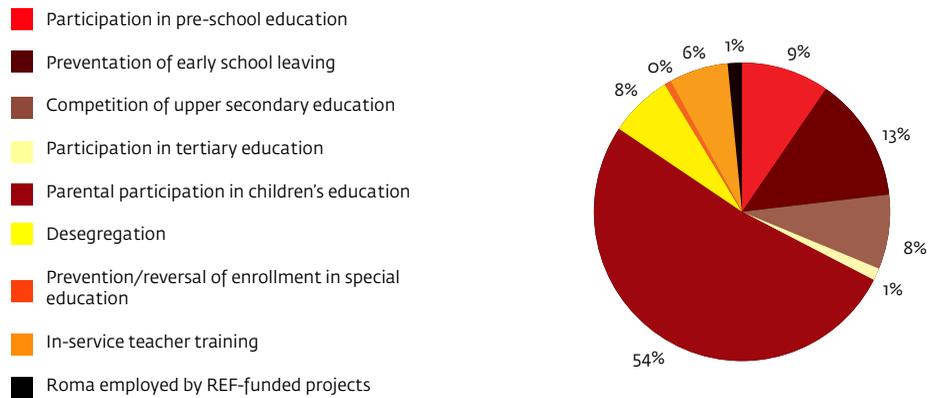


FIGURE 5. Preventing early school leaving, distribution of beneficiaries by country, 2010

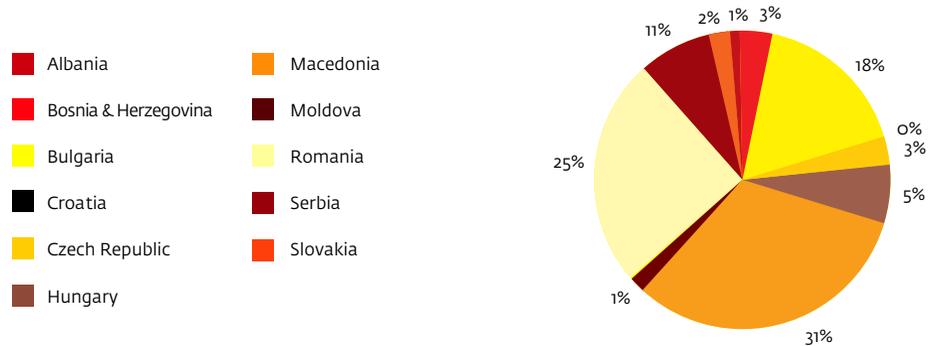


FIGURE 6. In service teacher training, distribution of beneficiaries by country, 2010

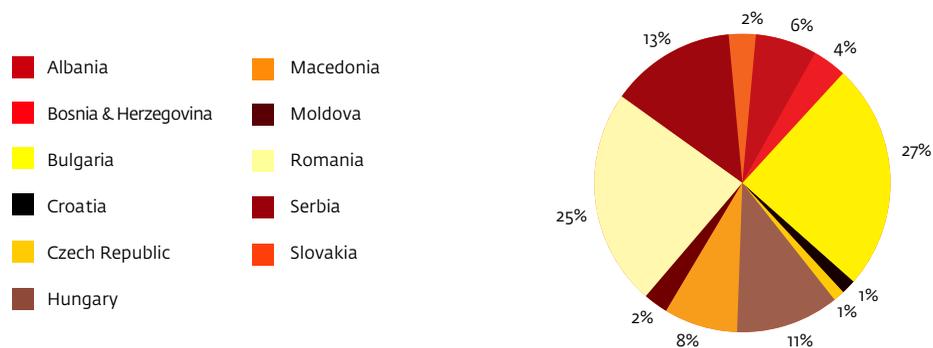
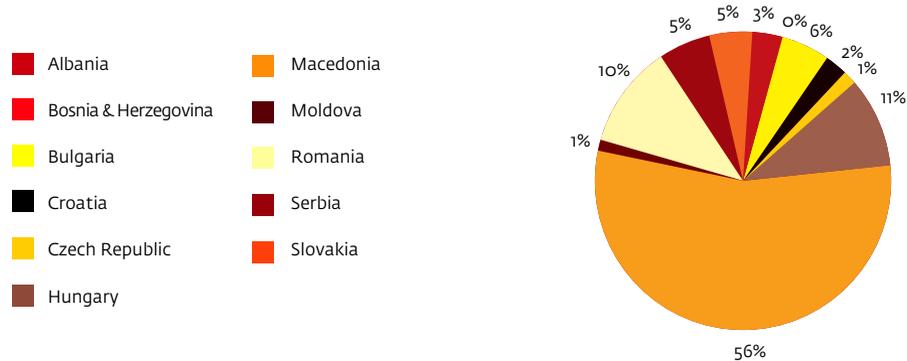


FIGURE 7. Enrolment in pre-school education, distribution beneficiaries by country, 2010



The number of REF-supported beneficiaries has been increasing yearly. In the last five years REF, together with its partners, has reached approximately 322,229 beneficiaries. This trend is expected to continue in the coming years as REF's aims to scale-up its activities with sustainable interventions for many more beneficiaries. Table 10 illustrates the progress made by REF and its partners in scaling-up activities, demonstrated by the increased number of beneficiaries.

TABLE 10. Beneficiaries of REF-funded projects by indicator, 2005–2010

Beneficiaries of REF-funded projects, by indicator per year						
Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Indicator	Number of beneficiaries					
Parental participation in children's education	2050	17561	29780	29674	42685	50136
Prevention of early school leaving	269	2765	5339	7256	10938	15522
Desegregation	0	1734	3553	5673	6534	9331
Participation in pre-school education	600	2966	4497	10441	3418	8034
Completion of upper secondary education	1278	2687	4797	5060	6282	5303
In-service teacher training	551	2977	4018	4488	2945	3125
Roma employed by REF-funded projects	123	589	802	733	638	553
Participation in tertiary education[1]	207	319	795	636	475	482
Prevention/reversal of enrollment in special education	0	353	525	172	125	435
Total	5,078	31,951	54,106	64,133	74,040	92,921

REF monitoring and evaluation

In 2010, REF conducted 103 site visits to the active projects through 36 monitoring visits in 12 countries. As of December 2010, REF had 49 active projects. In 2010, five projects were closed before project completion due to unsatisfactory progress, three projects were identified within the organization as best practices and the remaining 65 projects were rated as satisfactory.

REF's system for assessing the impact of the projects it finances consists of three main components:

- A system of nine indicators is systematically monitored by REF staff for all projects.
- External evaluations of larger and/or particularly important projects are conducted.
- A specialized Management Information System (MIS) that was developed for collecting information reported by REF grantees and comparing it with findings of monitoring visits.

REF spent 35,011 Euros on external evaluation of six projects in 2010. Terms of reference were advertised and a transparent selection process was conducted. Reports from the evaluators are available on REF's website.

Preventing Reassignment to Special Education in Slovakia

As REF reported in its 2009 study *School as Ghetto: Systemic Overrepresentation of Roma in Special Education in Slovakia*, Roma account for approximately 60 percent of all children in special education in Slovakia. The overrepresentation of Roma is one of the main reasons for which Slovakia has one of the highest overall rates of enrolment in special education in Europe and results from a complex set of factors. Subsequently, poor scholastic performance in the first years of primary education figures prominently among the reasons for which Roma are disproportionately reassigned to special education; poor performance is a result of a combination of language barriers and social disadvantages compounded by lack of access to pre-school education.

For the Banská Bystrica-based Romani NGO Regional Association of Romani Initiatives (KARI), a plan to provide children from disadvantaged Romani communities with additional support in primary education developed in the process of implementing a REF-funded project from 2007 to 2009. The earlier project focused on raising awareness in Romani families with pre-school-aged children of the disadvantages of special education and to encourage enrolment of Romani children in standard primary education. In late 2008 and with an eye on setting the aforementioned plan in motion, KARI sought REF support to undertake additional activities to improve children's scholastic achievements in the first year of primary school. This would be achieved through after-school instruction delivered by qualified teaching staff as well as mentoring in local Romani communities provided by NGO activists.

In the first round of after-school instruction, which ran from January to June 2009 and was provided in seven localities in the Banská Bystrica region, 230 of the 261 participating children (88.1 percent) successfully completed the first year of standard primary education. For the 2009–2010 and 2010–2011 school years, the project activities were further expanded to cover the second year of primary education, involving a total of 230 children in eleven standard primary schools in the Banská Bystrica region.

The previous phases of the project were included in a mid-2010 comparative external evaluation of REF-funded projects in Slovakia for the prevention and/or reversing of segregation of Romani children in special education. Among the findings of the evaluation was that the total per-child costs of the project for effectively preventing placement in special education were far below the level of public spending for the same child if reassigned to special education.

Taking into account KARI's success in addressing the needs of disadvantaged Romani children in the first years of primary school, REF has incorporated some of the activities piloted by KARI into activities implemented in other regions of Slovakia.

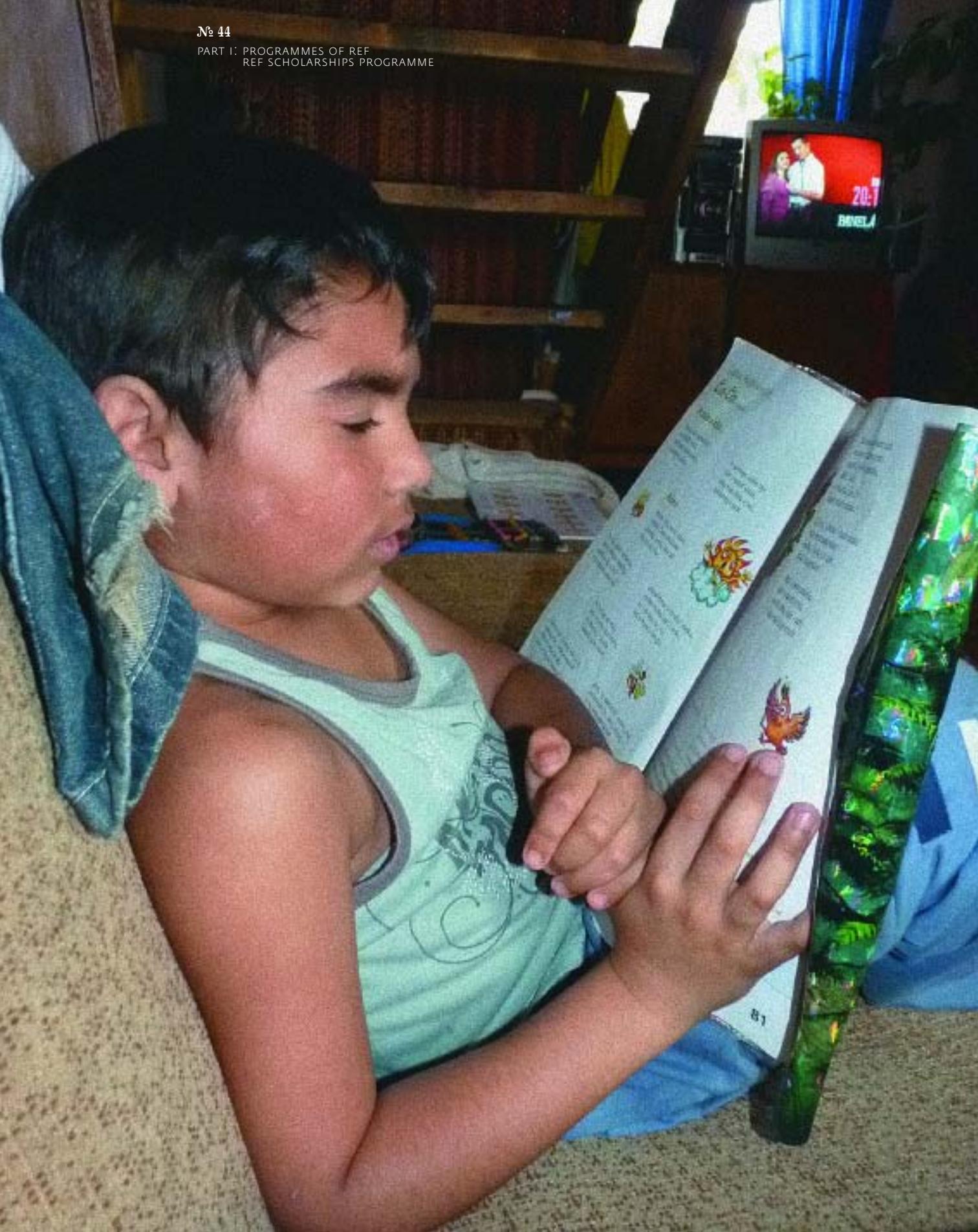
Piloting Grassroots Desegregation in the Czech Republic

On 14 November 2007, the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights ruled in the case of *D.H. and Others v. the Czech Republic (D.H.)* that 'segregating Roma students into special schools is a form of unlawful discrimination that violates fundamental rights'. Informed by an amicus brief prepared in October 2006 by the European Roma Rights Center, the International Step by Step Association and the European Early Childhood Association as well as REF, the ruling marked an important victory in the fight against the overrepresentation of Roma in special education not only in the Czech Republic, but also elsewhere in Europe.

Despite efforts by the Czech government to measure the segregation of Roma and change national policies accordingly, the first two years after the *D.H.* ruling brought little change in school-level practices separating Romani children from their non-Romani peers. Romani students continue to be placed in schools or classes that deliver a reduced curriculum, severely limiting their options for further education and employment prospects.

Taking this situation into account, REF has supported six grassroots initiatives since early 2010 which prevent and/or combat segregation in education at the local level. While the numbers involved are small, REF has supported these initiatives in order to pilot several models of desegregation as a basis for later scaling up in coordination with the Czech government. Below is a brief description of these six efforts:

- *Equal Start* (Ostrava). The main aim of this project, implemented by the organization Společně-Jekhetane (*Together*) and to be conducted over a period of three school years, is to enroll at least 25 Romani children aged six to seven from two segregated localities in primary schools in which Roma constitute no more than 25 percent of all pupils.
- *Alternative - Helping Hands in Opavsko* (Opava region). Implemented by the NGO Eurotopia, this project focuses on 60 Romani children and youth, offering activities aimed at improving preparation for primary education, raising awareness among Romani parents, and improving the competences of teaching staff for working with Romani children.



- *To School with Enthusiasm from Ji'oro – Srdíčko (Šternberk)*. This project supports the individual preparation of children for enrolment in the first year of standard primary education, as well as provides after-school instruction for children in the first and second years of primary education. The project is implemented by Charita Šternberk and serves approximately twenty children.
- *Romodrom for Education 2010 (Olomouc and Moravia–Silesia regions)*. This project is implemented by the Prague-based NGO Romodrom and includes activities to promote the completion of compulsory education for 45 children and youth between the ages of seven and eighteen.
- *Let's Get to Know Each Other in School (Brno)*. Through this project, the Society of Roma in Moravia works with a total of approximately ten children, promoting their transfer from segregated to integrated schools as well as their first-time enrolment in integrated schools.
- *Expert Assistance for the Parents of Socially Disadvantaged Children in the Area of Pre-School and Primary Education (Brno)*. Focusing on approximately fourteen children of pre-school and primary school age, this project, which is implemented by the Museum of Romani Culture, combines pre-school preparation, support to Romani children from segregated neighbourhoods attending integrated primary schools and work with the parents of Romani students.

REF SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME

REF's Scholarships Programme runs five academic merit-based scholarship schemes for countries in Central and Eastern Europe as well as Moldova, Russia, the Ukraine and Turkey. Scholarships schemes are tailored to support Roma students in pursuit of tertiary education and study towards Bachelor's, Master's and PhD degrees. Applications at the vocational level are eligible for consideration under a fifth programme, the Roma Health Scholarship Programme (RHSP).

One significant change in 2010 for the Scholarship Programme was the merging of the Roma Supplementary Grants Scholarship (RSGS) and the Roma Interregional Scholarship Programme (RISP) under the name of the Roma International Scholar Programme (RISP).⁴

⁴ Due to the transition, some data for 2010 is presented for the two programmes individually.

The five Scholarships Programmes are:

- Roma Memorial University Scholarship Programme (RMUSP)
- Roma International Scholar Programme (RISP) (formerly the Roma Supplementary Grants Scholarship and Roma Interregional Scholarship Programme)
- Law and Humanities Programme (LHP)
- Roma Health Scholarship Programme (RHSP)
- Professional Development Fund (PDF)

TABLE 11. REF Scholarship Programme in four academic years, 2007–2010

Component	2007–2008		2008–2009		2009–2010		2010–2011	
	Grants awarded	Funding Granted (Euros)						
RMUSP	678	592,938	674	585,528	916	854,451	1029	1,001,254
RSGS	2	29,598	7	53,764	11	72,272	20	104,370
RISP (Interregional)	6	4,476	12	26,993	15	34,075	N/A	N/A
LHP	81	85,400	84	125,450	109	139,555	145	169,835
RHSP	N/A	N/A	36	123,747	86	243,290	249	318,950
PDF	N/A	N/A	5	10,000	4	6,180	4	5,345
Total	767	712,412	813	925,482	1,137	1,349,823	1443	1,176,434

Of 1,558 rejected applications to REF's Scholarships Programmes, 49 appeals were received and processed. The majority of the appeals (39) were generated from RMUSP, seven from RHSP applicants, one from RISP and two from LHP applicants. Of 49 appeals, 14 were reconsidered and subsequently approved pending additional information or due to the consideration of challenging circumstances causing delays in application submission or other reasonable circumstances. The above appeals were processed by REF in the case of technical and administrative errors and by an International Selection and Appeal Board when the review of newly introduced circumstances and conditions was necessary.

Roma Memorial University Scholarship Programme (RMUSP)

The 11th cycle of the Roma Memorial University Scholarship Programme (RMUSP) was conducted in 2010, marking the 4th cycle to be managed by REF after accepting programme administration responsibilities from the Open Society Institute (OSI). RMUSP is designed to facilitate open access for Roma youth to tertiary education and to enable larger numbers of Roma to take on visible positions in society through quality education. To this end, RMUSP provides support to Romani students from Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe to pursue tertiary education in their countries of residence. Scholarship recipients study at established, state-accredited universities in the countries of the Decade of Roma Inclusion and Turkey.

For the 2010-2011 academic year, RMUSP granted support to 1,029 of 2,284 applicants, an acceptance rate of 45 percent. This rate of acceptance is considerably lower than in the three previous academic years (approximately 53 percent). Concurrently, 2010 saw the highest number of grants requested and awarded since the programme's inception.

Among the 1,029 Scholars selected in 2010–2011, 572 are female and 457 are male. Scholar age ranges between 17–35 years, with the majority being in their early twenties. 82.7 percent of scholarship recipients are pursuing their Bachelor's degree, 16 percent their Master's and 1.3 percent their PhD.

Beginning in 2010, RMUSP introduced a country quota due to the wider programme visibility resulting from outreach efforts; this in combination with over 10 years of programme operation has led to a steadily increasing number of applications. A total of 1,001,254 Euros were allocated for RMUSP scholarship support in 2010–2011. The rejected applicants (1,251) were not supported by the programme due to the limitations of the scholarships budget, the country quota or due to the fact that they did not meet eligibility criteria.

TABLE 12. RMUSP awards by country, 2005–2010

Grants Awarded								
Overall Rank	Country	2005–2006	2006–2007	2007–2008	2008–2009	2009–2010	2010–2011	TOTAL
1	Romania	228	243	160	125	221	268	1 245
2	Bulgaria	151	140	172	178	203	254	1 098
3	Hungary*	90	96	114	107	147	140	694
4	Macedonia	55	70	113	111	123	106	578
5	Serbia**	51	48	55	65	76	71	366
6	Slovakia	36	25	26	28	35	30	180
7	Turkey	n/a	4	6	44	67	80	201
8	Czech Republic	16	15	12	3	13	35	94
9	Kosovo	0	0	12	2	17	21	52
10	Albania	n/a	n/a	n/a	4	11	17	32
11	Bosnia & Herzegovina	n/a	n/a	n/a	4	4	7	15
11	Montenegro	<i>See Serbia</i>	0	6	1	1	0	8
12	Croatia	0	2	2	2	1	0	7
	Total	627	643	678	674	919	1 029	4 570

* In 2010–2011, an additional 30 Scholarships were considered in Hungary to cover monthly stipends for the scholars of Hungarian Romaversitas, which is not included in this table.

** The figure given for the 2005–2006 academic year includes figures from Montenegro, which left the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro in May 2006.

In 2010–2011, the countries with the highest demand for scholarships were Romania and Bulgaria, constituting 18 and 32 percent of the total demand respectively. Together, these two countries received 49 percent of the grants disbursed. Also, whereas Romania accounted for the largest number of RMUSP applicants and grantees in 2005–2009 and the largest number of applicants to the programme in 2009–2010, Bulgaria accounted for a slightly larger share of RMUSP grantees in the 2008–2009 academic year (27 percent versus 19 percent). In 2010–2011, Romania has again represented the largest proportion of both applicants and grantees.

Relative to the three previous academic years, the greatest increase both in demand for RMUSP funding and number of RMUSP grantees was in Turkey, where the programme began operations in the 2006–2007 academic year. Accounting for less than one percent of both overall demand and total number grantees in 2006–2007, Turkey represented 7.6 percent of the applicant pool and 7.7 percent of all RMUSP grantees in 2010–2011.

Roma International Scholar Program (RISP) (formerly Roma Supplementary Grants Scholarship and Roma Interregional Scholarship Programs)

The Roma Supplementary Grants Scholarships and Roma Interregional Scholarship Programmes assisted Roma Scholars studying internationally within and outside the Central and Eastern European region in the 2007–2009 academic years. The two programmes and their corresponding objectives were merged in 2010 into the Roma International Scholar Programme (RISP). Applications were received in 2010 from Bulgaria, Hungary, Macedonia, Moldova, Romania, Russia and Slovakia from Scholars seeking assistance to study in France, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Romania, the UK and the United States. Of 36 candidates, 20 were selected; of these 20 approved Scholars, one is pursuing a PhD and the remaining are seeking their Bachelor's or Master's degrees (two of these were also selected as Erasmus students). The Roma Supplementary Scholarship Programme grants for 2010–2011 totaled 104,370 Euros with scholarships awarded in amounts up to 9,050 Euros.

TABLE 13. RSGS and RISP in three academic years, 2007–2010

Academic Year	2007–2008		2008–2009		2009–2010		2010–2011	
	Applicants	Scholars	Applicants	Scholars	Applicants	Scholars	Applicants	Scholars
RSGS	9	2	12	7	17	11	N/A	N/A
RISP	8	6	15	12	19	15	36	20
Total	17	8	27	19	36	26	36	20

Law and Humanities Programme (LHP)

In the 2010–2011 academic year, the Law and Humanities Programme (LHP) received 234 applications of which 138 were new and 96 were renewal applicants. The final number of scholars selected in 2010–2011 was 145. Of the 145 scholarship recipients, 76 were selected from the Ukraine, 39 from Moldova and 30 from Russia. 85 percent of scholarships granted were distributed to scholars studying at the Bachelor's degree level, 11 percent at Master's level and 4 percent at the PhD level. In the 2010–2011 academic year, 86 of the selected scholars were female and 59 were male.

102 Scholars from the pool of scholarship holders in 2010–2011 were supported by Erinnerung Verantwortung Zukunft foundation (EVZ) up to 1,000 Euros, with the remaining 43 scholarships being funded by the REF Scholarships Programme. The total amount of scholarships awarded through LHP for the 7th scholarship cycle was 169,835 Euros, 102,000 Euros of which was funded by EVZ.

TABLE 14. LHP in three programme countries, 2008–2010

	Scholars in 2008–2009	Scholars in 2009–2010	Scholars in 2010–2011
Moldova	35	35	39
Russia	21	28	30
Ukraine	32	46	76
Total	88	109	145

The increased demand as well as the increased number of awards for scholarships in LHP countries is a result of a intensive outreach effort conducted in these countries in 2010. While the ranking pattern of the countries with the highest to lowest demand did not change, the percentage of applications by country showed big changes as compared to previous years. For example, applicants from Ukraine constituted 60 percent of the total application pool and received 53 percent of disbursed scholarships. This translates into a doubling of the demand from the Ukraine while other countries showed increase of only 10–15 percent.

LHP dynamics in the last two years has shown a decrease in scholar drop-out rates due to changes in selection procedures (the addition of personal interviews for new applicants and more advanced selection criteria) as well as the incorporation of extracurricular activities into the programme for enhancing student/beneficiary benefits and promoting the development of Scholar networks.

TABLE 15. LHP award, drop-out and graduation rates, 2004–2010

	2004– 2005 (LHP 1)	2005– 2006 (LHP 2)	2006– 2007 (LHP 3)	2007– 2008 (LHP 4)	2008– 2009 (LHP 5)	2009– 2010 (LHP 6)	2010– 2011 (LHP 7)
Applications	50	50	79	96	93	121	234
Scholarships	50	50	56	86	88	109	145
University graduations	<i>Not yet available</i>	3	8	7	19	24	<i>Not yet available</i>
Drop-out rate*	<i>Not yet available</i>	48%	30%	42%	27%	26%	12%

* The use of the term drop-out refers to participation in the scholarship program; a student who drops out from the program may still be enrolled in the university.

LHP Programme extracurricular activities in 2010

In July 2010, the LHP held a training session for 80 scholarship recipients and alumni entitled 'Project Design and Management for Programme Scholars' at the Annual Students Conference in Kiev, Ukraine. The topic of Project Design and Management was chosen as one of the most requested subject matters (based on a post-training survey and voting process) following a training on fundraising held by the programme in Moldova in 2009. The 2.5 day training was conducted by programme staff and focused on a number of topics including an asset-based approach to community development and a presentation of project monitoring and evaluation tools.

In 2010, the LHP International Internship Programme awarded scholarships to three individuals (two from Moldova and one from Russia). Two of these Scholars were selected on a competitive basis and to participate in a 14-day internship programme with the European Roma Right Center (ERRC) in Budapest, Hungary. A five-month International Internship was granted to one Russian Alumna in REF's headquarters office located in Budapest, Hungary.

The Tutoring and Language component of LHP allowed students with good academic standing to receive additional language training through attending courses at accredited language schools or through private language lessons where established language schools were not available. In the 2010 academic year, 37 Scholars chose to learn English and one received training in Romanian. The highest number of language trainees was in the Ukraine (21), where the International Renaissance Foundation provided supplemental support for language training courses for LHP Scholars. Additionally, 11 Scholars in Russia and six Scholars in Moldova benefitted from language courses.

In 2010, a steady number of applications from LHP Scholars for REF's Professional Development Fund and International Internships Programme were collected. Overall, this growing interest in participating in extracurricular activities and acquiring employable skills (such as language proficiency and work experience) demonstrates a stronger motivation and clarity of goals among the Scholars as compared to the initial years of the scholarship programme.

Creating Opportunities in Albania

In academic year 2010–2011, the Albanian Ministry of Education introduced for the first time quotas for the admission of Roma and Egyptian students into public universities. As a result, 25 young Roma and Egyptian students started their Bachelor's studies mostly in the social sciences, while several others are waiting to start their Master's studies. This measure, together with the provision of REF scholarships, has created greater opportunities for young Roma and Egyptians to access higher education. In the previous years, only private universities had offered scholarships for Roma and Egyptian students. Currently, there are more than 50 Roma and Egyptian students who have benefited from these positive measures. In the absence of such measures, few Roma and Egyptian students have managed to be accepted in public universities based on merits alone.

Tendencies in the LHP Scholarship Programme

An external evaluation of LHP was carried out in spring 2010. The outcomes of the evaluation referred to all administration and management aspects of the programme. The overall outcome of the evaluation was positive and emphasized the importance and the value of the programme and its components for individual students and Roma communities in programme countries. The resulting evaluation report also made recommendations for improvements including developing a better database, increasing the base scholarship for students, introducing earlier deadlines for submission of Enrolment Certificates to optimize the scholarship disbursement term, broadening the programme to serve the needs of the grassroots communities (vocational education) and developing beneficiary networks to further the sustainability of the impact of the programme.

Of the last three years, academic year 2010–2011 showed the most significant increase in the number of LHP applications received and scholarships granted (see Table 16). The near doubling in the number of applications can be attributed to a combination of factors, including (I) better targeted and timed outreach programmes, where Country Coordinators prioritized Roma settlement secondary schools and used media for outreach including visual aids, posters and flyers; (II) on-line forums of LHP students which helped to attract the attention of potential applicants; (III) LHP alumni involvement in outreach on a voluntary basis in their home communities; and (IV) a decrease in employment rates in programme countries, which persuaded more Scholars to continue their studies and/or advance to further academic levels (see Table 17).

Drop-out rates in 2010 were the lowest in the history of LHP. A number of background factors may have contributed to this decrease, such as the previously mentioned lack of temporary employment opportunities that encourages more scholars to continue education. Additional factors include increased competition and more tightened selection process (including the addition of personal interviews), which results in only the most committed and capable of applicants receiving scholarships. Finally, an increase in opportunities for networking and professional development has allowed the Scholars to form their own professional communities, exchange information and show support for each other.

TABLE 16. Renewal and new LHP applicants for Moldova, Russia and the Ukraine, 2008–2011

	Total Number of Applicants			Renewal			New		
	2008– 2009 (LHP 5)	2009– 2010 (LHP 6)	2010– 2011 (LHP 7)	2008– 2009 (LHP 5)	2009– 2010 (LHP 6)	2010– 2011 (LHP 7)	2008– 2009 (LHP 5)	2009– 2010 (LHP 6)	2010– 2011 (LHP 7)
Moldova	35	43	51	24	30	33	11	13	19
Russia	21	27	40	12	17	23	9	10	17
Ukraine	37	51	143	24	27	40	13	24	100
Total	93	121	234	60	74	96	33	47	137

TABLE 17. LHP Scholars reapplying, graduating and continuing studies, 2008–2011

Scholars	2008–2009 (LHP 5)	2009–2010 (LHP 6)	2010–2011 (LHP 7)
Reapplied from the preceding year	33	74 with 68 granted	96 with 73 granted
Graduated in the preceding year	7	19	24
Studying towards Bachelor's Degree	107	93	123
Studying towards Master's Degree	4	13	16
Studying towards PhD Degree	1	3	4
Part Time studies	8	5	7
Professional Development	2	2	2
Language tutoring	6	19	38
Roma Supplementary Scholarship Programme	2	2	1

Roma Health Scholarship Programme (RHSP)

The Roma Health Scholarship Programme (RHSP), delivered in cooperation with the OSI Roma Health Project, is designed to provide health education, preparatory courses, mentorship and advocacy training for Romani minorities in Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe. To achieve its objectives, RHSP supports Romani students studying to become medical doctors or nurses at state-accredited and recognized medical universities and medical-vocational schools in their home country or country of residence. Academic performance is the prevailing criteria in RHSP for recipient selection.

RHSP was piloted during the 2008–2009 academic year in Romania. In 2009–2010 it was extended to Bulgaria and to Macedonia and Serbia in 2010–2011. As illustrated in Table 18 below, the overall acceptance rate for RHSP support in all four countries in the 2010–2011 academic year was 55 percent.

TABLE 18. Total and accepted number of RHSP applicants, academic year 2010–2011

	Total number of applicants	Accepted applicants	
		Number	Ratio, out of the total number of applicants
Bulgaria	93	57	61%
Macedonia	87	49	56%
Romania	167	96	69%
Serbia	105	47	45%
Total	452	249	55%

In 2010, 76 of the 96 beneficiaries in Romania were first-time applicants to the programme. Among the 57 beneficiaries in Bulgaria, 44 were first-time applicants.

RHSP provides support to both students who pursue vocational-level education and to students in tertiary education. Table 19 below provides the percentages of beneficiaries in the 2010–2011 academic year enrolled in vocational education and tertiary medical education programmes by country. The figures reveal that in all four countries, the majority of beneficiaries pursue vocational studies.

TABLE 19. Ratio of beneficiaries in vocational and tertiary education, academic year 2010–2011

	Vocational Education	Tertiary Education
Bulgaria	63%	37%
Macedonia	61%	39%
Romania	62%	38%
Serbia	74%	26%
Total	65%	35%

In the 2010–2011 academic year, 67 percent of the total number of RHSP beneficiaries in the four countries was female. The predominance of female students was characteristic for Macedonia, Bulgaria and Romania. Only in Serbia was the number of male students higher than that of female students.

One key development during the academic year 2009-2010 has been the organization of preparatory courses for prospective medical students, carried out under the overall RHSP Programme through contracted entities in each country. The preparatory courses are carried out in different sites and locations for more than 120 potential RHSP Scholars.

In October 2010, RHSP underwent an external evaluation of the programme in Romania and Bulgaria, focusing on four constituent components of the programme. The external evaluators developed a common work plan and methodology to learn about programme outcomes; the evaluation report is expected to be presented in 2011.

Professional Development Fund Grant (PDF)

In 2010–2011, REF's Professional Development Fund scholarship scheme offered ten Professional Development Fund Scholarships for RMUSP and LHP students. The fields/academic directions supported by this programme include research, internships, summer schools and fellowships.

In 2010, of eight applications submitted from Bulgaria, Moldova, Hungary and Romania, four Scholars received assistance through PDF, totaling 5,345 Euros in support. Specifically through LHP, PDF selected two students to support their attendance at the European Summer School on 'European Union – After the Lisbon Treaty' conference in Prague, Czech Republic.

HUNGARY: Student Volunteerism in Educational Projects

The Roma Education Fund works in collaboration with three tertiary educational institutions in Hungary with the aim of encouraging students to volunteer in order to engage them with the Roma community. Generally, as higher education is more theoretically than practically oriented, students may often read and listen to lectures about the situation of Roma, yet rarely have opportunities for practical interactions. For example, in the case of teacher training, most teachers leaving their Master's program and entering their first teaching positions are often unable to handle the education of disadvantaged or Roma children properly. In response to this, REF provides practical experiences for the students through volunteer projects.

Since 2007, students from the University of Szeged in pre-service teacher training have taken part in a project which aims to help the social and academic integration of Roma students. In the program, students mentor Roma pupils and provide them with extra classes. Student volunteers help with homework and organize after-school programs. In the 2010–2011 academic year, 75 students and around 110 Roma pupils took part in the program.

Since 2010, REF has worked with the Collage of Nyíregyháza involving students from the Faculty of Teacher Training and Faculty of Social Studies in the 'A Good Start' early childhood educational project. Approximately 30–40 students in pre-service teacher training participate in the 'Your Tale' activity, which aims to improve the reading and writing skills of young Roma mothers, most of whom dropped out early from their own primary education. Furthermore, around 60 Social Studies students worked with Roma mentors, conducting home visits with Roma families.

In 2010, collaboration started with Eötvös Loránd University and four Afternoon Clubs, known as Tanodas, where Roma pupils participate in after-school classes in order to improve their academic results. The aim of the collaboration is to provide a trained volunteer workforce (university students) at the Tanodas. In addition, this provides places where students of Intercultural Studies can obtain relevant professional experience.

These projects benefit Roma pupils and parents as well as for the university students. Students gain professional experience before graduation and become more familiar with the educational and social situation of Roma. This experience will help them to handle the educational difficulties of Roma children as teachers or to be more aware of the Roma community as social workers. The REF is working to create similar experiences through universities in other countries and similar programs will soon start in Montenegro.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME

REF's Policy Development and Capacity Building Programme coordinates and supports studies, research, technical assistance and training for REF partners and public institutions on policy- and programme-related issues. Through this work, REF has been steadily building our reputation as a think tank on Roma education. As a member of the EU Roma Platform, REF and other EU and national government authorities work together to develop and implement a common strategy on Roma-related issues. In addition, REF is in contact with European Commission Delegations in many of the countries in which we operate. REF's Policy Development Programme works on the country, regional and local levels. The majority of this work is completed in cooperation with local authorities and school inspectorates, who REF staff consults with during preparation, implementation and monitoring missions. REF is currently active in more than 100 municipalities.

Technical Assistance

An added value for REF as an international organization is the fact that organization is working with Country Facilitators who are nationals of the countries in which REF is operating. The Country Facilitators are young Roma university graduates who have complex duties, one of which is to maintain close contact with the Roma civic sector, NGOs who have received grants by REF, Ministries of Education and other governmental and nongovernmental bodies relevant to REF activities. Country Facilitators have a pivotal role in offering technical assistance to all prospective applicants to REF and in helping them to develop project proposal that are in line with the standards of REF's application process. Country Facilitators are the first interface between REF and our stakeholders and they prove to be essential in developing project proposals with Roma NGOs, REF's most important partners. Beyond this role they are in continuous communication with REF grantees.

Country Facilitators regularly attend policy roundtables and other events in their countries and are also the contact point for other international organizations working in Roma education. In this last aspect they contribute to better donor coordination and help to avoid potential project overlap among different donors.

In Macedonia, REF is currently involved in the policy dialogue on the mainstreaming of the new Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) Policy and on reforms within the public education system. REF supported the development of the Handbook on Anti-discrimination in Education for the Ministry of Education and is a member of Macedonia's Expert Group on Planning the Operational Programme of the country⁵.

REF was approached by the Serbian government and the World Bank to participate in the design and implementation of a national programme known as the Delivery of Improved Local Services Project (DILS). In addition, the Serbian IPA Programme Second Chance was designed on the basis of REF experiences in adult education, benefiting from models developed and tested by REF.

These are just some examples of the ways in which REF works to reinvest our experience in the communities in which we work.

⁵ Operation Program is responsible for planing IPA (EU) funds.

European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) Study Visit: Moving Out of Segregation, a Roma Support Programme

In the first week of October, a group of international educational experts visited a successful and innovative educational model of REF activities in Szeged and Hódmezővásárhely in Hungary. The group consisted of eight members who brought their experiences from throughout the world including Turkey, Sweden, the Czech Republic, Spain, Ireland, England and France. The group visited the two cities where the local municipalities decided to eliminate Roma only ghetto schools. Supporting the desegregational efforts of the two municipalities, DARTKE* Association and voluntary students of the University of Szeged work to help Roma children who are students of the integrated schools. The university students serve as mentors by assisting students with their homework and help in different ways them in raising their educational results.

The study visit was an opportunity for the group to learn about the historical perspectives of desegregation processes in Hungary as well as the practical implementation of the model project, which provides mentoring to Roma students. Finally, it was a valuable occasion to promote knowledge transfer in the wider European context and to open up future possibilities for mutual work. The participants summarized their overall impressions in the final report as follows:

'The group would like to thank the REF for their excellent organisation, preparation and commitment to the study visit programme. We were all made to feel very welcomed by both the staff and the organisations that we visited. We would also like to applaud REF for their efforts, devotion and professional approach to addressing the inequalities that the Roma children face in the integration into the education system in Hungary.'

(Extracted from the CEDEFOP Study visit group report – 2010)

More information about CEDEFOP can be found at: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/publications/15186.aspx>

Studies

'Improving the tools for the social inclusion and non-discrimination of Roma in the EU'

This report was prepared for use by the European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities; the report was developed within the framework of a contract managed by the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) and the Roma Education Fund (REF). The full report, released in 2010, is available on the REF website as well as the ERRC and the European Commission websites.⁶

* Social Science Research Association in the South-Alfold region (Dél-Alföldi Regionális Társadalomtudományi Kutatási Egyesület (hereafter: DARTKE)

⁶ <http://www.errc.org/en-research-and-advocacy-roma-intro.php> / <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=6428&langId=en>



From the Foreword written by Vivianne Reding, Vice-President of the European Commission, Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship:

'We have commissioned the European Roma Rights Centre to conduct, in cooperation with the Roma Education Fund, a comprehensive analysis of policies, programmes and projects for Roma in 18 Member States. This is now the right time to present these findings as the situation of Roma is high up on the political agenda of the European Union and of the Member States. This report does offer a comprehensive analysis of what works and why. A sustainable solution for Roma calls for full cooperation by national governments, local authorities, other key players and of course Roma themselves. I am convinced that this report will contribute to the dissemination of good practice among all stakeholders, including decision-makers working for the social inclusion of Roma.'

Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) in Macedonia

The Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (MLSP) has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Conditional Cash Transfer Project (CCT), with program implementation slated to commence in September 2010. The CCT in Macedonia is to be implemented in secondary education with the beneficiaries being children who are regularly enrolled but whose families are Social Welfare beneficiaries. The benefit provided by CCT is 1,000 Macedonian denars or 16 Euros per child per month, totaling 12,000 Macedonian denars or 195 Euros per year/per child.

Approximately 9,000 of the expected 18,000 beneficiaries applied for the benefit. The attendance of student's receiving CCT benefits will be measured every two months, those attending at least 85 percent of the time with benefits disbursed. There is potential for the CCT program to expand in the future in subsequent phases to cover employment, health and/or other levels of education. The preliminary results of CCT in Macedonia are expected in the summer 2011.

Roma Education Fund Country Assessments

REF Country Assessments are reports which seek to provide an analysis of the education systems and ongoing education reforms from the perspective of the inclusion of Roma children in the countries taking part in the Decade of Roma Inclusion. Country Assessments also serve as a tool for the review of the different programmes and activities REF has carried out since its establishment in 2005, highlighting the thematic and programmatic areas that REF will prioritize the following three years in the country of focus. In 2010, REF developed a new Country Assessment for Albania and updated the Country Assessments for Bulgaria and Serbia.

Full Country Assessments can be found on the REF website in the Publications section.

Country Assessment Albania

In December 2010, REF presented the preliminary Country Assessment Report for Albania to partner institutions and organizations. The presentation was organized in partnership with Technical Secretariat for Roma at Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. Officials from the Ministry of Education (the Ministry) received the report positively, adding that it will serve as a valuable reference document for addressing the education situation of Roma. Comments and feedback from Roma and other local and international organizations will be incorporated into the final draft. The Country Assessment Report is expected to be published in 2011.

REF Capacity Building, Research and Policy Analysis priorities. As a result of the development of the Country Assessment, the major themes of REF's research and policy activities in Albania include:

- Provide technical support to the government to help them build positive change in policy and practice on Roma education
- Develop the capacity of civil society; REF needs to provide technical support to raise capacities for NGOs provided project grants, particularly in monitoring and evaluation, but also project management and advocacy as needed.
- Undertake research on the situation regarding segregation and special schooling in Albania; although it is known that this is a problem within Albania, there is a lack of data showing the scale at which it is happening and what is needed to tackle it.

Strategic directions for future REF activities in Albania. REF funding in the next three years will take into account the following priorities:

- Supporting the government to build an education system that benefits the Roma by working closely with central and local government, providing match-funding on specific projects, in particular those that relate to the priorities above.
- Supporting initiatives to prevent drop-outs and promote re-enrollment and to improve Roma's transition rates from primary to secondary education and from secondary to higher education
- Investment in integrated pre-school education; securing access for Romani children to quality, integrated pre-school education.

Removing Enrolment Barriers in Albania

In order to provide access in primary education to unregistered Roma children, the Ministry of Education has issued a directive on enrollment of children regardless of not possessing birth certificate or relevant documentation. While these children are given the possibility to attend school they cannot graduate unless

are registered with the civil registry. The government of Albania has improved the law on civil registration by removing the deadline and the court procedures for cases that are beyond the deadline. This measure has allowed many unregistered Roma pupils to become registered and thus be able to graduate. Despite this progress, there remain many complicated cases requiring court procedures which make it difficult for parents to register their children. Resolving the civil registration of Roma children will enable them to access primary and other level of education. REF grants actively support the Roma families to obtain the necessary documentations.

Country Assessment Bulgaria

Since the development of the first Country Assessment in 2007, Bulgaria has become an EU Member, the government has changed, various levels of legislation and normative documents related to education in Bulgaria were developed; additionally, an optimization of the entire school network has taken place. The process of reassessment was completed by an independent consultant and supported by REF. After the development of the first draft, REF organized a wide public discussion on the paper in which 60 participants took part.

A product of this reassessment and public input process, the new Country Assessment for Bulgaria defines the following five strategic directions for future REF activities in Bulgaria:

- Desegregation of the education system through the scaling-up of REF initiatives, working towards their institutionalization as policy and practice of the municipality
- Improving the capacity of teachers and pedagogical staff to work in a multicultural environment
- Investing in pre-school education
- Supporting initiatives that help prepare children and students for the next, higher educational level
- Investing in growing young Roma professionals through university scholarships and internships

The final publication will be available on REF's website in English and Bulgarian in 2011.

Investments in Roma Education in Bulgaria

Since the changes in early 1990s, there have been a range of different and significant donors making philanthropic contributions in Bulgaria, including the Open Society Institute, Charles Steward Mott Foundation, Novib, USAID, World Bank, UNDP and many more. They have provided extremely important support to Roma and non-Roma NGOs working to ensure access to quality education for all people, including Roma.

After Bulgaria became an EU member state, however, the key actors have changed. With the exception of the Roma Education Fund, the European Union – through the PHARE programmes and the Structural Funds – has taken the leading role as the main financial engine of the education of Roma in Bulgaria. Two of the potential regional donors – Balkan Trust for Democracy and Trust for Civil Society in Central and Eastern Europe – have not included the goals of the Decade of the Roma inclusion in their priorities. Those changes plus a dynamic political context has left most NGOs in Bulgaria without adequate resources. Currently there are not more than a dozen Roma NGOs who seem to be sustainable.

In recent years, all available donors in Bulgaria were granting an estimated 3 to 4 million Euros per year in support of Roma education in Bulgaria. Despite these investments, the country is still not able to effectively utilize the available funding. The programmes supported by the EU funds are often delayed and difficult to implement due to tremendous administrative burdens. Nevertheless, the contribution of the European Commission entails roughly 75 percent of total national expenditures on education.

Roma NGOs still prefer to receive smaller-sized grants available from REF and the few other available donor organizations, rather than going deeper into the complex procedures and administrative requirements of EU funds. In order to bridge these administrative hurdles, the REF is in a position to initiate collaborations with Roma NGOs, providing much-needed technical assistance on the management and administration requirements of the European Commission, ultimately enabling them to access available EU grants.

The number of project proposal applications received by REF in 2010 increased in comparison with previous years. REF remains one of the few grant-making organizations, making the organization critical in the survival of the civic organizations of the Roma in Bulgaria. REF's flexibility allows it to respond to the needs of the Roma community and, at the same time, maintaining its organizational strategy and priorities.

Country Assessment Serbia

Regarding the education of Roma students in Serbia, all experts agree that there are three problems of outstanding importance: low participation, high drop-out rates and the overrepresentation of Roma children in special education. The process of updating of the Country Assessment for Serbia has generated the following themes to REF's strategic directions for improving access to education for Roma. The prevailing themes for Serbia are:

- To build upon the existing commitment, leadership and coordination resources available: the education of Roma students is a high-priority issue on the agenda of the Ministry of Education.

- To make better use of grassroots resources, both good and bad practices: due to the decade-long investments of international donor agencies, a rich pool of grassroots experience is available in Serbia.
- To seek and utilize available experience and know-how outside of Serbia: since the huge majority of problems in relation to the education of Roma students are not unique to Serbia, professional exchange among the countries participating in the Roma Decade is a rich source of relevant knowledge.

Subsequently, REF has identified the following programmatic objectives for the realization of our country strategy:

- Continue, scale-up and expand existing successful programmes, including:
 - REF's pre-school programme in cooperation with UNICEF, OSCE and the Ministry of Education.
 - REF's secondary-education scholarship and mentoring programme in cooperation with the Vojvodinian Autonomous Province
 - small-scale and isolated grassroots projects and programmes
- Develop and implement new programmes to address current education needs, including:
 - a programme for improving the capacity of schools for Roma inclusion
- Examine and develop education policies and practices, focusing on:
 - policies for reaching out-of-school children
 - policies for reducing the placement of Roma students in special education
 - assessment of the performance of Roma students in comparison to the performance of non-Roma students on the basis of grade-eight standards

The expected results of REF activities in Serbia include:

- An enforceable legislative framework for affirmative action at all education levels.
- An enforceable legislative framework for detecting and preventing discrimination in education.
- Appropriate adjustment to financial mechanisms linked to the decentralization process to ensure that adequate resources are allocated concurrently with new responsibilities.
- Near universal preparatory pre-school enrolment within poor Roma communities.
- A decreased drop-out rate in grades five through eight and an increased completion rate for primary education.
- An improvement in the quality of education for Roma students.
- A decrease in the number of Roma children attending special schools.
- An increase in Roma enrolment in high school and tertiary education, with a commensurate increase in the volume and amount of scholarship support.
- Improved cross-sectoral cooperation (including that between responsible governmental bodies) that is critical in reaching Decade of Roma Inclusion goals.



Follow Up to the Strasbourg Decisions

The case of *Oršuš and Others v. Croatia* originated in an application against the Republic of Croatia lodged with the Court under Article 34 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms by fifteen Croatian nationals, on 8 May 2003. In its ruling, the Court said that Roma children had been uniquely segregated, thus indicating the different treatment of one group.

The Court listed a number of reasons for its ruling; including the fact that the exams used to determine the placement of children should be separated was not specifically language tests as claimed, citing language barriers as a justification for student segregation. It was also noted that the government had failed to monitor segregated children to observe the children's language progress, and that all 15 applicants had dropped out of school at the age of 15 without having completed primary education. In making its ruling, the Court pointed out that the statistics submitted by the applicants for the region in which the applicants lived, and not contested by the Government, had showed a drop-out rate of 84 percent for Roma pupils before completing primary education.

The Croatian government introduced the following six measures and appropriate activities for the enforcement of the Court's ruling: improvement of the legislative framework related to Roma pupils; creation of an educational model for Roma pupils for the successful learning of the Croatian language as well as socialization and integration in school and out of school; external evaluation of the upbringing and education of Roma; involvement of direct and indirect stakeholders in the upbringing and education of Roma children; development of the infrastructure needed for efficient education, upbringing and socialization of Roma children; implementation of the National Program for Roma and Decade of Roma Inclusion Action Plan 2005–2015.⁸

Despite above-mentioned measures and activities, there are still a significant number of Roma-only classes in Medjimurje County. There are 1,488 Roma pupils attending 19 primary schools comprising a total of 223 classes. Of these, 32 classes are Roma-only while 191 are mixed. This fact has been explained with demographic conditions in the area of five primary schools where these Roma classes exist: Kursanec (15 mixed and 13 Roma-only classes), Mala Subotica (13 mixed and 9 Roma-only classes), Macinec (18 mixed and 5 Roma-only classes), Pribislavec (17 mixed and 4 Roma-only classes) and Orehovica (16 mixed and 1 Roma-only class).⁹

⁷ For full judgment please visit: www.echr.coe.int

⁸ For more detailed information, please visit: www.mzos.hr

⁹ Source of information Education State Office, Medjimurje County

REF recognizes the need to maintain the momentum generated by Oršuš and Others v. Croatia and to take a proactive role in ensuring access to mainstream education and the full integration into society of all Roma children in Medjimurje County.

REF has taken care to ensure that the institutions participating in the project are indeed ensuring a multidisciplinary approach, spending resources more efficiently and increasing the access to education of all Roma children. Each of them has a significant role in providing quality pre-school education and it is only through these joint efforts that such a complex issue can be solved.

COMMUNICATION AND CROSS COUNTRY LEARNING PROGRAMME

REF staff worked to disseminate information through our Communication and Cross Country Learning Programme throughout 2010. Below are some of the ways in which REF worked to keep our staff, partners and beneficiaries connected through sharing of knowledge. In addition, a list of International events in which REF participated can be found in the Annex.

REF's external communication

In parallel to the different in-country events that the Roma Education Fund has participated in, we reach out to readers through its website and to our regular followers on Facebook. Thus, besides informing local media agencies in local languages, most of the significant news of REF has been translated to English and thus distributed through various Roma and education related networks.

In 2010 REF published articles in the July, Sept and December issues of the Open Society Education News, available at <http://archive.tol.org/nsi-list.html>.

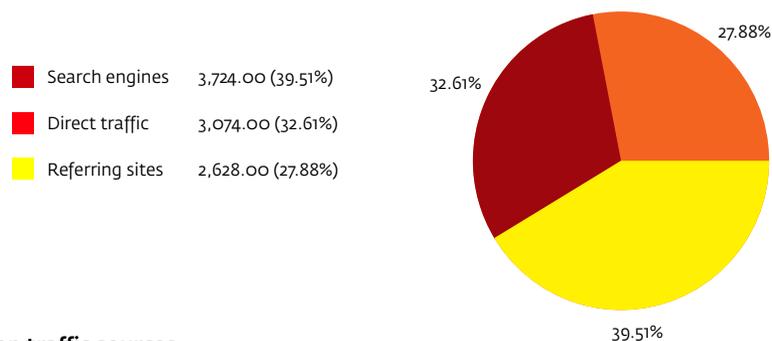
Finally, REF's announcements, news, and press releases have been regularly distributed through various Roma media channels such as the ERIO newsletter, the Roma Virtual Network and the website of the Decade Secretariat.

REF's Quarterly Newsletter

Part of REF's communication goals for 2010 was to create a new forum for regular updates on all related events and news. With the launch of the European Union supported 'A Good Start' pilot project, the REF communication team created the Quarterly Newsletter as a new platform for external communication. The 10–12 page informative magazine reports quarterly on all fields of activities, events and innovations that take place throughout all the REF network offices. It is structured in four main units – Update on the AGS projects, Latest news of the REF networks, REF Scholarships Programme update and other related information. Each issue also includes at least one or two personal stories with photos contributed by REF beneficiaries.

<http://www.romaeducationfund.hu/publications/quarterly-newsletters>

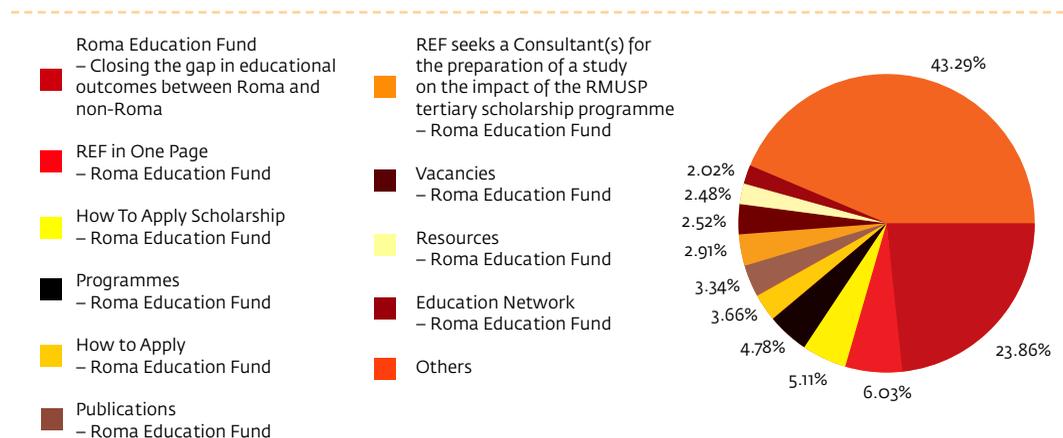
FIGURE 8. Website traffic sources for the last quarter of 2010 (October – November – December)



Top traffic sources

Sources	Visits	% visits
google (organic)	3,603	38.22%
(direct) ((none))	3,074	32.61%
eurobrussels.com (referral)	455	4.83%
facebook.com (referral)	262	2.78%
romadecade.org (referral)	256	2.72%

FIGURE 9. Website viewing activity by page



Page title	Page views	Page views %
Roma Education Fund – Closing the gap in educational outcomes between Roma and non-Roma	8,587	23.86%
REF in One Page – Roma Education Fund	2,170	6.03%
How To Apply Scholarship – Roma Education Fund	1,840	5.11%
Programmes – Roma Education Fund	1,719	4.78%
How to Apply – Roma Education Fund	1,319	3.66%
Publications – Roma Education Fund	1,201	3.34%
REF seeks a Consultant(s) for the preparation of a study on the impact of the RMUSP tertiary scholarship programme – Roma Education Fund	1,047	2.91%
Vacancies – Roma Education Fund	908	2.52%
Resources – Roma Education Fund	894	2.48%
Education Network – Roma Education Fund	726	2.02%
Others		43.29%

Nadja Kocic, REF Country Facilitator for Serbia, Participates in Organizing the Roma Women's Workshop 'Education of Roma women in Serbia'

In 2010, the OSCE Mission to Serbia supported the National Council of Romanian National Minority in Serbia by organizing a workshop about Roma women's and girls' education. With REF's partnership and donor coordination activities with OSCE, REF participated as partner in organizing this event.

The workshop 'Education of Roma Women in Serbia' was organized with the aim of providing an overview of achievements within education-related goals of the Decade of Roma Inclusion. Workshop participants included relevant stakeholders and experts in education, gender equality and human rights; a total of 110 attendees had the opportunity to analyze existing education policies, determine good practices, discuss acquired experiences and initiate agreements on key strategic steps. This national conference saw the highest number of participants from Serbia with representatives from other Decade of Roma Inclusion countries as well. General goal of the workshop: Define short- and long-term goals regarding the education of Roma Women in Serbia. This includes both women and girls; these goals aim to support the strategic planning of the Board for Education of the Roma National Minority Council, leading to the establishment of the universal right to quality education.

Specific goals of the workshop were:

- To promote gender equality and human rights with a special emphasis on education of Roma women in Serbia (women and girls).
- Exchange of good practices and successful initiatives and successful initiatives in the segment of education of Roma women in Serbia and Decade countries.
- Connecting different stakeholders in the segment of education of Roma women.

Workshop discussions focused on:

- The influence of tradition in Roma communities on the education of Roma women and girls (pupils and students) with special attention on early and arranged marriages.
- The improvement in the position of Roma women and girls (pupils and students) in the education system in Serbia.
- The role of Roma women as creators and bearers of change.

In order to encourage and facilitate cross country learning, REF invited guests from Montenegro including female representatives of Roma Women's NGOs. Staff from the Roma Scholarship Foundation presented their work with Roma women and girls, and discussed the latest educational and gender equality policy changes in Montenegro.

Anniversary of DH Case CEU Debate

On the third anniversary of the landmark *D.H. and Others v The Czech Republic* judgment, Central European University (CEU) hosted a discussion presented by the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) in association with the Human Rights Initiative (HRSI) on the segregation of Romani children in education.

As a key partner in the initial case, REF participated in this discussion regarding the status of the verdict three years after. A representative from REF addressed the issues of education segregation in the Czech Republic and other countries in the region, highlighting the scope of the issue as seen in the numerous cases segregation in education. This reality emphasizes the importance of the three landmark European Court of Human Rights judgments discussed during the debate: *D.H. and Others v The Czech Republic*, *Oršuš and Others v Croatia* and *Sampanis and Others v Greece*.

REIMBURSABLE GRANT PROGRAMME

This Programme provides support to Roma NGOs in accessing EU Structural Funds and other associated funds. An advance is provided to organizations which have been awarded grants from EU sources, allowing them to start activities before actual financing from the respective government agencies or the EU becomes available. Since 2006, the REF has helped 26 NGOs in three countries, i.e. the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Romania, to mobilize 16,547 million Euros of EU support with 454,842 Euros REF contribution. The Programme has been set up as a pilot facility available for the EU member states, but will now be extended for non-EU members, principally in the Western Balkans.

The REF is also lobbying the EU and the respective government agencies managing EU funds for procedures that allow NGOs easier access to these funds.

Following is a table illustrating the Reimbursable Grants activities for 2010. In comparison to 2009 our leveraging ratio was more than doubled (in 2009 it was 17) owing to further investments into Romanian structural fund projects.

TABLE 20. Reimbursable grants awarded, 2005–2010

#	Project ID	Contract Date	REF Grant Amount (Euros)	Amount Mobilized (Euros)	Status	Leveraging Ratio
1	REV HU 001	2006	14,607	73,350	fully reimbursed	5
2	REV HU 002	2006	12,708	63,510	fully reimbursed	5
3	REV HU 003	2006	13,837	69,187	waiting for reimbursement	5
4	REV HU 004	2006	14,393	71,972	waiting for reimbursement	5
5	REV HU 006	2007	20,000	109,099	fully reimbursed	5
6	REV HU 008	2007	30,000	814,727	fully reimbursed	27
7	REV HU 009	2007	10,000	69,579	fully reimbursed	7
8	REV HU 010	2007	13,600	68,080	waiting for reimbursement	5
9	REV HU 011	2007	10,000	74,600	waiting for reimbursement	7
10	REV HU 012	2007	10,000	74,000	fully reimbursed	7
11	REV HU 014	2007	12,000	72,000	fully reimbursed	6
12	REV HU 015	2007	10,000	60,000	fully reimbursed	6
13	REV HU 016	2007	10,000	64,596	fully reimbursed	6
14	REV HU 017	2008	8,000	50,000	partially reimbursed	5
15	REV HU 018	2008	10,800	81,544	waiting for reimbursement	8
16	REV HU 019	2008	6,400	70,000	waiting for reimbursement	11
17	REV HU 020	2008	18,792	241,000	waiting for reimbursement	13
18	REV SLO 001	2006	8,000	40,131	fully reimbursed	5
19	REV SLO 002	2006	23,920	119,600	fully reimbursed	5
20	REV SLO 003	2007	9,000	42,000	waiting for reimbursement	5
21	REV CZ 001	2007	18,785	93,926	waiting for reimbursement	5
22	REV RO 001	2009	35,000	5,000,000	under implementation	143
23	REV RO 002	2009	35,000	734,160	under implementation	21
24	REV RO 003	2009	35,000	3,252,753	under implementation	93
25	REV RO 004	2010	35,000	4,000,000	under implementation	114
26	REV RO 005	2010	30,000	1,137,400	under implementation	38
Total			454,842	16,547,214		36



PART II

THE 'A GOOD START'
PROJECT



PART II: THE 'A GOOD START' PROJECT

Mainstreaming the Access of Disadvantaged Roma Children to Quality ECEC, as part of the EU Roma Pilot project, 'A Good Start', 2010–2012

The 'A Good Start' (AGS) project is an excellent example of the scaling up of REF successful activities in early childhood development (ECD). Since 2005, REF has actively implemented projects promoting ECD. Through a successful application to the European Commission (EC) AGS provides an opportunity for more than 4000 Roma children to benefit from REF activities.

The implementation of the project began following the official grant signing ceremony with the European Commission in Brussels on 4 June 2010. Formal contract proceedings began with our international and local partners the official launch of the program was organized. The Kick-Off Event with an official press conference took place between 30 June–2 July 2010 and the 'A Good Start' (AGS) project started in Slovakia, Romania, Macedonia and Hungary.

Basic Data about AGS

The 'A Good Start' project is supported by the European Commission Directorate General for Regional Policy (DG Regio). It targets Roma and non-Roma children aged 0–6 years as well as their parents and caregivers. The project offers quality early childhood services in sixteen locations of four countries of the Roma Decade. The home-, community- and centre-based interventions employed through the 'A Good Start' project have undergone previous testing by the Roma Education Fund. The main aim of these interventions is to improve early childhood development outcomes for Roma and non-Roma children. The project has an explicit but not exclusive beneficiary target group.

Pre-School Education Matters

From age 2 all children benefit from pre-school.

The quality of preschool matters.

Part-time has equal benefit to full-time.

The effects of quality preschool education persist until at least the end of primary school.

High quality preschool education can protect a child against consequences of attending a low quality primary school.

Extracted from keynote presentation by Edward Melhuish, Birbeck, University of London

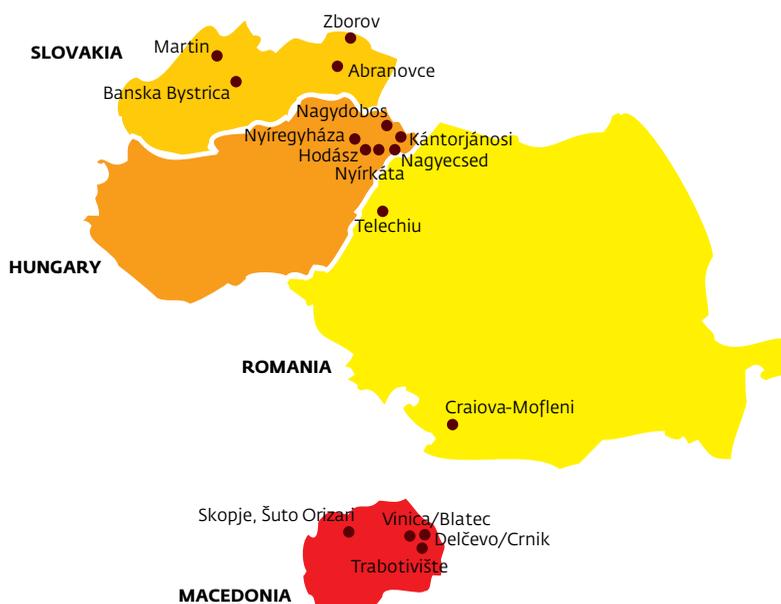
EU conference, Budapest 'Excellence and Equity in Early Childhood Education and Care'.

Improving accessibility and quality of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)

The interventions are adapted to the local conditions in the four participating countries: Slovakia, Romania, Macedonia and Hungary. The core activities target over 4,000 Roma and non-Roma children and their caretakers. The specific locations in the four countries include:

- Slovakia: Martin (urban), Banska Bystrica (urban), Abranovce (rural), Zborov (rural)
- Romania: Craiova – Mofleni neighbourhood (urban), Telechiu (rural)
- Macedonia: Skopje, Šuto Orizari (urban), Vinica/Blatec (urban), Trabotivište (rural), Delčevo/Crnik (rural)
- Hungary: Nyíregyháza (urban), Mátészalka micro region (5 small rural localities) Hodász, Nagyecsed, Nagydobos, Kántorjánosi, Nyírkáta

FIGURE 10. Map of AGS countries and localities



The budget provided by the European Commission DG Regio (95 percent) and the Network of European Foundations (5 percent) totals 2 million Euros. In order to ensure smooth operations, the Roma Education Fund has allocated additional resources for the project.

'Good quality pre-school is an essential component of the infrastructure for sustained economic development.'

Extracted from keynote presentation by Edward Melhuish, Birbeck, University of London

EU conference, Budapest 'Excellence and Equity in Early Childhood Education and Care'.

Managing the project

In addition to internal meetings held at the REF Budapest Office such as the Executive Committee and Policy Development Team meetings, Country Project Team meetings also took place in Slovakia, Romania, Macedonia and Hungary. Regarding project management consistency, the Pilot Operational Manual acts as a guiding document and ensures fluent and productive operations.

Difficulties and changes in localities in Hungary

Out of the six localities in Hungary, in Ópályi and in Mátészalka the 'A Good Start' project has encountered difficulties in regard to local commitment and support. In order to reach the originally planned indicators, the Pilot Management Team of the project assigned two other localities (on the basis of the ratio of socially disadvantaged children and undereducated parents among inhabitants), which are Kántorjános and Nyírkáta.

AGS partner organizations

REF's three international partners are:

- the Slovak Governance Institute (SGI),
- the International Step By Step Association (ISSA),
- the Fundacion Secretariado Gitano (FSG)

REF's twelve local partners are:

- Cultural association of Roma in Slovakia (KZRSR),
- Civic Association EQUAL CHANCES (Equal Chances),
- County Association of Roma Initiatives (KARI),
- Methodological and Pedagogical Centre Bratislava (MPC Bratislava) from Slovakia,
- Ruhama Foundation,
- Romani CRISS from Romania,
- National Roma Centrum (NRC),

- Roma Education Center 'Ambrela' (Ambrela),
- Humanitarian and Charitable Association of the Roma KHAM (KHAM) from Macedonia,
- National Charity Association for a Better Future (Better Future),
- Unity in Diversity Foundation (UDF),
- College of Nyíregyháza (College) from Hungary

AGS is a complex project with 15 partner organizations and an extensive, constant management system. The implementation of the project is based on a cooperative partnership between REF, three international partners and twelve local organizations, all of which play an active role in the social inclusion and education of Roma children in their own countries. While the Roma Education Fund has the overall responsibility for implementation, the International Step by Step Association (ISSA) provides expertise on early childhood development in the form of trainings provided to various stakeholders in the project. The Fundación Secretariado Gitano provides technical counseling and supports communication and dissemination assignments. The Slovak Governance Institute plays an important role in the creation of the Monitoring and Evaluation framework and the project's ongoing monitoring.

Through AGS, partner NGOs work with pre-schools and kindergartens to ensure quality teaching and good attendance as well as provide alternative education programmes when there is an absence of spaces for children. They provide advice and parenting skills training to parents to help them create a nurturing and supportive environment at home. Practical support is also offered to overcome barriers to education; children are provided transport and accompaniment to school, financial assistance for school enrolment fees and basic items needed for attending pre-school – slippers, pyjamas, clothing, shoes and school supplies. To improve the health of the children, community mediators and health mediators help families access health services, arrange vaccinations and provide hygiene kits. In some cases pediatricians and psychologists also provide support to the families.

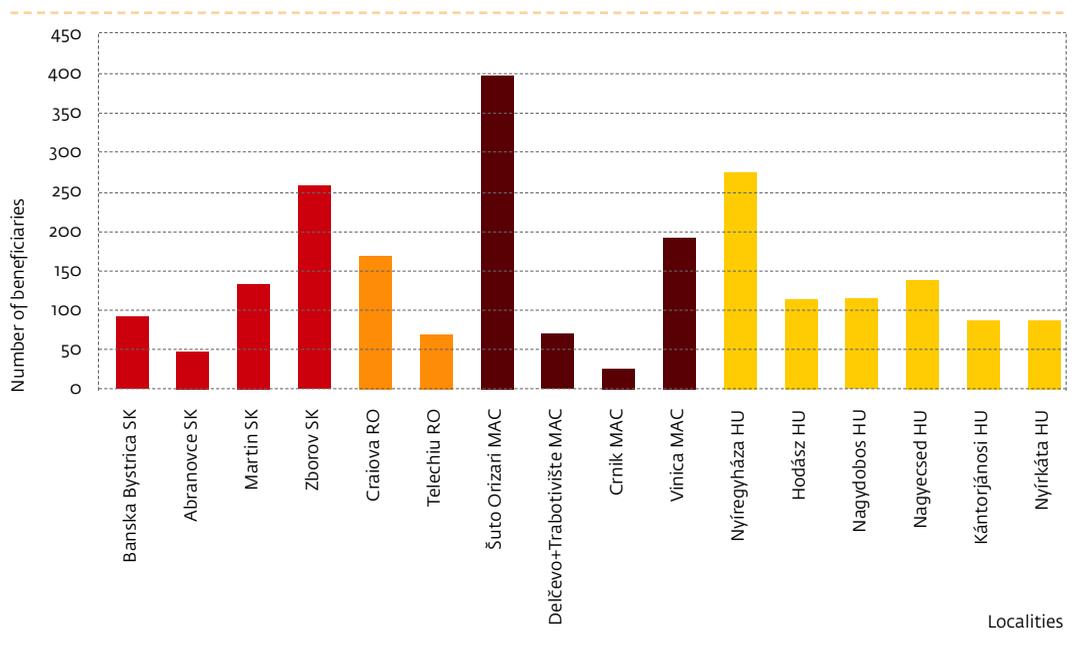
Quality assurance is essential within 'A Good Start.' As a pilot project, AGS aims to establish benchmarks for practices on early care and development for Roma children in Central and Eastern Europe. A major factor for success is well-trained, capable and committed personnel. Community mediators, health mediators and teachers are provided with training on early care and development by the International Step by Step Association. The teachers are provided with teaching methodologies, diagnostic tools and materials to ensure that they give the best possible opportunities to the children with an emphasis on promoting an intercultural approach to education. Community mediators meet regularly with the teachers to discuss problem issues and to provide them with guidance and support as needed. The mediators also meet regularly

with parents in Community Centres and during home visits, providing information and counselling. At the management level, there is continuous monitoring and support provided by REF to the project partners.

Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation

There is a lack of comprehensive and comparable data on Roma in the region. REF and its partners in the monitoring and evaluation team (Slovak Governance Institute, World Bank and UNDP) developed a Community Assessment tool in order to establish a baseline for each location. Partner NGOs carried out research on early care and development services in each project locality from primary and secondary sources. The Community Assessment data tables show the gaps in early care and development provision as well as what is needed to improve the situation. A household survey was designed to capture basic household information and provide insight into the education-related expectations and attitudes of the Roma parents. The survey has been applied to the parents involved in the project (where they or their children are 'recurrent beneficiaries' participating in a number of activities). Below is a table illustrating the number of families expected to be recurrent beneficiaries.

FIGURE 11. Number of recurring beneficiaries in AGS localities



Dissemination

As the dissemination of project proceedings is an important part of AGS, we developed the structure of the REF website in order to fully utilize it as a tool for broad communication about AGS. All important information is regularly uploaded to the REF website, which can be found at:

www.romaeducationfund.hu/good-start-eu-roma-pilot

A selection of concrete outputs of the 'A Good Start' project⁶

SLOVAKIA - achieved through partnership with and Programme management by the Cultural Association of Roma in Slovakia, the Civic Association Equal Chances and the County Association of Roma Initiatives.

- 147 home visits were conducted, reaching 85 families and 154 participants attended four community events in Banska Bystrica.
- 110 home visits were conducted and 30 mothers attended community motivation events in health and education in Abranovce.
- There were 380 home visits and a new class was established at the formal preschool in Zborov.
- Six community motivation meetings were held with 120–140 people attending in Martin.
- A working group was created, made up of eight elementary and kindergarten teachers, three parents, one employee from the Department of Social Affairs and Healthcare and one employee from the Department of Education, Culture and Sport.
- Altogether 580 children received material support to help them to attend pre-school in Slovakia.

ROMANIA – achieved through partnership with and Programme management by the Ruhama Foundation and the Romani CRISS from Romania.

- One Community Centre was furnished and the classroom was equipped for a children's education programme (regular weekly activities with at least 25 children at each have been delivered) and 26 people attended an ISSA training in Craiova.
- 52 children signed up for the Mofleni kindergarten in Craiova, based on teamwork delivered by the Trust Foundation, the Mofleni kindergarten teachers and school mediators.
- Children materials (books, games for kindergarten; 52 children bags; toys, 7 painted fairy tales posters; 3 promotional materials -banner, roll up, kindergarten name plate) were purchased in Craiova.
- A new kindergarten group was opened for children between 3–5 years old (24 children were enrolled into this group) and 20 children were enrolled in the existing public kindergarten.

⁶ Outputs are based on our partners' reports and cover the time period from June 2010 to December 2010.

MACEDONIA – achieved through partnership with and Programme management by the National Roma Centrum, the Roma Education Center ‘Ambrela’ and the Humanitarian and Charitable Association of the Roma KHAM.

- Four participants from NGO Ambrela and seven participants from NGO KHAM were trained to work as Roma community mediators.
- 22 kindergarten teachers from were trained on diversity (11 participants from Suto Orizari, six from Vinica, two from Delchevo and one from Crnik).
- 220 families were visited in Shuto Orizari.
- 189 families received regular home visits in Vinica, Delchevo and Crnik.
- 19 children were included in the preschool education in Delchevo.

HUNGARY – achieved through partnership with and Programme management by the National Charity Association for a Better Future, the Unity in Diversity Foundation and the College of Nyíregyháza.

- Six Roma mentors/mediators were trained and are working in the localities/settlements
- A total of 527 families received regular visits in six localities
- Nine ‘Your tale’ facilitators were trained, ten ‘Your tale’ groups of 8–15 participants, totalling over 100 participants, occurred on a weekly basis
- 54 students – from the Pedagogy Faculty of the College of Nyíregyháza – participated in ‘Your Tale’ sessions (resulting in a better understanding of the Roma)
- Over 1,200 children’s story books used and distributed amongst the participants of ‘Your tale’ sessions.
- 350 families were given elementary food packages at Christmas, donated by the Open Society Institute

Implementing ‘A Good Start’ in Hungary, by Eva Foldesi, REF Country Facilitator

Since the signing of the project agreement between REF and the European Commission Directorate General for Regional Policy in June 2010, an intense preparation and implementation work has been underway. Since taking on the management of the project as Country Facilitator for Hungary in September I am happy to report the realization of promising results and ongoing activities.

In Hungary, the project has been implemented in six locations (among the most disadvantaged) with an ultimate aim of enhancing the access to quality early-childhood care and pre-school services for 850 Roma children. From the beginning of the project, we have maintained a strong focus on community-building and on the unique local conditions in the field. In each project location, a different work scheme and approach has been developed adjusting appropriately to the context. Nevertheless, across the different AGS sites we have established a common foundation for the running of project activities. This core foundation

has been achieved by establishing a cooperation with local stakeholders, putting in place community mediators who have steady access to beneficiary families (via 1,000 door-to-door visits), creating 15 'Your Tale' groups (a story-telling mothers club that has proven to be a powerful social forum for mothers) and finally, facilitating volunteer sessions lead by parents in kindergartens.

Overall, AGS activities are occurring throughout the participating communities and are steadily becoming incorporated into the localities and everyday lives of beneficiary communities. One year remains for us to help these children in accessing quality services in order to provide them with a good start.

Events, Press Conferences, Transnational Workshops and Trainings held through December 2010

- A Press Conference with a three-day Kick-Off Event was held from June 30–July 2 2010 in Budapest. All of the international and local partners attended.
- An extensive Data Collection, Monitoring and Evaluation Training took place from 31 August–2 September 2010.
- Four Country Launch Events took place with extensive media coverage; high level politicians, decision makers and early childhood development experts attended.
- Two Transnational Workshops and many internal meetings were conducted (Pilot Management Team meetings, Executive Committee meetings, Policy Development Team meetings, etc.)

The Story of an AGS Beneficiary

Mariann Kóka, one of the mentors participating in the AGS project, working as a connector between the Roma parents, children and the non-Roma community, has kindly offered to share her success story with REF and its readers.

My name is Mariann Kóka, I am a Romani woman and I am 26. I live with my family in Tiszavasvári, a small town in the East of Hungary. I was very happy when Szilvia Pallaghy and Anasztázia Nagy, programme managers of the 'A Good Start' project, invited me to take part in the programme as a mentor. A Romani settlement known as the Guszev in the city of Nyíregyháza was assigned to me.

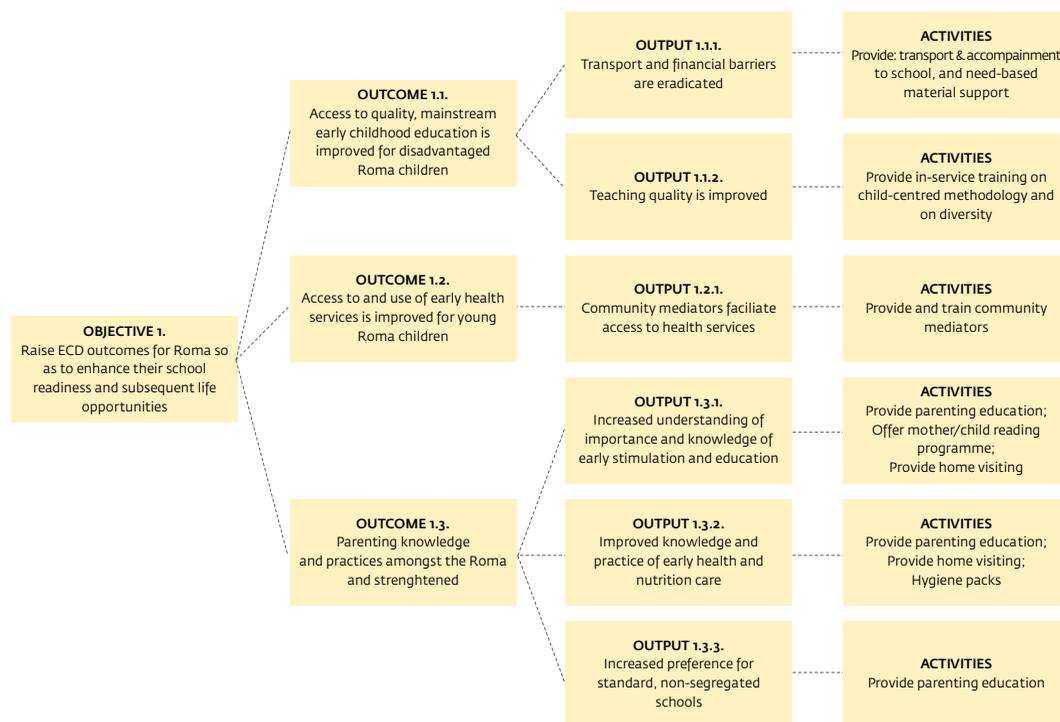
The goal of the project is early child development for those children who live in deep poverty in Romani settlements, often in inhuman conditions. In the framework of the programme, my task is to visit the families and persuade them how important it is for a child to start attending pre-school from the age of 3. This task is very close to my heart since I myself used to be a child, but I was 'lucky': my parents realized that it was important for a child to grow up and develop in a community from a very early age. I was as little as 2 years old when I was enrolled in a day-nursery. What I can say is that my life developed differently

from the lives of those peers of mine who did not attend pre-school, because by the time I started school I had obtained knowledge of many things, so I was able to learn with non-Roma throughout the 8 grades of the elementary school. There were several of us, Roma, who started secondary school, but, unfortunately enough, it was only me who succeeded in receiving a secondary school certificate. I was the only Roma in the group who started and graduated from college. My parents were very proud of me. It was a really great thing since I was the second Romani person in town who had received college education.

It was in the framework of the after-school activities programme that I had an opportunity to mentor Romani children. During mentoring, the children kept asking questions about my college years. They thought they would never be able to make it. As I was telling them my story, I came to realize that it is exactly through my own example that I shall convince them to do it. Later, I was very happy when several of them, following a successful completion of secondary education, were admitted to colleges. A couple of years have passed since then, and soon these youngsters will become young Romani college graduates.

This is why I again agreed to take a role as a mentor in this programme, because I understand that if, through the after-school activities, a certain proportion of students can receive help, even more positive results can be achieved. Through my own example, I am probably able to better demonstrate that they really can make a change, and that their children can have a better life, just let us help. I would like to see that, as a result of the programme; all children in the Guszev neighbourhood attend pre-school education and develop in a healthy way. If we manage to achieve this, we will be successful.

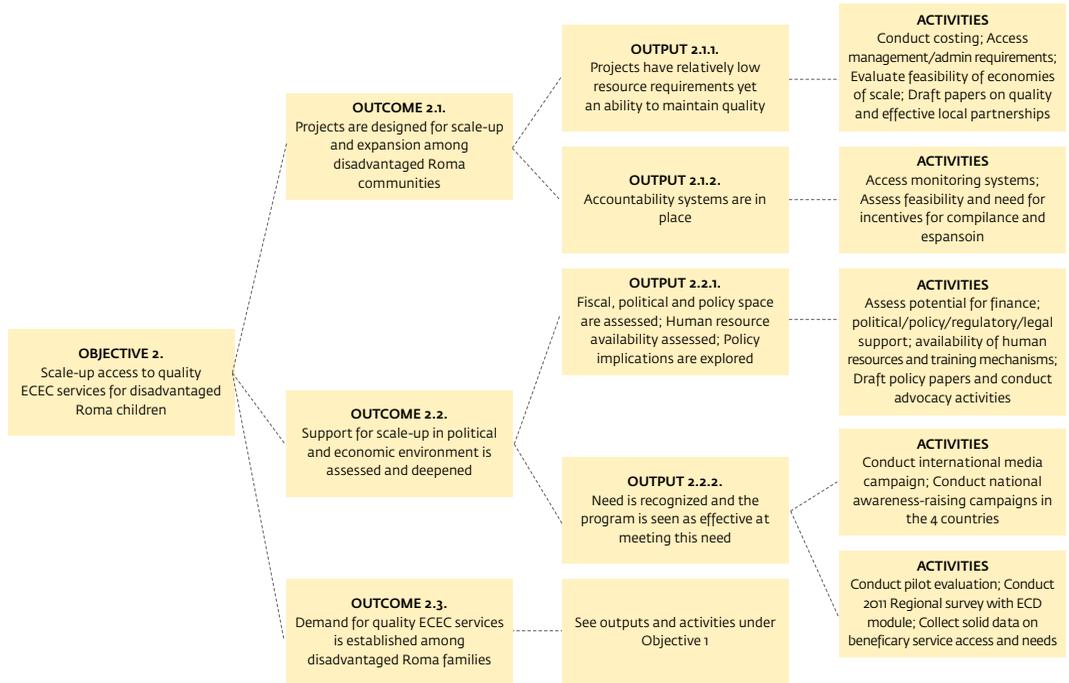
FIGURE 12. Project logframe



To help monitor and evaluate 'A Good Start', the Roma Education Fund together with colleagues from the Slovakian Governance Institute, the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) developed visual logframes. Logframes show the project logic; if the design makes sense, successful delivery of the activities should lead to the planned outcomes. They help keep the focus during implementation and evaluation on the impact.

Above is the project summary logframe for 'A Good Start'. It summarizes the project design, explains what will be achieved and illustrates how it will be achieved, without specific data. We have also developed country-specific logframes that clearly show the activities in each location and their intended outputs and outcomes - these are available on REF's website. Country-specific logframes act as a monitoring and reporting tool, enabling comparisons between planned and actual results.

FIGURE 13. Project logframe



The **Project Logframe** is just one of the monitoring and evaluation tools utilized in the 'A Good Start' (AGS) project. Additional tools employed include a Community Assessment, a Household Survey and Indicator Worksheets. The **Community Assessment** is a data table that establishes a baseline of information on Early Childhood Development (ECD) services in each project locality. The majority of the information is quantitative and its purpose is to help determine gaps in early care and development provision. This data subsequently indicates what is needed to improve the situation in terms of ECD and helps to measure the results of the project. The **Household Survey** is a questionnaire that captures basic household information and provides insight into the education related expectations and attitudes of the Roma parents. This tool will be used to assess conditions early in the project (September 2010) and at the end of the project (June 2012). Finally, the **Indicator Worksheets** measure the short, medium and long-term effects of the project. These worksheets contain aggregate data, including information such as the number of children enrolled and vaccinated and the number of parents involved in health mediation.

PART III

THE ROMANIA OFFICE



PART III: THE ROMANIA OFFICE

In 2010, Roma Education Fund Romania (REF Romania) became fully operational. The Country Director, Eugen Crai was recruited and REF Romania Office has started the implementation of all four European Structural Funds (ESF) projects leveraging approximately 18 million Euros for Roma children and youth education over the coming three years.

With a current staffing capacity of 24 members, REF Romania will soon expand to fulfill the human resources demands of the ESF-funded projects. Apart from the Country Director, the senior management consists of Senior Managers (project managers of each ESF funded project), a Finance and Administration Manager and a Legal Adviser. Demographically and excluding the Country Director, 66,7 percent of senior managers are Roma and 33,3 percent are non-Roma with 50 percent being male and 50 percent female. For the full staff, excluding the Country Director, 46 percent are Roma and 54 percent non-Roma, with 37,5 percent being male and 62,5 percent female.

REF Romania manages two ESF-funded projects as the main project applicant – ‘School after School’ and ‘Equal Opportunities in Education’. The two remaining ESF projects for which REF serves as implementing partner are entitled ‘Roma Youth Competitive on Labour Market’ and ‘Roma Health Scholarship Project’. (See Table 21)

The School after School Project aims to increase the enrollment and academic success in primary education for 2000 children at risk from early school drop-out. The Equal Opportunities in Education Project aims to increase school success rate for 1250 Roma children in urban and rural areas. REF is partner in other two projects: The Roma Youth Competitive on the Labour Market Project and the Roma Health Scholarship Project aims at facilitating the access of the Roma youth on the labour market.

The implementation of the two ESF-funded projects where REF Romania is the main applicant started in September 2010. The implementation of Roma Youth Competitive on the Labour Market started in December 2010 and that of Roma Health Scholarship Project in January 2011.

TABLE 21. ESF-funded projects managed by the REF Romania Office

Project Title	REF RO Status	Duration (months)	Total Value of ESF Projects (thousands of Euros)
1. School after School	Main applicant	36	5 799
2. Equal Opportunities in Education	Main applicant	36	5 387
3. Roma Youth Competitive on Labour Market	Implementing partner <i>[Main appl.: Resource Centre for Roma Communities CRCR]</i>	24	3 300
4. Roma Health Scholarship	Implementing partner <i>[Main appl.: Media Monitoring Agency]</i>	36	4 560
Total			19 046

In addition to the ESF-funded Projects, REF Romania runs the Grants Programme component which is subdivided into two main components:

1. The funding of classical grant projects that REF is supporting in Romania. These projects are funded by REF and implemented by local NGOs. REF's Romanian Country Facilitator is liaising with the NGOs and supervises the implementation of these projects. Within the reporting period there were five projects active in Romania (with Roma Women Association, Ruhama Foundation, Matias NGO, Centre for Education and Social Development and Resource Centre for Roma Communities). Moreover, the Country Facilitator supervises the implementation of the AGS Project in two locations in Romania (Telechiu, Bihor County and Craiova, Dolj County).
2. The award of grants allocated by REF Switzerland for the development of the capacity of REF Romania partners for the implementation of the ESF funded projects. Three grant agreements have been signed to date by REF Romania with the following partners (respective grant amounts in parenthesis):
 - O Del Amentza (33,217 Euros)
 - Centre for Education and Social Development (37,172 Euros)
 - Amare Rromentza (22,390 Euros)

Last, but not least, REF Romania is managing the emerging Roma NGO Platform on European Structural Funds Projects. The aim of the Roma NGO Platform on ESF is to provide assistance to Roma NGOs in the design and implementation of ESF-funded projects, to share best practices related to the implementation of such projects and to coagulate a Roma voice in relation to the Romanian Managing Authority and intermediate implementing bodies of the Managing Authority.

THE HARLEM CHILDREN ZONE EXPERIENCE - AN REF SITE VISIT

The Hungarian American Embassy together with Open Society Institute New York organized a working conference to the United States, to visit and discuss the Harlem Children Zone (HCZ) program. Two REF staff members had the opportunity to participate in this peer learning program.

HCZ is arguably one of the most ambitious social experiments, aiming to alleviate poverty and increase the educational achievement of the poorest minority children. HCZ combines reform-minded charter schools with a web of community services created for children from birth to college graduation. HCZ intervention is designed to ensure that the social environment outside of school is positive and supportive. This provides a unique laboratory to understand whether communities, schools or a combination of the two are the main drivers of student achievement.

Understanding the school-community dynamic in student achievement is of tremendous importance for domestic policy as it goes to the heart of how communities and public goods should be allocated to alleviate racial and economic inequality. HCZ has over 20 programs designed to help and empower individuals in the 97 blocks of the Harlem community. These programmatic investments include early childhood programs (such as Head Start); public elementary-, middle- and high-school programs (such as karate, dance, after-school tutoring); a college-success office; and family, community and health programs; foster-care prevention services. Currently, REF supports several similar activities in the Decade of Roma Inclusion countries and participates in similar collaborations, such as our partnership with the Head Start/ISSA in four countries.

The site visit to Harlem Children Zone was an excellent learning opportunity that will benefit all REF staff and the programmes that we support. Of course, one cannot compare the size and measures between REF activities and those occurring in Harlem. However, this knowledge-sharing visit strengthened us and reaffirmed that our priorities are on the right track. Just as with the children in Harlem, it is only with strong community involvement, mutually supportive interventions and charismatic and professional local staff that we can reach the educational outcomes for Roma children that we strive for.





PART IV
**DONOR COORDINATION
AND PARTNERSHIPS**



PART IV: DONOR COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

2010 was a complex and challenging year for the Roma Education Fund, marked by the undertaking of a number of new strategic initiatives through the implementation of REF network, which composed of the Swiss, Hungarian and Romanian Foundations.

After a successful donor conference in November 2009, REF was ensured financially with having in a 25.5 million Euro funding commitment for the forthcoming years but had to start working on those activities which indicated to reach high number of beneficiaries according to its strategy for 2010–2015.

Another important milestone in 2010 was REF Romania's successful application for structural funds for four projects (two projects as the main applicant and two as a strategic partner). In addition to the launching of these projects, in 2010, REF Romania has developed a portfolio of activities with a total funding of 14.5 million Euros for a three-year period. The Romanian Foundation started its activities with the involvement of well-known Roma NGOs, Ministry of Education and other strategic partners.

The Roma Education Fund has also been intensively engaged in the implementation of the 'A Good Start' project (AGS) with 15 partners and the support of the European Union. As part of this project, a series of launch events were held in four target countries. Additionally, in cooperation with REF's international partners, the UNDP and the World Bank provided professional trainings for all stakeholders in order to have well-prepared data for monitoring beneficiary achievements. The overall budget of this EU Roma pilot (AGS) project has already reached 2,034,000 Euros for a 22-month period.

In summary, REF closed 2010 with a positive balance and has great potential to maintain its operations at the same disbursement rate in the years to come. We continue to work actively to meet our 2011 financial goals and to secure our operations through the end of the Decade of Roma Inclusion. Our current challenge is to secure 14 million Euros in order to ensure a stable and controlled cash flow for the smooth operation of our Programmes and network. To date, our hard work and planning has provided us with a

degree of financial assurance in the form of a 1.3 million Euros surplus. Nevertheless, in order to continue to make progress towards achieving the significant progress yet to be made in the inclusion of all Roma in education, REF must pursue and acquire further involvement of its strategic partners, dedicating special attention to its new initiatives in Romania and with European Union and working hard on fund raising and donor harmonization.

Evaluation of the Budget and Financial Year

REF closed 2010 with a positive balance, as seen in Table 22. We reached the forecasted 1.35 million Euros financial surplus due to incoming funds after the 2009 Donor Conference.

REF management is dedicated to adhering to approved budgets and preventing overspending on any line of the budget. In order to avoid unforeseen financial issues, REF management integrated a risk management system into our operations, which will afford us greater control over and opportunity to identify and address potential financial risks.

Looking forward to 2011, it is anticipated that the implementation of the Romanian Office and the 'A Good Start' project will represent the largest financial commitments in the near future. In addition, REF will continue to expand existing programmes, allocate sufficient fund to growing needs, as well as develop new initiatives.

TABLE 22. Management report, 2010 and forecast for 2011

	2010 Actual*	2011 Forecast
Estimated Income from donors	8,218,454	13,778,000
Reimbursement of grants	215,210	–
Re-payment of reimbursable grants	26,000	100,000
Interest income	3,152	
Available balance from previous year	365,521	1,351,914
Total available	8,828,337	15,229,914
Administrative expenses	926,705	1,003,880
Grant commitments made in current year	1,945,612	3,064,005
Funds committed for other activities		
– Communications	285,100	429,127
– Policy development & Capacity Building	874,933	1,163,803
– Tertiary Scholarships	2,328,624	2,995,783
– Reimbursable grant mechanism**	65,000	210,000
– Demjan projects	NA	168,000
– REF Romania		
– 2 ESF projects in lead	211,376	2,864,784
– 2 ESF projects as a partner	4,340	516,824
– Capacity building and platform	79,309	386,510
– EU Roma Pilot	755,424	1,056,000
Total budget commitments	7,476,423	13,858,716
Financial Surplus (+) or Deficit (–) at year end	1,351,914	1,371,1986

* this is not an audited report, the audited management report will be issued 31 May 2011

** this management report includes reimbursable grants as an expense unlike the consolidated management report, which includes them as an open obligation outside the expenses

Fundraising, Donor Harmonization and the Challenge Fund

REF continued to actively pursue our fundraising goals following the successful 2009 Donor Conference; owing to these efforts, we were able to welcome a number of new and returning donors in 2010 from Finland, Spain, the Tempus Foundation and the Romanian Structural Funds Programme.

Also in 2010, REF management organized an operative meeting for all bilateral donors (SIDA, DFID, Austria, Finland, and Switzerland SDC) in order to facilitate synergy among the goals and expected outcomes of various donors. The meeting in Vienna produced a logframe approved by all bilateral donors, which will ensure and measure through professional indicators a significant number of beneficiaries in the western Balkan counties.

At the 2009 Brussels Donor Conference, Mr. George Soros announced a fundraising challenge for REF in respect of fundraising goals – upon the successful acquisition of a 20 million USD budgetary income, Mr. Soros will fund REF with an additional 5 million USD. REF is committed to meeting this challenge in 2011 and is driven by the promise of realizing additional resources to invest in our mission and beneficiaries.

TABLE 23. Tally of new and existing pledges following donor conference

I. Tally of Pledges after the conference – (including new as well as existing pledges)						
Donor	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
Austria government	1,000					1,000
Sweden SIDA		980	485	485		1,950
EVZ Stiftung – Germany	95	180	180	180	180	815
United Kingdom DFID	1,334					1,334
Network of European Foundations	200	100	100	100	100	600
Switzerland SDC	247	500	500	500	500	2,247
Sándor Demján Foundation – Hungary		500				500
Open Society Institute – Health Program		1,000				1,000
Open Society Institute	3,945	4,814	3,489	3,489	3,489	19,226
AOSI	20					20
World Bank	365	365	365	365	365	1,825
WB Community Fund	31					31
Finland		100				100
Spain	12					12
Tempus Foundation	2	3				5
REF Romania		3,665	1,976	3,152	2,394	11,187
ESF Romania – Health Program and Labour Program		615	444	549	44	1,652
EU Roma Pilot	956	956				1,912
WB to EU pilot	6					6
Total in thousand EUR	8,214	13,778	7,539	8,820	7,072	45,423
<i>In thousand USD</i>	11,772	19,747	10,805	12,641	10,136	65,099

* Exchange rate: 1.4332

TABLE 24. Income received, 2005–2010

Thousand EUR							
Donor	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Total
CIDA Canada	701	–	–	–	–	–	701
Austrian Government	–	–	–	–	–	1,000	1,000
DFID United Kingdom	291	–	–	424	–	1,334	2,049
Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	700	300	710	88	–	–	1,798
European Development Bank	560	–	–	–	–	–	560
EVZ	–	–	–	112	154	95	361
German Government	–	–	450	–	1,550	–	2,000
Government of Spain	–	–	80	80	–	12	172
Hellenic AID Greece	110	–	–	–	–	–	110
Ireland Development Cooperation	100	100	–	–	–	–	200
James D. Wolfensohn Roma Study Schol.	–	8	–	–	–	–	8
Network of European Foundations	–	99	200	200	400	200	1,099
Nicolae Gheorghe	–	3	–	–	–	–	3
Nicolas Burnett	–	20	–	–	–	–	20
Open Society Institute (incl. AOSI)	1,304	2,669	2,132	3,559	2,961	3,965	16,590
Parishioners of St Thomas	–	–	–	0	–	–	0
Putumayo World Music, Inc.	–	–	1	0	–	–	1
Raiffeisenbank Hungary	–	–	–	4	–	–	4
SIDA Sweden	–	423	432	551	573	–	1,979
Slovenian Ministry for Foreign Affairs	10	–	–	10	–	–	20
Swiss Agency for Development and Co.	405	400	473	182	368	247	2,075
William H. Newton-Smith	–	1	–	–	–	–	1
World Bank Community Connection	–	–	6	4	15	31	56
European Commission (EU Roma pilot)	–	–	–	–	–	956	956
World Bank IBRD (incl. AGS)	764	1,654	1,545	799	–	371	5,133
Yehudi Menuhin Foundation	–	–	–	2	–	–	2
Hungarian Gov't (MACIKA)	–	–	147	–	–	–	147
Hungarian Gov't (Norwegian Fund)	–	–	–	5	–	–	5
Hungarian Gov't (Tempus Public Found.)	–	–	–	–	1	2	3
Grand Total	4,945	5,677	6,176	6,020	6,022	8,213	37,053

REF Network Growth

An analysis of REF income between 2009 and 2011 illustrates a solid increase that can be attributed to the fundraising efforts of the entire network. As compared to 2009, 2011 has seen financial growth of nearly 130 percent; this figure is consistent with REF's Strategic Directions for 2010–2015. Moving into 2011, our management will continue to face additional challenges and raise funds in our ongoing pursuit of the goals of our strategy.

TABLE 25. Total and increase in income, 2009–2011

	2009	2010	2011
Total income	6 022	8 218*	13 778
Increase in %	–	36,5%	67,6%

* Includes consultancy income EUR 4,500

Possible alternatives to bridge the financial gap of the mid-term strategy

In the current financial environment, REF has had to shift its fund-raising strategy, focusing on the following main directions:

- Work with past donors and encourage an extension of their contributions (Netherlands, Spain, Germany).
- Engage new EU member states (Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Bulgaria) as new donors and involve them through the newly established World Bank Multi-Donor Trust Fund.
- Explore eligibility for EU Structural Funds in countries where new local office may be located, such as Bulgaria and Slovakia.
- Work on scaling-up the EU Roma Pilot (AGS) project with the European Commission.
- Mobilize more private sector resources, especially from foundations and companies.
- Escalate our tailor-made fundraising for the Scholarship Programme and organize a special donor conference for this programme.

Being on the way of the prosperity of REF network, we need to consider the risks of the augment and tackle all issues with the support of our strategic partners.

Confession of a Roma girl

Azamina Ferhatović is a Roma girl from Bosnia and attends 7th grade in the project Primary School 'Ivan Goran Kovačić' in Gradacac, from Bosnia. She is an excellent pupil and her mother is a member of Parents' Council in this school. The pupil won a prize for the best literary work at the open competition of the 'Tuzlanski list' newspaper.

Today, my teacher told me to write something about the life of the Roma people. She told me exactly like this: 'Azamina, you are the one who wrote about this topic in the most sincere way because nobody can write about you like you can do it yourself'. I am going to write about myself, Azamina, as a Roma pupil. I still have fresh memories of coming to this school for the first time. I remember school children getting out of our way to let us pass. They were afraid of us touching them. They turned their heads away from us, the Roma. Some were sneering, some were pointing at us. I felt a great fear. I looked down at my torn shoes. I wanted to turn away and run into the protection of my house, the house covered by nylon, but my house. Some Roma children do not go to school because they have nothing to put on. The good thing is that I did not give up. Then, I talked to one teacher. She liked my answers and said: 'You will be mine. I'll take you directly to the third grade of an-eight-year elementary school. The fact that you told me you wanted to study and accomplish something in your life was important to me.'

And the first day in 4th-a class?! The teacher brought me into the classroom. If she did not hug me I would crush down because my knees were trembling. She told the children: 'We have a new pupil. Her name is Azamina. She is Roma. I already like her and you will, too, for sure. Look how beautiful she is. She can't write or read, but you are going to help me teach her'. Children were looking at me frowningly. The teacher put me into the first desk. She did not ask me anything. We were working together every day, before and after classes. I absorbed her every word. In the beginning, children did not approach my desk. The teacher told me once that something smelled weirdly. I knew that she wanted to say that something stunk. But I had a bath. To be honest, I used cold water, because we did not have a bathroom then. She approached me and realized that the smell was coming out of my schoolbag that my mum took from a garbage container. She went to the bookshop and bought me a new one, a beautiful schoolbag that smelled, smelled of something unknown to me, of something new. She used to buy me a sandwich every day. I learned letters. I was already coming out to the board. Vedad gladly wanted to sit next to me.

Then my birthday! My class prepared a surprise for me. Arslan's mother brought me a birthday cake. They put a crown on my head. They took photographs of us. We were dancing and singing; I arrived home with arms full of presents. I think that only at school, in this class, I realized what love is, because that beautiful feeling in my soul, when entering now the fourth grade, is nothing but love!

The teacher took me to the school in nature. For five days. I was silent during the trip because I thought that nobody would sleep with me because I am Gipsy. I remember my teacher's words: 'Who would like to share a bedroom with Azemina?!' 'I will', answered Anamarija, a poor girl who does not have a father. Thank her, because I like her even more now. I am 12 now. Starting school I started to be ashamed even though I know that it was not my fault for being a Roma girl.

My parents do not work. However, we, four children, are lucky because my mum completed three years of education and she is a bit different. She goes with my father to collect iron. We often beg, because we do not have food. My family is lucky because I go to school. Now, my teacher is conducting a humanitarian action, together with the whole class, for covering our house. And she will succeed. I am the oldest child, but I do not smile often. Maybe I will smile when our house is covered and when we are not afraid of rain and lightning anymore. I would like to complete my studies and accomplish something in my life, so that my children would not beg and would live in a beautiful house.

I am a straight A-scholar. I will be always grateful to my teacher and to all my peers from the 4th-a class. We are 31 in class. When I grow up, I will help everyone, especially my teacher. I am afraid of transferring into the fifth grade. Now I send a message to my brothers, to people, not to spare spreading love, because love opens the heart, and I am rich in love of each child from the 4th-a!



LETTER
FROM
THE
DIRECTOR

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

In my remarks last year, I highlighted the shift that is taking place in REF as it emerges from the initial phase of its existence and sets itself new and ambitious goals.

The core of REF's new strategy is to focus its efforts on taking activities to a much larger scale, through leveraging resources and partnerships with others, for greater impact on more Roma children. I am proud to report that the A Good Start project begun in 2009 has continued into 2010. You can see clear evidence in the rest of this Report of this shift in REF's operations.

What is so exciting about these developments is that this puts REF at the forefront of answering the most important question in Roma education: what does it take to implement successful projects on a major scale? What makes this question difficult to answer is that it is not simply a question of multiplication. An NGO that provides good quality tutorial support for 100 Roma children in two schools might use four tutors, who are supported by a part-time (25 percent) manager, part-time (50 percent) administrator, and a few hours (10 percent) of a bookkeeper/accountant. However, providing tutorial support to 10,000 Roma children does not simply require 400 tutors, 25 full-time managers, 50 administrators and 10 full-time bookkeepers. Instead it requires a different set of institutional actors and ways of organising activities, and places new demands on monitoring and evaluation when the lives of 10,000 children are being affected. Moreover, it also requires political will to legitimise such a large intervention. REF is uniquely placed to try to answer these questions; and the work in which it is now engaged will be key instruments for providing some answers. Many eyes will therefore be on REF as it implements these activities with its partners.

The work REF has done over the last couple of years has brought into sharp relief some key issues, notably how to identify the best ways to spend finite resources. It is clear that REF should not aim to be the sole financier of Roma education – it is not practical to raise the required resources and, more importantly, it would absolve governments of fulfilling their responsibilities. But even with its current significant funds, REF faces difficult choices about the most effective use of resources. It is important that REF continues to be open about the criteria and evidence it uses to make these choices.

Over the course of 2010, there have also been some significant changes in the personnel associated with REF, as this Report documents. Staff transitions are never easy for an organisation, and it is a tremendous tribute to the staff that so much has been achieved despite the comings and goings and the inevitable disruption that that causes. The staff have demonstrated, once again, their level of professionalism and commitment which makes being the Director so rewarding.

Finally, I would like to thank Pierre Gassman for stepping in to serve as Interim Director after I left REF, and ensure a high degree of continuity in REF's operations at such an important time.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tobias Linden', with a stylized, cursive script.

Tobias Linden
Director

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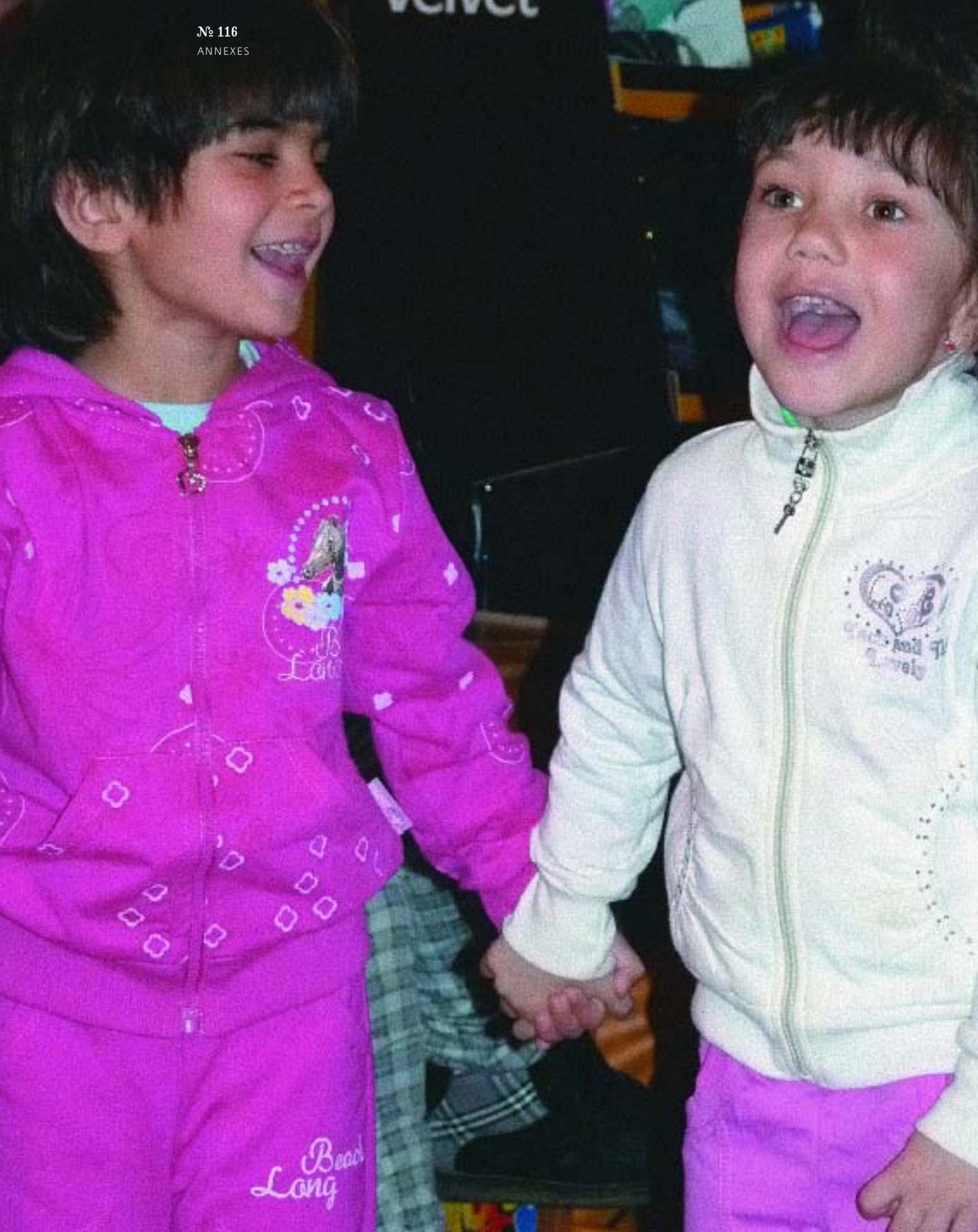
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1. Boards

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Hungarian Governing Board

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2. REF Staff and Administration

REF staff Budapest Headquarters

REF staff Romania Office

REF country facilitators

3. Grant Tables

4. REF Participation in International Events

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THE GOVERNING BOARDS OF REF

The Roma Education Fund (REF) consist of a Swiss, a Hungarian, and as of April 2009 a Romanian Foundation, with a Romanian Board. Each foundation is overseen by a separate Governing Board, their roles and areas of cooperation has been settled in a Memorandum of Agreement that was agreed by all three boards in April 2009.

THE SWISS FOUNDATION'S GOVERNING BOARD

The Swiss Foundation's Governing Board is responsible for the overview of the REF's general operations and the approval of grants and projects. In accordance with the statutes and by-laws of the REF, the Swiss Foundation's Governing Board consists of eight members, appointed in the following manner:

- The Open Society Institute appoints one member in its role as founder of REF.
- The World Bank appoints one member in its role as founder of REF.
- The Open Society Institute and the World Bank mutually agree on the appointment of a member who is a Swiss national. (Swiss law requires a Swiss national on the Governing Board.)
- The Open Society Institute and the World Bank appoint, on the basis of a transparent process, three members of Roma origin.
- The two largest public donors to REF apart from the founding members – whether governments or multilateral organisations – are invited by the founding members to appoint one member each.
- The largest private donor or consortium of private donors of REF is invited by the founding members to appoint a member.

The Swiss Foundation's Governing Board meets regularly, approximately four times a year. The Board's members mutually agree on the appointment of one member as Chair. The Chair organises the Swiss Foundation's Governing Board meetings and proposes their agenda.

The primary responsibilities of the Governing Board are as follows:

- Setting REF's policies.
- Approval and amendment, as necessary, of REF's operations guidelines, and internal policies.
- Selection of REF Director.
- Approval of REF's annual budgets.
- Approval of REF's annual financial audits.
- Resolution of issues confronting REF, as necessary.
- Approval of projects and programmes.

1. BOARDS

SWISS GOVERNING BOARD

Costel Bercus

Chair of REF Board



Costel Bercus is a Romanian Roma, graduated in International Relations and European Studies from the Spiru Haret University in Bucharest. Since 1997, he has been working as a human rights activist with Romani CRISS (Roma Center for Social Interventions and Studies), which is a well-known human rights organization in Romania. In 2000, he was appointed Executive Director of Romani CRISS, which made him exposed to extensive international activities and ultimately led to his appointment in 2005 as Board Member of the Roma Education Fund (REF). The same year, he was asked to take the Chairmanship of the REF Board which he is carrying on still today. Between 2006 and 2008, he was leading the Roma Civic Alliance of Romania, a network organization linking over twenty Roma NGOs in Romania. He has also worked as an international consultant providing technical assistance in policy development on Roma inclusion for several countries in the Western Balkans and Romania, commissioned by different international development agencies.

Rob Kushen

Vice-Chair



Since 2008, Robert Kushen has been the Managing Director of the European Roma Rights Centre, a public interest legal advocacy organization dedicated to challenging discrimination and promoting equality of Roma throughout Europe. From 1996–99 and 2003–07, he served in a number of positions at the Open Society Institute, including Director of International Operations from 2004–07. From 1999 to 2002 he served as Executive Director of Doctors of the World ('DOW'), a non-governmental organization committed to addressing health care problems caused by human rights abuses in the U.S. and around the world. From 1991–1996, he served in the Office of the Legal Adviser of the U.S. Department of State, where he worked as counsel to the bureau on counterterrorism, liaison to the International Criminal Tribunals for Yugoslavia and Rwanda, and negotiated a number of international agreements in the areas of scientific and environmental cooperation. Rob's experience on Roma issues includes the establishment while at DOW of health education

and service delivery programs addressing tuberculosis and maternal child health care for Roma, Ashkalia and Egyptian people in Kosovo. He has served as a member of OSI's Roma Advisory Board since 2004, which is responsible for oversight of all of OSI's Roma programming, and is presently the Chair of that Board.



Yvana Enzler

Yvana Enzler is currently the Swiss Ambassador in Albania. She joined the Swiss diplomatic service in 1979 and was posted in Berne (1979–80), Brussels (1980–81), Berne (1981–88), Rome (1988–91), Washington (1991–95) and again Berne (1995–98). From 1998 to 2002 she was Deputy Head of Mission at the Swiss Embassy in Sarajevo and, from 2002 to 2007, Head of the Swiss Liaison Office in Pristina (Kosovo). She holds a Master Degree in Political Sciences from the University of Lausanne (Switzerland) and a M.A.L.S. from Georgetown University in Washington D.C. (U.S.A.)



Pierre Gassmann

Pierre Gassmann is a Swiss National. Holds an MBA (INSEAD) and an MA of the Graduate Institute for International Relations in Geneva. He worked for ten years in the private sector, and then, for 25 years in senior management positions at the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), namely as Head of Operations for Eastern Europe. He has served as program advisor and lecturer at the Program for Humanitarian Policy and Conflict Research (HPCR) at Harvard University and at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP). He has been a consultant to the International Labour Office (ILO), the Swiss MFA, the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC) and the United Nations Works and Reconstruction Agency (UNWRA). He is an associate of the WolfGroup Consultants.

Henna Huttu



Henna Huttu is a Finnish Roma Activist, President of the Fintiko Romano Forum (Finnish National Roma Forum) and NGO Roma of the Northern Finland. She has studied on the International Master of Education programme at the University of Oulu and specialized on intercultural education and special education. She has worked at the Finnish national Board of Education Roma Education Unit in 2000–2002 and from 2006 onwards as a permanent Roma specialist at the Advisory Board of Roma Matters in the Provincial State Office of Northern Finland. She has published articles on variety of matters concerning Education of the Roma, including teaching materials for Romani.



Livia Járóka

Livia Járóka has been a member of the European Parliament for Hungary since 2004. She is a member of the group of the European People's Party and the European Democrats (ePP-ed). She serves on the Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) and the Civil Liberties, Justice, and Home Affairs (LIBE) committees in the Parliament. Járóka serves as the ePP's deputy coordinator for the FEMM committee. Livia Járóka is also the first Roma woman to be elected to the European Parliament. She was also named a Young Global Leader in 2006 by the Forum of Young Global Leaders and the World Economic Forum. Járóka also won the 2006 MEP award in the category of justice and fundamental rights.

Tamar Manuelyan Atinc



Tamar Manuelyan Atinc is currently Director for Human Development in the Europe and Central Asia Region of the World Bank. Tamar has been in the World Bank since 1984 working in various capacities, including 13 years in the East Asia and the Pacific Region as Advisor in the VP office, Acting Director for Human Development, sector manager for poverty, and senior economist on China. She has also served as a member of the World Development Report 06 team on Equity and Development and worked in the Africa Region. Her recent interests and work have focused on poverty, inequality, labor markets and social protection issues.

Christian Petri



Christian Petri is Executive Director of the Freudenberg Foundation and representative of a group of foundations that, with the assistance of NEF (Network of European Foundations), have set up a project for supporting the REF.

Nadir Redzeqi



Nadir Redzeqi is Macedonian Roma and NGO activist since 1998. With his 12 years of experience, working on the Roma issues at local, national and international level, he contributes to Roma integration and institutional set-up of Roma issues. During this period he held various positions in managing and coordinating Roma related actions. He has been member of the number of policy and decision making bodies related to the Decade of Roma Inclusion in Macedonia and an active international actor on Roma issues. At present, he holds the position of project manager at Local Government Initiatives.

HUNGARIAN GOVERNING BOARD

Costel Bercus

Chair



Costel Bercus is a Romanian Roma, graduated in International Relations and European Studies from the Spiru Haret University in Bucharest. Since 1997, he has been working as a human rights activist with Romani CRISS (Roma Center for Social Interventions and Studies), which is a well-known human rights organization in Romania. In 2000, he was appointed Executive Director of Romani CRISS, which made him exposed to extensive international activities and ultimately led to his appointment in 2005 as Board Member of the Roma Education Fund (REF). The same year, he was asked to take the Chairmanship of the REF Board which he is carrying on still today. Between 2006 and 2008, he was leading the Roma Civic Alliance of Romania, a network organization linking over twenty Roma NGOs in Romania. He has also worked as an international consultant providing technical assistance in policy development on Roma inclusion for several countries in the Western Balkans and Romania, commissioned by different international development agencies.



Katalin E. Koncz

Katalin e. Koncz has been the executive director of the open society institute-Budapest since 1993. Before that, she served as the executive director of a hungarian non-profit organisation devoted to the educational and professional training needs of young central and east europeans. she is a member of the informal Roma advisory committee of the open society institute.

Gyula Várallyay



Gyula Várallyay is a former senior staff member of the World Bank, where he worked on projects and country programmes in the regions of Latin america, europe, and central asia. he served as interim director of ReF on two occasions.

ROMANIAN GOVERNING BOARD

Costel Bercus

Chair



Costel Bercus is a Romanian Roma, graduated in International Relations and European Studies from the Spiru Haret University in Bucharest. Since 1997, he has been working as a human rights activist with Romani CRISS (Roma Center for Social Interventions and Studies), which is a well-known human rights organization in Romania. In 2000, he was appointed Executive Director of Romani CRISS, which made him exposed to extensive international activities and ultimately led to his appointment in 2005 as Board Member of the Roma Education Fund (REF). The same year, he was asked to take the Chairmanship of the REF Board which he is carrying on still today. Between 2006 and 2008, he was leading the Roma Civic Alliance of Romania, a network organization linking over twenty Roma NGOs in Romania. He has also worked as an international consultant providing technical assistance in policy development on Roma inclusion for several countries in the Western Balkans and Romania, commissioned by different international development agencies.

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Pierre Gassmann

Pierre Gassmann is a Swiss National. Holds an MBA (INSEAD) and an MA of the Graduate Institute for International Relations in Geneva. He worked for ten years in the private sector, and then, for 25 years in senior management positions at the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), namely as Head of Operations for Eastern Europe. He has served as program advisor and lecturer at the Program for Humanitarian Policy and Conflict Research (HPCR) at Harvard University and at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP). He has been a consultant to the International Labour Office (ILO), the Swiss MFA, the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC) and the United Nations Works and Reconstruction Agency (UNWRA). He is an associate of the WolfGroup Consultants.



Toby Linden

Toby Linden joined the Roma Education Fund as Executive Director in June 2008, on secondment from the World Bank where he is a Senior Education Specialist. He was most recently based in the World Bank's Sarajevo office where he managed the Bank's education programs in Bosnia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovakia. Prior to joining the Bank, Toby worked for the British Council and for the UK Department for Education and Skills; in both organizations he had a variety of positions in policy analysis and program management. He is married and has three children.

NATIONAL SELECTION BOARD MEMBERS OF THE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

National Selection Board members list

Name	Surname		Position	Country
Rajmonda	Duka	University of Tirana, Economic Faculty	Lecturer	Albania
Sofokli	Garo	University 'Aleksander Moisiu', Durres	Dean of Faculty of Education	Albania
Adriatik	Hasantari	Roma Active Albania	Executive Director	Albania
Maria	Metodieva	OSF Bulgaria	Former SP ISB member	Bosnia and Herzegovina Croatia and Montenegro Kosovo
Maja	Petruseva	Education Advising Center Skopje	President	Bosnia and Herzegovina Croatia and Montenegro Kosovo
Svenka	Savic	University of Novi Sad	Professor	Bosnia and Herzegovina Croatia and Montenegro Kosovo
Luljeta	Vuniqi	Kosova Gender Studies Center	Executive Director	Bosnia and Herzegovina Croatia and Montenegro Kosovo
Stefan	Dr Panayotov	General practitioner	MD	Bulgaria
Milena	Grigorova	Ministry of Health	State Expert	Bulgaria
Deyan	Kolev	Center for Interethnic Dialogue and Tolerance 'Amalipe'	Chairman	Bulgaria
Lyubomir	Lazarov	Center for Interethnic Dialogue and Tolerance 'Amalipe' & Caritas-Sofia	Project Coordinator	Bulgaria
Lilia	Makaveeva	Integro Association	Executive Director	Bulgaria
Galina	Marinova	America for Bulgaria Foundation	Interpreter/ Translator	Bulgaria
Anna	Rizova	Bulgarian Red Cross	Project Coordinator	Bulgaria
Yana	Yotova	Ministry of Education, Youth and Science	Junior expert	Bulgaria

David	Beňák	Metropolitan District Praha 14 Authority	Head of social and health department	Czech Rep.
Horváthová	Lucie	Cabinet of minister of human rights and minorities	officer	Czech Rep.
Zdeněk	Ryšavý	Association Romea	Executive Director	Czech Rep.
Lídia	Balogh	MONA Foundation for the Women of Hungary	Project Manager	Hungary
Csilla	Farkas	n/a	n/a	Hungary
Iván	Sörös	Hungarian Ministry of Public Administration and Justice	Referee for Equal Opportunities	Hungary
Viorica	Cretu	Swiss Cooperation Office in Moldova, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)	no info	Moldova
Angela	Dumitrascu	United Nations Development Programme	Portfolio Manager	Moldova
Ruslan	Stanga	NGO 'Ograda Noastra'	Director	Moldova
Redzep	Ali Cupi	Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Macedonia	Director of the Department for Development and Promotion of Education in Languages of Members of Ethnic Communities	R. Macedonia
Neda	Zdraveva	Faculty of Law – Skopje	Assistant	R. Macedonia
Ramadan	Berat	OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje	Political Reporting Unit Senior Assistant (Roma Issues)	R. Macedonia
Lucian	Gaman	Resource Center Appolo	NGO President	Romania
Elena	Motas	School Inspector for Roma Issues in Iasi	School inspector	Romania
Ariana	Vacaretu	Emil Racovita High School in Cluj Napoca	Teacher	Romania
Stanislava	Kuchepatova	St.Petersburg Institute of Art History	scientific expert	Russia
Bessonov	Nikolay	Russian Scientific and Research Institute of Culture and Nature Heritage	researcher	Russia
Anastasia	Ryko	St.Petersburg State University	professor	Russia
Dragana	Jovanovic	MOH	Specialist	Serbia
Jelena	Kis Piger	Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, Secretariat for Education	Education Specialist	Serbia
Tatjana	Peric	MOE	Education Specialist	Serbia

dr Vladimir	Čakarevič	MOH		Serbia
Stevica	Pivarsky	MOE	Department Head	Serbia
Stanislav	Daniel	ERRC	research officer	Slovakia
Agnes	Horvathova	Profuturo, civil association	project manager	Slovakia
Alice	Petrasova	Presov University, Pdg. Faculty	Univ.teacher	Slovakia
Basak	Ekim Akkan	Bogazici University	Academician	Turkey
Hacer	Foggo	Sulukule Platform	Activist	Turkey
Emine	Onaran Incirlioglu	Bilkent University	Academician (retired)	Turkey
Lina	Kondur	International Women's Fund 'Chirikli'	Member	Ukraine
Ihor	Krykunov	Kyiv Roma NGO 'Amala'	Head	Ukraine
Rostyslav	Semkiv	National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy	Professor	Ukraine
Maria	Donevska	PhD Profesor, Institute of social work and social policy – Faculty of Philosophy , University of, Ss. Cyril and Methodius, Skopje , Republic of Macedonia		

2. REF STAFF AND ADMINISTRATION

At the end of 2010, REF had a total of 51 staff members (up from 26 at the end of 2009), with 19 working in REF's office in Budapest, 24 in the Romanian office in Bucharest and eight based elsewhere. Of the total number of staff members, over 70 percent are Roma. Although REF's staff size doubled, the ratio of Roma to non-Roma staff was maintained.

A number of significant staffing changes occurred in 2010. As Tobias Linden's secondment from the World Bank ended at REF, Mr. Pierre Gassman (vice-chair of the Swiss board) served as the executive director position for four months, until the Board selected a new executive director Ms. Zsuzsanna Szelényi in October.

Other important changes in staffing in 2010 included the appointment of the AGS project staff. This includes Ms. Szilvia Pallaghy as Project Manager, Ms. Beata Prokaj as Finance and Administrative Coordinator and Ms. Terez Polyak as Project Coordinator. New Country Facilitator Marsela Taho was appointed in Albania and Kosovo in order to strengthen REF's activities in these counties. In addition, a Country Facilitator for Hungary, Éva Földesi was established in order to manage the complex Hungarian portfolio including taking on some coordinating responsibilities for the 'A Good Start' project.

Establishment of REF's office in Bucharest was completed, enabling the management to hire a necessary number of staff to handle the tasks of the four Structural Funds projects.

REF STAFF BUDAPEST HEADQUARTERS



Toby Linden

Executive Director till June 2010

Toby Linden joined the Roma Education Fund as Executive Director in June 2008, on secondment from the World Bank where he is a Senior Education Specialist. He was most recently based in the World Bank's Sarajevo office where he managed the Bank's education programs in Bosnia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovakia. Prior to joining the Bank, Toby worked for the British Council and for the UK Department for Education and Skills; in both organizations he had a variety of positions in policy analysis and program management. He is married and has three children.

Judit Szira

Executive Director to date

e-mail: jszira@romaeducationfund.org



Judit Szira, a Hungarian National, holds a teacher degree in Mathematics and Chemistry, and holds a degree in Public Education. Between 1998–2006 she was a member of the School Board of the city of Budapest City Council. Between 1994 and 1997 she was Programme Director of the Public Education Development Programme at the Soros Foundation, Budapest. Previously she was chief advisor to the Roma Commissioner in the Ministry of Education of Hungary. She is a member of the board to the National Tempus Foundation. She has been working from the beginning of her career on Roma inclusion issues in the field of public education. She published in professional journals and newspapers on equity issues, active citizenship and social cohesion.

Erzsebet Bader

Communication Assistant

e-mail: ebader@romaeducationfund.org



Erzsebet Bader is a Hungarian Roma, holds a BA in English studies. She worked as international coordinator at the Roma Press Center in Budapest, prior to that participated in one project of the European Roma Rights Centre as a researcher, focusing on Roma education in Hungary and took part in a Media and Marketing training program of the Centre for Independent Journalism, Budapest, held for local TV stations in Hungary as assistant. In 2007 Erzsebet was a press coordinator of the Chachipe photo contest, organized by the Open Society Archives and Open Society Institute, Hungary. She joined REF in November 2007.



Valeria Bodóczy

REF Scholarships Programme – Administrative Assistant

e-mail: vbodoczky@romaeducationfund.org

Valeria Bodóczy holds an MA degree in Foreign Language Education and a diploma in secretarial studies and office management. Between 2002–2006 she worked as international civil servant at IOM Geneva and ICHEIC London offices. She joined REF in 2006 worked as administrative assistant later as administrative officer. After a one and half year break she joined REF again as the coordinator of the REF Donor Conference 2009, currently she is working as administrative assistant of the REF Scholarships Program.

Nino Chelidze

REF Scholarships Program – Program Manager

e-mail: scholarship@romaeducationfund.org



Nino Chelidze, born in Tbilisi, Georgia – Holds MA Degrees in Linguistics and Education Management. Worked for the Ministry of Education of Georgia for the Department of Foreign Affairs, monitored Minority and IDP Programs for the Ministry of Education, served as liaison for international and GO education offices. Later represented ACTR/ACCELS in Georgia and managed Scholarship Programs such as: Media Development, Edmund E. Muskie Scholarship Program, Fulbright Scholar Program, etc. As a Manager of IREX oversaw Edmund E. Musky Scholarship as well as RSEP/CI (Regional Scholar Exchange Program and Contemporary Issues Program), helped develop Musky Scholarship Alumni Association for Caucasus (Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia in 1997). In 2000 joined US Peace Corps as an Education Project Manager and supervised Secondary School and University Teaching Programs. As of 2004 joined Roma Memorial University Scholarship Program in OSI Budapest and is currently managing REF Academic Scholarship Programs. (RMUSP, LHP, RHSP, Interregional – and International Scholarship Programs).



Andrea Dörömböző

Financial Assistant

e-mail: adorombozo@romaeducationfund.org

Andrea Dörömböző is a Hungarian Roma, holds a MA degree in English studies, obtained ELTE University, Faculty of elementary and nursery school teachers. Prior to joining the REF team in Budapest, Andrea has spent 8 years as assistant casino manager, leading and controlling the Casino activities, being responsible for all financial activities, working with various international organizations and financial teams. Now, as a REF employee, working as a financial and administrative assistant, Andrea is responsible for maintaining the flowless contracting process with all REF partners, besides the preparation of various financial reports.



Eben Friedman

Advisor on Policy Development

e-mail: efriedman@romaeducationfund.org

Eben Friedman holds a Ph.D. in political science from the University of California, San Diego. His dissertation, 'Explaining the Political Integration of Minorities: Roms as a Hard Case,' drew on two years of field research in Slovakia and Macedonia. Based in Skopje since 2005, Eben joined REF in 2007 after several years with the European Centre for Minority Issues.



Merziha Idrizi

REF Scholarships Program – Alumni and Programming Officer

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Merziha Idrizi is a Roma from Macedonia. She has BSc degree in Economics, Financial Management from the University of 'Ss. Cyril and Methodius' – Faculty of Economics-Skopje, Macedonia and has joined REF/SP in September 2007. Merziha has previously worked as a Program Coordinator on the project 'Alliance for Inclusion of Roma in Education' within the Foundation Open Society Institute Macedonia, as a part of the Roma Education Program. Merziha has experience in the work, on a voluntary base, with Roma and non Roma NGOs from Macedonia, related to the Roma language and Roma culture. She was a member of the Center for Economic Analysis (CEA) – Macedonia until 2007. Merziha is currently working as an Alumni and Programming Officer in the Scholarship Programs team of REF.



Viktoria Kószegi

REF Scholarships Program – Program Officer

e-mail: scholarship@romaeducationfund.org

Viktoria Koszegi holds a BA from the Teacher Training Faculty of Eötvös Loránd University and a postgraduate degree from the Personnel Administration Faculty of Budapest University of Economic Sciences and Public Administration. She comes from the governmental sector where she worked in administration of municipality level and had coordination tasks for the Community Development and Cultural Committee. She joined the REF/Scholarships Program in September 2008 as administrative assistant and country coordinator for RMUSP in Hungary and is currently working as program officer in the Scholarships Program team REF Country facilitators.



Rodica Moroi

REF Scholarships Program – Senior Program Officer

e-mail: scholarship@romaeducationfund.org

Rodica Moroi is a Moldovan National, she holds a BA in Economics from the Academy of Economic Studies of the Republic of Moldova and an MA degree in International Relations and European Studies from the Central European University. Rodica Moroi has previously worked with the Soros Foundation – Moldova, Law Program and Access to Justice Project as well as with the European Initiatives Program. As of December 2007 Rodica has joined the REF/SP as a Program Officer and was working as a Senior Program Officer for the RMUSP and RHSP Programs.



Anasztazia Nagy

Program Officer

e-mail: anagy@romaeducationfund.org

Anasztazia is a Roma from Hungary working as junior program officer at the REF. Currently she is coordinating and managing the Hungarian project portfolio. She graduated at the Budapest Corvinus University – Faculty of Public administration in 2002 and holds a MA degree in public policy, Central European University, Budapest. She is very committed to improve the educational situation of Roma since she believes that this is the field which can significantly change the future of the Roma pupils. She was also active member of the Roma community during her studies.



Beata Bislim Olahova
Project Grants Programme Manager
e-mail: bolahova@romaeducationfund.org

Beata Bislim Olahova holds a Masters Degree in Business Administration; and has been through a lot of human rights actions before working for the Roma Education Fund. Among others, she worked at the European Roma Rights Center as a legal monitor for Slovakia where she was involved in human rights monitoring and fact-finding missions and worked to investigate potential cases of discrimination and human rights abuse. Beata is a Member of the Management Board of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) nominated by Slovak Republic. As a student of the post graduate Roma Diplomacy program of the Diplo foundation, she participated and contributed to the international events on Roma Diplomacy, as a Challenge for European Institutions.

Szilvia Pallaghy
e-mail: szpallaghy@romaeducationfund.org



Szilvia Pallaghy, who is Hungarian National, holds a MBA, graduated from the Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio and CEU Business School, Budapest. Originally she completed an MA in Literature and in Psychology in Hungary. After working in the private sector as Human Resources Specialist for General Electric, she began to work in the Ministry of Education, Hungary, where she had several positions. Between 2003 and 2006, she was the Head of Secretariat at the Office of the Ministerial Commissioner for the Integration of Roma and Disadvantaged Children. After that, from 2006 she worked as the Head of Unit for Education and Equal Opportunity in the Directorate General for Equal Opportunity. She joined to the Roma Education Fund as a manager in 2010 and responsible for the EU funded 'A Good Start' project.

Beata Prokaj
Finance and Administrative coordinator
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Beata Prokaj, a Hungarian national, holds an MA degree in Economics. She started in the private sector then worked for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees as a Staff Development Clerk. She joined REF in June 2010 as a Finance and Administrative coordinator working on the EU Roma Pilot, 'A Good Start' project. She has strong social responsibility.



Shemsi Shainov

Senior Program Officer

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Shemsi Shainov is a Roma from Macedonia and holds a BA in Economics. He was appointed as Senior Program Officer from his previous assignment as Country Facilitator for Macedonia. Before joining REF, he worked as a freelance consultant, mainly on small and medium-scale enterprise development, training programs, land tenure issues, and environmental protection projects. As of 2001, he was National Program Officer of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation within the Swiss Embassy in Macedonia. For more than three-and-a-half years he had various assignments, working in the Czech Republic, and occasionally in Poland, for The Prince of Wales Business Leaders Forum, a UK charity, in the development of Romany Youth Entrepreneurship Program. In 1995, the Government of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany appointed him as a local partner consultant for the project on Economic Reintegration of Rejected Asylum Seekers, and one year later he was appointed as a Director of Department Entrepreneurship Development. He has worked for three years as a journalist for the Macedonian Television Corporation.



Mihai Surdu

Senior Policy Officer

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Starting in 1995, Mihai Surdu worked with the Research Institute of Quality of Life in Bucharest, Romania. In 2007 he joined the REF as Capacity Building and Policy Development Manager. Mihai Surdu has a doctorate of Sociology from the University of Bucharest. He has written extensively on issues related to Roma Education, and has published extensively on segregation as well.

Marius Taba

Monitoring and Evaluation Officer

e-mail: mtaba@romaeducationfund.org



Marius Taba is Monitoring and Evaluation Officer of Roma Education Fund. Marius Taba is a Roma from Romania. He graduated with an MA in Public Administration, Faculty of Sociology and Social Work, University of Bucharest. Currently he is a PhD student at the Faculty of Sociology and Social Work, University of Bucharest. He is very active in civil society activities in Romania since 1999. He has worked for more than 5 years for Romani CRISS- Roma Center for Social Intervention and Studies where he was implementing projects dealing with education and public awareness campaigns. Marius Taba is founder and Board member of the Romanian Students Organization from Hungary.

Barbara Tonté

Administrative Assistant

e-mail: btonte@romaeducationfund.org



Barbara Tonté is a Hungarian Roma, working for the Roma Education Fund as administrative assistant since September 2010. Barbara works for Kai Consulting as well in implementing a community development program in five disadvantaged settlements of Hungary. Previously, she worked for the Hungarian Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, and the European Parliament, and Romaversitas Foundation. She graduated at the University of Szeged (BA 2005) as a human resources manager and Central European University as an expert on European Studies (MA 2008)

Jenő Zsiga

Finance and Administration Manager

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Jenő Zsiga, a Hungarian National, comes from the private sector. He manages from 2001 to 2006 an international Advertising Agency as deputy director. He holds a BA from the Budapest Business College and holds an MA from the University of Pecs in Economics. As a young Roma activist he was a student leader at Romaversitas, Hungary and he was one of the founders of one of the first Hungarian young Roma Association, the Bronz Klub.

REF STAFF ROMANIA OFFICE

Eugen Crai

Country Manager, REF Romania



Eugen Crai is the Country Manager of Roma Education Fund, Bucharest. He holds a Master's degree in Law of McGill University, Montreal, Canada, and has completed several post-graduate studies in management and training in The Netherlands, UK, Denmark and Romania. Specialized in Human Rights Law and Anti-discrimination legislation (he also graduated several summer courses at Central European University Budapest), Eugen has been the Programme Manager of the first EU Phare Project for the Improvement of Roma Situation in Romania and has worked for 9 years with UNICEF Office in Romania as Education Officer and later as Social Policy Specialist. He was actively involved in Human Rights and minority rights advocacy and education policy development and advocacy in different capacities all along his professional career. Eugen has worked continuously in and for Roma communities from Romania for the past 14 years. Eugen Crai is also author and co-author of several articles and publications on issues of ethics & management, education and minority rights.

Adina Ursulean

PR and Logistics Coordinator



Adina Ursulean graduated from the Faculty of Journalism and Communication Studies, University of Bucharest. In present she is enrolled into a Masters Course on Communication Campaigns, Advertising and Public Relations. From October 2010 she held the position of PR and Logistics Coordinator at Roma Education Fund, Bucharest Romania, prior to what she worked at a PR agency for various multi-national companies.

Adrian Diaconu

Facility Manager



Adrian Diaconu graduated in Business Management. He has worked as Facility Manager for Autoitalia Group and Cargus-DHL. His main responsibilities was to administration buildings with all that function includes, negotiation and renegotiation of all contracts for services, maintaining communication with all departments, maintaining and develop professional relations with all suppliers. He has joined the Roma Education Fund, Bucharest team in November 2010.

Ana Maria Cojocaru
Financial Manager



Ana-Maria Cojocaru graduated the Faculty of Automatics within the Polytechnic Institute of Bucharest, holds a diploma of HR Analyst and also an MBA (Magna cum laudae) with the Romanian – Canadian MBA Programme. She has worked as a Senior Consultant and HR Manager for LARIVE Romania IBD, performing market research studies, business development plans, providing consultancy for M&A projects and headhunting. Starting with 1996 she was involved in PHARE Projects either as an expert or performing programme management on behalf of LARIVE. From 2002 until 2009 she worked as a long term expert in all PHARE Projects 'Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups' (PHARE 2001, 2003 and 2005) – Lot 2 Grant Scheme Management and also provided support for the PHARE 2004 Project. She was Procedures, Procurement and HRD Expert, Local Co-ordinator and in the PHARE 2005 she was Team Leader for both components of the Project, i.e. Institutional Building and Grant Scheme Management.



Cristi Mihalache
Project Manager

Cristi Mihalache is Project Manager of the Roma Education Fund Romania Foundation. He graduated the National School of Political and Administrative Studies in Bucharest, Romania with a BA in Public Administration, and holds an MA degree in Human Rights from the Central European University, Budapest, Hungary. Currently he is a Ph D candidate with Faculty of Political Science of the University of Bucharest. Cristi has been involved in activities related to public relations, international advocacy, grant administration, capacity-building and training with organisations such as Romani CRISS, European Roma Rights Centre, and Open Society Institute. Also, Cristi has been involved in the programming process related to social inclusion actively contributing to the elaboration of the Joint Inclusion Memorandum and the National Development Plan 2007-2013 in Romania. He acted as a consultant for the Management Authority for the Sectorial Operational Programme Human Resource Development (MA SOPHRD), the institution managing the European Social Fund in Romania, as well as for other Technical Assistance projects on issues related to social inclusion of Roma and other vulnerable groups. Beginning 2007, Cristi has acted as a consultant on EU structural funding for the Roma Education Fund.



Cristina Jitariu
Project Coordinator

Cristina holds a BA from the Faculty of Medicine, Iasi and a Masters Degree in Social and Health Services Management from the University of Bucharest. She has worked since 2004 in implementing social projects addressed to disadvantaged groups. Her experience is multiple (monitoring & evaluation, project management, training, evaluator, consultant in public health research, contribution to publications) in projects such as the National Tuberculosis Programme (Project Management Unit World Bank and Global Fund), increase of access to health services for Roma Communities (JSI/USAID), S.P.E.R. (PHARE), Study on access to health care of Roma population (Romani CRISS).



Daniela Samuila
Accountant

Daniela graduated in 2001 at the Faculty of Management from the Academy of Economic Studies from Bucharest. She is member of the Chartered Accountants and Licensed Accountants of Romania (CECCAR) from 2005. From 2009 she is working as accountant for Roma Education Fund Romania.



Dragos Cazacu
IT Expert

Dragos Cazacu is IT Expert in the Bucharest Roma Education Fund office and is involved in all IT aspects of its activities. Dragos graduated the Polytechnical University of Bucharest with a degree in Electronics & Telecommunications and worked since 1996 in IT-related jobs in relevant companies acting in several industries, as for example hospitality, construction, retail and energy trading.



Florin Nasture
Programme Manager

Florin Nasture is a Romanian Roma. He graduated from the faculty of Theology and Philology, Bucharest University and has an MA in Strategic Management and Social Development. Since 1997 he has been actively involved with Roma Civil Society, working as a Program Coordinator for Romani CRISS and later

as a Country Coordinator for the Pakiv European Roma Fund. He managed programs dealing with education, culture, and income-generating activities. He has an extended training and practice of community development. He was REF's Country Facilitator for Romania before joined the Budapest Office.

Georgian Lunca

Logistics Coordinator



Georgian made his first step in the human rights activism as a reporter of Roma News, the first press agency of Roma minority in Romania. After almost one year since graduating the Sociology and Social Work Faculty, University of Bucharest, he joined the Project on Ethnic Relations (PER) Regional Center for Central, East and Southeast Europe, where he brought his contribution to the good implementation of initiatives aiming to improve the interethnic climate and situation of ethnic groups from Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria and Former Yugoslavia. During the last three years he has been actively involved in the media development activity of Medienhilfe, oriented to increasing the capacity of Roma media outlets to bring their contribution to the successful integration of Roma minority in Europe.

Georgiana Barbulescu

Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator



Georgiana holds an MA in Human Rights at University College London and her previous work included implementing projects at PACT Foundation on integration of Roma on the labour market, on intercultural dialogue and on the EU Open Method of Coordination process on social inclusion. Among others, she worked at Save the Children Romania, Minority Rights Group International and Children's Society in London, UK. She has a previous background in the private sector, working in PR agencies for multi-national companies.

Ionela Cristea

Project Coordinator



Ionela holds a BA from the Faculty of Sociology and Social Work, University of Bucharest and an MA in Human Resources Management at the same faculty. Since 2003 she has been actively involved with Roma civil society, working for 'Impreuna' Agency. She has specific experience in implementing projects in the area of Youth, Volunteering and Education. She was also active member of the Roma community during her job as a consultant at Pricewaterhouse Coopers Romania.



Laura Greta Marin

Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator

Native Romany speaker from Romania, Laura studied Law, Psychology and Community Development. She is involved in the NGO sector since 1999, working in projects addressed to Roma communities and other disadvantaged groups. Her fields of expertise are: training, community facilitation/development, strategic planning, project and organizational management, public policies, monitoring and evaluation (of projects and programs, public policies, etc). As expert in monitoring and evaluation she trained over 1000 public servants and NGO staff and took part in a number of technical assistance teams for implementing PHARE Projects in Romania. Laura is co-author of the 'Monitoring and Evaluation System for Intervention Focused on Roma in Romania' – National Agency for Roma and General Secretariat of the Government, 2008.



Monica Florina Silaghi

Project Assistant

Monica is a Roma from Romania graduated in Social Assistance, now enrolled in a Master Course on Public Policies in Social Assistance. Monica is active in the NGO sector since 2006, coordinating projects and programs regarding the improvement of the Roma children access in education, raising the access of the Roma communities members to social services, capacity building for Roma in relation with the public authorities, civic education for young Roma, etc. In her activity she worked with a number of NGO, the most relevant: Ruhama Foundation, Impreuna Agency, FCSD, RSDF.

Valentina Diana Gheoca

Procurement Expert



Valentina is the Procurement Expert in the Bucharest Roma Education Fund office and is involved in two of the ESF financed projects currently under implementation by the Romanian branch. Valentina has studied Juridical and Administrative Law within the 'Spiru Haret' University of Bucharest and has been working as a Procurement Expert and Bid Coordinator since 2006 for various multinational companies such as Poyry, Deloitte and Louis Berger. She has also been involved in several PHARE and ISPA projects as Project Manager or Procurement Expert.

REF COUNTRY FACILITATORS

Albania and Kosovo

Marsela Taho

Country Facilitator for Albania and Kosovo

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Marsela Taho is Albanian, started working for the Roma Education Fund in June 2010, as a country facilitator for Albania and Kosovo. She received her degree in social work from the University of Tirana in 2001, and also completed the Roma Participation Programme at the Central European University in Budapest in December, 2005. Marsela has worked with children and their families as a social worker for various organizations, such as Terres Des Homes, UNDP Local Governance Programme, AiBi (Amici dei Bambini) Roma women of the Future. She is involved in Roma women issues and she is part of the International Network of Roma Women. Lately she worked in the Ministry of Labour and Social affairs and Equal Opportunities in Tirana, in the Secretariat of the Decade Roma Inclusion.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Aida Mihajlovic

Country Facilitator – Bosnia and Herzegovina

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Aida Mihajlovic is a BIH national. She graduated from the Faculty of Arts and Science, English Department, Sarajevo University, Bosnia and Herzegovina. She started working in different schools in 1987 while in the last 15 years she focused her work in NGO sector. During this period she held various positions in managing and coordinating in different NGOs and diplomatic mission. She has trainings in monitoring and evaluation, anti-bias, leadership, communication, PTSP, ethics, code and empathy. While working with Save the Children UK she provided valuable support and input as a member of the project coordinators team to the publication 'A Guide for Models of Good Practice in Regional Project-Based Work with Roma Children' as an output of the 'Inclusive Education and Anti-Discrimination in the Western Balkans – Equal Opportunities for Roma Children Project'. She is married and has a son.



Bulgaria

Dimitar Dimitrov

Country Facilitator

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cell: +359 8 9842 8500

Dimitar Dimitrov graduated B.A. 'Tourism' in 2004. In 2009 he finished his postgraduate in 'Social Development Practice' at the London metropolitan university, UK. He has professional qualifications in 'Political management', 'Management of European programs and projects'. In 2005 he did a traineeship in the European Commission at DG Employment, Social affairs and Equal opportunities. In 2006 he was a trainee in the National parliament of Bulgaria. He is also graduate of 'Bulgarian school of politics'. He has specific experience in the area of Minority issues, Youth, Volunteering, EU social issues, Education, especially Education of minorities and Roma in particular. He has been involved in programs and projects of local, national and international NGOs and public institutions. He has an extensive practice in Community development. For a limited period of time he was a senior expert in the State agency for youth and sports in Bulgaria. As a consultant he was involved in elaboration and development of different social, educational and socio-economic studies and analyses.

Hungary

Éva Földesi

Country Facilitator

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Eva Foldesi, a Hungarian national, holds a BA degree in Economics and an MA degree in Sociology and Anthropology received at CEU. She has been working as a project assistant to a Roma labour market project before joining REF. Additionally, she was an educator in the Holocaust Museum, Budapest, moderating anti – racist and multicultural sessions organized for grammar school students. After graduating from the CEU, in the October of 2009, she joined to REF first as an administrative assistant then took the position of country facilitator for Hungary from September, 2010. This position includes duties of supporting grant management programmes and coordinating the European early childhood education project of REF, overall facilitating the implementation of these programmes among partner organization, local stakeholders and donors.

Macedonia



Senad Mustafov

Country Facilitator

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Senad Mustafov is a Roma from Macedonia. He graduated from the faculty of Law – 'Justinian I' at University 'St. Cyril and Methodius' – Skopje, Macedonia. Since 1999-2002 he has been actively involved with Roma Civil Society, working as a volunteer – assistant in Roma program in Foundation Open Society Institute – Macedonia (FOSIM) and later as a program coordinator in Romaversitas/FOSIM. He was member of the Romany expert group on European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI). He is trainer for democracy and Advocacy and Lobbying.

Romania



Danut Dumitru

Country Facilitator

e-mail: ddumitru@romaeducationfund.org

Danut Dumitru is a Romanian Roma, working as a Country Facilitator for Romania since September 2010. In the last four years, he worked with the Roma Initiatives as a Programme Coordinator at the Open Society Institute, Budapest where amongst other tasks, he was monitoring and evaluating projects implemented. In doing so, he had monitored many NGOs from all parts of Central Eastern Europe. Since 2000, Danut has been involved in defending Roma rights with Romani CRISS (Roma Center for Social Intervention and Studies) in Romania. He has worked with many international organizations as social worker and counselor, and also worked in Population Services International as a Program Coordinator in a research on Sexual Transmitted Disease within the Roma communities as a Behavior Change Communicator (BCC). Danut holds degree in Sociology and Social Work from the University of Bucharest, Romania and an MA Degree in Community Administration of Justice. He graduated from Roma Access Program of the Central European University in Budapest, Hungary, in 2005.



Florin Nasture

Country Facilitator

e-mail: fnasture@romaeducationfund.org

Florin Nasture is a Romanian Roma. He graduated from the faculty of Theology and Philology, Bucharest University and has an MA in strategic management and social development. Since 1997 he has been actively

involved with Roma Civil Society, working as a program coordinator for Romani CRISS and later as a country coordinator for the Pakiv European Roma Fund. He managed programs dealing with education, culture, and income-generating activities. He has an extended training and practice of community development.



Serbia and Montenegro

Natasha Kocic-Rakocevic

Country Facilitator

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Natasha Kocic Rakocevic is a Roma, with Serbian citizenship. Since 1999, she has been actively involved with Roma Civil Society, working as a programme manager for Roma Children's Centre. She managed numerous programs dealing with education, health, civil participation and gender issues. Natasha took part in Serbian Roma rights movement. As a Roma National Consultant, engaged by UNICEF, she participated in development of Sub-regional Study on Exclusion of Roma in South-East European Countries with particular focus on Roma children and women. She has inclusive training in project and financial management, project development, monitoring, fundraising and strategy planning.

Slovakia

Lydia Bariova

Country Facilitator – Slovakia

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Lydia Bariova is a Slovakian Roma. She graduated from Social Faculty of Constantine Philosopher University and has Magister degree in social work. Since 2003 she has been actively involved with Roma Civil Society, working as a programme manager for Slovakia Family Planning Association. She managed numerous projects dealing with young Romani leadership, combating socio – economic exclusion at the grassroots level, building strategic partnerships among local Roma and authorities and fostered national and international networking to promote shared learning, strategic thinking and joint actions, including gender issues. She has one year training in leadership, fundraising, project development, strategy planning, and program monitoring evaluation system through PAKIV European Roma Fund.

3. GRANT TABLES

LIST OF ACTIVE GRANTS PER COUNTRY (DECEMBER 2010) – ROMA EDUCATION FUND

Nr.	1.	Nr.	2.
Country	Albania	Country	Albania
Project code	ALB 012	Project code	ALB 08
Impl. agency	Romani Baxt Albania	Impl. agency	Save the Children CH, Save the Children ALB
Contracted on	01.08.2010	Contracted on	01.04.2009
Completed on	31.07.2011	Completed on	31.03.2011
Status	Ongoing	Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	54,998	Granted amount (Euro)	155,160

The main goal of the project is to support in long term a better level of education in Roma community and the protection of the children through preschool and afternoon support for primary school by means of kindergarten and additional support, English course, community service, summer school for 150 Roma children (60 in Baltez, 90 in Tirana).

The promotion and support of development of qualitatively inclusive education in four schools and four kindergartens in two pilot regions of Albania where a considerable number of Roma/Egyptian children are living. Raising the awareness of stakeholders in education at the national level on a wide scale basis by providing training and mentoring services to Regional Education Authorities' staff and school staff by introducing child-centered teaching methods.

The advocacy activities for systemic policy improvements that work against segregation and all forms of racial discrimination, as well as the development and use of culturally sensitive curricula in close cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science, and the Institute of Curricula and Training.

Nr.	3.
Country	Bulgaria
Project code	BU 135
Impl. agency	Centre for educational integration of children and students from ethnic minorities
Contracted on	01.08.2010
Completed on	30.06.2012
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	300,000

The main aim of the project is to support municipalities to lead the process of reorganizing their school network by transferring Roma children to mainstream schools and closing the Roma-only schools and to facilitate partnership between the municipalities and the Roma NGOs which have accumulated valuable experience in implementing school desegregation projects, especially the ones who were supported by the Open Society Institute and the Roma Education Fund.

Nr.	4.
Country	Bulgaria
Project code	BU 144
Impl. agency	Center for Interethnic Dialogue and Tolerance: Amalipe
Contracted on	01.05.2010
Completed on	31.03.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	36,070

The main goal of the project is the Roma experts and organizations will take active part in the process of preparing the new Public Education Act in Bulgaria and that the new law will legitimize and support the efforts for Roma educational integration.

Nr.	5.
Country	Bulgaria
Project code	BU 146
Impl. agency	Nangle – 2000
Contracted on	01.10.2010
Completed on	30.09.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	19,984

The main aim of the Project is to provide early childhood education for all Roma children between 3–6 years old from Roma quarter 'Rakovitsa' to all kindergartens in Berkovitsa town.

Nr.	6.
Country	Bulgaria
Project code	BU 147
Impl. agency	Diverse and Equal
Contracted on	01.10.2010
Completed on	30.10.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	38,200

The main aim of the Project is to provide Roma children living in the villages of Botevgrad Municipality with equal opportunities for preschool education. All Roma children (100 hundred) aged 5–6 living in 12 villages within Botevgrad Municipality (12 villages) will be enrolled in 10 preschool education groups.

Nr.	7.
Country	Bulgaria
Project code	BU 148
Impl. agency	Equal opportunities initiatives association
Contracted on	01.11.2010
Completed on	31.09.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	8,940

The main goal of the project is to increase the percent of the children from Fakulteta and Philipovtzi Roma districts who successfully enroll in kinder gardens for the pre-school education, as well as to facilitate the access of Roma children to the pre-school groups in the schools, as it is the necessary precondition for a school enrolment.

Nr.	8.
Country	Bulgaria
Project code	BU 150
Impl. agency	Center for Regional development Roma
Contracted on	01.11.2010
Completed on	30.10.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	20,000

The main objective of the project is a reintegration of Roma adults, who have stopped their education on one or other reason in the social and professional life of the community, through provision of opportunities for training according to their individual needs. The training is orientated to increase their self-reliance, acquisition of social skills through a support, which are necessary for their successful social and labor integration and increasing of the opportunities for work on the local labor market.

Nr.	9.
Country	Bulgaria
Project code	BU 151
Impl. agency	Stolipinovo
Contracted on	01.11.2010
Completed on	30.10.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	14,735

The aim of this project is the effective integration of adult Roma in the country through increasing the level of their education, creating in them a new attitude towards education and increasing their engagement in the processes of desegregation and the education of their children.

Nr.	10.
Country	Bosnia & Herzegovina
Project code	BIH 07
Impl. agency	SAE Roma
Contracted on	01.08.2009
Completed on	30.08.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	81,646

The main goal of the project is promotion and affirmation of education (especially elementary and secondary education) as a key element of existential success of Roma children and youth in the area of Tuzla Canton, including a set of measures targeting children, Roma parents and the education authorities.

Nr.	11.
Country	Czech Republic
Project code	CZ 015
Impl. agency	Jekhetane
Contracted on	01.01.2010
Completed on	30.06.2012
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	27,454

This project aims to integrate at least 25 Romani children aged 6–7 from two segregated localities in the city of Ostrava in primary schools in which Roma constitute no more than 25% of all pupils. Children from these locations tend otherwise to attend practical schools (i.e., former special schools) or standard primary schools in which the majority of pupils are Roma.

Nr.	12.
Country	Czech Republic
Project code	CZ 017
Impl. agency	Člověk v tísni, o.p.s./ People in Need
Contracted on	01.09.2010
Completed on	31.08.2012
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	50,000

The main goal of the project is to develop the cognitive qualities of and overcome educational barriers faced by Romani children in Czech Republic through development and piloting of a new methodology for work with educationally disadvantaged children in the sphere of formal education in four ethnically mixed primary schools in Prague.

Nr.	13.
Country	Czech Republic
Project code	CZ 019
Impl. agency	Eurotopia Opava
Contracted on	01.09.2010
Completed on	31.08.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	6,867

The main goal of the project is to support the scholastic success of the 60 Romani children, and youth aged 3–18 in and around the city of Opava through activities aimed at improving the preparation of Romani children for primary education, improving the competences of teaching staff for working with Romani children and raising awareness among parents of Romani children about the importance of education for their children's future, as well as parents' competences for preparing their children for school.

Nr.	14.
Country	Czech Republic
Project code	CZ 020
Impl. agency	Charita Sternberk
Contracted on	01.10.2010
Completed on	31.08.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	19,182

The main goals of the project are to provide individual preparation of children for successful enrolment in the first year of standard primary schools and to provide after-school instruction in the homes of socially disadvantaged families with children in the first and second year of standard primary education.

Nr.	15.
Country	Czech Republic
Project code	CZ 021
Impl. agency	Romodrom
Contracted on	1.10.2010
Completed on	31.07.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	19,132

The main goal of the project is to prevent early school leaving and to facilitate a return to school for out-of-school children and youth aged 7–18 in the Olomouc and Moravia-Silesia regions through a complex program which responds to their specific educational needs.

Nr.	16.
Country	Czech Republic
Project code	CZ 022
Impl. agency	Ass. Of Romanies in Moravia
Contracted on	01.06.2010
Completed on	30.11.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	19,182

The main aim of the project is to reduce the segregation of Roma pupils in selected Elementary schools.

Nr.	17.
Country	Czech Republic
Project code	CZ 023
Impl. agency	Museum of Romani Culture
Contracted on	01.08.2010
Completed on	31.06.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	12,369

The main goal of the project is to increase the number of Romani children from the socially excluded locality (i.e., ghetto) Brno-střed who are successfully enrolled in non-ghetto pre-schools and primary schools through work with parents and children.

Nr.	18.
Country	Croatia
Project code	CRO 013
Impl. agency	Medjmurje County
Contracted on	1.10.2010
Completed on	30.06.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	55,000

The main objective of the program is to create sustainable conditions for full integration into heterogeneous pre-school and primary education throughout Medjmurje County for all Roma children from the age of 5,5–6,5 through long-term and systematic approach to pre-school education and upbringing, to prepare the sources and to come out with the long-term solution to provide quality, integrated pre-school education. The long term goal in the next three years is to have 3 cohorts in pre-school education thus having universal pre-school enrolment for entire Roma population in the county.

Nr.	19.
Country	Hungary
Project code	HU 033
Project name	Panon Kincstár Tanoda
Contracted on	01.06.2009
Completed on	30.06.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	35,000

The main goal of the project is to provide opportunity for dropped out students to complete vocational secondary education in order to get a marketable profession and to get job after the studies.

Nr.	20.
Country	Hungary
Project code	HU 046
Impl. agency	Muro Phral Association
Contracted on	01.08.2010
Completed on	30.06.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	38,050

The main goal of the project is to support families as a complex unit.

Nr.	21.
Country	Hungary
Project code	HU 047
Impl. agency	Magiszter Alapítvány
Contracted on	30.06.2010
Completed on	30.09.2010
Granted amount (Euro)	4,140

The project is a small grant contribution to support the Matura examination of 20 adult Roma

Nr.	22.
Country	Hungary
Project code	HU 048
Impl. agency	Romaversitas
Contracted on	01.09.2010
Completed on	31.08.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	47,421

The main goal of the programme is to increase the number of Roma students graduating university, through financial and academic support.

Nr.	23.
Country	Hungary
Project code	HU 049
Impl. agency	Chance for Renewal Social, Educational and Cultural Country-wide Association
Contracted on	01.08.2010
Completed on	31.07.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	32,796

The main objective of the project is to improve the school results of 50 Roma children and to help their carrier orientation through Tanoda type activities (remedial classes, individual tutoring, and carrier orientation).

Nr.	24.
Country	Hungary
Project code	HU 052
Impl. agency	Eötvös Loránd University
Contracted on	01.09.2010
Completed on	30.08.2012
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	108,590

The aim of the project is to establish a relationship and initiate cooperation between the Center for Intercultural Psychology and Education of ELTE University, Budapest (main applicant) and four 'Tanodas' (organizations for extracurricular project activities) in the city of Budapest

Nr.	25.
Country	Hungary
Project code	HU 054
Impl. agency	Dartke
Contracted on	01.09.2010
Completed on	30.08.2012
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	85,000

The main objective of the project is to support desegregation started in a number of towns in Hungary in September 2007.

Nr.	26.
Country	Macedonia
Project code	MAC 051
Impl. agency	Ministry of Labor and Social Policy
Contracted on	01.11.2009
Completed on	31.08.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	138,554

The Project has the following specific objectives:

- a) Increasing the number of Roma attendees (777 children for two years of implementation) in public pre-school one year before entering of primary compulsory education – in 20 municipalities in Macedonia;
- b) Improving capacities of 1554 Roma parents directly as well as 108 preschool teachers and 21 Roma assistants for supporting and encouraging development and education of Roma children, age 4.8–5.7 in 20 municipalities in Macedonia;
- c) Improving social skills and proficiency in Macedonian language of 777 Roma children, age 4.8–5.7 enrolled in public preschools around Macedonia for the period of two years;
- d) Increasing the abilities of teacher and assistants personnel in combating prejudice and stereotypes against Roma;
- e) To raise the public conciseness about the problem with Roma children and to involve authority in the Local municipalities in activities to solving them;
- f) Encouraging and support early child development.

Nr.	27.
Country	Macedonia
Project code	MAC 052
Impl. agency	Ministry of Education and Science of RM/Department for Promotion and Development of Education in the Languages of Minorities
Contracted on	01.11.2009
Completed on	31.08.2010 Prolonged until 2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	264,650

The general goal of project is through positive interventions to improve the retention and achievement rate of all Roma Secondary school students enrolled in 1st, 2nd and 3rd class in the school year 2009/10.

Nr.	28.
Country	Macedonia
Project code	MAC 054
Impl. agency	Ternipe MK
Contracted on	01.01.2010
Completed on	30.09.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	15,552

The main project goal is to improve education level and achievements of up to 43 Roma adults from Delchevo, Pehcevo and Berovo through provision of adult education program and extend number of additional catch up classes in acquiring of GSCE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) secondary school certificate within the mainstream education and/or accomplishment of the final state exam in order to become eligible for enrollment in the tertiary education, as well to strengthen the awareness of the importance of education within the Roma population and increase their chance for employment in the labor market.

Nr.	29.
Country	Macedonia
Project code	MAC 056
Impl. agency	Foundation Open Society Institute Macedonia
Contracted on	01.05.2010
Completed on	30.09.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	59,939

The main aim of the project is empower about 80 Roma university students socially and academically so they could be better prepared for their future life and carrier.

Nr.	30.
Country	Moldova
Project code	MD 004
Impl. agency	Roma National Center from Republic of Moldova
Contracted on	10.12.2009
Completed on	10.06.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	56,660

The Project has the following specific objectives:

- a) To develop and support a preschool preparatory program in order to provide a better preparation of Roma children for the mainstream primary education. As well to increase enrolment of the Roma children in the preschool program and maintain a database of Roma children reaching preschool and school enrolment age for the 2009–2010 in the Huzun and Vulcanesti;
- b) To support desegregation of school from Huzun by transferring Romani children and create mixed classes in Micleuseni school as well in Vulcanesti in the school from Nisporeni town thus to improve school participation of Roma children in both localities;
- c) To raise awareness and learn about positive practices from other countries of EU such as Romania in order to promote this practices in Moldova.

Nr.	31.
Country	Moldova
Project code	MD 005
Impl. agency	Uniunea Tinerilor Romi din
Contracted on	18.10.2010
Completed on	31.08.2012
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	109,620

The aim of the project is to reduce segregation by facilitating access to quality education guaranteed by the state through the integration of Roma pupils in Primary and secondary mixed schools in the Republic of Moldova.

Nr.	32.
Country	Romania
Project code	RO 033
Impl. agency	Resource Center for Roma Communities
Contracted on	01.05.2007
Completed on	30.06.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	908,300

Supporting excellence in education of Roma students, and implicitly to improve the retention and achievement rate in upper secondary education of the targeted Roma students. Using effectively the positive discrimination regarding the secondary education that has been recently introduced by the Government. A total number of 275 Roma will be provided with financial support and tutoring for the period 2007–2011. Provision of educational support in the form of individualized mentoring to the same 275 students during the same period of time (2007–2011). To increase the number of Roma students who want further education in high school and beyond the compulsory education.

Nr.	33-
Country	Romania
Project code	RO 070
Impl. agency	Center for Education and Social Development
Contracted on	01.02.2010
Completed on	31.01.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	70,000

The main goal of the project is to facilitate the transition of the Roma pupils from high school to university level in Calarasi County by providing them with additional educational support.

- Providing additional support to 100 Roma pupils from Calarasi in order to increase the chances to pass the Matura exam.
- Motivating young Roma from Calarasi to continue their education to the university education through a information campaign and awareness raising activities.
- Reducing the drop out rate by involving Roma parents and didactical personnel in supporting young Roma from high schools.
- Facilitating access to the university education for 70 Roma young from rural areas from Calarasi.

Nr.	34-
Country	Romania
Project code	RO 074
Impl. agency	Matias Organization
Contracted on	01.08.2010
Completed on	31.08.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	51,065

The main aim of the project is to ensure the enrolment and the improved performance of Roma children to preschool preparation programme and to primary education through provision of a comprehensive system of support to the Roma community and education institutions.

Nr.	35-
Country	Romania
Project code	RO 076
Impl. agency	Roma Women Association 'For Our Children'
Contracted on	01.08.2010
Completed on	31.08.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	78,700

The main objective of the project is to insure and strengthen the education desegregation processes within the targeted schools and institutions in the frame of the previous project interventions as well to extend its activities both in terms of the number of school and preschool institutions, beneficiary group through set of activities that will insure a smooth achievement of the project goal.

Nr.	36.
Country	Romania
Project code	RO 087
Impl. agency	Ruhama
Contracted on	01.12.2010
Completed on	31.08.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	162,774

The main objective of the project is to develop and validate good practices in educational programs for Roma children until 2015, programs that improve annually the mainstream school participation and results of the pupils and hence can become public policies of the Ministry of Education.

Nr.	37.
Country	Serbia
Project code	SER 032
Impl. agency	Provincial Department of Education and Culture, Council for Roma
Contracted on	01.09.2007
Completed on	31.08.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	850,408

The main objective of this project is to expand access to secondary education for Roma students in Vojvodina, i.e. to increase the number of Roma pupils who enroll and finish secondary schools (especially the number of those enrolling in 4-years educational profiles), and to improve their achievements rate during secondary education. Providing financial and mentorship support to Roma pupils who attend secondary schools on the territory of Vojvodina. Guiding and motivate secondary school pupils to continue toward tertiary education. To motivate primary school pupils and their parents to enroll in secondary schools, targeting grammar schools and other competitive school.

Nr.	38.
Country	Serbia
Project code	SER 042
Impl. agency	Minority Rights Center/ MRC and Ministry of Education- Inspection Department
Contracted on	01.01.2009
Completed on	31.12.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	79,686

The project objective is to support the anti-discriminative school environment for children of Roma nationality:

1. To build capacity of educational institutions to develop and promote anti-discriminative environment.
 2. To strengthen the role of Roma parents in the process of primary education of their children.
 3. To secure higher inclusion of Roma children in educational system and continuity in education.
 4. To strengthen the role of civil society organizations in advocating for implementation of measures against discrimination supported in the government strategic documents on education of Roma.
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Nr.	39.
Country	Serbia
Project code	SER 059
Impl. agency	Mali Princ
Contracted on	01.08.2010
Completed on	30.09.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	48,675

The main aim of the project is to initiate developing of new educational and social policy in Belgrade, so as relevant institutions' fully implementation of the government program and policy (such as Decade Action Plan for Education and Law on Foundations of Education).

Nr.	40.
Country	Serbia
Project code	SER 061
Impl. agency	Ministry of Education of the Republic of Serbia
Date from	01.08.2010
Completed on	31.12.2010
Status	Under evaluation
Granted amount (Euro)	66,950

The main objective of the project is to ensure that local education services are developed to meet the educational needs of local Roma children more effectively and that the gap in educational success between Roma and non-Roma children is radically reduced.

Nr.	41.
Country	Serbia
Project code	SERPPP
Impl. agency	REF
Contracted on	2009
Completed on	2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	55,160

Donor coordination of REF, OSCE and UNICEF for universal preschool enrolment at national level in SERBIA.

Nr.	42.
Country	Slovakia
Project code	SK 031
Impl. agency	The Civic Association Equal Chances
Contracted on	01.12.2009
Completed on	31.03.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	64,374

The main goal of the project is to improve the integration of 120 Romani children in one pre-school facility in the city of Prešov and five villages in the surrounding region.

The Project has the following specific objectives:

- a) Pre-school preparation of Romani children in ethnically mixed standard pre-schools;
- b) Motivation programs for parents;
- c) Tutoring of Romani children enrolled in primary schools (with the teachers providing after-school tutoring to children in primary education not teaching the same children during school hours;
- d) Preparation of study on education situation in the city of Prešov;
- e) Preparation of the handbook on informed consent of the parents in relation to special education.

Nr.	43.
Country	Slovakia
Project code	SLO 033
Impl. agency	KARI Union
Contracted on	01.02.2010
Completed on	31.04.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	59,970

The main aim of the proposed project is to improve the educational outcomes of 230 Romani children enrolled in the first and second years of primary education in eleven standard primary schools in the BB region in order to prevent their reassignment to special schools.

Nr.	44.
Country	Slovakia
Project code	SLO 034
Impl. agency	Ternipe & ProFuturo Association
Contracted on	01.01.2010
Completed on	31.01.2011
Status	Under evaluation
Granted amount (Euro)	60,690

The main aim of the proposed project is to improve through after-school activities based on the Hungarian Tanoda model Romani children's success in education, and subsequently their competitiveness on the labor market and their social integration. The project anticipates serving a total of 117 children in three localities: Rimavská Seč (70 children), Alekšince (20 children), and Zbehy (17 children).

Nr.	45.
Country	International
Project code	INT 019
Impl. agency	Central European University
Contracted on	01.06.2010
Completed on	31.12.2013
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	330,000

RAP aims to prepare young Roma to succeed as scholars and as promoter of Roma inclusion on the international scene. The program was designed to increase the number of young Roma with high international standards of education to access internationally recognized graduate universities. This is a continuation of the program for a further 3 years.

Nr.	46.
Country	Macedonia
Project code	CDS 1
Impl. agency	National Roma Centrum
Contracted on	29.11.2010
Completed on	1.04.2012
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	6,740

Project Mission: Full inclusion of Roma children in regular preschool education through (a) better access to quality education for Roma pupils and (b) minimize or eliminate the drop-out level of Roma pupils. The project is a small grant supplement to support the implementation of AGS programme in Macedonia

Nr.	47.
Country	Macedonia
Project code	CDS 2
Impl. agency	Kham
Contracted on	29.11.2010
Completed on	1.04.2012
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	7,600

The project is a small grant supplement to support the implementation of AGS programme in Macedonia.

Nr.	48.
Country	Ambrella
Project code	CDS 3
Impl. agency	Kham
Contracted on	29.11.2010
Completed on	1.04.2012
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	7,959

The project is a small grant supplement to support the implementation of AGS programme in Macedonia

Nr.	49.
Country	Ambrella
Project code	CDS 4
Impl. agency	National Roma Centrum
Contracted on	22.12.2010
Completed on	1.03.2011
Status	Ongoing
Granted amount (Euro)	1,535

The project is a small grant contribution to support the translation of the Handbook and Advocacy meetings as a follow up to the MAC 45 completed project.

4. REF PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL EVENTS, 2010

1	Young Leaders Dialogue <i>San Francisco USA (A Nagy's participation was supported by the US government)</i>	10–25 February
2	ERRC-REF Seminar on the draft synthesis report of a study concerning 'Activities to improve the impact of policies, programmes and projects aimed at the social inclusion and non-discrimination of Roma in the EU', <i>Budapest Hungary</i>	1 March
3	Roma Early Childhood Development Workshop in the frame of European Foundation Centre Forum for Roma Inclusion <i>Hague</i>	4–5 March
4	'EU Projects in favour of the Roma Community' – DG for Education and Culture <i>Brussels Belgium</i>	10–11 March
5	Education Policy and Equal Education Opportunity Workshop <i>Tirana</i>	18–21 March
6	Meeting of Council of Europe Group of Specialists on Roma, Gypsies and Travelers <i>Strasbourg France</i>	24–27 March
7	European Forum for Freedom in Education conference on early school leaving <i>Brussels Belgium</i>	13 May
8	'Access and Social Inclusion' – DG for Education and Culture <i>Brussels Belgium</i>	17 May
9	Harlem Children Zone Conference, invited by OSI <i>Washington DC. USA</i>	June
10	School Education Stakeholder Platform Meeting <i>Brussels Belgium</i>	14 June
11	Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015 18 th International Steering Committee Meeting <i>Bratislava</i>	24–25 June
12	Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015 19 th International Steering Committee Meeting <i>Prague</i>	28 September
13	Breaking the cycle of disadvantage Social inclusion in and through education <i>Gent, Belgium</i>	28–29 September

14	Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015 18 th International Steering Committee Meeting <i>Bratislava</i>	29 September–01 October
15	European Training Foundation Regional Meeting <i>Saniurfa, Turkey</i>	3–7 October
16	Roma and Sinti Consultation Meeting organized by the Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues (CPRSI) <i>Warsaw, Poland</i>	5 October
17	European Foundation Centre Forum for Roma Inclusion Meeting <i>Warsaw Poland</i>	5–6 October
18	Young Leaders Dialogue organized by the US Embassy <i>Prague Czech Republic</i>	8–12 November
19	Meeting with the Human Rights Commission <i>Roma, Italy</i>	15–16 November
20	National Conference for European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion <i>Palermo Italy</i>	23 November
21	1 st Meeting of the International Task Force for the Education of Roma <i>Strasbourg, France</i>	28 November
22	Monitoring and Evaluation of Roma Projects and Policies <i>Brussels, Belgium</i>	30 November
23	4 th meeting of the European Platform for Roma Inclusion 'Early childhood services for Roma children and families' <i>Brussels, Belgium</i>	13 December

5. CONSOLIDATED MANAGEMENT REPORT

	REF Switzerland EUR	REF Hungary** EUR*	REF Romania*** EUR****	Total – all REF entities
INCOME				
Donations from 3 rd parties*****	7,237,857	980,597		8,218,454
Project Support Program Refund	215,210			215,210
Interest Income	2,591	561		3,152
Gain on Foreign Exchange		4		4
Total Income	7,455,658	981,162	–	8,436,820
EXPENDITURE				
Administrative expenses	335,548	591,157		926,705
Project Support Program	1,945,612			1,945,612
EU Roma pilot – A Good Start	31,053	724,371		755,424
School after School			109,898	109,898
Equal Opportunitites			101,478	101,478
Youth on Labor Market			4,340	4,340
Roma Platform – Capacity Building			79,309	79,309
Communications	124,007	161,093		285,100
Policy development and capacity building	610,020	264,913		874,933
Tertiary Scholarships	2,211,418	117,206		2,328,624
Loss on recoverable grants	–			–
Losses on foreign exchange				–
Total Expenditure	5,257,658	1,858,740	295,025	7,411,423

Donation from REF Switzerland to REF Hungary	1,200,000	1,200,000		-
Donation from REF Switzerland to REF Romania	340,119		340,119	-
Total Internal Transfers	1,540,119	1,200,000	340,119	-
Excess of income over expenditure	657,881	322,422	45,094	1,025,397

* Translated from HUF at the yearly average exchange rate of 275.93 HUF/EUR of www.oanda.com

** REF Hungary received EUR 1.200.000 from REF Switzerland for operational expenses

*** REF Romania received EUR 340.119 from REF Switzerland as a start-up capital

**** Translated from RON at the yearly average exchange rate of 4.22 RON/EUR of www.oanda.com

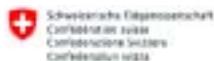
***** Include consultancy income EUR 4.500 and the balance of World Bank Multidonor Trust Fund EUR 100.000

The cover photo was taken by Gábor Valuska at a 'Read with Us' event in Hungary in 2010.

The 'Read with Us' campaign aims to encourage the practice of reading in impoverished families, for children and parents alike. With the help of reading, as a tool and as an opportunity, the campaign intends to stimulate social dialogue as well as to stand up against divisiveness and for reconciliation within Hungarian society. It enlists the participation of celebrities and opinion-shapers in an effort to change reading habits in the participating communities and to raise awareness of the need for social and personal responsibility.

'Read with Us' was initiated and managed by the Open Society Foundations Roma Initiatives with invaluable contributions from several partners.

www.olvassunkegyutt.hu



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