

# INEQUITY AND INEQUALITY:

Teacher Absenteeism, Romani Pupils,  
and Primary Schools in Romania

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This study and its research report are the result of cooperation between the Center for Urban and Regional Sociology – CURS; the Roma Center for Social Intervention and Studies – Romani CRISS; and Roma Education Fund (REF). The main authors of this report are Cătălin Augustin Stoica and Marius Wamsiedel.

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*The views, opinions, or positions strategies expressed by the authors are theirs alone, and do not necessarily reflect the views, opinions, positions, or strategies of the Roma Education Fund or the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth, and Sports.*

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STUDENTS ARE THE FIRST TO PAY, ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, FOR THE CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR TEACHERS MISSING CLASSES.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Examining the habits of teachers in 220 primary schools across the breadth of Romania's school system while simultaneously cataloguing each school's work environment, this study sought to examine the degree to which teacher absenteeism was a contributing factor to Romani pupils' poor school attendance and performance. However, few links were found between teacher absenteeism and that of their students. Nonetheless, this report subtly points to the learning environment in each school, in particular those poorer schools with insufficient infrastructure, resources and funds, and the distinct correlation that can be made to their often substantial Romani student bodies. This suggests that equality and equity in the classroom, and by default the attendance and performance of Romani pupils has yet to be guaranteed in an inequitable and unequal national school system. Until Romania's national and county-level educational authorities make sure all schools have a fair share of resources, Romani pupils will continue to struggle to compete for their future social and economic success in classrooms emptied of play, games, teachers, and even learning itself.

## AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

Based on the Roma Education Fund's (REF) terms of reference prepared by Arthur Ivatts, the research undertaken by the Center for Urban and Regional Sociology (CURS) and the Roma Center for Social Intervention and Studies – Romani CRISS addresses the issue of teacher absenteeism in primary schools (grades one through four) by employing a quasi-experimental approach and combining quantitative and qualitative methodologies.

Two principal hypotheses that we intended to test were: (a) Is there a positive correlation between teacher absenteeism and the percentage of Romani students enrolled in primary grades? (b) Is there is a positive correlation between teacher absenteeism and student absenteeism? In addition, we intended to observe whether school personnel records provide accurate data on teacher absenteeism.

Our research strategy has combined quantitative and qualitative methodologies, which have relied on a sample of 220 schools as follows: (1) 110 schools where Romani students in primary grades (one through four) have a significant presence; (2) 110 schools where Romani students in primary grades have a rather low presence (near or around 10 percent). We named the schools in the first category "Roma schools" and the schools in the second category "non-Roma" schools.

Field research was conducted during the second semester of the school year 2010–2011 (January to June).

The quantitative component aimed, on one hand, at gathering objective data about school infrastructure, student body, and teaching staff composition, experience, qualifications, and performances. On the other hand, in each school, aside from the school principals, we interviewed four persons who teach primary grades. These individual interviews have dealt with schools' organizational climate and teachers' satisfaction. In total we interviewed 880 teachers and 220 school principals.

The qualitative component consisted of observations made in schools in regard to teacher absenteeism and lateness/tardiness. Such observations have been made by our interviewers through 10 unannounced visits in selected schools during the second semester of the previous academic year (that is, 2010–2011).

## SAMPLE FEATURES

In selecting the two samples, we employed a sampling strategy based on certain criteria (that is, number of Romani pupils enrolled in primary grades). Due to lack of reliable official data regarding the ethnic background of students enrolled in primary schools, we relied on data provided by local county inspectors for Roma education.

Roma schools included in our sample tend to have a higher percentage of male principals than non-Roma schools (48.2 percent versus 31.8 percent). Also, both the average and the median age of principals in Roma schools are higher than the average and median age of principals in non-Roma schools. Notably, fewer principals from Roma schools have a university degree (94.4 percent) as compared to principals from non-Roma schools (99.1 percent). Similarly, fewer principals from Roma schools have the highest educational qualifications (first degree – 79.0 percent) as compared to principals from non-Roma schools (86.4 percent). Yet, Roma schools seem to fare better than non-Roma schools in terms of principals with the lowest teaching qualification. Specifically, 5.5 percent of Roma school principals have "no degree" as compared to 7.2 percent of non-Roma school principals with "no degree." Moreover, Roma school principals have more teaching experience (measured in years) as compared to non-Roma school principals. Yet, more non-Roma school principals have held this position for less than 10 years as compared to Roma school principals.

Also noteworthy is the fact that non-Roma schools included in our sample have no principals of Roma origin. In such schools, 91.8 percent of principals are Romanians and 8.2 percent of principals have other ethnic background (mostly Hungarian). Among the 110 Roma schools included in our sample, we encountered only one principal of Roma ethnic background.

## INFRASTRUCTURE, HUMAN RESOURCES, AND ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE

Our data indicates that the Roma schools have poorer facilities for physics, chemistry, biology, and informatics. The differences between these two types of schools can reach even 20 percent in the case of physics laboratories. Other differences appear once again in one of the most important facilities, namely, sanitation and the presence of a toilet inside the school. Non-Roma schools have a 15-percent greater chance of having this essential facility compared to Roma schools, although even the non-Roma percentages seem small.

Teachers from Roma schools tend to have fewer years of teaching experience than teachers from non-Roma schools. Also, 27.7 percent of teachers in Roma schools have “no degree”, whereas only 16.5 percent of teachers from non-Roma schools have “no degree.” In addition while 64.9 percent of teachers from non-Roma schools have “first degree” qualification, only 42.5 percent of teachers from Roma schools hold similar teaching qualification.

Roma schools also tend to have more Romani teachers than non-Roma schools (4.6 percent versus 2.6 percent). More than half of Roma schools (57.3 percent) report having Romani mediators. In contrast, slightly over one-quarter of the non-Roma schools included in our sample have Romani mediators. Similarly, 44.5 percent of Roma schools have Romani-language instructors, whereas only 16.4 percent of non-Roma schools have teachers of Romani language.

Teachers' income seems to be a common reason for lack of satisfaction in both types of schools. Only four percent of the teachers believe that their earning provide a decent living. It seems that Roma and non-Roma schools mainly differentiate themselves in the organizational climate in rural areas. Here, principals from Roma schools tend to have a more restrictive behavior while the principals in the non-Roma schools tend to have a more directive behavior.

A relatively clear trend appeared in the data: teachers from Roma schools were more often against segregation and in favor of mixed classes. Also, teachers from non-Roma school tend to choose the middle category “neither agree nor disagree” more often, while teachers from Roma schools tend to be more sure about their views on the issue of (de)segregation.

## TEACHER ABSENTEEISM

During the course of our research, we found there to be no systematic records and aggregate official data on teacher absenteeism at the county and national levels. As a result we do not have the means to compare and validate our findings with official statistics.

Overall, in Roma schools the number of hours of teacher absences (7,253 hours) is 2.43 times as high as the number of hours of teachers' absences in non-Roma schools (2,978 hours). In terms of types of absences, in Roma schools the number of hours of absences due to medical reasons (4,357) is six times as high as the number of hours of absences due to medical reasons in non-Roma schools. Extremely important is that in Roma schools the number of hours of absence due to *undocumented* medical reasons (83 hours) is 16 times as high as the number of hours of absence due to undocumented medical reasons in non-Roma schools (five hours).

Also, the number of hours of unjustified absences in Roma schools (12 hours) is now 1.7 times as high as the number of hours of unjustified absences in non-Roma schools (seven hours). This finding tends to support our initial hypothesis regarding the existence of significant differences between Roma and non-Roma schools in terms of teacher absences. Our data also indicate that infrastructural factors and geographical location might be the ultimate factors that affect teacher absenteeism, all other factors being equal.

In addition, teachers from non-Roma schools have more hours of absence due to participation in extracurricular and training activities than teachers from Roma schools. Yet in Roma schools we found more hours of absence (213 hours) due to participation in other professional events than in non-Roma schools (190 hours of absence). Similarly, Roma schools reported more hours of absence (121 hours) due to “other reasons” than non-Roma schools (four hours).

Non-Roma schools tend to be stricter than Roma schools when dealing with teacher absences. Specifically, 41 percent of teachers in non-Roma schools claim they are “often” or “very often” required to bring to school documents that justify their absences. In Roma schools, 28.7 percent of teachers say they must justify their absences through various documents “often” or “very often.”

More Roma schools than non-Roma schools rely on substitute teachers to replace teachers who miss classes and announce this fact in advance. Also, in Roma schools a teacher's absence is more frequently dealt with by having a colleague supervising (but not teaching) pupils (21.0 percent in Roma schools versus 12.6 percent in non-Roma schools). Non-Roma schools more frequently opt for the solutions of teaching missed classes outside the usual school days (7.1 percent) and during the usual school days (9.8 percent). On the other hand, for unannounced absenteeism, non-Roma schools tend to opt for teaching missed classes outside usual school days/hours more frequently than Roma schools (15.0 percent versus 7.0 percent).

Notably, as compared to non-Roma schools, in Roma schools more teachers report coming late for classes rarely (29.5 percent) and sometimes (1.6 percent). Yet more teachers from non-Roma schools claim that teacher lateness represents a problem in their schools (5.5 percent versus 2.5 percent). Based on our sampled observations, teachers' tardiness seems to appear more frequently in Roma schools (17.0 percent) as compared to non-Roma

schools (10.5 percent). Similar findings have been recorded in rural and urban areas for both types of schools. Furthermore, the number of observed teacher's absences is higher in Roma schools than in non-Roma schools (in both urban and rural areas).

## STUDENT ABSENTEEISM AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

We note that the per capita number of absences of Romanian students is higher in Roma schools than in non-Roma schools (13.20 absences per Romanian pupil in Roma schools versus 6.1 absences per Romanian pupil in non-Roma schools). Also, the per capita number of Romani pupils' absences is higher in Roma schools (45.20 absences per pupil) than in non-Roma schools (30.20 absences per pupil). Thus, from the standpoint of the number of absences per pupil, both Romanian and Romani pupils from Roma schools tend to fare worse than both Romanian and Romani students from non-Roma schools. Equally important, Romani students in both types of schools have a higher number of absences per pupils than Romanian pupils.

Roma schools' principals report a significantly higher seasonal variation of pupils' absenteeism as compared to non-Roma schools principals. Specifically, 40.9 percent of Roma school principals say there is no such seasonal variation of student absenteeism as compared to 73.7 percent of non-Roma school principals who say the same thing. In Roma schools, 19.1 percent of principals claim that pupils' absenteeism tends to be high during winter, while in non-Roma schools, 16.5 percent of principals state that pupil attendance tends to be lower during winter. As compared to principals from non-Roma schools (14.7 percent), more than twice as many principals from Roma schools (37.3 percent) claim that pupils' absenteeism tends to be higher in the summer (May–June). Similarly, as compared to non-Roma schools' principals, principals from Roma schools tend to report more frequently that pupil absenteeism varies by weekdays (22.7 percent versus 33.6 percent).

In terms of strategies to reduce and sanction student absenteeism in Roma schools, 10.7 percent of Romanian pupils and 25.0 percent of Romani students were officially warned due to their absences. In non-Roma schools 20.9 percent of Romanian pupils and 151.68 percent of Romani students were officially warned due to their absences. In the latter case, the figure signifies that Romani pupils received more than one warning due to absences. Thus, in both types of schools, as compared to Romanian counterparts, Romani students tend to be more often warned due to their absences. Furthermore, in Roma schools no Romanian pupil and 0.5 percent of Romani pupils were expelled from school due to absences. In non-Roma schools 0.3 percent of Romanian pupils and 2.2 percent of Romani students were expelled from school due to unjustified absences.

In terms of drop-out rates, in Roma schools Romani pupils had a rate of 7.7 percent. In non-Roma schools the drop-out rate for Romani pupils was 5.8 percent. In contrast, in Roma schools the drop-out rate for Romanians was 0.6 percent. In non-Roma schools the drop-out rate for Romanian students was 0.4 percent. Our analyses indicate

that, as regards drop-out rates, Romani pupils fare worse than Romanian students in both types of schools. Furthermore, Roma drop-out rates are higher in non-Roma schools than in Roma schools. In addition, in Roma schools 8.4 percent of Romani pupils either dropped out of school or were expelled, while in non-Roma schools 8.0 percent of Romani students did the same.

Romani pupils' academic performance is lower as compared to the academic performance of Hungarian, Romanian, and other students. Specifically, in both types of schools Romani pupils' academic performance is somewhat above "satisfactory" (2.8 in Roma schools and 2.6 in non-Roma schools). Notably, Romani pupils' in non-Roma schools seem to have slightly lower average grades than in Roma schools.

## LINKING SCHOOLS TO TEACHER AND STUDENT ABSENTEEISM

To explore the relation between school type (Roma and non-Roma) and teacher absences, we first ran a correlation analysis between the total number of hours of absences per teachers and the percentage of Romani pupils on the school roll. We found not statistically significant relations between these two variables. To test further this relation, we have employed a causal-type approach (ordinary least square regression or OLS) and ran four nested models. The fourth and most complex model led us to the following conclusions: First, the presence of numerous facilities in a given school is statistically significant. Its negative effect implies that in schools with good facilities teacher absenteeism is lower. The other two interesting effects are caused by "restrictive" and "directive" strategies adopted by a school's principals. It seems teacher absenteeism tends to increase in schools where principals adopt a directive ("iron fist") behavior. On the other hand, principals that favor a restrictive approach (with an overload of bureaucratic assignments) tend to be more effective in combating teacher absenteeism. In sum, our analyses indicate that there is no significant difference in the average number of teachers' absences "caused" by the number of Romani students a given school, controlling for all other variables.

To examine the relation between teacher and pupil absences we have employed a similar strategy. Our analyses indicate that the correlation between teacher absenteeism and pupil absenteeism in both Roma and non-Roma schools is not statistically significant. Furthermore, we have found no statistically significant relations between teacher and pupil absenteeism even after controlling for variables such as number of teachers, number or pupils on roll, locality-type (urban/rural), or the level of socio-economic development of localities. *In sum, teacher absenteeism seems to be caused by factors other than a significant presence of Romani children in a given school. Such factors include a school's location (urban/rural or poor/rich areas), a school's facilities and infrastructure, its organizational climate, and teachers' work satisfaction (especially regarding remuneration).*

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Monitor closely academic performance in Roma schools, not only in regard to the current grades, but also in regard with basic skills obtained at the newly introduced National Standardized Test (preparatory class, grades two, four, six, and nine) by the Law on Education 1/2011, Chapter 5, Section 2, art. 74. Include a sample of Roma schools in the next TIMSS elementary school mathematics test in 2015 and the PIRLS reading literacy study test programmed for 2016. Prioritize for desegregation and no enrolment policy in the Roma schools that obtain the poorest academic performance and where children may lack the basic skills. In the current context of economic crisis, ensure that a fair share of the GDP is transferred to education and that efficient use of public finances ensures fair salaries for teachers. In this regard, in light of reviewing previous studies and policy measures, design an incentive program with bonuses for outstanding attendance for teachers.
- Make more efficient use of the European Union Structural Funds in order to improve the school infrastructure and facilities among rural and urban schools, as well as use of the EU Structural Funds for teacher training, in order to improve learning conditions and teachers' working environment.
- Introduce elements of modern management to the training of primary school principals, encouraging non-authoritarian and cooperative leadership.
- Collect and disseminate aggregate and school data on teacher absenteeism as well as on academic performance, drop-out rates, and general statistics reflecting quality of education. Make these data available through informing parents about teacher absenteeism and school quality records in the process of enrolment.
- Use more efficiently teacher inspection for documenting, sanctioning, and reporting publicly aberrant and unacceptable cases of teacher absenteeism.
- Identify the high drop-out risk students and intervene with more interaction with family and financial incentives, as well as school-after-school classes for preventing/reducing drop-outs.
- Make compulsory the recovery of the hours missed due to teacher tardiness and absenteeism. Encourage parents and association of parents in exercising control over the school life and reward or sanction behaviors of teachers considered inappropriate. Such as teacher tardiness and unjustified absenteeism.
- In our samples of primary and general schools, we found no cases with segregated classes. If such cases still exist, then one should organize the desegregation process in such a manner that those "Roma schools" that register higher values on teacher absenteeism are considered among the first for desegregation. This recommendation should be related with focus of an ordinance and ministerial order that priority should be given to a no enrolment policy in segregated Roma schools.



UNTIL ROMANIA'S NATIONAL AND COUNTY-LEVEL EDUCATIONAL AUTHORITIES MAKE SURE ALL SCHOOLS HAVE A FAIR SHARE OF RESOURCES, ROMANI PUPILS WILL CONTINUE TO STRUGGLE TO COMPETE FOR THEIR FUTURE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SUCCESS IN CLASSROOMS EMPTIED OF PLAY, GAMES, TEACHERS, AND EVEN LEARNING ITSELF.

# INTRODUCTION

This study focuses on teacher absenteeism in Roma and non-Roma primary schools in Romania. According to the most recent Census (2002), the Roma minority represents 2.46 percent of Romania's total population (21,698,181 people). This figure is disputed by Romani leaders and various NGOs, which claim that the Roma population is actually higher than Census data attests. An additional proof of this phenomenon can also be the constant differences found between censuses and opinion polls. Romani leaders and NGOs suggest that, due to their long history of discrimination and exclusion in Romania (among other Central and East European countries), members of the Roma minority tend to avoid stating their ethnic background.

Leaving aside this controversy, most experts agree that Roma in Romania face extremely difficult conditions in economic well-being, political participation, discrimination, prejudices, and exclusion. The trials and tribulations of Romania's post-communist transition have further exacerbated the difficulties and hardships experienced by Roma. Inspired by William Julius Wilson's (1987) views on the underclass in the United States, some analysts (for example, Szelényi and Ladányi 2006) claim that, in the Central and East European context, Roma have a significant presence among the incipient "underclass" – a category that includes individuals with low socio-economic status, minimal education, and lack of opportunities – who are further victimized by a lack of community safeguards and resources, and who also face racial and ethnic discrimination.

As in other cases, expert solutions for improving Roma's status have focused on (access to) education as an exit from poverty. Currently, as it will be discussed in this report, the poverty that affects Romani communities is closely related to low levels of education among Roma and chronic shortcomings in the entire educational system. Romani children usually have poorer school attendance, a higher drop-out rate, and are more likely to have worse school performance than non-Roma children. Some authors claim that such difficulties are the result of historical discrimination, economic deprivation, and cultural differences (that is, the alleged Roma culture's low valorization of education).

This study looks at several micro-level issues related to Roma's access to education and the quality of education Roma children receive in schools. Observers of Romania's situation have claimed that Roma children face more difficulties in areas where Roma have a significant presence. In regards to schools, some authors have noted that schools where Roma children are a majority have a poorer infrastructure and fewer human resources (in terms of teaching staff). Also, for reasons that are beyond the scope of this report, such schools fail to attract highly qualified teachers. Individuals who end up teaching in such schools deem this fact a temporary parking orbit of their careers and are usually uninterested in the well-being of the pupils. These factors might translate into job

dissatisfaction, poor job performance, and absenteeism. All this taken together might negatively impact Romani pupils' academic performance and attendance rates. Ultimately, some might claim that the already poor chances of Roma children to get an education are further diminished by teaching staff's attitudes and behaviors in areas where Roma have a significant presence.

At the core of this study are dimensions of teacher absenteeism in Roma and non-Roma schools in Romania. Based on the Roma Education Fund's (REF) terms of references (TOR) and desk review prepared by Arthur Ivatts, the research undertaken by the Center for Urban and Regional Sociology (CURS) and the Roma Center for Social Intervention and Studies – Romani CRISS addresses the issue of teacher absenteeism in primary schools (grades one through four) by employing a quasi-experimental approach and combining quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Specifically, based on REF's TOR we have conducted surveys and observations on two samples as follows: (1) a sample of 110 schools where Romani pupils have a significant presence in primary grades; (2) a sample of 110 schools where non-Romani pupils have a significant presence (near or above 75 percent) in primary grades.

Two principal hypotheses that we intended to test were: (a) There is a positive correlation between teacher absenteeism and the percentage of Romani students on roll in primary grades; (b) There is a positive correlation between teacher absenteeism and student absenteeism. In addition, we intended to observe whether school personnel records provide accurate data on teacher absenteeism.

In selecting the two samples, we employed a purposive sampling strategy based on certain criteria (that is, number of Romani pupils enrolled in primary grades). Due to lack of reliable official data regarding the ethnic background of students enrolled in primary schools, we relied on data provided by local county inspectors for Roma education, who have been contacted and supervised by Gheorghe Sarău, the Romani Language Counselor from the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth, and Sports (MERYS or the Ministry of Education in what follows).

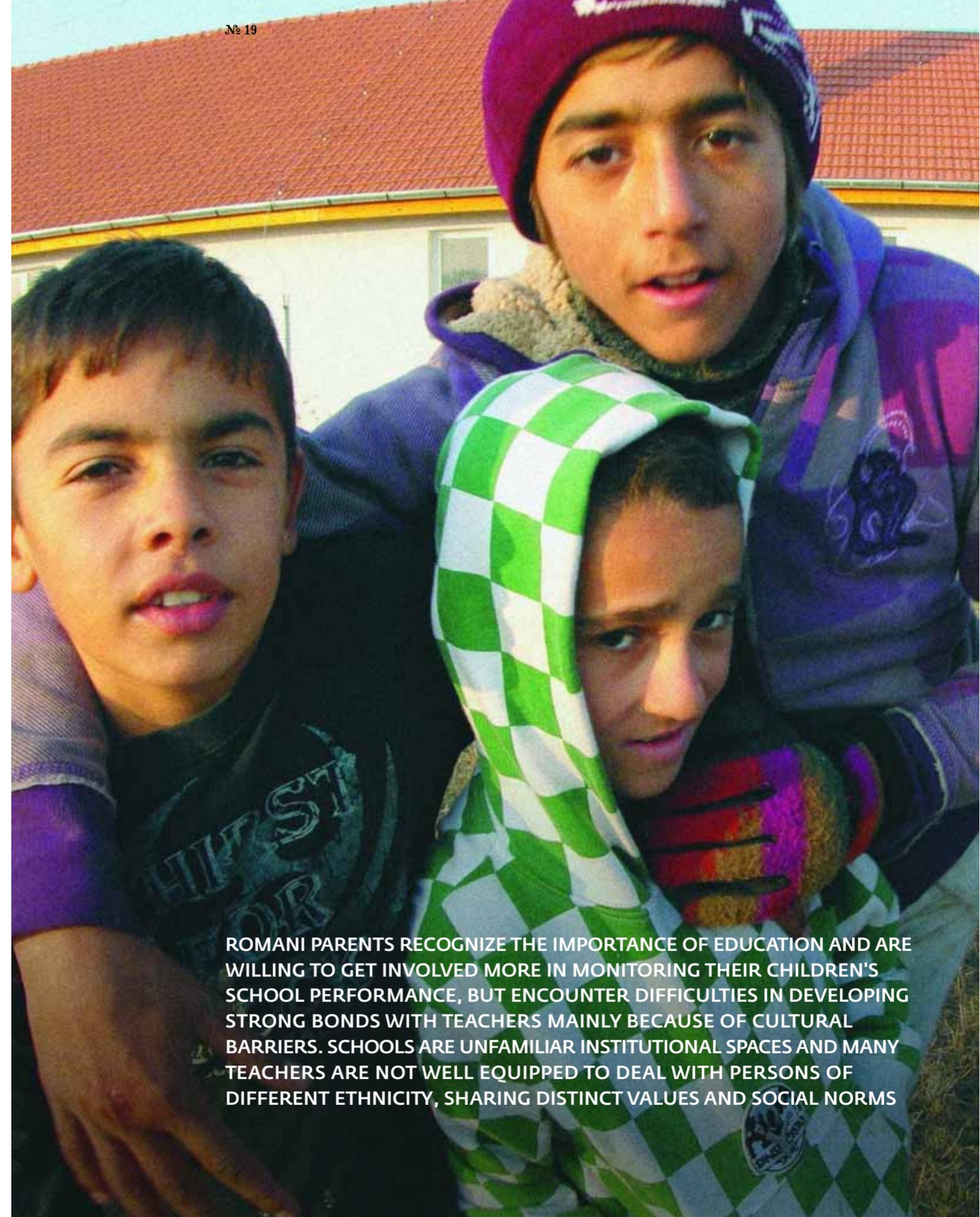
As this report will attest, in conducting this study we have faced several major difficulties. The most important were related to the lack of systematic official data (or sampling frames) on pupils' ethnic background and lack of county- or national-level aggregate data on teacher absenteeism. In addition, the overall climate of dissatisfaction with the ongoing economic crisis and the educational reforms initiated by the current Romanian government has also posed challenges to our fieldwork activities. Despite all this, during the second semester of the 2010–2011 academic year, we interviewed 220 schools' principals and 880 teachers from both Roma and non-Roma schools, using three types of questionnaires discussed in the next section. During the same period, our interviewers conducted sampled observations on issues related to teacher absenteeism and tardiness. These sampled observations were recorded through unannounced visits in the 220 schools included in our sample.

This research report is organized as follows: The next section provides a literature review of studies on Roma's access to education in Romania and on teacher absenteeism in developing countries. The third section details our methodological approach, while the fourth section discusses at length various challenges related to conducting the fieldwork. These two last chapters will describe the differences between the theoretical scheme used for data collection and the issues that appeared during the data collection. This will help the reader better understand the strengths and the limitations of our research.

In the fifth section we present the parameters of our achieved samples. This will describe both characteristics of the schools that were included in our sample and the profile of the teachers and principals we interviewed. The sixth section outlines the material and human infrastructure of the 220 schools included in our sample. This chapter tries to highlight differences between Roma schools and non-Roma schools concerning their material infrastructure, teacher capabilities, teacher fluctuation, organizational climate, and teachers' views on school segregation.

The seventh section contains descriptive analyses of teacher absenteeism based on subjective and factual data. This section addresses the main facts regarding teacher absenteeism in Roma and non-Roma schools and provide the basis for hypothesis-testing using inferential statistics. In section eight, we present the results of our descriptive analyses regarding student absences and academic performance. These descriptive analyses rely on subjective or opinion-based assessments made by teachers and principals, as well as on factual data from official school records.

Section nine analyzes the two main research questions using inferential statistics. These analyses will help us determine if the two main research questions asked here – that is, the link between type of school and teacher absenteeism and the link between teacher absenteeism and pupil absenteeism – are supported by data. The final chapter represents the main conclusions and policy proposals.



**ROMANI PARENTS RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION AND ARE WILLING TO GET INVOLVED MORE IN MONITORING THEIR CHILDREN'S SCHOOL PERFORMANCE, BUT ENCOUNTER DIFFICULTIES IN DEVELOPING STRONG BONDS WITH TEACHERS MAINLY BECAUSE OF CULTURAL BARRIERS. SCHOOLS ARE UNFAMILIAR INSTITUTIONAL SPACES AND MANY TEACHERS ARE NOT WELL EQUIPPED TO DEAL WITH PERSONS OF DIFFERENT ETHNICITY, SHARING DISTINCT VALUES AND SOCIAL NORMS**

# TEACHER ABSENTEEISM AND ROMA ACCESS TO EDUCATION

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Definitions

Absenteeism from the workplace is an important problem that both public and private institutions are faced with as it has a great impact not only on the increasing costs organizations must face, but also on their overall productivity and effectiveness. Although at first glance the definition of absenteeism might seem to be an easy issue to tackle, as it can be equated with the physical absence of an employee from their workplace, this matter needs to be afforded careful attention. There are still many ways in which individuals can be present at work without actually coming through with their professional obligations, although some authors prefer to reflect on this notion rather as "presenteeism" (Munro 2007). Thus, the definition given to absenteeism needs to encompass an overall view of all the aspects involved in the practice of work absenteeism. What can be stated with certainty is that the definition of absenteeism by many authors is rather taken for granted and most studies focus their attention on the causes and effects of the phenomenon and its explanations.

Hackett and Guion (1985) distinguish between two forms of absenteeism. The first form is voluntary and refers to unjustified and illegitimate non-attendance of employees. This includes not coming to work without providing due notice in advance as well as without giving any explanation as to the reasons of the absence. On the other hand, they also account for involuntary absenteeism, which reflects absence caused by factors which escape the control of the employee. Illness, personal problems, or any other event or situation preventing the employee from coming to work are legitimate examples of involuntary absenteeism. All these are contained in the individual labor contracts employees' sign and they are not accountable for any of these missed working days.

The most common official rationale for work absence is sickness absenteeism. Ehrberg et al. (1991) propose three ways of approaching employees seeking sick leave. First, there are the cases where the employee is severely ill, thus his or her request is legitimate. The second situation refers to minor illnesses and here it is debatable whether employees are justified in taking advantage of sick leave or not. Last but not least, a widely encountered case of absenteeism is when workers take days off by invoking sickness in order not to go to work. The feigning of sickness is employed when workers actually enjoy paid vacation days while having no health problem preventing

them from going to work. At the same time, absenteeism does not refer only to sick leave, but also to other types of absences which are less accounted for in studies on workers' absence. There is no easy way and no simple answer to what work absenteeism is and how it can be apprehended and measured. Actually, depending on each profession, the specifics are quite different. At the same time, the effort of providing some general guidelines for identifying and trying to prevent absenteeism is more than welcome.

In directing the discussion on the problem of employee absenteeism to the very precise case of teachers, the definitions of absenteeism is twofold. As already mentioned, it refers to unjustified absence from school and this is something that studies agree on (Scott and Wimbush 1991; Miller et al. 2007; Chapman 1994). On the other hand, there are authors who are inclined to add to this simplistic view of the problem with the idea that even if the teacher is present but not prepared, it should still be counted as missing class and therefore note should be taken of their absence (OECD Report 2009). At the same time, physical presence in the precinct but failing to attend classes as well as filling in the register to mark the day in school and afterwards going to pursue their own interests during their work time are also problems which have been signaled (Gardiner 1992). Although the above mentioned studies look at this complicated phenomenon from a behavioral perspective, in the sense that they see absenteeism as behavior, it is essential to stress that the overall rates it reached are actually pointing toward framing teacher absenteeism not as simple behavior, but as a form of social practice. It is at this point that studies need to stop and see how exactly this practice can be apprehended and how it can be measured in order to have useful tools in combating its negative effects and preventing it from expanding further.

Providing a reliable definition for absenteeism is a difficult task. Researchers in the field of management studies, on the one hand, and education studies, on the other hand, dispute the phenomenon of teacher absenteeism. While some experts focus on the increasing costs organizations face due to absenteeism, others emphasize the moral effects of the problem. All definitions of teacher absenteeism are discursively built around two dichotomies. The first distinction is the one between physical absences and "presenteeism." The second one revolves around issues of voluntarily and involuntarily skipping work. The only legitimate absence from the workplace is found somewhere in the area of physical and involuntary, while unjustified absence is placed with certainty in voluntary disengagement with work.

### Measures of Absenteeism

Measuring a phenomenon as ample as absenteeism presupposes a great effort in establishing which dimensions are to be taken into consideration, how indicators must be selected, and which are the most relevant for assuring an appropriate apprehension. Only after going through these steps and establishing these measurements can one proceed to a sound inquiry into the problem and then make recommendations for public policy. Numerous studies focus on the frequency the employee has been absent from the workplace (Jacobson 1988; Goldberg and Waldman 2000; Martel and Dupuis 2006). Other studies also take into consideration the explanation provided

for absence (Kasset et al. 2001). But the overwhelming majority of research on the topic of absenteeism focuses rather on establishing the causes of absenteeism and their effects, thus making it very difficult to reach consensus with regard to measuring workplace absenteeism and its operationalization into specific dimensions and indicators. When discussing sick-leave and sick-leave abuse, studies focus their attention on short-term absenteeism. This is due to the fact that there are better chances that a long-term absence can be caused by an actual disease, while with short-term absences chances are that the incidence of abuse is higher (Winkler 1980).

All these insights make measuring teacher absenteeism all the more difficult, as on neither of the already mentioned topics can one find satisfying models. On the one hand, if we were to measure teacher absenteeism as a function of the number of missed days in school, it would mean overlooking the fact that some of them only have classes during some days of the week and this would render investigation ineffective. For this reason, the Australasian Faculty of Occupational Medicine (1999) recommends that accounting for even smaller units of time than full days can prove to be more helpful. On the other hand, Leonard et al. (1990) propose a longitudinal analysis of what they consider to be the two "most common measures of absence," frequency of the event and time-lost, in an attempt to account for their seasonal stability and variability. This kind of model seems of very little utility, as it can only account for patterns of disparaged individual behavior, leaving unanswered the explanatory aspect which needs to be central in any study of absenteeism. Gaziel's study (2004) measures the absence frequency index for primary school teachers, a count within the interval of each absence during a given period of time. The author also uses the time-lost index, which is an aggregate measurement of the total time that teachers missed work during a given period of time, disregarding all explanations provided by the teachers. This measurement is useful in providing a clear overview of the general situation, so that managers of the institution can have a good understanding of the magnitude of the phenomenon. After all this is done, once can proceed to determine which absence is justified and which is a marker of improper professional behavior. According to Gaziel, using both these indices gives a more accurate perspective into which absence is motivated and which are voluntary manifestations of cutting work, enabling someone who is watching to observe the patterns.

Another approach into measuring absence is looking for the causes or predictors and finding an explanation there. Thus, job satisfaction and quality of work life, and inequalities and unfairness at work are used as predictors for the likelihood of absence (Goldberg and Waldman 2000; Kass et al. 2001; Boer et al. 2001). Other explanatory models hold financial incentives as solutions to the problem of absence (Jacobson 1988; Firestone and Pennel 1993). These studies focus not only on causes and predictors, but also on possible measures that can be taken in order to diminish teacher absenteeism and to improve their overall performance within the education institution.

The effects that teacher absenteeism has on the institution, and most importantly on its students, represents further developments brought to measuring the phenomena. Therefore, numerous studies have turned their attention toward student performance in standardized tests and how this can be a measure of teacher absenteeism,

in the form of both physical absence from school as well as their lack of quality training and ability to bring about knowledge in students. More often, teachers are held accountable for student performances (Haertel 1986), which are turned into indicators of teacher quality. Haertel dwells on the technical aspects of what standardized tests actually measure, to what extent it is legitimate to evaluate teacher activity as a function of student scores in standardized tests, and so on. The one point the author does mention is the fact that student achievement is an overall measure of teacher quality as it can be simply put as the extent to which an educator does his or her job in a very specific subject. In other words, achievement is the use students can give to the formal instruction a particular instructor is responsible for. Of course, this study is merely an indirect measurement of teacher absence, as it is part of the process of evaluation and to the degree of achievement students can arrive at due to their respective teachers' activity.

In dealing with absenteeism measurement, several patterns can be established. Most researches take into account the frequency of absences as a clear indicator of the severity of the phenomenon. As it became transparent in the difficulties of providing one definition for this practice, frequency alone is not an exhaustive measurement for this. Teacher absenteeism takes many forms and in order to encompass all the aspects of this problem a time-lost index is also necessary for assessing both its financial and moral costs. For a bird-eye view of the phenomenon, the context in which absenteeism takes place needs to be taken into account. Cause-driven measurement is a popular endeavor in delineating the acceptable forms of absence from the workplace. Evaluating the impact of teachers missing classes also improves findings on this topic. These measurement indicators, however, fail to take into account the responsibilities of being a teacher and are fairly reductionist in stating their definitions about the obligations embedded in the occupation itself. Occupation is measured as the time a teacher enters and exits the classroom, notwithstanding the time spent preparing for classes, the interaction with both their students and their colleagues, and the amount of due planning in constructing the curricula.

### Causes

To each form of absenteeism pertains to a different set of causes. For the regulated forms of absenteeism, which are, at the same time, socially and institutionally approved, causes revolve around severe personal issues that each employee has the right to solve. Problem absenteeism, however, stems from a series of causes that are not as easily observable. There is a long causal chain which is intimately connected with the dystopias of the present workplace. Absentee teachers are generally dissatisfied. The work-pay divide, coupled with the lack of appreciation that some teachers experience, as well as with the institutional inability to control the work of its employees, irremediably leads to teacher absenteeism.

When it comes to addressing the causes of absenteeism, the first one in rank is related to financial incentives leading to a lack of motivation on the part of teachers. On the other hand, as Chapman (1994) points out, since the financial incentives are so rare (or, in some cases, completely lacking) that teachers are forced to resort to

new sources of employment in order to make a living. This diffusion of resources to other areas renders them less and less available for the schools they teach at and gives them even less time to prepare for classes. Also, lack of control over teachers' behavior on behalf of the school management can also be accounted for at least as an enabling factor, if not a cause. An important aspect to be taken into consideration is the shared feeling teachers have concerning the lack of appreciation towards their work. A feeling which is tightly connected to disproportion between the amount of work and the salary they receive. De Boer et al. (2001) hold that a good predictor for work absence is unfairness at work. They argue that a job with high demands on behalf of the employee, but which, at the same time allows the worker very little control over their own job and renders him or her disempowered can lead to "withdrawal" from the workplace and even to increase in rates of absenteeism. If we take a look at how the education system is being put through constant reformation, this can easily be associated with a sensation of dispossession of control. At the same time, the idea of unfairness that both Chapman and De Boer et al. address is related to the fact that there is a general feeling of relative deprivation. As it seems like there is no justice, commitment toward the job is not perceived as an obligation any longer (Firestone and Pennel 1993).

Hirschfeld et al. (2002) present a discussion of the problematic approach in studies linking absenteeism to job satisfaction. They contend that prior analyses of the relation between perceived performance, importance of the task, and reward for the performed tasks, on the one hand, and absenteeism, on the other hand, have focused primarily on work settings with high external rewards, thus rendering the link between an inverse relationship between skills, perceived performance, and proneness toward absence from the workplace in low-paying jobs. Their argument is that in the public sector, where employees have low-paying jobs and where they perceive that the way they perform their tasks is more important than acknowledged by management, there are better chances for employees to resort to absence in order to take what they consider to be their right to take advantage of paid time without working. In these settings, promotions and chances for pay increases are very scarce, while the perceived exercised skills, as well as the perceived importance of the task, are viewed by employees to be unappreciated. Seeing that this situation does not lead to any form of external reward, employees resort to absence as a way of what is considered to be legitimate reward for their effort. This is also the case with teachers who not only have low-paying jobs, but also perceive this relative deprivation both in relation to the appreciation shown toward the job they perform (providing education to members of society) and in relation to how other jobs are financially rewarded in comparison to the skills they require.

There are some forms of teacher absence that do not qualify as problem absenteeism. These are sick leaves and family problems. They are usually mentioned in the labor contract, so that people can take care of their health and their families when it is the case. Ehrberg et al. (1991) bring to discussion a very interesting twist which can turn regulated sick leave into excessive absenteeism. They take into consideration some enabling factors for absenteeism. In the study they conducted, they submit to analysis the number of leave days that each teacher

can take per year. Afterwards, they analyze the number of unused leave days that each teacher has in a number of schools in New York. Taking their analysis further, they focus their attention on whether teachers receive any kind of compensation for the unused days, and if they do, what is the nature and the value of this compensation. This investigation also gives insights into the types of incentives that appeal to teachers apart from the obvious financial stakes. One of these motivating factors is the possibility of early retirement. On the other hand, Ehrberg et al. focus their attention on what they call "a sick bank" and its effects on teacher absenteeism, and practically on how a policy measure undertaken in order to prevent excesses in absenteeism actually leads to favoring it further on. In the same tone, Winkler (1980) discusses the problem of sick-leave abuse and how it could be prevented. The very important point that he emphasizes is the fact that work absence in the public sector is very costly because it not only poses more obligations toward the employer, but it also prevents the main beneficiaries of the services from getting what they need. For instance, this is the case with absent teachers, who need to be replaced by substitutes; only if they come for a very short amount of time, they cannot remove the sensation of a provisory measure, something that is second best. This way, substitute teachers manage to do a lot less usually than the absent teachers, should they come to class. The focus of the discussion of Winkler's article is this: the fact that there is sick-leave for teachers determines them to a rational choice type of analysis: if they know that they would lose the sick-leave days should they not use them and if, at the same time, they need not provide any proof of illness, then they might act in conformity to a utilitarian notion. Thus, teachers' actions will be motivated by an attempt of maximizing their own well-being at the expense of the school and of their students.

### Effects of teacher absenteeism

As mentioned before, the importance granted to the topic of workplace absenteeism is related to the overall negative effects this has both on the costs implied for employers and for the productivity and efficiency of the work itself and those of the organization in general. This is why focusing on both predicted and observed effects of employees' absenteeism is not farfetched.

As David Chapman (1994) emphasizes, the reasons why teacher absenteeism needs to be taken seriously are related to the impact this has on students. So he points out that first of all, students are deprived of important hours of "instructional time." Teachers are theorized as gatekeepers of knowledge (Carlson 2002), intermediaries between the objectives of educational curricula and the students as receptors of these objectives, transformed into specialized classes. Thus, their absence from class has harmful effects for the educational process. For this reason, this is what some of already mentioned authors call voluntary absenteeism and others "presenteeism." The common practice of teachers coming to class without being prepared to teach students needs to be taken into consideration as absenteeism, because this refers to a work hour when teachers did not do their job. At the same time, Chapman also mentions the effects of teacher absenteeism on the increase in student drop-out rates. The main explanation for this phenomenon is that both students and parents stop perceiving school as an

institution that takes the educational process seriously. Consequently, parents adhere to a rational reasoning where, instead of sending their children to school and putting up with teacher misconduct, they prefer to give up the economic burdens of keeping their children in school. This is also a way of undermining school authority within communities, according to Chapman, as well as communities' confidence in formal education institutions.

Ehrenberg et al. (1991) also mention poor student performance as a consequence of teacher absenteeism. In order to see if they are right, they test an econometric model of teacher absenteeism and its impact on student drop-out rates and student performance. Although their tests do not necessarily validate the hypothesis that there is such an impact, the authors themselves emphasize the limitation of their research manifested in the fact that they only took in consideration pass rates on a set of standardized tests in the state of New York for a limited year series. They actually state that teacher absenteeism needs to be treated with all seriousness, as its effects on student performances are quite severe. Not only does teacher absenteeism affect efficient school management, it also prevents the school from doing what it is supposed to for its students. First, students cannot be guided through the curricula, and second, school management cannot rely on teachers' activity and their following regular schedule.

The great emphasis placed on the problem of teacher absenteeism has twofold consequences. On the one hand, researchers apprehend the effects this has on schools, from how this affects the entire fabric of the educational system to how it impacts the organizational culture. The logic of the effects teacher absenteeism goes from a general to a very specific level. On the other hand, it relates to the obvious effects regarding student performances. Obviously, the main concern revolves around the construction of the educational system, which determines the understandings of both students' and teachers' roles in the learning process. First, absenteeism leads to the deterioration of teachers' authority in front of students and the entire community. Another layer of understanding leads to changes in educators' role in providing students with the necessary tools for engaging in a critical examination of the world they live in and becoming young professionals. Further on, it impacts relations among teachers, as well as the way they perceive their own position as professionals, their attitude toward the working environment, and the beneficiaries of the services they provide. As a consequence, organizational culture is altered and alienation becomes the working rule. Teachers become alienated both from their students and from their fellow teachers. The code of conduct stops being taken for granted regulation, and instead it is submitted to constant negotiation and interpretation. A mirror of teachers' usefulness is theorized in literature to be correlated to high student scores in standardized tests. Since the ultimate goal is to accomplish good student scores in standardized tests, their failing to do so is often put on account of teacher absenteeism in both its forms (physical absence as well as disengagement with the learning process). At the same time, from a student's perspective, the lack of engagement and preoccupation on behalf of their teachers ineluctably leads to establishing vocabularies of motive for their own disengagement and lack of motivation.

### Concluding Remarks

As intuitive as researching teacher absenteeism may appear, at a closer look one can understand that this phenomenon is in fact multifaceted. Its implications are manifold. Students are the first to pay, one way or another, for the consequences of their teachers missing classes. The organizational culture is also subject to numerous changes in the work relations of the members of an institution. The school as an institution mirrors the behavior and practices of its employees. Last but not least, the educational system may find itself in disarray if not for the concerted efforts of interdisciplinary scholars. The stakeholders in teacher absenteeism are not only the teachers and their students, but it also links to future professional formation of the latter, as well as their becoming persons. On the other hand, one cannot place blame on the teachers alone. This practice needs to be integrated within a wider social and economic context and placed in relation to the forces that drive them toward absenteeism and disengagement with their work. Research on the topic should also address the longitudinal effects of teacher absenteeism affecting all the actors involved in the educational process.

### ROMA PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION

Assessing Roma participation to education is a difficult task for at least two reasons: the lack of official data on the number of Roma enrolled in schools and the reluctance of many Roma to disclose their ethnicity to authorities. Although Ministry of Education Order 1540/2007 requires schools to gather data on the student population disaggregated on ethnicity, there is no public delivery of information on how many Roma are enrolled in any form of education. The only recent data in this respect is to be found in the activity report of a high-ranking official in the Ministry of Education, which indicates a Romani student population "exceeding 200,000" during the school year 2008/2009. The estimation is based on the reports made by school inspectors in charge with minority issues (MECTS 2009: 6).<sup>1</sup> The second difficulty is related to the method of counting Romani students. Where self-identification seems more legitimate than hetero-identification, for it allows people to decide the ethnicity they belong to, it is not necessarily more accurate. Given the defensive strategy of self-identification (Fleck and Rughinis 2008: 9), which consists of assuming Roma ethnicity within the community but not disclosing it to outsiders, it is likely that such an approach would lead to an undercount of Romani students. At the same time, hetero-identification is misleading because it relies on subjective assessment performed by observers based on a limited set of information about children, and is subject to various understandings of "ethnicity."

#### The gap between Roma and non-Roma

Despite the scarcity of data and the inevitable flaws in data gathering, recent studies indicate that the participation to education is considerably lower among Roma as compared to the majority population, and this situation is

<sup>1</sup> An independent assessment using similar data collection procedures estimated the total number of Romani students enrolled in the academic year 2006/2007 to be 250,000, out of which over 10 percent (25,525) took classes on Romani language and Roma history (EUMAP 2007:34).

encountered at each level of education. Among non-enrolled or drop-out Roma, 4.2 percent attended a crèche and 24.1 percent went to kindergarten, while among Roma participating in education, the rates are relatively higher (8.1 percent, respectively 66.6 percent), but still below national averages (Surdu 2011: 5). According to the Report of the Presidential Commission for analysis and policy drafting on education and research, which used official data from the school year 2004/2005, the participation rate in primary education was 64 percent for Roma and 98.9 percent for the total population. The same source indicates that 80 percent of unschooled youth are Roma, out of which 38 percent are functionally illiterate (Miclea 2007: 8). Participation to education is higher among Roma who live dispersed or in mixed communities rather than in compact communities. These Roma individuals usually come from wealthier families and do not speak Romanes at home (Surdu 2000: 108–9; Surdu 2011: 18–19).

What explains the gap in terms of participation to education between Romani and non-Romani youths? Is there an ideological foundation for some Romani parents' decision not to enroll children in school or not to let them finish the ten years of mandatory education? Or, as some authors argue, is this rather an economic decision combined with systematic rejection of the educational system? In order to answer these questions, we will explore the findings of three recent research reports focusing on school leaving in Romania. Two of them concerned the peculiar situation of Romani children (Surdu 2011 and Duminică and Ivasiuc 2010) and the other was interested in providing an overall depiction of the phenomenon, while pointing out the impact of ethnicity on the educational trajectory of children (Voicu 2010). All three studies reject the lay explanation that parents' disinterest in schooling leads to children's failures. Instead, they devise several categories of determinants of school leaving. Voicu (2010: 23) observes that teachers tend to perceive low-performing and drop-out students and their parents as lacking confidence in education, but the widespread idea is not supported by evidence from the interviews conducted with these categories of subjects. Students who left school recognize the importance of education for upward social mobility and express the desire to return at some point to classes. In a similar vein, Duminică and Ivasiuc (2010: 89–94) show that Romani parents recognize the importance of education and are willing to get involved more in monitoring their children's school performance, but encounter difficulties in developing strong bonds with teachers mainly because of cultural barriers. Schools are unfamiliar institutional spaces and many teachers are not well equipped to deal with persons of different ethnicity, sharing distinct values, and social norms. Drawing from evidence collected through focus groups, Surdu (2011: 79–83) also insists on the positive attitude of Romani parents towards school, which is regarded instrumentally as a means for achieving a better future. Education is seen as a way for improving the social status and increasing economic opportunities. However, while recognizing the importance of education for children's future, many parents are aware that having a high school or university diploma does not necessarily translate into obtaining a good job. The experience of educated people in their proximity is often intriguing – although managing to perform well in school, they faced unemployment or employment in menial jobs after finishing education. This finding suggests that, on the one hand, scarcity of jobs in Roma communities and discrimination on the labor market are likely to contribute to early school leaving and, on the other hand, the decision of abandoning

school is often based on rational choice rather than on lack of confidence in school. A related finding of the focus groups conducted with Romani parents is their wish that children fare a little better than themselves in school, usually by completing one additional educational cycle.

The three studies, similar in scope but relying on different data-gathering instruments, explore various issues that are considered to increase the likelihood of early school leaving, and propose different categories of determinants of abandon.

TABLE 2.2.1. Theoretical and Empirical Approaches to Determinants of Dropping out

Voicu (2010: 22–25) <sup>2</sup>	Duminica and Ivasiuc (2010: 82–89) <sup>3</sup>	Surdu (2011: 80–89) <sup>4</sup>
The individual and the family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Economic hardship</li> <li>– Educational model provided by parents</li> <li>– Educational model provided by older siblings</li> <li>– Family (divorce, domestic violence, vices)</li> <li>– Involvement in activities at the edge of the law (prostitution, gang membership, begging)</li> <li>– Joining the workforce</li> <li>– Migration</li> <li>– Ethnicity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Costs of education</li> <li>– Involvement in lucrative activities</li> <li>– Distance to school</li> <li>– Unsafe route to school</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> The research consists of case studies conducted in 19 schools from towns and the outskirts of large cities. The criterion for selecting schools was the existence of a high number of students at risk of leaving school early, based on the perception of local informants (all of them teachers). Data was obtained through observation fiches, individual interviews with teachers and parents, and group interviews with students enrolled in the ninth grade and youths who abandoned school after completing the eighth grade (Voicu 2010: 17–18).

<sup>3</sup> The research was carried out in 70 compact Roma communities with a low socio-economic profile and consisted in surveys of parents and school-aged children, and interviews with school principals and teachers (Duminica and Ivasiuc 2010: 36–39).

<sup>4</sup> The research consists in two surveys on representative samples of Roma households with at least one case of early school leaving, and Romani households where all school-aged children were enrolled in a form of education at the moment of the research, and in focus-groups with Romani parents.

Voicu (2010: 22–25)	Duminica and Ivasiuc (2010: 82–89)	Surdu (2011: 80–89)
The community	Poor performance/psychological discomfort	Institutional
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Early marriage</li> <li>– Early pregnancy</li> <li>– High criminality areas</li> <li>– Norms of dropping out after finishing 8<sup>th</sup> grade</li> <li>– Bride kidnapping</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Discrimination of children in the classroom (by teachers and non-Romani peers)</li> <li>– Teachers' low expectations</li> <li>– Limited communication between school and community</li> <li>– Mono-cultural curricula</li> <li>– Fluctuation in the teaching staff</li> </ul>
The school	Early marriages	Cultural
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Teacher lack of involvement (in prevention)</li> <li>– Insufficient school and professional orientation programs</li> <li>– Frequently repeating years</li> <li>– Limited familiarity with the school environment</li> </ul>		Early marriages

Voicu's tripartite model for explaining abandon differs from the other two through the emphasis on individual, familial, and community/cultural characteristics. He also includes ethnicity among the determinants of abandoning school, but mentions that the dropping out of Roma is in most cases due to lack of economic resources rather than to cultural factors (2010: 23).

#### Economic factors

The *economic situation* of the family appears to be the most often invoked reason behind the decision to abandon school: 44 percent of the parents in the sample of Duminica and Ivasiuc (2010: 82) and 41.8 percent of parents in the sample of Surdu (2011: 51) declared that their child dropped out either because the family lacked resources or because the child started to work. At first glance, it seems odd to invoke economic reasons for abandoning

school given that the entire mandatory education is provided free of charge, children from disadvantaged families are entitled to receive social scholarships, and all children enrolled in preschool and primary education receive snacks and milk on a daily basis. However, qualitative research points out that the indirect costs of attending school are a burden for poor Romani families. The costs of clothing, especially if the institution has adopted a distinct suit/uniform, school supplies, learning aides, and the contributions to the "school fund" and "class fund" (informal budgets aiming to cover expenses that are not foreseen in the budget of the institution) are difficult to cope with for parents with low income (Grădinaru et al. 2010; Surdu 2011: 80–83). Duminica and Ivasiuc (2010: 86) found out that, despite legal provisions aiming to protect persons from disadvantaged groups, the proportion of children receiving social scholarships is considerably lower than the proportion of children who qualify for this type of support. It is not clear, however, why some children fail to receive a benefit they are entitled to. Economic hardship leads many students to start working either within the household (taking care of younger siblings) or outside it (gathering forest fruits, mushrooms, or collecting scrap iron). These activities are occasional and for relatively short periods of time. However, during the period of work children miss classes which, in turn, reduces their academic performance and increases the risk of abandoning school.

#### Institutional factors

Powerful as it is, the economic argument fails to explain why some Roma from poor families drop out of school, whereas others continue their educational path. A potential answer is to be found in the profile of schools Romani children are enrolled in and in their personal experiences at school. Duminica and Ivasiuc (2010: 82) consider that the environment of the institution creates discomfort, making many students unwilling to attend classes. Indeed, various practices transform school into an unfair and unpleasant space. *Discrimination* of children based on their ethnicity has been reported extensively in interviews and focus groups. It can take overt forms (such as school or classroom segregation, abusive assignment of Romani students to special education), but often is realized in more insidious ways (such as associating Romani students with undesirable phenomena, placing them in the last rows of desks, and limiting the time allocated by teachers for their instruction).

One of the first studies providing information of the magnitude of school *segregation* (Jigau and Surdu 2002: 14–15) analyzed the ethnic composition of 5,560 kindergartens, primary and secondary schools, high schools, and schools of arts and trades in the rural milieu.<sup>5</sup> Romani students represented 50.1 percent to 70 percent of the total population of students in 6.4 percent of schools and over 70 percent in 5.8 percent of schools. The existence of segregation was also documented by the Ministry of Education, during the implementation of the PHARE project "Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups, with an Emphasis on Roma." The project was carried out in 10 counties during 2002 and 2004. The evidence gathered led to the release of the Ministry of Education

<sup>5</sup> Although a convenience sample, it was very large, comprising over a quarter of schools providing education in the rural milieu.

Notification 29323/20.04.2004, which acknowledged the practice of having classrooms and schools attended exclusively by Roma, either because the school was in the proximity of the Romani community or because Romani students were deemed unprepared to attend classes at a mixed school. Segregated schools prevent students from having access to quality education and are detrimental to Roma and non-Roma alike because they foster ethnic prejudice and cultivate a feeling of inferiority among the enrolled students. Segregated schools share several characteristics. They have less qualified teaching staff, record high teacher turnover rates, are unable to provide quality instruction to ensure school success, and have high rates of non-enrollment and drop-out. Given these facts, the Notification requires county school inspectorates to evaluate all schools where there the Romani student population is disproportionately high when compared with the share of Roma from the total number of school-aged persons in an administrative unit and to initiate desegregation plans fit to each particular situation. Recommended measures include creating mixed collectives at each level of education, providing transportation for Romani students from residentially-segregated schools to attend classes at a school with a different composition of the student body, sharing school spaces and facilities, introducing school mediators, providing additional tutoring for children experiencing learning difficulties, promoting Roma ethnic identity in mixed schools, hiring Romani teachers for Romani-language classes and Romani history classes, training teachers in inclusive education, and raising awareness among Romani and non-Romani parents about the advantages of inclusive education. The Notification also sets a deadline for eliminating segregation on ethnic grounds (three years). Despite the resolute tone of the Notification and the elaborated justification of the initiative, it has some major shortcomings. First, it does not mention how data on the ethnicity of students should be collected, using self-identification or hetero-identification. Second, it places the entire responsibility on the county school inspectorates, instead of being addressed to the managers of institutions where segregation actually takes place. Third, it does not establish any penalty for school inspectors who fail to evaluate the situation and initiate desegregation plans. Fourth, it does not provide any information about the source of money to be used for implementing some proposed measures, such as ensuring transportation to a nearby school. An independent evaluation after the first year of implementing the measures (Surdu 2007: 16–21) showed that 12 county school inspectorates failed to report any action. Twenty-one inspectorates did not create any desegregation plans (five of them considered there was no recorded case of segregation in that county). While eight inspectorates created such plans, their feasibility was contestable. For instance, no desegregation plan included the involvement of local actors in the prevention and correction of segregation.

Three years after the Notification, when the entire educational system was expected to be desegregated, the phenomenon was still widespread. As a consequence, the Ministry of Education released Order 1540, which reiterated that segregation represented a form of discrimination with detrimental effects on students. As compared to the previous initiative, Order 1540 is more explicit, forbidding the creation of first and fifth grades having preponderantly or exclusively students of Roma ethnicity, beginning from the school year 2007–2008. It also extended the responsibility of analyzing the ethnic composition of classrooms to the management of schools. The analysis of

segregation referred not only to the proportion of Roma enrolled in each classroom, but also to a set of data regarding teaching staff, facilities, involvement of students and parents from disadvantaged families in the advising structures, cultural diversity, activity of the school mediator, school participation, absenteeism, drop-out rates, and school's cooperation with local authorities and NGOs. Were all the aforementioned data systematically gathered, there would have been enough information now to depict an accurate representation of the educational system to which Roma youth have access. However, the Order failed to introduce sanctions for school managers and county inspectors who did not put the requirements into practice and did not make public all the information gathered through this measure. Moreover, the actual outcome of the Order 1540 is unknown. A study conducted after one year of implementation (Surdu 2008), using a convenience sample of 134 schools, pointed out that 67 percent of schools were segregated (including class segregation), 63 percent of schools failed to create desegregated first and fifth-grade classes, and 60 percent of segregated schools were located three kilometers or less from an unsegregated institution. Another study (Fleck and Rughinis 2008: 167) found out that according to the perception of Romani adults, 25 percent of Romani students learn in Roma-majority classes, 28 percent learn in classes where about half of the total population is Roma, and 47 percent learn in non-Romani-majority classes. Romani students in segregated classes are more likely to be illiterate as compared to the other Romani (15 percent, respectively four percent). At the same time, Romani respondents were more inclined than non-Romani to consider that managers of segregated schools should be punished (62 percent, as compared to 48 percent).

The most recent document released by the Ministry of Education with regard to segregation is Notification 28463/03.03.2010, which addresses two particular situations: the enrollment of Romani children from families in return migration and the relationship between desegregation and the study of/in the Romani language. According to the Notification, children from families who come back from a different location should be enlisted at the beginning of the second semester in different classes. Thus, the creation of segregated classes due to late enrollment is forbidden. Second, the Notification makes clear that desegregation should not prevent children from attending classes of/in the Romani language and classes on the history and traditions of minorities. The Notification does not bring any change to the approach of desegregation, because both situations have been addressed in the previous initiatives of the Ministry. However, it expresses the formal commitment of the Ministry of Education to continue the process of desegregation.

In the absence of systematic monitoring and evaluation of the desegregation process and the limited data conveyed by educational institutions, it is impossible to accurately assess the impact of various initiatives of the Ministry of Education. Given that desegregation started with first and fifth grades in the academic year 2007/2008, the process should have been completed in the current school year.

Another major form of discrimination is the *abusive enrollment of Romani children in special education*. During socialism, special schools handled students deemed unfit to become "productive" members of society. Schools were

isolated, had a poor level of instruction, and contributed to the marginalization of the attending students (Walker 2010: 169). After the fall of socialism, special education was restructured and it passed from the reclusion of people with deficiencies to providing opportunities for their integration into mainstream education. Currently, special education is realized in special schools, special classes in mainstream schools, and also in mainstream classes, where children with mild special needs are assisted by qualified staff. The former Law on Education (84/1995) defined the categories of 'disabilities' upon which school-aged children could be assigned to special education: mental, physical, sensorial, language, socio-affective, and behavioral. However, in practice, these formal criteria coexist with informal criteria, which brings into special education children without disabilities, but who display inappropriate behavior, come from families where domestic violence is encountered, or whose parents are substance abusers (EUMAP 2007: 45). To what extent ethnicity matters in the assignment of students to special schools is unclear, given the lack of statistics and research on the topic. However, practitioners working in special schools describe situations in which Roma are over represented: "My personal observation is that the majority (perhaps more than 70 percent) of the students enrolled in special education programs are of Roma origin" (Walker 2010: 176). This suggests that at least some of the schools providing special education face not only abusive assignment of Roma, but also segregation. The Law on National Education 1/2011 explicitly forbids the abusive inclusion of children in special education on criteria of race, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or belonging to a disadvantaged group (Art. 50 (3)).

Discrimination against Romani students can be camouflaged in mainstream schools with an ethnically mixed collective of students. Fleck and Rughinis (2008: 164–5) discuss about "invisible segregation" in the classrooms, which refers to differential treatment of students. There is a large body of evidence supporting this claim. In many schools, teachers expect little from Romani children in terms of school performance; the amount of time spent with them is considerably lower as compared to the time allocated to non-Romani students; Romani students are placed in the back desks; Roma are associated to undesirable phenomena, such as lack of hygiene or criminality; teachers use derogatory words when discussing with them; and Romani students are considered solely responsible for school failures (Jigau and Surdu 2002: 88–90; Duminica and Ivasiuc 2010: 111–5; Surdu 2011: 83–85). It is even more remarkable that some of the teachers acting in such ways are either unaware they discriminate against Roma or consider their behavior as legitimate. The lack of intercultural training in the basic curriculum of universities and the poor monitoring of teachers' in-class behavior are two factors contributing to the emergence and maintaining of discriminatory practices.

#### Cultural factors

Another explanation for the gap in participation to education between Roma and non-Roma focuses on the values and social norms around which life is organized in Romani communities. The alleged undervaluation of education, discussed at an earlier point, is an example in this respect. Suffice to look at Voicu (2010: 22–25) to identify several other cultural traits considered to have an impact on the school trajectory of Roma children: early marriage,

early pregnancy, bride kidnapping, and the norm of dropping out at the end of the eighth grade. However, several questions arise: can the norms pertaining to marriage, sexuality, and maternity be accountable for the relatively lower participation to education of Roma? To what extent do they contribute to early school leaving? Recent scholarship on Romani marriages shows that the average age of marriage for Romani women (17 years and six months) slightly increased as compared to the generation of their parents, but is still considerably lower than that of non-Romani women. At the same time, the incidence of marriages before the age of 18, although high in absolute terms (53 percent of Romani women were married before reaching adulthood), is on a sharp decline (Surdu and Surdu 2006: 32–33). In some communities, early marriages are considered legitimate. Several arguments that support the practice are that early marriages protect girls' virginity and avoid lapses into promiscuity (Bitu and Morteau 2010: 8), increase the opportunities to find a "suitable partner" (Surdu and Surdu 2006: 33), and provide better financial arrangements (Surdu 2011: 58–9). At the same time, early marriages do not seem to represent one of the major causes of dropping out from school. Less than seven percent of parents of school-aged Roma who abandoned school identified marriage as a reason for the decision to discontinue education (Surdu 2011: 58, Duminica and Ivasiuc 2010: 84).<sup>6</sup> The cleavage between the widespread idea that Roma abandon school because of marriage and the statistical evidence not supporting the claim led Duminica and Ivasiuc to consider that early marriages are used to situate Roma "in an inferior and blamable cultural otherness" (84).

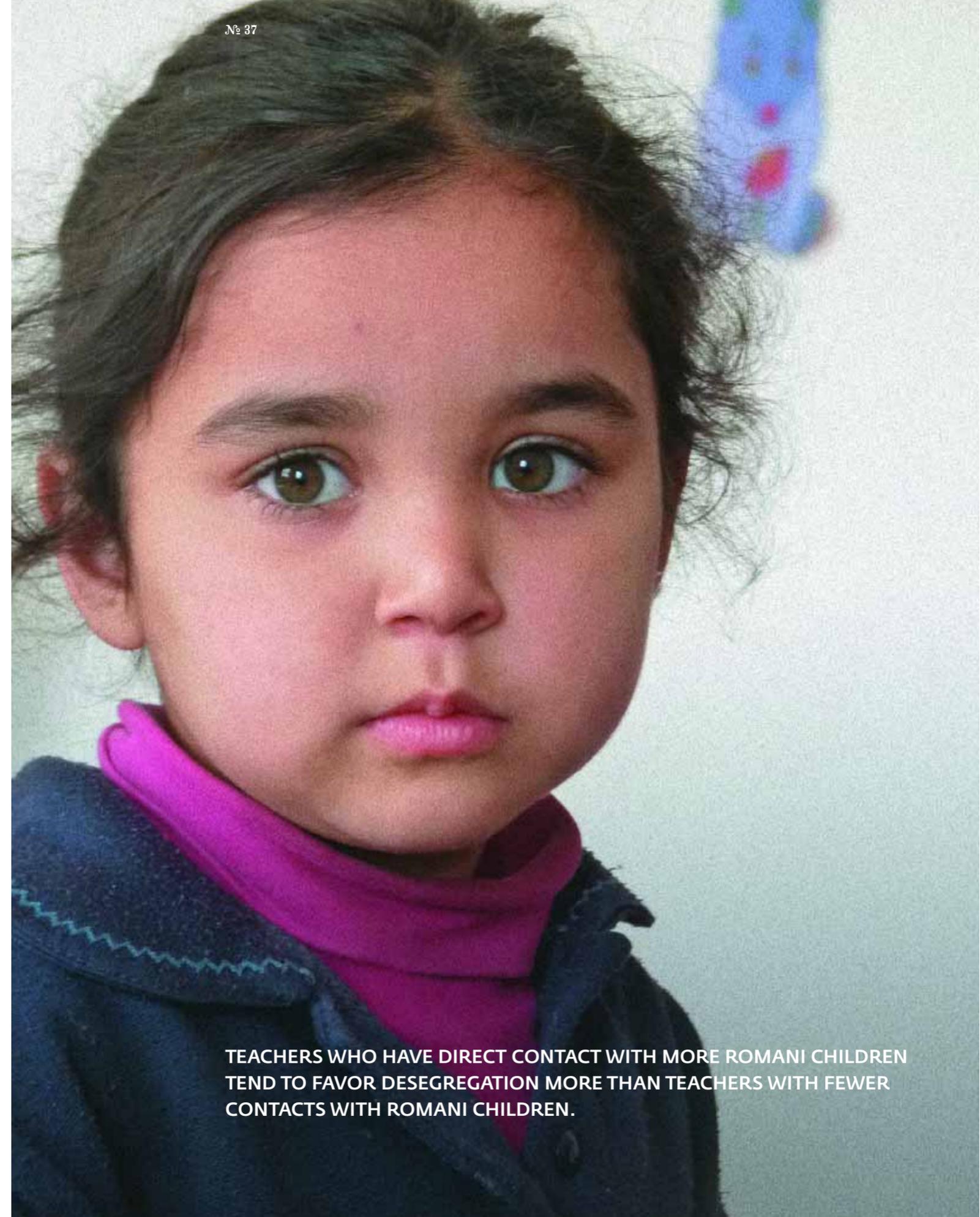
#### Concluding remarks

The examination of the few recent studies focusing on Roma education reveals that dropping out from school is a multifarious problem, involving economic, institutional, familial, and cultural aspects. Parents tend to consider schooling necessary in order to increase children's chances of upward social mobility, but at the same time are aware that a diploma does not suffice for securing access to a good job. Poverty makes many parents unable to cover the various expenses education requires (clothing, supplies, transportation, out-of-pocket contributions to school- and classroom-funds). In poor families, the children's workforce is often taken advantage of when economic opportunities arrive, leading to prolonged periods of absence from school and difficulties in coping with educational demands.

Another deterrent from completing mandatory education is institutional. Schools are unfamiliar and unfriendly spaces, in which Romani students are exposed to various sorts of discrimination. The attitude of educational decision-makers towards Roma is rendered clear by the practices of creating segregated schools and classrooms, and the abusive assignment to special schools. It is difficult to assess how many educational spaces continue to be ethnically segregated at the moment. However, it is important to notice that desegregation was enforced by the Ministry of Education, and not by school principals. Moreover, the failure to put into practice the desegregation

<sup>6</sup> It is noteworthy that girls are disproportionately affected by this practice.

measures of the Ministry one year after the release of the Order 1540/2007 is an indicator of school principals' resistance to provide Romani students with equal opportunities to achieve educational success. Desegregation itself is an important yet minor step towards this goal. It is not uncommon for Romani children to face discriminatory attitudes from teachers and non-Romani peers, be placed in the last rows of desks, and remain uninvolved in class activities most of the time. Except for some optional classes on the Romani language and Roma history and traditions, school curricula do not reflect and promote the cultural identity of the ethnic group. Most teachers are unaware of the specificity of working with children from cultures different from their own and have a superficial understanding of traditional Romani norms and values. However, Romani culture is used as a scapegoat to divert attention from the shortcomings of the educational system and larger structural and historical forces.



**TEACHERS WHO HAVE DIRECT CONTACT WITH MORE ROMANI CHILDREN TEND TO FAVOR DESEGREGATION MORE THAN TEACHERS WITH FEWER CONTACTS WITH ROMANI CHILDREN.**

# SAMPLE DESIGN AND RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

## SAMPLING

The focus of the research has been to collect data on teacher absenteeism and its effects on Romani pupils enrolled in grades one through four (or primary schools). To avoid the fallacy of sampling on the dependent variable (that is, considering only schools with a significant number of Romani pupils on roll), we also included in our study schools where Romani pupils do not have a significant presence. Initially, we aimed to include in our sample schools with 90 percent or more of students on their rolls belonging to the Roma ethnic group and schools with 10 percent or less of students belonging to the Roma minority. As it will be discussed in this report, based on data provided by representatives of the Ministry of Education, seemingly, the number of schools where Romani pupils represent more than 90 percent of students on roll is rather small across Romania. (We will address these controversial issues regarding the number of Romani students on roll in the next sections of this report.)

Our research strategy has combined quantitative and qualitative methodologies, which have relied on a sample of 220 schools as follows:

- (1) 110 schools where Romani students in primary grades (one through four) have a significant presence;
- (2) 110 schools where Romani students in primary grades have a low presence (near or around 25 percent).<sup>7</sup>

The quantitative component aimed to gather objective data about schools' infrastructure, student body, and teaching staff's composition, experience, qualifications, and performances. In each school, aside from the schools' principals, we interviewed four individuals who teach primary grades. These individual interviews have dealt with schools' organizational climate and teachers' satisfaction. In total we interviewed 880 teachers and 220 school principals.

The qualitative component consisted of observations made in schools in regard to teacher absenteeism and lateness/tardiness. Such observations have been made by our interviewers through 10 unannounced visits in selected schools during the second semester of the previous academic year (that is, 2010–2011).

<sup>7</sup>As it will be discussed in the following pages, lacking adequate sampling frames for a random selection of different types of schools, we have had to rely on non-random sampling techniques. We note also note that in our sample we did not find instances of segregated classrooms.

Our research strategy aimed at measuring the incidence of teacher absenteeism in the two subsamples and to test three hypotheses:

- (a) There is a positive correlation between teacher absenteeism and the percentage of Romani students enrolled in primary grades.
- (b) There is a positive correlation between teacher absenteeism and student absenteeism.
- (c) School personnel records do not provide accurate data on teacher absenteeism.

As it will be discussed at length in the following pages, several objective constraints have limited our capacity to test some of these hypotheses and have led us to re-calibrate our study, based on consultations with REF representatives. In brief, two of the most severe constraints were: (1) the lack of an adequate sampling frame that would have allowed us to use a stratified, random sampling strategy of selecting schools; (2) the lack of national and county-level data regarding teacher absenteeism. These are objective constraints in the sense that the Romanian Ministry of Education does not have up-to-date, reliable information on schools' ethnic composition and does not have data on teacher absenteeism.

Yet we consider that the lack of systematic data on teacher absenteeism is itself an important finding of this study and that in this regard our study brings a contribution to improving the administrative procedures necessary for having an overview on the phenomena of teacher absenteeism at an aggregate level.

## RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

As discussed in the literature review section, studies conducted in developing countries suggest that teacher attendance (or absenteeism) is directly or indirectly influenced by following three types of variables:

### A. Teacher Variables

#### A1. Individual variables

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Level of education
4. Ethnicity

#### A2. Teacher commitment/satisfaction

1. Salary
2. Workload
3. Work environment

4. Opportunity for personal development

#### B. School Variables

1. Work group norms
2. School principal's leadership style
3. Local/state supervision
4. Partnership (school-community)
5. Type of school (public/private)

#### C. Contextual Variables

1. Poverty
2. Remoteness
3. Place of residence

In designing our instruments we have had to rethink some of the variables and in some cases we have excluded factors or variables that are invalid in the Romanian context. For instance, based on discussions with representatives of the Ministry of Education, there are no private primary schools with 90 percent Romani students. Overall, private general education schools are very few, extremely expensive, and located in upscale areas of the largest Romanian cities, inhabited mostly by ethnic Romanians.

Furthermore, the Romanian state school system is extremely centralized and hierarchical. Schools are supervised by county level school inspectorates. Which in turn, are supervised by the Ministry of Education. Local communities (including parents and local elected officials) have little influence on educational policies. Admittedly, the newly adopted Law of Education intends to decentralize the school system and give more power to local communities. Yet the new law will formally take effect at the beginning of this academic year (that is, September 2011) and one can reasonably expect that its practical effects will be visible during the next three to five years. Against this backdrop, we have had to drop the variable "supervision level" (local/state) from our questionnaire. More generally, in our instruments we have retained those variables and indicators that are substantively appropriate for this study.

We have designed three questionnaires and an observation fiche, which are described below. The observation fiche and the questionnaires are included in the Annex.

**3.2.1. General information about schools.** This questionnaire was employed with the interviewers' second visit in the schools included in the sample. The instrument has seven sections. The first section contains questions that tap a school's location, the year when it was established, and the school's infrastructure (including internet access). The second section refers to the teaching staff's socio-demographic characteristics (for example, teaching staff by gender, age, ethnicity, teaching experience). The third section addresses issues related to the qualifications

of individuals teaching primary grades in selected schools. The fourth section of the questionnaire deals with teaching staff's extracurricular activities while the fifth section with the evaluation of teaching staff during the previous academic year. (We offer more details about teachers' evaluations in the following pages.) The sixth section includes socio-demographic information about students enrolled in primary grades in terms of their ethnic background. The last section of the questionnaire contains information about the school principal (for example, age, qualifications, education, teaching experience). To complete this questionnaire, our interviewers have contacted and discussed with school principals and members of the academic support staff (secretaries, members of the personnel departments.)

**3.2.2. The end of the school year questionnaire** has been completed by our interviewers at the end of the academic year in all of the schools included in our sample. This questionnaire has four sections. The first section includes several data about the school. The second section targets changes among teaching staff during the current academic year (for example, number of teachers who have been hired during the year and their qualifications and the number of teachers who have been fired or have left the school during the current academic year.). This section also includes a series of detailed questions about primary-school student absences during the current academic year. The third section contains questions about student performance during the current academic year by ethnic background. The fourth section attempts to collect data on teachers' absenteeism during the second semester. To complete this questionnaire, our interviewers held discussions with school principals, school academic support staff, and with individuals teaching primary grades.

**3.2.3. The teacher questionnaire** has been employed in interviews with individuals who teach grades one through four in the schools included in our sample. In each school, we planned to conduct four interviews with teachers. The total sample of teachers included 880 respondents nationwide. In each school, we planned to randomly select four teachers to answer our questionnaire. For instance, let us assume that in a school there were 8 individuals who teach primary grades as follows: two individuals teaching first grade, two individuals teaching second grade, two individuals teaching third grade, and two individuals teaching fourth grade. From among these teachers, we have randomly selected and interviewed one respondent who teaches first-grade children, one respondent who teaches second grade, one who teaches third grade, and one who teaches fourth grade. In other words, wherever possible, in each school we have attempted to interview four respondents who teach grades one through four. If in a school we have encountered only two persons teaching primary grades, we interviewed these two people and the remaining two interviews have been conducted in another school from our sample, which had more teachers and similar student body in terms of its ethnic composition.

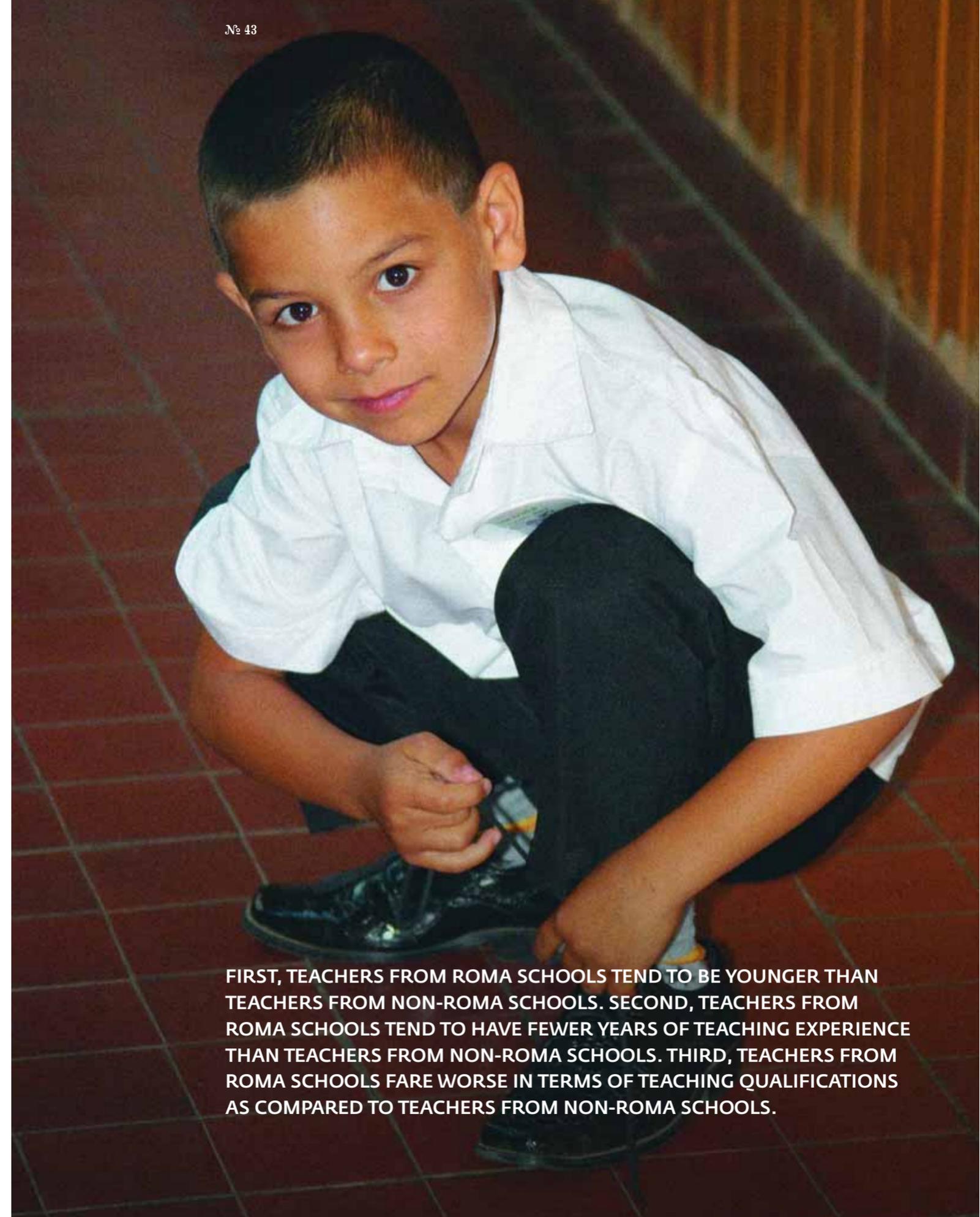
The questionnaire has three sections. The first one taps general data about the school. The second section contains a series of items that address the organizational climate. These items have been adapted from the study *Open Schools, Healthy Schools: Measuring Organizational Culture* (Wayne K. Hoy, C. John Tarter, and Robert B. Kottkamp,

eds. 1991. London: Sage Publications) and they allow us to capture both teacher commitment/satisfaction and school level variables related to organizational climate. The third section refers to teachers' absenteeism and lateness, while the fourth section includes socio-demographic data (including income) about teachers.

As the attached questionnaires attest, these instruments include most of the relevant variables that previous studies have suggested to have significant (direct or indirect) influences on teacher attendance (or absenteeism).

**3.2.4. The observation fiche:** This instrument intended to measure teacher attendance and lateness/tardiness. Specifically, in each school included in our sample our interviewers have made 10 unannounced visits during the second semester of the current academic year. In scheduling these visits we have taken into account the following criteria: (1) If possible, in each school, all primary grades and classes needed to be observed by our interviewers; (2) The observations had to be made at different times during the day, taking into account the fact that, for primary school children a school day has four hours of teaching activities/classes (usually from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm); (3) In each school the 10 unannounced visits had to be made over the course of 17 weeks (that is, the second semester).

Against this backdrop, in a given school, the first visit had to occur in the first week of the semester on a Monday. On that day, the visit and observation started at the first hour of classes (that is, 8:00 am) and observations will be made for all first grade classes. The second visit in the same school has taken place in the third week of the semester, on a Tuesday from 9:00 to 10:00 am, in all second grade classes. The third unannounced has taken place in the fourth week of the semester, on a Wednesday from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm and has targeted all third grade classes. We conducted our sampled observations *in classrooms*. That is, following a strict schedule, our fieldwork operators entered classrooms to verify whether teachers are absent or not and whether teachers are late or not. To reduce teachers' suspicions, our interviewers claimed they wanted to observe how many students showed up for classes. To this end, our interviewers also used a mock fiche to allegedly record students' presence in classrooms. We present below the schedule of visits in a given school.



FIRST, TEACHERS FROM ROMA SCHOOLS TEND TO BE YOUNGER THAN TEACHERS FROM NON-ROMA SCHOOLS. SECOND, TEACHERS FROM ROMA SCHOOLS TEND TO HAVE FEWER YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE THAN TEACHERS FROM NON-ROMA SCHOOLS. THIRD, TEACHERS FROM ROMA SCHOOLS FARE WORSE IN TERMS OF TEACHING QUALIFICATIONS AS COMPARED TO TEACHERS FROM NON-ROMA SCHOOLS.

**TABLE 3.1.** Schedule during the second academic semester  
(x indicates day, grades/classes, and time of visit)

Week #	Hour/classes when observations will be made and grades	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	First class/hour – grade I Second class/hour The beginning of the last class/hour	x				
2	First class/hour Second class/hour The beginning of the last class/hour					
3	First class/hour Second class/hour – grade II The beginning of the last class/hour		x			
4	First class/hour Second class/hour The beginning of the last class/hour – grade III				x	
5	First class/hour Second class/hour The beginning of the last class/hour					
6	First class/hour – grade IV Second class/hour The beginning of the last class/hour				x	
7	First class/hour Second class/hour – grade IV The beginning of the last class/hour					x
8	First class/hour Second class/hour The beginning of the last class/hour					
9	First class/hour Second class/hour The beginning of the last class/hour – grade III		x			
10	First class/hour Second class/hour The beginning of the last class/hour					

Week #	Hour/classes when observations will be made and grades	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
11	First class/hour – grade II Second class/hour The beginning of the last class/hour		x			
12	First class/hour Second class/hour The beginning of the last class/hour					
13	First class/hour Second class/hour – grade I The beginning of the last class/hour			x		
14	First class/hour Second class/hour The beginning of the last class/hour					
15	First class/hour Second class/hour The beginning of the last class/hour – grade I					x
16	First class/hour Second class/hour The beginning of the last class/hour					
17	First class/hour – grade III Second class/hour The beginning of the last class/hour					x

# PRACTICAL FIELDWORK ISSUES

As mentioned previously, we have faced several important challenges in conducting this study. We detail below these challenges and practical issues.

## SAMPLING ISSUES

Taking into account available financial resources and REF's Terms of Reference, we proposed to conduct our study on a total sample of 220 schools (corresponding to 110 schools for each subsample of Roma and non-Roma schools). This sample size was considered appropriate to account for the regional differences and to reduce the possibility of having the data biased by the inclusion of extreme schools.

We initially aimed for a probability, stratified sample of schools fitting our criteria in terms of pupils' ethnic composition. We envisioned creating sixteen strata based on Romania's so-called historical regions (including Bucharest, the capital city) and the milieu of residence (urban/rural). The number of schools in each stratum was supposed to be determined using proportional allocation according to data regarding the ethnic structure of primary schools provided by the Ministry of Education.

Ideally, this sample should have been selected from a sampling frame containing information about the students' ethnic background in all primary/general schools in Romania. *Unfortunately, such a detailed sampling frame does not exist. The most recent and reliable information about primary school students' ethnic background comes from official statistics compiled by the Ministry of Education in 2007.* Aside from being outdated, this list includes information at county level only, with no information on specific schools.

Yet, in each school, the teaching staff does gather data about students' ethnic background. Such information is collected through students' respective dossiers. Specifically, at the beginning of each academic year, parents must (re)enroll their children in school and each time parents need to fill in a form/fiche stating their occupation, their children's nationality (ethnicity), and even religious affiliation. The information collected through these individual fiches is then entered by individual teachers into a class roll (*catalog*, in Romanian). This catalog is a document containing the names, personal information, and grades of all children enrolled in a given class. Despite all these efforts to collect information on students' family background at the school level, there is no systematic reporting of this information to higher levels within the Ministry of Education.

Against this backdrop, in order to gather information about primary schools that fit our study's criteria, we have had to rely on the help provided by Gheorghe Sarau, Romani Language Counselor from the Ministry of Education and one of the most knowledgeable person of issues related to Roma education. Mr. Sarau also is in charge of a network of county-level inspectors that deal with Roma issues at county inspectorates for education (*Inspectorate Scolare Județene* in Romanian – county level substructures of the Ministry of Education). Thus, with his help, each county-level inspectorate for education has been asked to provide us information about primary schools with 90 percent Romani students and primary schools with 10 percent Romani students, from both rural and urban areas. (We have included the official request in the Annex.)

Although our sample was supposed to include 220 schools, we were expecting to get a list of at least 328 schools that fit our criteria. We intended to use the at least 108 schools as replacements for schools that would have refused to participate in our study. Specifically, based on our extensive fieldwork experience and due to the voluntary character of participation in this study, we estimated a refusal rate of 50 percent, or 55 to 56 schools in each sub-sample, that is, Roma and non-Roma schools. Yet, there were counties that reported having no schools with over 90 percent Romani pupils enrolled in grades one to four. Furthermore, other local-level inspectors stated that their counties have less than four schools that fit our criteria in terms of their ethnic composition; such situations have been encountered in Bucharest, Cluj, Ialomita, and Sibiu. Similar problems have been reported in the case of schools with maximum 10 percent Romani children enrolled in primary grades. Specifically, there were counties that reported having no schools with Romani children enrolled in primary grades. Also, there were counties that reported having only schools with between 12 percent and 30 percent. Overall, instead of at least 328 schools, we received a list with only 225 schools that allegedly fit our criteria. This fact, however, should not be regarded as a possible reproach to county-level inspectors. We signal this issue here as yet another important objective constraint to conducting this study.

The problems associated with the lack of an adequate sampling frame have been further affected by the real situation in the field, as reported by local inspectorates and Roma education inspectors. Despite these and other problems related to access in some schools, our team has managed to conduct the study on *a sample of 220 schools, 880 teachers, and 220 school principals.*

The composition of our achieved sample differs from our initial expectations and assessments. This is especially true for schools which were supposed to have at least 90 percent Romani pupils enrolled in grades one to four. Such schools seem to be rather rare at the moment of data gathering (2011) and for our sample. As we will discuss in the next section, only 7.3 percent of the schools designated by county-level inspectors as schools with over 90 percent Romani pupils on roll actually have between 75 percent and 98 percent Romani children enrolled in grades one to four. Conversely, in schools initially deemed by county-level inspectors having less than 10 percent Romani children in primary grades we have encountered cases with 20 percent or more such pupils on roll.

Although we have good reason to believe that our purposive sample does reflect the real situation in the field, one might reasonably wonder from where these discrepancies come. We present below two possible sources for these discrepancies:

- (1) Some county inspectors might have relied on informal assessments of a school's ethnic composition. Such informal assessments of Romani pupils might have come from school principals, teachers, local authorities, and/or from local Romani leaders (some of whom might also serve as community-mediators). Put another way, there might have been cases when the number of Romani pupils on a school's roll was overreported based on hetero-identification and not on a school's official records. As mentioned previously, when enrolling children in schools, parents need to fill in a fiche stating their occupation, their children's nationality (ethnicity), and even religious affiliation. True enough, as discussed earlier, when entering school, some Romani parents might declare their children as Romanians (or Hungarians). According to Fleck and Rughinis (2008: 9), many Roma tend to adhere to a defensive strategy of self-identification, declaring ethnicity in private contexts or within the community, but identifying with another ethnic group in public contexts or outside the community. The vocabulary of motives for not assuming ethnicity includes fear of discrimination, remembrance of persecutions, and distrust in authorities. The strategy of defensive self-identification is particularly obvious in the collection of statistical data (during the census, but also for school registers), leading to a severe undercounting of Roma. Assessing the number of Romani children in a school based on hetero-identification has a potential of distorting data due to the subjectivity of the respondents and the informal criteria devised by them to assign people to ethnic categories. Whereas approaches based on self-identification are likely to provide considerably lower numbers of Roma in classes and schools. From our standpoint, relying on "ethnic hetero-identification" (or on what others say about a person's ethnic background) is not only fallacious but also unethical. In our achieved sample and analyses, we have had to rely on a school's official records or pupils' dossiers.
- (2) The official information provided by local inspectorates might be unreliable. This is unsurprising taking into account the relative chaos that characterizes Romania's bureaucratic structures and the lack of adequate human and financial resources to collect relevant information about the country's various fields and domains, including the education system. In addition, one might suspect that the information held and provided to us by county inspectorates might be outdated. A brief digression is in order. In 2007, Order 1540 of the Ministry of Education considered segregation a severe form of discrimination, with serious impact on the access of Romani children to quality education. In 2010, the Ministry of Education released Notification 28463, pointing out that educational segregation has not been completely eradicated and urging county school inspectorates to enforce the anti-segregation legislation. The incidence of segregation in Romanian schools, the types of segregation (class/school), the forms of education in which the phenomenon continue to exist (mainstream/special), and the number of Romani students who continues to be affected by segregation are unknown at the moment, due to lack of data.

We iterate that in the absence of an adequate sampling frame, we had to rely on local education officials in charge of Roma issues. Such people are supposed to have first-hand extensive knowledge of the ethnic composition of primary schools in all Romanian counties and regions. Seemingly, some of the information they had was biased and/or outdated. *Nonetheless, we are confident that we have employed the best available resources to select a sample of schools in accordance with the objectives of this study.*

## DATA ON TEACHER ABSENTEEISM

As stipulated by REF in the Terms of Reference of this contract, we were supposed to gather nationwide data on teacher absenteeism from the Ministry of Education and compare teacher absenteeism figures in Roma and non-Roma schools. Prior to the start of the fieldwork, we have had several discussions with informants (teachers, professors, and school principals) and with representatives of the Ministry of Education. From these discussions we have learned that there is no systematic reporting of teacher absenteeism both at the county and central levels. *The lack of county or national-level aggregate data on teacher absenteeism is itself an important finding of this study.*

But how is teaching staff's presence/absence dealt with at schools' level? According to several teachers and high school instructors we interviewed, teachers attendance is recorded with the help of attendance registers. Each teacher/instructor must sign-in via an attendance register (*condică de prezență* in Romanian) for every hour, day, and class when s/he teaches. At the end of school day, the attendance register is counter-signed by school principal(s). This should prevent teaching staff from subsequently modifying or "cooking" the record of their attendance during previous days.

Some schools might designate a person to check the attendance register at the end of the day. Usually this is done by the school management. Teacher attendance is also checked by management through random and unannounced visits in classes. Yet, there is no officially established set of rules to check teacher attendance in all schools in Romania. Depending on the size of the school and its management, different schools adopt different methods and practices to check if the info on the attendance register reflects reality (or if teachers are actually present in school/classes). One can only assume that such personal checks are more difficult to perform in larger schools than in smaller schools. In addition, irrespective of a school's size, the school management (usually a principal and a deputy principal) cannot verify every teacher and every class, every day.

Nevertheless, there are cases of justified teacher absences. Some teachers might miss classes due to medical reasons and in most cases they bring in medical certificates to attest to their condition (and be considered on medical leave, for which they are [partially] paid). Other teachers might miss classes due to family or personal reasons. In such cases, teachers usually call in and announce their problems. Still, other teachers might miss classes due to professional reasons (for example, one-day training courses at the county inspectorate for education, student

Olympics). Such absences are known in advance and special measures are taken to make up for missed classes and supervise children who are at school. For instance, pupils might be supervised by other teaching staff (usually individuals teaching grades five through eight, who have “windows”/days when they do not teach) or by members of administrative support staff (lab assistants and so on).

There are, however, cases when teachers miss classes for no justifiable reason. How such cases are dealt with is a matter of each school’s management strategy and policies. Some principals could be tough on all teachers missing work. Other principals might sanction some teachers who missed work but not others, depending on each case and personal relationships. Usually, unjustified absences are reported to the school secretary and accountant/s. The latter is supposed to sanction financially a teacher’s absences. Days of unjustified absences are frequently considered “unpaid days off” or “unpaid vacation” (*concediu fără plată* in Romanian). Romanian labor laws and regulations stipulate that an employee is entitled to a certain number of days of “unpaid vacation” without being fired. However each organization (from business firms to schools) has its own practical ways of dealing with unjustified absences.

Against this backdrop, as discussed previously, we have designed an observation fiche to measure teacher absenteeism in selected schools. With the help of this fiche our interviewers had to record whether teachers are present in classes and (if the case) the reason for their absence. Also, our interviewers had to collect information about teacher lateness/tardiness. We have also attempted to compare the information from this observation fiche with official information collected through the attendance registers. Accessing attendance registers has been an extremely difficult task and in many cases impossible. We tend to believe that this situation is partially due to the socio-economic context of our study and to local “politics” (or more politely, “management practices”) in each school.

Our interviewers have been instructed to be non-intrusive and to gain the confidence of both school management and individual teachers. Admittedly, given the difficult socio-economic context of this study, we have anticipated that teachers would be extremely suspicious of unknown individuals who check their presence and activities in class. We have attempted to reduce the level of suspicion in three ways: (1) all subjects have been assured that their responses and behaviors are fully confidential and anonymous<sup>8</sup>; (2) our interviewers have reiterated that this study is commissioned by a non-governmental international organization and has nothing to do with the Ministry of Education; (3) as a consequence, neither school management nor higher echelons would be able to take any administrative sanctions against teachers who participate in this study.

<sup>8</sup> Although confidentiality and anonymity are related, they are distinct concepts. Anonymity means that no answer can be associated to a particular individual or interviewee. Confidentiality implies that what has been declared or stated by a respondent or an interviewee will not be repeated to a third party, which is unrelated to a given research project.

## SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

To combat the economic crisis, the current government, under the strict supervision of the International Monetary Fund and the EU, has implemented a series of austerity measures aiming at reducing budget deficit and jump-starting the economy. To this end, all wages of state employees were cut by 25 percent in May 2010. This cut has severely affected all individuals employed in the state education system, who were already poorly paid. In addition, the current government has announced additional restructuring measures, which have translated into significant layoffs from all state sectors (including education).

For instance, according to the previous education law, general schools included grades one through eight, while high schools included grades nine through 12. According to the newly adopted education law, which took effect in September 2011, general schools will include grades one through nine and high schools grades 10 to 12. It is expected that some high school instructors will lose their jobs as the ninth grade will be transferred to general schools. As a result, teachers and instructors’ dissatisfaction with the current government has soared. Overall, dissatisfaction with the current ruling coalition and president is at an all-time high. For instance, according to a nationwide opinion poll conducted by CURS in March 2011 (at the beginning of the fieldwork), 93 percent of respondents had *little or very little confidence* in the current government. Similarly, 89 percent of respondents had *little or very little confidence* in the president.

The new education law also had stirred a great deal of controversy among teachers and instructors. While the new law has ambitious goals in terms of reforming the Romanian education system, some of its provisions are deemed controversial. For instance, the new law emphasizes a student-centered education and imposes higher standards for hiring teachers/instructors and for evaluating them. But the current government and its minister of education seem to ignore that teachers and instructors (especially in the pre-university system) are severely underpaid. Some education trade unions have also claimed that the new law’s attempt at decentralizing the education system might in fact lead to its politicization. This is so because, on the one hand, the new law gives more power to local authorities (for example, mayors) to oversee schools and appoint managers/ principals (who are political allies or supporters of local authorities). On the other hand, school managers are supposed to receive more autonomy in deciding their personnel policies. Some trade union members and leaders fear that this fact would give more power to political factors to intervene in the affairs of a system that is supposed to be apolitical.

The features of the larger social, political, and economic context social have impacted our study and fieldwork in several ways. First, approximately five school principals (or two percent of the 225 schools nominated by county inspectors) initially refused to participate in our study. We have made great efforts to convince these school principals that our study will have no adverse effects on their colleagues and schools. Gheorghe Sarau from the Ministry of Education and county inspectors for education have been extremely helpful and have managed to significantly

increase our response rate. Eventually, the number of schools that refused to take part in this study was reduced to two. In four of these five cases, school principals claimed that, since they are not required by law or by the Minister of Education to participate in this study, they will not join our efforts. In one case, however, the refusal to participate in the study had a different connotation. Specifically, the principal of the school was shocked that "her" school was designated as a school where Romani pupils are a majority. In her words, "My school is not a Gypsy school! Why do many people say this?" Given her attitude and reactions, we decided that is better to replace this school with another school, with similar features in terms of its ethnic composition.

Second, although we have gone at great lengths to assure our respondents that the data we collect is fully confidential and anonymous, in many cases teachers and school principals have remained suspicious of our efforts and might have engaged in management strategies aimed at portraying their schools in the best possible light. For instance, in a few cases, teachers selected for interviews claimed they need to ask school principals for permission to answer our questions. In one case, a teacher told our interviewer that she must show to her school principal how she answered our questionnaire. The teacher proposed the following strategy. She would answer a questionnaire in a "politically correct manner" and she would show this questionnaire to the principal. Then she would answer a second questionnaire sincerely, with "[her] real opinions of the state of affairs in our school." She asked our interviewer to keep the second and "real" questionnaire secret and send it directly to CURS' headquarters. Seemingly, many teachers from this school felt intimidated by and extremely fearful of the school principal, who was deemed very authoritarian, unfair, and politically well-connected.

Third, and in connection with previous points, the overall climate of distrust, hopelessness, and dissatisfaction with the current economic, social, and political conditions has negatively impacted our ability to access attendance registers. Moreover, as we were approaching the end of the fieldwork, we have been confronted with several refusals to provide data about a school's situation at the end of the academic year. In some cases, such refusals to further cooperate were motivated by the fact that new principals were appointed in some schools. The new principals claimed they knew nothing of this study and cannot offer us further assistance unless they are told so by county inspectorates or the Ministry of Education. In other cases, against the backdrop of controversies stirred by various statements made by the Ministry of Education or other government officials, some principals declared that they simply do not want to be a part of this study anymore, as they and their colleagues have nothing to gain from this or any other study because "the whole [education] system and the entire country is in chaos." In addition, some principals, administrative staff, and teachers were reluctant to help us complete the end-of-the-academic-year questionnaire, fearing that the data would be communicated to the Ministry of Education and they might lose their jobs.

Aside from these difficulties, our fieldwork interviewers have faced other challenges. For instance, in some cases, due to lack of communication between a school's management and security guards, our interviewers were

denied access to schools, which has negatively affected our interviewers' activity. Such cases have been solved locally by our interviewers and regional coordinators. In other instances, our interviewers have been harassed by local authorities. In one such case, an interviewer was briefly retained by the local police at the request of an extremely authoritarian mayor, who wanted to know what our interviewer was doing in "his locality." This incident was solved with the help of CURS' management, who has reported this abuse to officials in the Ministry of Administration and Interior.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

This section and the previous section of the research report have detailed the major challenges that our team faced in selecting the sample and conducting the fieldwork. As mentioned previously, several objective constraints have made us re-calibrate our research strategy. These objective constraints were: (1) the lack of an adequate sampling frame to select randomly the target groups of schools in our sample; (2) outdated county-level information on schools' ethnic composition; (3) the lack of official aggregate data (at county or national level) on teacher absenteeism.

In conducting the fieldwork, our interviewers have faced important difficulties, which were mostly the result of the features of the larger socio-economic context. In some cases, the overall malaise and dissatisfaction with the current economic, social, and political conditions has negatively impacted our ability to access some schools, consult attendance registers, and/or continue the study.

Despite all this, our team has successfully managed to survey and conduct observations on a sample of 220 schools nationwide. Furthermore, we have conducted 880 interviews with teachers and 220 interviews with school principals. We iterate that school principals and administrative staff, as well as teachers received no material incentives to participate in this study.

## SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

In this section, we discuss the characteristics of our achieved samples. As readers might recall, we initially intended to pursue a purposive random sampling strategy, which also included stratification criteria such as number of Romani pupils enrolled in grades one through four, residential milieu, regional distribution, and size of school (for details on types of purposive sampling, see Patton 1990). Due to lack of adequate sampling frames, we had to re-calibrate our strategy and opted for a simple purposive sampling based on certain criteria (that is, number of Romani pupils enrolled in primary grades). We present below several characteristics of our sample of schools. For sake of brevity, in the following tables and comments we will employ “Roma schools” to denote schools with near or above 25 percent Romani pupils enrolled in primary grades (one through four) and “non-roma schools” to denote schools with less than 25 percent of Romani children enrolled in primary grades (one through four).

**TABLE 5.1.** Schools by residential milieu, historical region, school type, and ethnic composition (n=220 schools)

Characteristics	Roma schools		Non-Roma schools	
	No. of cases	Percent	No. of cases	Percent
<b>Residential Milieu</b>				
Urban	54	49.1	57	51.8
Rural	56	50.9	53	48.2
<b>Historical Region</b>				
Moldova	22	20.0	20	18.2
Muntenia	38	34.5	21	19.1
Dobrogea	3	2.7	8	7.3
Oltenia	11	10.0	15	13.6
Banat	-	-	8	7.3
Transylvania	23	20.9	31	28.2
Crisana-Maramures	10	9.1	6	5.5
Bucharest	3	2.7	1	0.9
<b>Type of school</b>				
Primary schools (grades one through four only)	17	15.5	10	9.1
General schools (grades one through eight)	81	73.6	86	78.2
Other (for example, high schools, secondary education colleges, and so on)	12	10.9	14	12.7

Characteristics	Roma schools		Non-Roma schools	
	No. of cases	Percent	No. of cases	Percent
<b>Romani children enrolled in grades one through four (based on official school records)</b>				
Above 75% Roma	8	7.3	0	0.0
50–75% Roma	28	25.5	0	0.0
25–50% Roma	60	54.5	0	0.0
Below 25% Roma	14 <sup>a</sup>	12.7	110	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100.0</b>

NOTE: a The schools in this category, although having less than 25 percent of Romani pupils enrolled in primary grades, were deemed by county inspectors as “Roma schools.”

We begin by noting that 50.9 percent of Roma schools in our sample are located in rural areas, whereas 48.2 percent of non-Roma schools are in rural areas. Furthermore 54.5 percent of Roma schools are situated in Moldova and Muntenia, which fare worse than other regions in terms of their socio-economic development. In contrast, only 37.3 percent of non-Roma schools are located in Moldova and Muntenia. As regards the type of school, 15.5 percent Roma schools are primary schools as compared to 9.1 percent non-Roma schools that are primary schools. Usually, primary schools (that is, schools that teach grades one through four only) tend to be located in poorer areas and fare worse than general schools (grades one through eight) in terms of infrastructure and teaching staff. Also, 12.7 percent of non-Roma schools are in the category “other type of schools.” In contrast, fewer Roma schools (that is, 10.9 percent) in our sample are in the category “other type of schools,” which includes high schools and secondary level colleges, and tend to be better equipped and somewhat more prestigious than some general schools. Based on these data, one might tentatively conclude that Roma schools in our sample are located in poorer areas, with more infrastructural problems. This fact might negatively impact these schools’ capacity to attract and retain well-qualified teachers. We will, however, discuss more about these issues in the following pages of this report.

In the previous section we have discussed at length the possible sources for discrepancies between, on the one hand, the Terms of References, our initial assessment, the information provided by county-level education inspectors, and, on the other hand, the real situation or the characteristics of the achieved sample in terms of pupils’ ethnic background. As Table 5.1 shows, 7.3 percent of the schools designated by county-level inspectors as schools with over 90 percent Romani pupils on roll actually have between 75 percent and 98 percent Romani children enrolled in grades one through four. These figures are based on schools fiches completed by parents, which record ethnicity. We iterate that the discrepancies between the information provided by officials from county inspectorates and our findings based on official school records might have generated by the following factors: (1) a possible overreporting of the number of Romani children based on informal hetero-identification of some pupils as Roma by various sources (for example, schools principals, teachers, local authorities, local Romani leaders

and activists); (2) outdated information held by county inspectorates, which has failed to take into account recent demographic evolutions and/or the effects of the Ministry of Education efforts to desegregate schools.

We have also interviewed the school principals from the 220 schools included in our sample. As shown in Table 5.2, Roma schools tend to have a higher percentage of male principals than non-Roma schools (48.2 percent versus 31.8 percent). Also, both the average and the median age of principals in Roma schools are higher than the average and median age of principals in non-Roma schools. Notably, fewer principals from Roma schools have a university degree (94.4 percent) as compared to principals from non-Roma schools (99.1 percent). Similarly, fewer principals from Roma schools have the highest educational qualifications (first degree – 79.0 percent) as compared to principals from non-Roma schools (86.4 percent). Yet, Roma schools seem to fare better than non-Roma schools in terms of principals with the lowest teaching qualification. Specifically, 5.5 percent of Roma school principals have “no degree” as compared to 7.2 percent of non-Roma school principals with “no degree.” Moreover, Roma school principals have more teaching experience (measured in years) as compared to non-Roma school principals. Yet, more non-Roma school principals have held this position for less than 10 years as compared to Roma-school principals.

Non-Roma schools included in our sample have no principals of Roma origins. In such schools, 91.8 percent of principals are Romanians and 8.2 percent of principals have other ethnic background (mostly Hungarian). Among the 110 Roma schools included in our sample, we encountered only one principal of Roma ethnic background. It is beyond the scope of this study to explain this situation, as we did not conduct a survey on a nationally representative sample of primary or general schools.

**TABLE 5.2.** Socio-demographic characteristics of school principals, in percent (n=220)

Socio-demographic characteristics	Roma Schools			Non-Roma Schools		
	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural
<b>Gender</b>						
Males	48.2	50.0	46.4	31.8	28.1	35.8
Females	51.8	50.0	53.6	68.2	71.9	64.2
<b>Age groups</b>						
Under 35 years	11.9	11.3	12.5	11.9	10.5	13.5
36–50 years	42.2	30.2	53.6	49.5	54.4	44.2
51 years and over	45.9	58.5	33.9	38.5	35.1	42.3
Average age (in years)	48.2	49.7	46.7	46.9	46.6	47.3
Median age (in years)	49.0	53.0	47.0	48.0	48.0	46.5

Socio-demographic characteristics	Roma schools			Non-Roma schools		
	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural
<b>Highest degree completed</b>						
High school	5.6	3.8	7.3	0.9	0.0	1.9
University	94.4	96.2	92.7	99.1	100.0	98.1
<b>Teaching qualification</b>						
No grade	5.5	5.6	5.4	7.2	3.5	11.3
Second grade	15.5	16.7	14.3	6.4	3.5	9.4
First grade	79.0	77.8	80.4	86.4	93.0	79.2
<b>Length of teaching experience</b>						
Less than 10 years	8.2	5.6	10.7	5.5	3.5	7.5
11–20 years	23.6	16.7	30.4	37.3	40.4	34.0
21–30 years	36.4	35.2	37.5	30.0	29.8	30.2
31 years and over	31.8	42.6	21.4	27.3	26.3	28.3
<b>Average teaching experience (years)</b>	24.9	27.3	22.6	23.3	23.6	23.6
<b>Median value for teaching experience (years)</b>	25.0	30.0	22.0	24.0	24.0	24.0
<b>Minimum teaching experience (years)</b>	6	6	8	5	5	5
<b>Maximum teaching experience (years)</b>	44	40	44	43	40	40
<b>Length of tenure as principal</b>						
Less than 10 years	72.7	74.1	71.4	82.7	89.5	75.5
11–20 years	19.1	18.5	19.6	15.5	8.8	22.6
21–30 years	7.3	5.6	8.9	1.8	1.8	1.9
31 years and over	0.9	1.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Ethnic background</b>						
Romanian	92.7	94.4	91.1	91.8	98.2	84.9
Roma	0.9	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other	6.4	5.6	7.1	8.2	1.8	15.1
<b>The principal lives...</b>						
In the same locality where the school is located	62.7	81.5	44.6	77.3	89.5	64.2
In a different locality	37.3	18.5	55.4	22.7	10.5	35.8

The quantitative component of our study also involved interviewing 880 individuals who teach primary grades in our sample of 220 schools. Table 5.3 presents the socio-demographic characteristics of our sample of teachers.

TABLE 5.3. Socio-demographic characteristics of 880 teachers from 220 schools, in percent

Socio-demographic characteristics	Roma Schools			Non-Roma Schools		
	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural
<b>Gender</b>						
Males	13.6	12.1	15.1	12.8	10.2	15.8
Females	86.4	87.9	84.9	87.2	89.8	84.2
<b>Age groups</b>						
Under 35 years	35.1	30.3	39.7	27.5	23.1	32.7
36–50 years	41.3	39.4	43.3	38.8	40.6	36.6
51 years and over	23.6	30.3	17.0	33.7	36.3	30.7
<b>Average age (years)</b>	40.6	42.1	39.0	43.5	44.7	42.2
<b>Median age (years)</b>	39.0	41.0	37.5	43.5	44.5	42.0
<b>Highest school completed</b>						
High school	32.9	35.6	30.2	42.7	38.3	47.8
University	67.1	64.4	69.8	57.3	61.7	52.2
<b>Teaching qualifications</b>						
No grade	27.7	22.4	33.0	16.5	7.8	26.8
Second grade	29.8	28.0	31.6	18.6	14.7	23.2
First grade	42.5	49.6	35.4	64.9	77.5	50.0
<b>Length of teaching experience</b>						
Less than 10 years	27.5	23.3	31.7	15.8	9.8	22.8
11–20 years	35.6	29.1	42.0	30.9	27.7	34.7
21–30 years	13.9	17.9	9.8	21.1	25.5	15.8
31 years and over	23.0	29.6	16.5	32.3	37.0	26.7
<b>Average teaching experience (years)</b>	18.9	20.6	17.1	22.3	24.2	20.2
<b>Med. value for teaching experience (years)</b>	16.0	20.0	15.0	22.0	25.0	19.0
<b>Min. years of teaching experience (years)</b>	1	1	1	0	1	0
<b>Max. years of teaching experience (years)</b>	46	41	46	42	42	41
<b>Ethnic background</b>						
Romanian	91.6	90.8	92.3	86.9	92.6	80.2
Roma	4.6	3.7	5.4	2.6	2.6	2.5
Other	3.9	5.5	2.3	10.6	4.8	17.3
<b>Teacher lives...</b>						
In the same locality where the school is located	62.9	84.8	41.3	73.0	92.8	50.0
In a different locality	37.1	15.2	58.7	27.0	7.2	50.0

We remind readers that this is a sample of teachers from the 220 surveyed schools. The values recorded for various socio-demographic variables should not be interpreted as indicators of Roma and non-Roma schools' human resources. At most, Table 5.3 sheds some light on the human resources of Roma and non-Roma schools dedicated to teaching grades one through four. Keeping in mind these limitations, we briefly comment on some differences between teachers included in our sample from both type of schools. In what follows, by "teachers from Roma schools" we refer to teachers included in our sample of Roma schools who answered the teacher questionnaire. Similarly, by "teachers from non-Roma schools" we understand teachers from non-Roma schools who answered the same questionnaire.

First, teachers from Roma schools tend to be younger than teachers from non-Roma schools (see the average and median values in Table 5.3.). Second, teachers from Roma schools tend to have fewer years of teaching experience than teachers from non-Roma schools (see the average and median values for years of teaching experience in Table 5.3). Third, teachers from Roma schools fare worse in terms of teaching qualifications as compared to teachers from non-Roma schools. For instance, 27.7 percent of teachers in Roma schools have "no degree" whereas only 16.5 percent of teachers from non-Roma schools have "no degree." Also, 64.9 percent of teachers from non-Roma schools have "first degree" qualification as compared to 42.5 percent of teachers from Roma schools who hold similar teaching qualification. Also, 45.5 percent of teachers in Roma schools have 11 to 30 years of teaching experience, whereas 52.0 percent of teachers on non-Roma schools have 11 to 30 years of teaching experience.

Furthermore, in Roma schools more teachers hold university degrees than in non-Roma schools (67.1 percent versus 57.3 percent). Some might speculate that a high proportion of teachers with university degrees indicate that these people currently hold jobs below their educational level. (We note that one is not required to hold a college degree in order to teach grades one through four. Most individuals who teach grades one through four are graduates of specialized [pedagogical] high schools.) If such people will find better career opportunities in the education system (that is, teaching grades five through eight or teaching in high schools), they might be more than willing to abandon teaching primary grades, which is an extremely challenging, difficult, and poorly paid job. In other words, some might speculate that Roma schools tend to attract younger university graduates in their first jobs and such individuals are likely to change their job or school if given better opportunities.

Notably, Roma schools tend to have more Romani teachers than non-Roma schools (4.6 percent versus 2.6 percent). Yet, overall, non-Roma schools tend to have more non-Romanian teachers than Roma schools (13.2 percent versus 8.4 percent). This is probably due to the presence of ethnic Hungarian teachers (and students) in the schools included in our samples.

# INFRASTRUCTURE, HUMAN RESOURCES, ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE, AND SCHOOL SEGREGATION

The quality of education, students' absenteeism, academic performance, and drop-out rates are influenced by schools' material and human resources, as well as by their organizational climate. Against this backdrop, we included in our research instruments questions that tap a school's infrastructure, their human resources, and organizational climate. We begin by presenting the results of descriptive analyses regarding material and human assets in the schools included in our sample. We turn next to perceptions regarding schools' organizational climate as captured by our survey among teachers in both types of schools.

## SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES

At first glance, it seems that a larger proportion of Roma schools were renovated, 78 percent in comparison to 74 percent for non-Roma schools, although the data show that the Roma predominated schools seem smaller, having fewer classes both for the cycles of grades one through four and five through eight. The biggest difference is hinted by the median of the classes in grades five through eight where non-Roma schools have approximately 2.5 more classrooms in median. But this "advantage" in renovation is not present in other important academic facilities. So, we see that Roma schools have poorer facilities for physics, chemistry, biology, or informatics. The differences between these two types of schools can reach even 20 percent in the case of physics laboratories. The differences dwindle when looking at computer labs but this again hides part of the truth as we will see later.

When analyzing other types of infrastructure we observe that there is not a large difference between the two types of schools concerning running water and ownership of local heating systems or even concerning alternative types of heating (coal and wood). But differences appear once again in one of the most important facilities for sanitation, namely, the presence of a toilet inside the school. Non-Roma schools have a 15 percent greater chances of owning this facility compared to Roma schools, although even the non-Roma percentages seem small. Also, centralized heating appear to be more often found in non-Roma schools, 70 percent of them owning one compared to 61 percent for the other schools. As mentioned before, the similar percentage of computer labs between the two types of schools hides differences in internet access and computer laboratories with internet. The difference

is of approximately 10 percentage points in favor of non-Roma schools. The differences become even larger when analyzing sport facilities and equipment. Non-Roma schools possess 15 percent more necessities for sporting activities, reaching 58 percent for the sport facilities and 78 percent for sport equipment.

TABLE 6.1.1. Main infrastructure items by school type, in percent

Has the school been renovated during the last decade?	Roma schools	Non-Roma schools
Yes	78.2	73.6
No	21.8	26.4
<b>Number of classes, grades one through four</b>		
Mean	7.2	8.1
Median	6	7
<b>Number of classes, grades five through eight</b>		
Mean	5.9	7.7
Median	5	7.5
<b>Does the school have?</b>		
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Physics laboratory	35.5	54.5
Chemistry laboratory	34.5	48.2
Biology laboratory	35.5	50.9
Computer laboratory	84.5	87.3
Other type of laboratory	14.5	21.8
<b>Other facilities</b>		
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Running water	91.8	90.9
Toilet in the building	62.7	77.3
Centralized heating	60.9	70.0
Own heating system	73.6	71.8
Wood-based heating system	41.8	41.8
Coal-based heating system	2.7	2.7
Internet access	80.9	89.1
Computer lab with internet access	67.7	78.1
Sports facilities	40.9	58.2
Athletic equipment	63.6	78.2

The size of classrooms and buildings for the educational process are again important as the lack of space can be as important as the absence of equipment. The average size of a classroom does not seem to be different for the two types of schools analyzed here. The two square meters difference found in the mean size of the school room seems to be rather caused by a skewed distribution than by real differences, as the median shows equality, 50 square meters. On the other hand both measures, the mean and the median, hint at the differences in size between the buildings of Roma and non-Roma schools (see Table 6.1.2.). The median for non-Roma schools is 315 square meters as high as the median surface of Roma schools. Considering that we have the same number of schools in both samples and that the classrooms have similar areas, such differences are most likely caused by the fact that the number of classrooms in non-Roma schools is higher than the number of classrooms in Roma schools.

Table 6.1.2 also presents a density indicator that is calculated by dividing the square meters of a school's teaching space by the total number of pupils in school. The average value of this density indicator is 4.5 square meters, with 4.4 square meters in Roma schools and 4.6 square meters in non-Roma schools. The median value of this density indicator is 2.6 square meters per pupil in both types of schools. The relatively significant differences between median and average values of our density indicator indicate that there are a few schools that are much bigger (in terms of their area) than the most other schools. This situation is more often encountered in the case of non-Roma schools.

TABLE 6.1.2. Teaching and total areas by school type

Surface of a room (square meters)	Roma schools	Non-Roma schools
Mean	46.6	48.5
Median	50	50
Surface of the school (square meters)		
Mean	1536.5	2144.5
Median	1007.5	1323
Total surface for teaching (square meters)		
Mean	862.6	1163.5
Median	560	800
Density indicator (square meters/pupil)		
Mean	4.4	4.6
Median	2.6	2.6

Another important aspect of the resources available in a school is related to the proportion between teachers and pupils. The smaller this proportion, the higher are the chances that children will get the appropriate attention from the teachers. In turn, this fact leads to an improvement in the quality of the entire education

process. Surprisingly, on this point, Roma schools fare better than non-Roma schools. Specifically, in Roma schools there are 23 children per teacher while in non-Roma schools there are 30 pupils per teacher. The median value of this indicator is somewhat similar, albeit with a smaller difference between the two types of schools, five instead of seven children per teacher (see Table 6.1.3).

TABLE 6.1.3. Average number of pupils and teacher/pupil proportion

Number of pupils	Roma schools	Non-Roma schools
Mean	20.4	20.5
Median	20	20
Teachers per pupil proportion		
Mean	22.8	30
Median	22	27

Other features of a school's human resources are also essential for the quality of education. As regards teacher experience, it is reasonable to expect higher quality teaching from teachers with more experience. As shown in Table 6.1.4, in Roma schools, we found a higher proportion of teachers having between one and ten years' experience. On the other hand, we found that non-Roma schools have a higher proportion of more experienced teachers – that is, individuals with between 11 and 35 years of teaching experience. We also note a slightly higher proportion of teachers at the entry level (with less than one year experience) in the case of non-Roma schools. One might claim that, as compared to Roma schools, non-Roma schools are better equipped to attract younger teachers and retain more experienced individuals.

TABLE 6.1.4. Teacher/classes proportion by years of teaching experience

Groups of teachers by years of teaching experience	Median	
	Roma schools	Non-Roma schools
Less than one year	.19	.22
1–5 years	.42	.35
6–10 years	.25	.22
11–15 years	.17	.23
16–20 years	.10	.14
21–25 years	.00	.11
26–30 years	.00	.06
31–35 years	.00	.03
Over 35 years	.00	.00

While teaching experience is essential for the quality of the educational process, a teacher's rank and tenure is also a sign of performance in this field. The Romanian education system ranks teachers using a four-category system. These ranks are based on a teacher's educational credentials, experience, performance, and on evaluations made by principals and county inspectors. As shown in Table 6.1.5, the proportion of tenured teachers is higher in Roma schools (median value 0.25) as compared to non-Roma schools (median value 0.22). Furthermore, non-Roma schools clearly outperform Roma schools in terms of teachers holding the highest qualification degree (first grade or *gradul I* in Romanian). Specifically, the proportion of teachers with first grade qualifications in non-Roma schools is nearly twice as high as the proportion of teachers with first grade qualifications in Roma schools (0.15 versus 0.08). This is a sign that non-Roma schools either give teachers the opportunity to obtain tenure more often or are more successful in attracting and keeping highly qualified individuals. (Of course, a combination of these two processes is possible as well.) Future research is needed to confirm this result, but if this is indeed true for all Roma schools in Romania, institutional support is urgently needed for Roma schools. Such support should focus on helping Roma schools to attract highly qualified individuals and/or encourage teachers from these schools to advance in their professional careers.

**TABLE 6.1.5.** Proportion of teachers per classes (including only those between 5 and 20 years of experience) by Tenure

Teacher qualifications	Median	
	Roma	Non-Roma
Beginners	.00	.00
Tenured	.25	.22
Second grade	.22	.22
First grade	.08	.15

Our data also gives us the opportunity to analyze the proportion of teachers by age groups by the total number of teachers in the school. On this point, we found that the proportion of teachers between 41 and 64 years is higher in the case of non-Roma schools, while the opposite is true for those aged between 21 and 40 years.

**TABLE 6.1.6.** Proportion of teachers per classes by age group and type of school

Teacher Age group	Median	
	Roma	Non-Roma
Younger than 20 years old	.00	.00
21–40 years old	.88	.82
41–64 years old	.70	.89
65 years and over	.00	.00

We conclude this sub-section by commenting on the presence of Romani mediators and Romani-language instructors in the schools included in our sample. Answers to these questions were provided by school principals from both types of schools.

**TABLE 6.1.7.** Romani mediators and Romani-language instructors by school type, in percent

Does this school have a Romani mediator?	Roma schools	Non-Roma schools
Yes	57.3	26.4
No	42.7	73.6
Does the school have Romani-language teachers?		
Yes	44.5	16.4
No	55.5	83.6

As shown in Table 6.1.7, more than half of Roma schools (57.3 percent) report having Romani mediators. In contrast, slightly over one-quarter of the non-Roma schools included in our sample have Romani mediators. Similarly, 44.5 percent of Roma schools have Romani-language instructors. Whereas only 16.4 percent of non-Roma schools have the Romani-language teachers.

## TEACHER FLUCTUATION

Analyzing teaching personnel's fluctuation can provide us with insights on various aspects of schools' functioning mechanisms and performance. For instance, a high fluctuation of teachers might indicate that a particular school faces management problems or other (infrastructural) obstacles that need to be dealt with.

Table 6.2.1 presents the situation of teachers that left the schools in the second semester, by experience and education. The first part of the table presents the mean percentage of teachers that left the school in the second semester, by experience, out of the total number of teachers in the schools at the beginning of the second semester. We observe that, on average, a small percentage of teachers left the schools in the second semester – fewer than five percent of the total number of teachers. The highest percentage of teachers who left the both types of schools is represented by the teachers with between five and 20 years of experience. The percentage is somewhat larger in the case of non-Roma schools (2.2 percent non-Roma schools, as opposed to 1.6 percent in Roma schools). We also note that the average percentage of teachers who left the school and had less than five years of experience. Also, the average proportion of teachers with between 21 and 45 of experience who left the schools is higher in Roma schools than in non-Roma schools.

**TABLE 6.2.1.** Mean percentage of teachers leaving school in the second semester, from the total number of teachers in school, in percent

<b>Mean percentage of teachers leaving the school, by teaching experience</b>	<b>Roma schools</b>	<b>Non-Roma schools</b>
Less than 5 years	0.9	1.7
5–20 years	1.6	2.2
21–45 years	1.1	0.6
More than 45 years	0.1	0.2
<b>Mean percentage of teachers leaving the school, by education level</b>	<b>Roma schools</b>	<b>Non-Roma schools</b>
Pedagogical high schools graduate	0.7	0.2
Pedagogical post-high school and college graduate	1.8	1.2
University graduates with a pedagogical degree	1.8	0.7
University graduates with other degrees	0.6	1.0
High school graduates	0.1	0.1
Less than high school	0.0	0.5

Looking at the average percentage of teachers who left Roma schools, we note that most of them were either graduates of pedagogical post-high schools or college/university graduates with a pedagogy degree. In the case of non-Roma schools, teachers who left these schools tend to be graduates of pedagogical post-high schools and university graduates with other degrees.

Turning now to teachers who were hired during the second semester (Table 6.2.2) we can observe that most of them had less than 20 years of experience in both types of schools, although there seems to be more of them hired in the Roma schools.

The same table also indicates that while non-Roma schools tend to hire teachers that graduated from pedagogical high schools, Roma schools tend to hire more university graduates with pedagogical training, in mean 1.1 percent of the total number of teachers.

**TABLE 6.2.2.** Mean percentage of teachers hired by a school in the second semester, from the total number of teachers in school, in percent

<b>Mean percentage of teachers hired by the school, by experience</b>	<b>Roma schools</b>	<b>Non-Roma schools</b>
Less than 5 years	1.8	1.3
5–20 years	1.6	0.9
21–45 years	0.7	0.7
More than 45 years	0.1	0.0
<b>Mean percentage of teachers hired by the school, by education</b>	<b>Roma schools</b>	<b>Non-Roma schools</b>
Pedagogical high school graduate	0.7	1.5
Pedagogical post-high school and college graduate	0.8	0.2
University graduates with a pedagogical degree	1.1	0.6
University graduates with other degrees	0.6	0.9
High school graduates	0.1	0.1
Less than high school	0.0	0.0

In conclusion, we can observe that Roma schools tend to “lose” more experienced teachers but they also tend to hire somewhat more experienced teachers compared to the non-Roma schools. Looking at the level of the education attained by the teachers who leave or are hired by the schools included in our sample, Roma schools tend to “lose” more teachers who have a university degree with pedagogical training but this is compensated by hiring more teachers with the same level of education. Non-Roma schools on the other hand tend to “lose” teachers with pedagogical post-high schools and college/university graduates with other degrees, and tend to hire more graduates of pedagogical high schools.

## SCHOOL ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE: TEACHERS' POINTS OF VIEW

Various studies have shown that, aside from its human and material resources, a school's organizational climate can have a significant impact on students' academic performance, psychological well-being, attendance, and drop-out rates. At the same time, like in many other organizations, in schools too, the organizational culture and climate has important effects on employee (or teaching staff) satisfaction, turnover, length of activity, performance, and absenteeism. Against this backdrop, we included in our teacher questionnaire items that tap schools' organizational climate. These items have been adapted from the study “Open Schools, Healthy Schools: Measuring Organizational Culture” (Wayne K. Hoy, C. John Tarter, and Robert B. Kottkamp, eds. 1991) and they allow us to capture both teacher commitment/satisfaction and school-level variables

related to organizational climate. We present below the results of preliminary descriptive analyses on organizational climate in our schools.

Efficient organization of the schools leads not only to job performance, but also to increased appreciation of the school organization and greater work satisfaction for the teachers. In the long run, these phenomena will increase teachers' performance and will attract capable prospective employees in the educational system. As a result, the subjective view of the teachers on work satisfaction is essential at both individual and institutional levels.

The first part of this analysis will attempt to see how teachers see principals' involvement in schools' activities. First, we note that principals are willing to go out of their way to help the teachers, almost 90 percent of the time in both types of schools. Yet the principals do not seem to be so open to constructive criticism, with only one in five accepting it very often in both types of schools. Similar results can be observed when teachers are asked whether principals explain their reasons for criticism or how often principals are willing to accept teachers' suggestions.

In both types of schools, principals are perceived as involved in teachers' activities and willing to treat teachers as equals – a sign of an open organizational climate, which can motivate teaching staff and improve their performance.

TABLE 6.3.1. Principals' involvement in school organization (teachers' point of view), in percent

School type	Roma	Non-Roma
<b>How often in your school does the principal go out of his/her way to help teachers?</b>		
Very often	67	63
Often	22	23
Sometimes	7	9
Rarely	4	5
<b>How often in your school does the principal use constructive criticism?</b>		
Very often	21	19
Often	34	35
Sometimes	39	40
Rarely	5	7

School type	Roma	Non-Roma
<b>How often in your school does the principal explain his/her reasons for criticism of teachers?</b>		
Very often	35	39
Often	43	37
Sometimes	17	17
Rarely	5	7
<b>How often in your school does the principal listen to and accept teachers' suggestions?</b>		
Very often	51	47
Often	34	38
Sometimes	11	10
Rarely	3	5
<b>How often in your school does the principal look out for the personal welfare of teachers?</b>		
Very often	38	39
Often	39	33
Sometimes	18	16
Rarely	6	12
<b>How often in your school does the principal treat teachers as equals?</b>		
Very often	61	60
Often	29	29
Sometimes	9	9
Rarely	1	3

Routine bureaucratic work may often lead to insufficient time dedicated to class activities or preparation. For example, meetings that are perceived as useless can be considered a waste of time by some teachers. As shown in Table 6.3.2, this seems to happen more often in non-Roma schools than in Roma schools. The percentage of teachers who often think that faculty meetings are useless is 22 percent in non-Roma schools as compared to 18 percent in Roma schools. Teachers in non-Roma schools also perceive more often routine bureaucratic activities as harmful for teaching. Also, committee requirements are more often seen as cumbersome by the teachers in non-Roma schools. Overall, as compared to Roma schools, in non-Roma schools we found a somewhat higher minority of teachers who feel that routine bureaucratic work and faculty meetings are unhelpful.

TABLE 6.3.2. Teachers and routine activities

School type	Roma	Non-Roma
<b>How often in your school are faculty meetings useless?</b>		
Very often	12	11
Often	6	11
Sometimes	22	21
Rarely	59	57
<b>How often in your school routine do duties interfere with the job of teaching?</b>		
Very often	10	11
Often	21	24
Sometimes	42	36
Rarely	27	29
<b>How often in your school do teachers have too many committee requirements?</b>		
Very often	15	20
Often	19	22
Sometimes	35	31
Rarely	31	27
<b>How often in your school does clerical support reduce teachers' paperwork?</b>		
Very often	24	29
Often	41	38
Sometimes	23	25
Rarely	12	8

Another important aspect of the school life for teachers is the interaction with other colleagues and the strength of the ties created at work. From this standpoint, Roma schools seem more open, with 23 percent of the teachers who visit often and spend time with their colleagues.

TABLE 6.3.3. Staff relationships

School type	Roma	Non-Roma
<b>How often in your school do teachers invite faculty members to visit them at home?</b>		
Very often	4	3
Often	19	11
Sometimes	48	53
Rarely	29	33
<b>How often in your school do teachers help and support each other?</b>		
Very often	51	50
Often	36	31
Sometimes	9	15
Rarely	3	4
<b>How often in your school do teachers have fun socializing together during school time?</b>		
Very often	47	46
Often	37	33
Sometimes	9	14
Rarely	6	7
<b>How often in your school do teachers socialize with each other on a regular basis?</b>		
Very often	46	43
Often	43	46
Sometimes	10	10
Rarely	1	1

To successfully motivate teaching staff and attract highly qualified employees in the educational system, material rewards (as well as other types) must be high. Work satisfaction is influenced by a large number of factors, from objective factors (like income and other benefits) to subjective matters, like relative frustration, poor work environment, and so on. Our data gives us the opportunity to see if important differences are visible when comparing work satisfaction between the two types of schools.

*Teachers' income seems to be a common reason for lack of satisfaction in both types of schools. Only four percent of teachers included in our samples claim that their earnings provide them with a decent living; 70 percent of interviewed teachers say an insufficient income prevents them from living the life they want. These responses are a clear sign of*

income frustrations within the Romanian education system and, while it is good that no differences are found between Roma and non-Roma schools, urgent actions are needed to ameliorate this situation.

On the positive side, we note that 78 percent of the teachers from Roma schools and 74 percent from non-Roma schools disagree with the statement that teaching is routine work – a fact which is also reflected in the belief that teaching is interesting. We found some differences as regards the respect that teachers receive from pupils. In non-Roma schools, 98 percent of teachers say they are respected by their pupils, while in Roma schools 94 percent of teachers have the same opinion. Yet, the overall percentages (above 90 percent) are signs of a good relationship between teachers and pupils in the surveyed schools.

TABLE 6.3.4. Teachers' work satisfaction, in percent

School type	Roma	Non-Roma
<b>Your teacher's income is enough to provide a decent living</b>		
Totally agree	2	2
Agree	2	2
Neither agree nor disagree	4	4
Disagree	26	23
Totally disagree	65	70
<b>Insufficient income prevents me from living the life I want</b>		
Totally agree	41	43
Agree	31	28
Neither agree nor disagree	14	12
Disagree	5	6
Totally disagree	9	11
<b>Teaching is routine work</b>		
Totally agree	3	3
Agree	6	8
Neither agree nor disagree	14	15
Disagree	45	34
Totally disagree	33	40
<b>Teaching is an interesting job</b>		
Totally agree	46	51
Agree	45	41
Neither agree nor disagree	6	4
Disagree	1	3
Totally disagree	1	2

School type	Roma	Non-Roma
<b>My pupils respect me as a teacher</b>		
Totally agree	55	58
Agree	39	40
Neither agree nor disagree	4	2
Disagree	1	0
Totally disagree	0	0
<b>My work involves an unbearable amount of stress</b>		
Totally agree	4	5
Agree	10	13
Neither agree nor disagree	27	25
Disagree	40	38
Totally disagree	19	19
<b>I like this job because I have enough free time/leisure time</b>		
Totally agree	5	6
Agree	19	14
Neither agree nor disagree	35	28
Disagree	28	34
Totally disagree	14	19

The level of stress related to teaching differentiates between the Roma and non-Roma schools. While only 14 percent of the teaching staff from Roma schools feels extremely stressed by teaching, in non-Roma schools 18 percent of teachers report being stressed out by their work. This difference is reversed when it comes to available leisure time. Thus, 24 percent of the teachers in Roma schools think they have enough free time, while only 20 percent of teachers in non-Roma schools.

## DIMENSIONS OF SCHOOLS' ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE

While the variables presented before represent a first glance of the organizational climate some of them have also been used to measure six distinct dimensions of organizational climate. The book *Open Schools/Healthy Schools: Measuring Organizational Climate* (Hory et al. 1991) was the first to conceptualize them as such. Table 6.4.1 presents them and the items that measure them.

The first dimension – *supportive principal behavior* – captures a principal's openness to teachers. It measures both the way the principal communicates with teachers and the way s/he receives/handles suggestions and comments. The second dimension – *directive principal behavior* – represents a more authoritarian approach to managing the

school (for example, "iron fist" and a close monitoring of teachers). The third dimension refers to a *restrictive behavior of the principal* and it includes increased bureaucratic assignments that hinder teachers' work through paper work and routine duties. The fourth dimension is *collegial teaching behavior*. This dimension measures the openness and cooperation among teaching staff. *Intimate teacher behavior*, on the other hand, measures the strength of the social relationships and the way in which the teachers socialize with each other. The last dimension, *disengaged teacher behavior*, measures lack of cohesion and common goals and practices among teaching staff. A high score on this dimension represents a high criticism of colleagues and school and poor group communication.

The values of the indicators assigned to each dimension have been calculated as sum scores and then readjusted to a scale from zero to 10, where zero represents the lowest score possible on that dimension and 10, the maximum possible score. Table 6.4.2 shows the mean scores on the six dimensions for the two types of schools (that is, Roma and non-Roma schools).

TABLE 6.4.1. Variables measuring six dimensions of organizational climate

	Cronbach's Alpha <sup>9</sup>
<b>Supportive principal behavior</b>	
How often in your school the principal uses constructive criticism?	.339
How often in your school the principal listens to and accepts teachers' suggestions?	
How often in your school the principal compliments teachers?	
<b>Directive principal behavior</b>	.318
How often in your school does the principal rule with an iron fist?	
How often in your school does the principal check lesson plans?	
How often in your school does the principal monitor everything teachers do?	
<b>Restrictive principal behavior</b>	.468
How often in your school routine do duties interfere with the job of teaching?	
How often in your school do teachers have too many committee requirements?	
How often in your school are teachers burdened with busy work?	
<b>Collegial teacher behavior</b>	.540
How often in your school do teachers accomplish their work with pleasure?	
How often in your school do teachers help and support each other?	
How often in your school do teachers respect the professional competence of their colleagues?	

<sup>9</sup>While the scores on the Cronbach's Alpha are relatively small we have used Confirmatory Factor Analysis to evaluate the dimensions. The results show an acceptable goodness of fit. For more details, please contact the authors.

TABLE 6.4.1. (CONTINUING) Variables measuring six dimensions of organizational climate

	Cronbach's Alpha
<b>Intimate teacher behavior</b>	
How often in your school are teachers' closest friends other faculty members at this school?	.287
How often in your school do teachers have parties for one another?	
How often in your school do teachers socialize with each other on a regular basis?	
<b>Disengaged teacher behavior</b>	.705
How often in your school are faculty meetings useless?	
How often in your school is there a minority group of teachers who always oppose the majority?	
How often in your school do teachers ramble when they talk at faculty meetings?	

We note that on most dimensions the difference between Roma schools and non-Roma schools is small or absent. An exception from this is found on the dimension related to a principal's restrictive behavior. On this dimension the score is somewhat higher in Roma than in non-Roma schools (6.4 versus 5.9), with important difference by rural and urban areas (see Table 6.4.2). If this were true for all Roma schools across the country, such practices might have negative effects on the performance and motivation of both teachers and pupils.

The analysis by type of locality also shows that differences exist for the directive dimension in the rural areas, 4.3 for Roma schools and 4.9 for non-Roma schools. This indicates that in the rural areas the non-Roma schools seem to more often use monitoring, checking, and an authoritarian attitude of the principal. Also small differences appear on the disengaged and intimate dimensions in rural areas in favor of the non-Roma schools, a 0.2 difference.

TABLE 6.4.2. Mean Values on the Six dimensions of a School's Organizational Climate

		Majority Roma	Minority Roma
Supportive		4.6	4.6
Directive		4.5	4.8
Restrictive		6.4	5.9
Collegial		3.5	3.5
Intimate		4.7	4.8
Disengaged		7.0	7.1
Supportive	Urban	4.5	4.4
	Rural	4.7	4.7
Directive	Urban	4.7	4.7
	Rural	4.3	4.9
Restrictive	Urban	6.2	5.9
	Rural	6.6	6.0

		Majority Roma	Minority Roma
Collegial	Urban	3.6	3.6
	Rural	3.5	3.5
Intimate	Urban	4.6	4.7
	Rural	4.7	4.9
Disengaged	Urban	7.1	7.0
	Rural	6.9	7.1

In conclusion, it seems that the organizational climate in Roma and non-Roma schools differ mainly by residential area (urban/rural). In rural areas, Roma school principals tend to adopt a directive behavior and this happens more often than in non-Roma schools. As discussed previously, such an organizational climate tends to negatively impact both teacher and pupil performance. This issue needs further investigation, using qualitative methods and an approach different from the one we employed in this exploratory study.

## TEACHERS' VIEWS ON SCHOOL SEGREGATION

School segregation is a much debated subject in policy analysis as its effects are long lasting. Our study attempted to capture partially this issue through a series of questions addressed to the teachers included in our samples. In what follows, we present teachers' views on school segregation.

Overall, in Roma schools 78 percent of teachers disagree or strongly disagree with the idea of having special classes for Romani children. In non-Roma schools, we found a somewhat higher percentage of teachers who support the idea of having special classes for Romani children. A similar picture appears when the teachers are asked if they agree with special schools for Romani children. While the percentage of disagreement is larger, above 73 percent for both, a similar difference is found between the two types of schools. Specifically, teachers in non-Roma schools tend to be more favorable to the idea of having special schools for Romani children, as compared to teachers in Roma schools.

TABLE 6.5.1. Teacher views on school segregation, in percent

School type	Roma	Non-Roma
<b>It would be better to have special classes for Romani children</b>		
Totally agree	5	4
Agree	6	13
Neither agree nor disagree	11	15
Disagree	35	31
Totally disagree	43	37
<b>It would be better to have special schools for Romani children</b>		
Totally agree	3	4
Agree	5	9
Neither agree nor disagree	10	15
Disagree	35	33
Totally disagree	47	40
<b>It would be better to have mixed classes (Romanians, Roma, or other ethnicity)</b>		
Totally agree	42	36
Agree	41	38
Neither agree nor disagree	9	14
Disagree	5	7
Totally disagree	2	5
<b>It would be better to have mixed schools (Romanians, Roma, or other ethnicity)</b>		
Totally agree	43	37
Agree	42	38
Neither agree nor disagree	9	15
Disagree	4	6
Totally disagree	2	4

When teachers were asked about mixed schools we found a similar pattern. More teachers from Roma schools tend to agree to having mixed schools and mixed classes, as compared to teachers from non-Roma schools. We also note that the percentage of non-responses to some of these questions tend to be smaller in Roma schools as compared to non-Roma schools, which might signal that teachers in Roma schools have well-formed opinions on this matter. Table 6.5.1 also shows that teachers in Roma schools are clearly against segregation and in favor of mixed classes. These results may have a number of causes. Teachers who have direct contact with more Romani children tend to favor desegregation more than teachers with fewer contacts with Romani children. We note, however, that in both types of school, support for mixed classes and rejection of segregation have become the leading views on this matter.

# TEACHER ABSENTEEISM: DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSES

The conceptualization of teacher absenteeism represents a difficult task, given that absenteeism, together with tardiness and lack of adequate preparation is part of a complex of factors hindering instruction. Moreover, the presence of teachers in school does not guarantee that teachers are actually in the classroom during scheduled classes (Ivatts 2010: 4). We have started with a working definition of teacher absenteeism adapted from the general definition proposed by Cascio (2003, in Ivatts 2010: 3): “failure of a teacher to be in classroom as scheduled, regardless of reason.”

Undoubtedly, measuring teacher absenteeism has been the most difficult task of this project. As discussed in previous sections, the most important reason for this difficulty is the lack of systematic, aggregate official statistics on teacher attendance in Romania. Against this backdrop, when we designed our instruments we aimed at triangulating various types of information on teacher absenteeism coming from different sources (the so-called *data triangulation strategy* [Denzin in Janesick 1994: 214–215]). For instance, our questionnaire designed for capturing a school's overall situation included several questions regarding teacher absenteeism and tardiness. These questions were answered by school principals. Their answers reflected opinions or subjective aspects regarding teacher absenteeism in a given school. Opinion questions on teacher absenteeism were also included in the questionnaire designed for primary school teachers.

Given the nature of these questions, one might reasonably suspect that our respondents' answers were affected by the so-called “social desirability” effect. This effect or bias refers to interviewees' tendency to answer questions in a manner that will foster a favorable image about themselves. Put another way, this bias implies that good behavior might be overreported (for example, voting, helping others, not skipping work) while bad behavior is downplayed or underreported.

To reduce social desirability biases, our questionnaires also included factual questions on teacher (and student) absenteeism. Specifically, at the end of the semester, our interviewers collected and summarized data about teacher absenteeism from school records. As discussed previously, some might suspect that, for various reasons, official records on teacher attendance might also be biased and teacher absenteeism might be somewhat underreported. Thus, we addressed the same issue of teacher absenteeism from yet another angle, that is, through observations. It is, however, a matter of debate whether one can fully compare data collected through sampled observations (*discontinuous* or *discrete* observations) with official school records about teacher absenteeism. Yet,

by relying on sampled observations we intended to obtain additional information on the phenomenon under scrutiny and get a sense of what was actually going on in the schools included in our sample. In the following pages, we present our findings regarding teacher absenteeism. We begin with subjective (opinion) issues regarding teacher attendance followed by factual data.

## SUBJECTIVE ASSESSMENTS OF TEACHER ABSENTEEISM: PRINCIPALS' POINTS OF VIEW.

Our research instruments included several questions that tap subjective evaluations of teacher absenteeism. Specifically, we asked both school principals and teachers to tell us their opinions on teacher absenteeism in their respective schools. We start by commenting on school principals evaluations of teacher attendance.

**TABLE 7.1.1.** Overall, how often are teachers of grades one through four absent during a semester?  
(n=220 school principals)

	Roma schools (percent)	Non-Roma schools (percent)
Very often	1.8	0.9
Often	0.0	0.0
Rarely	7.3	6.4
Very rarely	84.5	89.1
DK/NA	6.4	3.6

As the above table shows, as compared to non-Roma schools, more principals from Roma-schools report that primary grade teachers are absent “very often.” One might speculate that this fact is due to contextual variables (schools' location in rural and inaccessible areas), individual factors, and teachers' commitment and work satisfaction. Furthermore, as compared to Roma schools, more principals from non-Roma claim that primary school teachers are very rarely absent (89.1 percent in non-Roma schools versus 84.5 percent in Roma schools). Also, at this question, we recorded a higher percentage of NAs (no answers) from principals in Roma schools as compared to principals from non-Roma schools. Lacking further, more detailed information about these schools, it is difficult to claim that a larger percentage of NAs (no answers) indicates that in such schools no actions are taken against teachers who are unjustifiably absent. More generally, survey respondents might not answer certain questions due to a variety of reasons and not necessarily because they intend to deceive the interviewer or because they might try to hide or underdeclare certain inappropriate behavior.

**TABLE 7.1.2.** What is the most frequent reason for teachers' absenteeism in your school?  
(n=220 school principals)

	Roma schools (percent)	Non-Roma schools (percent)
Medical problems	52.2	63.1
Family/personal matters	24.3	13.5
Professional matters (attending workshops, training sessions, student Olympics, and so on)	9.6	11.7
Other reason	7.0	5.4
DK/NA	7.0	6.3

As regards the most frequent reason for teachers' absenteeism, non-Roma school principals report a higher incidence of medical reasons (63.1 percent) as compared to Roma school principals (52.2 percent). Furthermore, family problems are more frequently invoked as reasons for teacher absences in Roma schools (24.3 percent) than in non-Roma schools (13.5 percent). Seemingly, absences due to professional reasons (for example, attending professional workshops, training sessions, student Olympics) are slightly more numerous in non-Roma schools than in Roma schools (11.7 percent versus 9.6 percent).

**TABLE 7.1.3.** What actions are taken against teachers who are unjustifiably absent?  
(multiple choice; n=220 school principals)

	Roma schools (percent)	Non-Roma schools (percent)
Pay cuts	14.9	14.0
Verbal sanctions	31.3	28.1
Written sanctions	13.4	5.8
Other	20.1	26.4
DK/NA	20.1	25.6

Pay cuts are equally employed in Roma and non-Roma schools as means of sanctioning unjustified teacher absences (14.9 percent and 14.0 percent). Yet, we should note that pay cuts are rather rarely used in both types of schools to address the problem of unjustified absences of teaching staff. *As compared to non-Roma schools, Roma school principals declare to be tougher in applying both verbal and written sanctions to teachers who are unjustifiably absent.*

**TABLE 7.1.4.** When a teacher is absent from school and s/he announces this fact in advance, which of the following solutions is most frequently adopted in your school?

	Roma schools (percent)	Non-Roma schools (percent)
Missed classes/hours are taught in the coming days, outside the usual hours/school days	2.9	7.1
Classes are taught by a substitute teacher	88.6	81.3
Missed classes are taught in the coming days during the usual hours/school days	7.6	9.8
Other solution	1.0	1.8

More Roma schools than non-Roma schools rely on substitute teachers to replace teachers who miss classes and announce this fact in advance. Yet, as compared to Roma schools, non-Roma schools more frequently opt for the solutions of teaching missed classes outside the usual school days (7.1 percent) and during the usual school days (9.8 percent).

**TABLE 7.1.5.** When a teacher is absent from school unannounced, which of the following solutions is most frequently adopted in your school?

	Roma schools (percent)	Non-Roma schools (percent)
Missed classes/hours are taught in the coming days, outside the usual hours/school days	7.0	15.0
Classes are taught by a substitute teacher	68.0	62.0
Missed classes are taught in the coming days during the usual hours/school days	14.0	15.0
Other solution	11.0	8.0

Unannounced teacher absences are dealt with slightly differently in Roma and non-Roma schools. For instance, 68 percent of Roma schools designate a substitute teacher to address unannounced teacher absences (versus 62.0 percent of non-Roma schools which adopt the same strategy). Non-Roma schools tend to opt for teaching missed classes outside the usual school days/hours more frequently than Roma schools (15.0 percent versus 7.0 percent). Yet one should be careful when interpreting the differences between Roma and non-Roma schools in regard to their preferred strategies of dealing with teacher absenteeism. This is so for at least two reasons: first, we remind readers that answers to the previously discussed questions might have "social desirability" (and other)

biases. Against this backdrop, using “substitute teachers”/“other colleagues” to replace absent teachers might be overreported. Second, adopting a particular strategy is a function of available human resources and managerial practices employed in each type of school. For instance, if a school has a shortage of human resources, then using other teachers to replace an absent instructor might not be an option.

### TEACHER ABSENTEEISM: TEACHERS' POINTS OF VIEW

We have discussed previously principals' opinions on the magnitude of teacher absenteeism in the schools included in our samples. We turn now to teachers' opinions and subjective evaluations of the same phenomena and we begin by addressing the issue of tardiness.

TABLE 7.2.1. In the past three months, how often did you come late for classes? (n=880 teachers)

	Roma schools (percent)			Non-Roma schools (percent)		
	Agregate	Male	Female	Agregate	Male	Female
Never	68.8	78.7	67.2	76.4	75.0	76.6
Rarely	29.5	19.7	31.0	21.5	23.2	21.3
Sometimes	1.6	0.0	1.8	2.1	1.8	2.1
Often	0.2	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Very often	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
DK	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
NA	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Notably, as compared to non-Roma schools, in Roma schools more teachers report coming late for class rarely (29.5 percent) and sometimes (1.6 percent). Also, an important difference appears between male and female teachers in Roma schools. Here, female teachers declare that they are absent rarely 31 percent of the time, almost 10 percent more often than the male teachers. Yet, as compared to Roma schools, more teachers from non-Roma schools claim that teacher lateness represent a problem in their schools (5.5 percent versus 2.5 percent, see, please Table 7.2.2 below). As it will be discussed in the next sections, the data collected through sampled observations tend to indicate that during the second semester of the 2010–2011 academic year lateness was more frequently encountered in Roma schools than in non-Roma schools. Yet, this relative inconsistency in data should be interpreted cautiously because our question referred to tardiness *during the previous three months*, prior to the start of the fieldwork. In addition, as already discussed, answers to this and other opinion questions might have “social desirability” biases.

TABLE 7.2.2. In your opinion, does teacher tardiness represent a problem in your school? (n=880 teachers)

	Roma schools (percent)	Non-Roma schools (percent)
Yes	2.5	5.5
No	89.3	85.4
DK	3.8	4.1
NA	4.5	5.0

Interestingly, as compared to teachers in Roma schools (2.5 percent), more teachers in non-Roma schools (5.5 percent) deemed tardiness a problem in their schools. In a similar vein, as compared to teachers in Roma schools (89.3 percent), slightly fewer teachers in Roma schools (85.4 percent) claim that teacher lateness does not represent a problem. These views are somewhat inconsistent with the information recorded through observation fiches by our interviewers (on this point, however, see our previous cautionary remarks on possible comparisons between answers to opinion questions and observational data).

TABLE 7.2.3. In the past three months, how often did you miss classes? (n=880 teachers)

	Roma schools (percent)	Non-Roma schools (percent)
Never	74.6	76.0
Rarely	22.5	20.6
Sometimes	2.2	2.5
Often	0.0	0.2
Very often	0.0	0.2
DK	0.2	0.0
NA	0.4	0.5

As compared to Roma schools, slightly more teachers in non-Roma schools claim they never missed classes during the past three months (76.0 percent versus 74.6 percent).

**TABLE 7.2.4.** What were the main reasons for missing classes?  
(Multiple choice; percentages calculated only for teachers reporting missing classes)

	Roma schools (percent)	Non-Roma schools (percent)
Family problems	21.0	13.0
Health problems	49.6	47.2
Personal problems (other than family-related problems)	16.8	15.7
Other reasons	11.8	19.4
DK/NA	0.8	3.7

As shown above, as compared to non-Roma schools, in Roma schools family problems (21.0 percent) and health problems (49.6 percent) are more frequently invoked by teachers as main reasons of their absences.

**TABLE 7.2.5.** When you missed classes, did you need to bring in justification documents?

	Roma schools (percent)	Non-Roma schools (percent)
Never	19.8	19.4
Rarely	17.1	13.6
Sometimes	19.4	27.0
Often	11.7	13.6
Very often	18.0	28.2
DK	6.3	5.8
NA	19.8	19.4

Non-Roma schools tend to be stricter than Roma schools when dealing with teacher absences. Specifically, 41.0 percent of teachers in non-Roma schools claim they are "often" or "very often" required to bring to school documents that justify their absences. In Roma schools, 28.7 percent of teachers say they must justify their absences through various documents "often" or "very often."

**TABLE 7.2.6.** When you missed classes, how was your absence dealt with? (n=880 teachers)

	Roma schools	Non-Roma schools
A colleague replaced me and taught my classes	76.6	82.0
Pupils waited in class being attended by a colleague	21.0	12.6
The class was dismissed and it was subsequently made up	0.0	1.8
Pupils remained in class unattended	0.0	0.0
Other solution	0.8	0.9
DK	0.8	0.0
NA	0.8	2.7

As shown above, teachers' responses indicate that their absences are handled rather differently in Roma and non-Roma schools. Specifically, in Roma schools, 76.6 percent of teachers say that colleagues teach the classes they missed while in non-Roma schools, the same strategy is more frequently adopted (82.0 percent). *Furthermore, as compared to non-Roma schools, in Roma schools a teacher's absence is more frequently dealt with by having a colleague supervising (but not teaching) pupils (21.0 percent in Roma schools versus 12.6 percent in non-Roma schools).*

**TABLE 7.2.7.** From what you know, how often do other teachers in this school miss classes?  
(n=880 teachers)

	Roma schools	Non-Roma schools
Never	13.4	11.7
Rarely	70.3	71.6
Sometimes	8.9	10.5
Often	0.2	0.7
Very often	0.0	0.5
DK	4.5	2.7
NA	2.7	2.3

As regards other colleagues' absences, teachers' perceptions of how often this fact occurs are fairly similar in both types of schools. Also, we recorded no notable differences between Roma and non-Roma schools in terms of whether teacher absenteeism represents a problem in the surveyed schools. In Roma schools, 2.5 percent of respondents claimed that teacher absenteeism is a problem and in non-Roma schools 2.7 percent of respondents said the same thing.

**TABLE 7.2.8.** Do you think that teacher absenteeism represents a problem in your school?  
(n=880 teachers)

	Roma schools (percent)	Non-Roma schools (percent)
Yes	2.5	2.7
No	77.2	79.1
DK	2.5	2.7
NA	17.7	15.4

We note, however, a small difference in how teachers from Roma and non-Roma schools perceive the main reasons for their colleagues' absences. Specifically, in non-Roma schools 52.0 percent of respondents stated that their colleagues miss classes due to health reasons. In Roma schools, 49.5 percent of respondents claimed that classes are missed by teachers due to health reasons.

**TABLE 7.2.9.** Generally, what is the main reason for teachers missing classes in your school?  
(n=880 teachers)

	Roma schools (percent)	Non-Roma schools (percent)
Family problems	23.9	23.8
Health problems	49.5	52.0
Other personal problems	5.9	4.9
Lack of interest in teaching	0.2	0.6
Pupils' lack of interest towards school	0.4	0.8
Other reason	1.9	2.7
DK	7.1	5.1
NA	11.1	10.1

## TEACHER ABSENTEEISM RECORDED BY OBSERVATION DOSSIERS AND OFFICIAL SCHOOL RECORDS

To gauge better the issue of teacher absenteeism, we adopted a data triangulation approach. Aside from opinion questions regarding teacher absenteeism, we also relied on factual data from school records and on observations. As readers might recall, our interviewers had to make 10 unannounced visits during the second semester of the

current academic year (2011) in each school included in our sample. In scheduling these visits we took into account the following criteria: (1) if possible, in each school, all primary grades and classes needed to be observed by our interviewers; (2) the observations had to be made at different times during the day taking into account the fact that, for primary school children, a school day has four hours of teaching activities/classes (usually from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm); (3) in each school, the unannounced visits had to be made over the course of 17 weeks (that is, the second semester). Interviewers were provided with an observation fiche, which is included in the Annex. In these observation fiches, interviewers had to record instances and motives of tardiness and absence in each school and various primary grade classes. *We remind readers that we conducted our sampled observations in classrooms.* That is, following a strict schedule, our fieldwork operators entered classrooms to verify whether teachers are absent or not and whether teachers are late or not. To reduce teacher suspicion, our interviewers claimed they wanted to observe how many students showed up for classes; to this end, our interviewers also used a mock fiche to record the students' alleged presence in the classrooms.

TABLE 7.3.1. Summary of observations regarding teachers' tardiness and absenteeism

Number of observations when...	Roma schools			Non-Roma schools		
	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural
Teachers were not late	1,331	656	675	1,678	1,102	576
Teachers were late	272	156	116	197	129	68
<b>Percentage of observations when...</b>						
Teachers were not late	83.0	80.8	85.3	89.5	89.5	89.4
Teachers were late	17.0	19.2	14.7	10.5	10.5	10.6
<b>Absences</b>						
Number of teacher absences	22	13	9	17	12	5
Percentage of absences to observations	1.4	1.6	1.1	0.9	1.0	0.8
<b>Counts of what happened when teachers were absent:</b>						
Pupils have left the classroom	2	2	0	1	0	1
Someone came in and announced the teacher's absence and remained in class with the pupils	10	5	5	6	3	3
Pupils remained in class, under no supervision	1	1	0	1	0	1
Other situation	9	5	4	9	9	0
<b>Reasons for absence (counts):</b>						
Medical reasons	6	2	4	3	1	2
Family/personal reasons	3	1	2	3	2	1
Professional reasons	2	2	0	2	1	1
Unjustified absence	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other reason	4	2	2	8	8	0
No reason could be established	7	6	1	1	0	1

We begin by noting that based on our sampled observations teacher tardiness seems to appear more frequently in Roma schools (17.0 percent) as compared to non-Roma schools (10.5 percent). The difference seems especially large in the urban areas where tardiness in Roma schools is almost double that in non-Roma schools. Similar findings have been recorded in rural and urban areas for both types of schools. Furthermore, the number of observed teacher absences is higher in Roma schools than in non-Roma schools (in both urban and rural areas). A larger difference is found in the urban schools, where it is almost double. The only notable difference in how these absences were dealt with refers to the strategy of sending another teacher to supervise the pupils. This strategy

has been adopted in 10 instances in Roma schools and in 6 instances in non-Roma schools. The reasons of observed absences have a fairly similar distribution in both type of schools. The only exception to this is the fact that in non-Roma schools our interviewers were not able to identify the reason for teacher absences in more instances (7) than in non-Roma schools (1). Our observations tend to suggest that there are some differences in regard to teacher tardiness and absences in Roma and non-Roma schools. As mentioned previously, given that we conducted sampled or discrete observations, one should be cautious in assessing the magnitude of the differences presented in Table 7.3.1. To address further the issue of teacher absenteeism, we turn next to the information recorded in the end-of-the-academic-year questionnaire, which include questions regarding teacher absences. Answers to these questions were provided by school principals and administrative staff based on official school records. Table 7.3.2 presents the summary of data on hours of teachers' absences by school type.

TABLE 7.3.2. Hours of teachers' absences by reason and school type from official school records

Number of absences (hours)	Roma schools			Non-Roma schools		
	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural
Total number of hours of absences	7,253	6,584	669	2,978	2,499	479
No. of hours of absences due to medical reasons	4,357	3,894	463	726	472	254
No. of hours of absences due to medical reasons which were justified (through medical letters)	375	196	179	336	146	190
No. of hours of absences due to medical reasons which were NOT justified (through medical letters)	83	69	14	5	0	5
No. of hours of absences due to family/personal reasons	145	100	45	287	202	85
No. of hours of absences due to extracurricular activities	43	26	17	72	22	50
No. of hours of absences due to professional training	51	14	37	96	62	34
No. of hours of absences due to participation in other professional events	213	152	61	190	131	59
No. of hours of absences due to other reasons	121	120	1	4	0	4
No. of hours of unjustified absences	12	8	4	1,498	1,491	7

The information presented above suggests that there are differences between Roma and non-Roma schools in terms of hours of teacher absences. Overall, in Roma schools the number of hours of teacher absences (7,253 hours) is 2.43 times as high as the number of hours of teachers' absences in non-Roma schools (2,978 hours). We note, however, that *our preliminary bi-variate analyses indicate that, despite this magnitude, the differences between Roma and non-Roma schools in terms of teachers' hours of absences are not statistically significant.*

In terms of types of absences, in Roma schools the number of hours of absences due to medical reasons (4,357) is six times as high as the number of hours of absences due to medical reasons in non-Roma schools. Extremely important, in Roma schools the number of hours of absence due to *undocumented* medical reasons (83 hours) is 16 times as high as the number of hours of absence due to undocumented medical reasons in non-Roma schools (five hours). Roma schools seem to fare better than non-Roma schools in terms of hours of absence due to family or personal reasons. Specifically, in Roma schools there were 145 hours of absence due to personal matters, whereas in non-Roma schools we found 287 hours of absence due to family problems.

Notably, in non-Roma schools we encountered more hours of absence due to participation in extracurricular activities and at training activities than in Roma schools. Yet, in Roma schools we found more hours of absence (213 hours) due to participation in other professional events than in non-Roma schools (190 hours of absence). Similarly, Roma schools reported more hours of absence (121 hours) due to "other reasons" than non-Roma schools (four hours of absence due to "other reasons").

Another major difference between Roma and non-Roma schools was found in regard to unjustified absences. Specifically, the number of hours of unjustified absences in non-Roma schools (1,498 hours) is 124.8 times as high as the number of hours of unjustified absences in Roma schools.

When we investigated more closely this issue, we found that 1,491 out of 1,498 hours of unjustified absences from non-Roma schools were associated with a single school in our sample. For reasons of anonymity, we cannot state the name of the school where we encountered this situation. Yet, based on discussions with our interviewers, the principal's statements, and on teachers' declaration, this school has had severe problems with several persons who teach first and second grades and who rarely came to classes.

Similarly, when we re-analyzed data from Roma schools, we found out that 2,428 out of 4,357 hours of absence due to medical reasons were associated with a single Roma school. Based on discussions with our interviewers and on the information collected through questionnaires, this school had a teacher who was seemingly severely ill. A possible strategy of dealing with extreme cases is to eliminate them from the sample and re-run the analyses. Table 7.3.2 presents the results of our analyses without the extreme cases from both non-Roma and Roma schools.

**TABLE 7.3.3.** Hours of teacher absences by reason and school type, excluding an extreme case among non-roma schools and an extreme case among roma schools

Number of absences (hours)	Roma schools			Non-Roma schools		
	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural
Total number of hours of absences	2,677	2,008	669	1,199	720	479
No. of hours of absences due to medical reasons	1,929	1,466	463	583	329	254
No. of hours of absences due to medical reasons which were justified (through medical letters)	375	196	179	334	144	190
No. of hours of absences due to medical reasons which were NOT justified (through medical letters)	83	69	14	5	0	5
No. of hours of absences due to family/personal reasons	145	100	45	106	21	85
No. of hours of absences due to extra-curricular activities	43	26	17	72	22	50
No. of hours of absences due to professional training	51	14	37	96	62	34
No. of hours of absences due to participation in other professional events	213	152	61	190	131	59
No. of hours of absences due to other reasons	121	120	1	4	0	4
No. of hours of unjustified absences	12	8	4	7	0	7

SOURCE: Official records of the schools included in our sample; data was collected through the end-of-the-academic-year questionnaire.

After re-running our analyses without the extreme cases, we have found differences between Roma and non-Roma schools in terms of teacher absences. As shown in Table 7.3.3, the total number of hours of absences in Roma schools (2,677 hours) is 2.23 times as high as the total number of hours of teachers' absences in non-Roma schools (1,199 hours). *The results of our bi-variate analyses (t-test) indicate that the differences between Roma and non-Roma schools in terms of teachers' absences are statistically significant ( $F=9.526$ , at  $p < .10$ ).* This fact should be treated with caution because, as mentioned previously, it is a matter of debate whether tests for statistical significance can be performed on non-random samples.

In terms of types of absences, in Roma schools the number of hours of absences due to medical reasons (1,929 hours) is now 3.3 times as high as the number of hours of absences due to medical reasons in non-Roma schools (583 hours). After

eliminating the extreme cases, in Roma schools the number of hours of absence due to *undocumented* medical reasons (83 hours) has remained 16 times as high as the number of hours of absence due to *undocumented medical reasons* in non-Roma schools (five hours).

Also, after we excluded the extreme case from among non-Roma schools, we found 106 hours of absence due to personal/family reasons in non-Roma schools and 145 hours of absence due to family matters in Roma schools. Furthermore, according to our new analyses, the number of hours of unjustified absences in Roma schools (12 hours) is now 1.7 times as high as the number of hours of unjustified absences in non-Roma schools (seven hours). We note, however, that in both types of schools the number of hours of unjustified absences is rather low as compared to other types of absences. All of the other differences in absence types have remained the same, even after we eliminated the extreme cases.

Thus, our descriptive analyses using factual data from school records suggest that the number of teacher absences is higher in Roma schools than in non-Roma schools. Our preliminary statistical tests (t-test for mean differences) indicate that such differences are statistically significant, if we exclude from analysis the extreme cases. This finding tends to support our initial hypothesis between the existence of significant differences between Roma and non-Roma schools in terms of teacher absences.

Yet, such differences might be caused by several factors. For instance, *teacher absenteeism might be a function of the number of teachers in a given school. Specifically, the higher the number of teachers, the higher the number of teacher absences, all other things being equal.*

Furthermore, *ceteris paribus*, a high incidence of teacher absenteeism might be the result of a school's attractiveness in terms of location, career opportunities, and so on. Schools located in poorer areas might have difficulties in recruiting qualified teachers. As mentioned previously, individuals who end up teaching in such schools deem this fact a temporary orbit of their careers and are usually uninterested in the well-being of pupils. These factors might translate into job dissatisfaction, poor job performance, and absenteeism. At the same time, Romani pupils tend to be more numerous in schools (and areas) that are relatively poor. *As a consequence, infrastructural factors and geographical location might be true factors that affect teacher absenteeism, all other factors being equal.*



ROMANI CULTURE IS USED AS A SCAPEGOAT TO DIVERT ATTENTION FROM THE SHORTCOMINGS OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AND LARGER STRUCTURAL AND HISTORICAL FORCES.

# STUDENT ABSENTEEISM AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Some experts state that Romani students have lower attendance rates, higher drop-out rates, and poorer academic performance as compared to non-Romani students in Romanian schools. We intended to investigate these phenomena in the larger context of our study on teacher absenteeism. To this end, our questionnaires included questions that tap both subjective evaluations of and factual data on student absenteeism and academic performance.

## STUDENT ABSENTEEISM: SUBJECTIVE AND FACTUAL ASSESSMENTS

We employed two questions that tap seasonal and weekly variations of student absenteeism. These questions were included in the end-of-the-academic year questionnaire, which answered with the help of school principals.

TABLE 8.1.1. Based on what you know, does pupil absenteeism vary by season?

	Roma schools (in percent)			Non-Roma schools (in percent)		
	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural
Yes, pupils' absenteeism tends to be high during winter	19.1	14.8	23.2	16.5	10.5	23.1
Yes, pupils' absenteeism tends to be high during the summer months (May–June)	37.3	46.3	28.6	14.7	10.5	19.2
No, there is no such seasonal variation	40.9	38.9	42.9	63.3	73.7	51.9
DK/NA	2.7	0.0	5.4	5.5	5.3	5.8

As shown in Table 8.1.1, Roma school principals report a significantly higher seasonal variation of pupil absenteeism as compared to non-Roma school principals. As compared to principals from non-Roma schools (14.7 percent), more than twice as many principals from Roma schools (37.3 percent) claim that pupil absenteeism tend to be higher in the summer (May–June). Specifically, 40.9 percent of Roma schools' principals say there is no such seasonal variation of students' absenteeism as compared to 73.7 percent of non-Roma school principals who say the

same thing. In Roma schools, 19.1 percent of principals claim that pupil absenteeism tends to be high during winter; in non-Roma schools, 16.5 percent of principals state that pupils' attendance tends to be lower during winter.

TABLE 8.1.2. Based on what you know are there weekdays when pupils' absenteeism tends to increase?

	Roma schools (in percent)			Non-Roma schools (in percent)		
	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural
Yes	33.6	35.2	32.1	22.1	22.8	22.6
No	60.9	61.1	60.7	71.8	73.7	69.8
DK/NA	5.5	3.7	7.1	5.5	3.5	7.5

Similarly, as compared to non-Roma school principals, Roma schools principals tend to report more frequently that pupil absenteeism varies by weekdays (22.7 percent versus 33.6 percent). In both types of schools, in urban and rural areas, Thursdays, Fridays, Mondays, and religious holidays have been mentioned as weekdays with lower student attendance rates. These subjective assessments of pupil absenteeism tend to indicate that attendance in Roma and non-Roma schools differ by seasons and weekdays. We now turn to objective measures of pupil absenteeism as gathered from official school records.

TABLE 8.1.3. Absenteeism by pupils' background and type of school (220 schools)

Absences and number of pupils enrolled in primary grades (one through four)	110 Roma schools	110 Non-Roma schools
Total number of pupils enrolled in primary grades	16,783	17,119
Total number of Romanian pupils enrolled in primary grades	4,197	12,554
Percentage Romanian pupils enrolled in primary grades	25.0%	73.3%
Total number of Romani pupils enrolled in primary grades	12,148	2,503
Percentage Romani pupils enrolled in primary grades	72.4%	14.6%
<b>Romanian Pupils</b>		
Number of absences of Romanian pupils per Romanian pupil	13.5	6.1
Number of Romanian pupils warned for absences	447	2,624
Percentage of Romanian pupils warned for absences by total number of Romanian pupils enrolled	10.7%	20.9%

<b>Absences and number of pupils enrolled in primary grades (one through four)</b>	<b>110 Roma schools</b>	<b>110 Non-Roma schools</b>
Number of Romanian pupils expelled due to absences	0	37
Percentage of Romanian pupils expelled due to absences by total number of Romanian pupils enrolled	0%	0.3%
Total number of Romanian pupils expelled due to other reasons	0	0
Percentage of Romanian pupils expelled due to other reasons	0%	0%
Number of Romanian pupils who dropped out of school	25	47
Romanian pupils' dropout rate (by total number of Romanian pupils enrolled)	0.6%	0.4%
Percentage of Romanian pupils who dropped out of school and were expelled	0.6%	0.7%
<b>Romani Pupils</b>		
Number of absences of Romani pupils per Romani pupil	45.5	30.6
Number of Romani pupils warned due to absences	3,038	3,787
Percentage of Romani pupils warned due to absences by total number of Romani pupils	25.0%	151.3%
Number of Romani pupils expelled due to absences	66	54
Percentage of Romani pupils expelled due to absences by total number of Romani pupils	0.5	2.2%
Number of Romani pupils expelled due to other reasons	18	1
Percentage of Romani pupils expelled due to other reasons by total number of Romani pupils	0.1%	0.04%
Number of Romani pupils who dropped out of school	933	145
Romani pupils drop-out rate (by total number of Romani pupils enrolled)	7.7%	5.8%
Percentage of Romani pupils who dropped out of school or were expelled	8.4%	8.0%

Table 8.1.3 shows that there are several differences between Roma and non-Roma schools in regard to pupil absenteeism and drop-out rates. Our descriptive analyses will focus on Romanian students and Romani students in primary grades in both types of schools. For reasons of brevity, in what follows we employ "Romanian pupils/students" to denote *Romanian pupils enrolled in primary grades* and "Romani pupils/students" to refer to *Romani pupils enrolled in primary grades*.

First, we note that the per capita number of absences of Romanian student is higher in Roma schools than in non-Roma schools (13.20 absences per Romanian pupil in Roma schools versus 6.1 absences per Romanian pupil in non-Roma schools). Also, the per capita number of Romani pupils' absences is higher in Roma schools (45.20 absences per pupil) than in non-Roma schools (30.20 percent absences per pupil). Thus, from the standpoint of the number of absences per pupil, *both Romanian and Romani pupils from Roma schools tend to fare worse than both Romanian and Romani students from non-Roma schools*. Equally important, *Romani students in both types of schools have a higher*

*number of absences per pupils than Romanian pupils*. In the Romanian school system, teachers can use different formal strategies to address the problem of student absenteeism. The less drastic strategy is to inform parents; this is usually done in an informal manner. A second and formal strategy is to issue an official warning to parents about pupil absences. The third formal and ultimate strategy is to expel pupils due to a very large number of unjustified absences.

In terms of the strategies discussed previously, in Roma schools, *10.7 percent* of Romanian pupils and *25.0 percent* Romani students were officially warned due to their absences. In non-Roma schools, *20.9 percent of Romanian pupils* and *151.68 percent of Romani students* were officially warned due to their absences. In the latter case, the figure signifies that Romani pupils received more than one warning due to absences. Thus, in both types of schools, as compared to Romanian counterparts, *Romani students tend to be more often warned due to their absences*. Furthermore, in Roma schools, *no Romanian pupil* and *0.5 percent* of Romani pupils were expelled from school due to absences. In non-Roma schools, *0.3 percent* of Romanian pupils and *2.2 percent* of Romani students were expelled from school due to unjustified absences. This fact might be explained partially by the higher number of absences of Romani pupils as compared to the number of absences of Romanian students in both types of schools. Yet, it would not be far-fetched to say that in some schools, based on past experiences with different pupils, teachers might be tougher on Romani students than on Romanian children.

Also, in Roma schools *no Romanian pupil* and *0.01 percent of Romani students* were expelled from school for other reasons. In non-Roma schools, *0.04 percent* of Romani pupils and *no Romanian students* were expelled from school due to other reasons. Such other reasons include (but are not limited to) transgressions of school norms and regulations, and extremely poor academic performance.

We employed a variant of school drop-out rate calculated as number of students from a certain ethnic group who have dropped out of school by the number of students from a certain ethnic group enrolled in primary grades. Specifically, in Roma schools, the drop-out rate for Romani pupils was *7.7 percent*; in non-Roma schools, the drop-out rate for Romani pupils was *5.8 percent*. In contrast, in Romani schools, the drop-out rate for Romanians was *0.6 percent*. In non-Roma schools, the drop-out rate for Romanian students was *0.4 percent*. *Our analyses indicate that, as regards drop-out rates, Romani pupils fare worse than Romanian students in both types of schools. Furthermore, Romani pupils' drop-out rate is higher in non-Roma schools than in Roma schools.*

We have also calculated the total percentage of Romani and Romanian pupils who have been expelled from school or have dropped out of school during the current academic year. *Along these lines, again, Romani pupils in both types of schools face more problems than Romanians*. For instance, in Roma schools, *0.8 percent* of Romanian pupils dropped out of school or were expelled. In non-Roma schools, *0.7 percent* of Romanian children dropped out of school or were expelled. By comparison, in Roma schools *8.4 percent of Romani pupils* either dropped out of school

or were expelled. While in non-Roma schools *eight percent of Romani students* did the same. We conclude this sub-section by offering a few caveats. The findings presented previously are the results of descriptive and bi-variate analyses. Although these analyses attest that there are several differences between Romani and Romanian pupils in terms of absences and drop-out rates, *such differences might be explained by basic facts rather than by more complex causal imageries*. For instance, the number of pupil absences might be influenced by the number of pupils in a given school. In this vein, one could hypothesize that *the number of pupil absences tends to increase as the number of enrolled pupils also increases, all other things being equal*. Hence, to properly assess the magnitude, significance, and causes of student absenteeism one needs to resort to causal-type analyses – a fact to which we will return later.

### ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: SUBJECTIVE AND FACTUAL DATA

We begin by presenting two subjective evaluations of pupils' academic performance; these evaluations were made by school principals with the help of the end-of-the-academic-year questionnaire. As Table 8.2.1 shows, as compared to non-Roma schools (38.2 percent), in Roma schools fewer principals (33.6 percent) deemed the academic performance of pupils better as compared to the previous academic year. In Roma schools, 59.1 percent of principals stated that the academic performance of pupils was the same as compared to the previous academic year.

**TABLE 8.2.1.** Overall, how would you evaluate the academic performance of pupils from this school as compared to the previous academic year (2009–2010)?

	Roma schools (in percent)	Non-Roma schools (in percent)
Better	33.6	38.2
Same	59.1	55.5
Worse	3.6	1.8
DK/NA	3.6	4.5

We asked school principals to evaluate the academic performance of pupils in their schools against the backdrop of an ideal, "best possible" school. On this point, we note other important differences between Roma and non-Roma schools. *For instance, 43.6 percent of Roma school principals deem their school academic performance worse than that of an ideal or an imaginary "best possible school."* In contrast, *only 25.5 percent non-Roma school principals view the academic performance of their schools as worse than that of an ideal or "best possible school."* Furthermore, 11.8 percent of non-Roma schools' principals claim that their schools have superior academic performance as compared to a "best possible school." Yet, only 4.5 percent of Roma school principals deem their schools' academic performance better than the academic performance of an ideal, best possible school.

**TABLE 8.2.2.** Overall, how would you evaluate the academic performance of pupils in this school with the academic performance of students from the best possible school?

	Roma schools	Non-Roma schools
Better	4.5	11.8
Same	38.2	41.8
Worse	43.6	25.5
DK/NA	13.6	20.9

Let us turn to primary school students' academic performance as captured by official school records. A brief detour, however, is in order. Until recently, grades from one to 10 were used to evaluate pupil performance. Currently, in primary school, there is a new evaluation system as follows: "very good," "good," "satisfactory," and "unsatisfactory." Students with an overall "unsatisfactory" evaluation might be required to repeat a certain grade. We asked primary grades teachers to provide us information on the overall academic performance of most pupils by classes and grades, at the end of the current academic year. We also assigned the following numeric values to the current evaluation system: 4 = very good; 3 = good; 2 = satisfactory; 1 = unsatisfactory. The results of our analyses are presented in Table 8.2.3.

**TABLE 8.2.3.** The academic performance of pupils enrolled in 220 primary schools (on a scale from 1 = minimum to 4 = maximum)

Average scores	Roma schools (in percent)	Non-Roma schools (in percent)
Romanian pupils	3.5	3.7
Hungarian pupils	3.3	3.3
Romani pupils	2.8	2.6

As shown above, Romani pupils' academic performance is lower as compared to the academic performance of Romanian, Hungarian, and other students. Specifically, in both types of schools, Romani pupils' academic performance is somewhat above "satisfactory" (2.8 in Roma schools and 2.6 in non-Roma schools). Notably, Romani pupils' in non-Roma schools seem to have slightly lower average grades than in Roma schools. In contrast, in both Roma and non-Roma schools, Romanian pupils' academic performance is above "good" (3.5 in Roma schools and 3.7 in non-Roma schools). Similarly, Hungarian students' academic performance in both types of schools is somewhat above good (that is 3.3) and slightly inferior to the academic performance of Romanian students.

# LINKING SCHOOLS WITH TEACHER AND STUDENT ABSENTEEISM

This study has attempted to answer two main substantial questions regarding teacher absenteeism. The first question deals with a possible relationship between a school's type (that is, Roma majority or Roma minority) and teacher absenteeism. Put another way, do teachers in Roma schools skip work more frequently than teachers in non-Roma schools? If so, does the simple presence of Romani children have any effect on teacher absenteeism?

The second main research question is closely related with the previous one: is there a link between teacher absenteeism in different types of schools and pupil absenteeism? A possible explanation for the relationship between the type of school (Roma and non-Roma) and teacher absenteeism could be pupil absenteeism. If this were true, one might speak of a vicious circle: if many (Romani) pupils (in Roma schools) do not come to school, teachers too would lose interest in teaching and coming to work. In this case, policy recommendations would focus on increasing pupil attendance/enrollment and decreasing drop-out rates. Yet, one might not exclude a different or inverse causal relation in which it is teachers' absenteeism that leads pupils to skip school. If this were the case, policy recommendations would focus on reducing teacher absenteeism. Before trying to answer these two substantive questions we need to offer a caveat. As mentioned previously (Chapter 3.1), the samples employed in our study are non-random samples. Due to this fact, the results of the statistical tests presented in the following pages cannot be generalized at the level of the entire population of Roma and non-Roma primary schools in Romania.

## QUESTION 1: IS THERE A LINK BETWEEN THE TYPE OF SCHOOL AND TEACHER ABSENTEEISM?

As shown in Table 9.1, we first conducted a correlation analysis between the total number of hours of absences per teachers and the percentage of Romani pupils on roll. The Bravais-Pearson coefficient (0.053), although positive and rather small, is not statistically significant. A possible explanation for this finding may be that the relationship between teacher absenteeism and percentage of Romani students on roll is not linear.<sup>10</sup>

TABLE 9.1. Pearson orrelation between teacher absenteeism and number of students

		Total hours of absences/ teachers	Percentage of Romani students
Total hours of absences/teachers	– Correlation coefficient	1	.053
	– N (no. of cases)	218	218
Percentage of Romani students	– Correlation coefficient	.053	1
	– N (no. of cases)	218	220

To test further this relation, we have employed a causal-type approach. Specifically, we have used ordinary least squares regression analysis (OLS). This type of analysis has several advantages as compared to simple linear correlations. First, it works with the assumption that the values of a given variable ("the dependent variable") are influenced by the values of other variables ("independent variables or factors") relying on a causal imagery (cause[s]  $\hat{r}$  effect). Second, unlike linear correlation, regression analysis gives us the possibility to control the effects of other variables. For instance, had we found a positive and statistically significant correlation between the percentages of Romani students on roll and teacher absences, this fact might have been caused by other factors such as a school's location (rural/urban areas). Roma-majority schools in our sample are more numerous in rural areas than in urban areas. Thus, teachers in Roma schools from rural areas might have higher absenteeism rates not because of Roma's presence in these schools but due to contextual variables (that is, location in poor,

<sup>10</sup> Linear correlation analysis represents a straightforward way to identify possible links between two metric (i.e., quantitative) variables. The values of the Bravais-Pearson correlation coefficient ranges from -1 to +1; "-1" denotes a perfect negative correlation between two metric variables – as the value of one variable increases, the value of the other variable decreases. A value of "+1" indicates a perfect positive correlation between two variables; as the value of one variable increases, the value of the other variable increases too. A value of "0" means no relation/correlation between two variables. All values obtained through correlations analysis on a given sample are judged based on their statistical significance. A statistical significant (positive or negative) correlation indicates that the link or the relationship between two variables cannot be attributed to chance (or it does have a real meaning). Yet, readers unfamiliar with statistical analysis should be aware of the fact that, even if two variables are correlated, this does not mean that one variable is the cause of the other variable. Put another way, correlation analysis is not a causal-type analysis. In some cases, the variations in the values of the two variables might be caused by a third variable, which is ignored or unknown to a researcher (on this point, see also the case of "spurious correlations").

unattractive, and difficult to access rural areas). In our OLS regression analyses, the *dependent variable* is hours of teacher absences. We have run four nested models as follows: In the first model (or baseline) model, we included three variables: (1) the total number of students in a given school; (2) the number of Romani students in a given school; (3) the number of teachers in a given school. In this model, we have found only a marginally statistically significant effect in regard to the number of teachers indicating that teacher absenteeism is more common in bigger schools, measured by number of teaching staff. Our first model does not lend support to our primary hypothesis, namely that there is a link between the type of school (Roma and non-Roma) and teacher absenteeism. Also, we note that the three variables included in our first model explain only two percent of the variation in teacher absenteeism.

The second model includes and controls for contextual variables such as the type of locality (urban or rural), a locality's level of social development,<sup>11</sup> and teachers' views on the economic situation of the pupils' families. It seems that none of these variables has a significant effect on teacher absenteeism. Furthermore, when we control for contextual variables, the effect of the number of teaching staff on teacher absenteeism disappears.

In the third model we added six variables that measure different school level characteristics. Three variables capture the presence of laboratories, facilities (for example, running water, indoor restroom, or central heating), and access to internet. Two other variables measure the type of school in terms of primary schools (that is, schools that teach only grades one through four) and general schools (that is, schools that have classes one through eight). We have also included a variable that captures teaching space per pupil. The results of our analysis show that none of these school-level variables seems to have significant effects on teacher absenteeism. Overall, the third model shows that the total number of teaching staff has positive effects on teacher absenteeism, while the number of pupils has negative effects on teacher absenteeism (or, in schools with fewer pupils, teacher absenteeism tends to decrease).

<sup>11</sup> We employed a composite index developed by Dumitru Sandu to account for a locality's level of social development. This index is based on the following indicators: (1) education stock at community level; (2) average age of individuals aged 14 years and over; (3) life-expectancy at birth; (4) number of automobiles per 1,000 inhabitants; (5) average housing area per household; (6) natural gas consumption per inhabitant; (7) locality size (10 categories). For details, see Sandu 2011.

TABLE 9.2. OLS regression of hours of teachers' absences on selected Independent variables

Independent Variables	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	Unstd. <sup>a</sup>	Std. <sup>b</sup>						
<b>Model 1</b>								
Constant	-3.51***		-2.50		-2.25		2.21	
Number of pupils	-.01	-.14	-.01	-.16	-.01*	-.20	-.01**	-.23
Number of Romani pupils	.00	.02	.00	.03	.00	-.01	.00	.02
Total number of teaching staff	.05*	.17	.04	.16	.07**	.26	.09***	.33
<b>Contextual variables</b>								
Urban †			1.41	.15	1.71	.18	1.93	.20
Socio-development index 2008			-.03	-.11	-.02	-.08	-.04	-.15
Teachers' view on economic status of pupils families			.17	.03	.33	.05	.27	.04
<b>School type and infrastructure</b>								
Laboratories					-.11	-.08	-.06	-.05
Facilities					-.20	-.11	-.32*	-.18
Internet					.09	.06	.14	.10
Teaching area/total number of pupils					-.06	-.07	-.08	-.09
Primary school ††					.74	.05	1.06	.07
Other type of school ††					-1.45	-.09	-1.89	-.12
<b>Organizational climate</b>								
Supportive							.09	.02
Directive							.56*	.16
Restrictive							-.8***	-.25
Collegial							-.30	-.06
Intimate							-.37	-.10
Disengaged							.17	.07
R-square	.021	.028	0.065	0.122				

NOTES: a Unstandardized regression coefficients

b Standardized regression coefficients

† Dummy variable; reference category is "rural" (=0)

† † Dummy variables; reference category is "general school" (grades one through eight)

Significance levels: \*\*\*<0.01; \*\*<0.05; \*<0.1

In the fourth and final model, we added six variables related to schools' organizational climate (as discussed in section 6.4). This final model seems to fit better the data as it explains 12 percent of teacher absenteeism. In addition, this fourth model uncovers three other interesting effects. First, the presence of facilities is statistically significant (albeit only marginal). Its negative effect implies that in schools with good facilities teacher absenteeism is lower. The other two interesting effects are caused by "restrictive" and "directive" strategies adopted by a school principal. It seems teacher absenteeism tends to increase in schools where principals adopt a directive ("iron fist") behavior. On the other hand principals who favor a restrictive approach (with an overload of bureaucratic assignments) tend to be more effective in combating teacher absenteeism.

The conclusion of these analyses is that there is no significant difference in the average number of hours of teacher absences "caused" by number of Romani students a given school, controlling for all other variables. It is worth mentioning that a school's size, measured by number of teachers hired, and a principal's directive behavior ("iron fist") have a positive effect on teacher absenteeism (that is, it increases teacher absenteeism). On the other hand, the number of pupils, high-quality facilities, and a principal's restrictive behavior have negative effects on teacher absenteeism (that is, it decreases teacher absenteeism).

### QUESTION 2: IS THERE A LINK BETWEEN TEACHER AND PUPIL ABSENTEEISM?

Our second research question tries to find out if there is a link between teacher absenteeism and pupil absenteeism. Answering this question can help us understand better what is happening at school level and also recommend possible policy actions.

On this issue, we have adopted a similar strategy and have run first simple correlations between various continuous variables. As shown in Table 9.3, the correlations between teacher and pupil absenteeism in both Roma and non-Roma schools are not statistically significant.

TABLE 9.3. Bravais-Pearson correlation between teachers' and pupils' absenteeism

	Total hours of absences/ teachers	Total Romanian pupil absences	Total Romani pupil absences (Romanian pupils)	Total unjustified absences (Romanian pupils)	Total unjustified absences (Romani pupils)
<b>Total hours of absences/teachers</b>					
Cor.	1	.082	.072	.099	.099
N	218	218	218	208	208
<b>Total Romanian pupil absences</b>					
Cor.	.082	1	.084	.952***	.952***
N	218	220	220	210	210
<b>Total Romani pupil absences</b>					
Cor.	.072	.084	1	.085	.085
N	218	220	220	210	210
<b>Total unjustified absences (Romanian pupils)</b>					
Cor.	.099	.952***	.085	1	1.000***
N	208	210	210	210	210
<b>Total unjustified absences (Romani pupils)</b>					
Cor.	.099	.952***	.085	1.000***	1
N	208	210	210	210	210

We have found no statistically significant relations between teacher and pupil absenteeism even after controlling for variables such as number of teachers, number of pupils on roll, locality-type (urban/rural), or the level of socio-economic development of localities. This conclusion is valid for our sample, but due to its non-random character we cannot generalize our findings for all of the primary schools in Romania. Granted, further research is needed on this topic, but other studies are difficult to conduct in the absence of reliable sampling frames (or information about the ethnic composition of primary and general schools in Romania). Gathering and synthesizing such information is the task of local, county, and national-level authorities in charge of Romania's education system. All efforts to reform this system are doomed to fail in the absence of reliable and relevant information regarding micro- and macro- (dysfunctional) characteristics of the system's sub-components (from infrastructure to human resources to pupils and communities).

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Monitor closely academic performance in Roma schools not only in regard with the current grades, but also in regard to basic skills obtained at the newly introduced national standardized test (preparatory class and grades two, four, six, and nine) by the Law on Education 1/2011, Chapter 5, Section 2, Art. 74. Include a sample of Roma schools in the next TIMSS elementary school mathematics test in 2015 and reading literacy study test PIRLS programmed for 2016. Prioritize for desegregation and no enrolment policy in the Roma schools that obtain the poorest academic performance and where children may lack basic skills. In the current context of economic crisis, ensuring that a fair share of the GDP is transferred to education and that efficient use of public finances results in fair salaries for teachers would reduce accumulated frustration of this professional category. In this regard, in the light of reviewing previous studies and policy measures, design an incentive program with bonuses for outstanding attendance for teachers.
- Make more efficient use of the European Union Structural Funds in order to improve the school infrastructure and facilities among the schools in rural and urban settings, as well as use of the EU Structural Funds for teacher training, in order to improve learning conditions and teachers' working environment.
- Introduce in the training of primary school principals elements of modern management encouraging non-authoritarian and cooperative leadership.
- Collect and disseminate aggregate and school data on teacher absenteeism as well as on academic performance, drop-out rates, and general statistics reflecting quality of education. Make these data available through informing parents about teacher absenteeism and school quality records in the process of enrolment.
- Use more efficiently teacher inspection for documenting, sanctioning, and reporting publicly aberrant and unacceptable cases of teacher absenteeism.
- Identify high drop-out risk students and intervene with more interaction with family and family financial incentives where needed as well as school-after-school classes for preventing/reducing the drop-out rate.
- Make compulsory the recovery of the hours missed due to teacher tardiness and absenteeism. Encourage parents and association of parents in exercising control about the school life and reward or sanction teacher behavior considered inappropriate such as teacher tardiness and unjustified absenteeism
- In our samples of primary and general schools, we found no cases with segregated classes. If such cases still exist, then one should organize the desegregation process in such a manner that those "Roma schools" that register higher values on teacher absenteeism are considered among the first for desegregation. This recommendation should be related with focus of the ordinance and ministerial order that priority should be given to a no enrolment policy in segregated Roma schools in the first and fifth grades.



INDIVIDUALS WHO END UP TEACHING IN ROMA SCHOOLS (LOCATED IN POORER AREAS) DEEM THIS FACT A TEMPORARY ORBIT OF THEIR CAREERS AND ARE USUALLY UNINTERESTED IN THE WELL-BEING OF PUPILS.

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# ANNEX: RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS AND LETTER TO SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

QUESTIONNAIRE NO: .....

## SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS: TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

The questionnaire will be employed in interviews with school principals and clerks, during the interviewers' second visit in schools.

### SECTION 1. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

SCHID. SCHOOL'S NAME OR NUMBER: .....

LOC. LOCALITY: ..... CTY. COUNTY: .....

SCHOOL\_R: 1. Majority Roma 2. Minority Roma

SCHOOL TYPE: 1. Grades 1 thru 4 2. Grades 1 thru 8 3. Other (Specify) .....

AGE. When was this school established? ..... (YEAR)

REN. Has the school ever been renovated during the last 10 years? 1. Yes/When ..... (YEAR) 2. No

CLSR. How many classrooms does the school have? ..... (NO. OF CLASSROOMS)

#### LABS. Types of laboratories in the school:

Labs' Type:	Yes or No?	
Physics	1. Yes	2.No
Chemistry	1. Yes	2.No
Biology	1. Yes	2.No
Computer Lab	1. Yes	2.No
Other lab/What type? .....	1. Yes	2.No

### FAC. Does the school have... ?

Facility	Yes or No?	
Running water	1. Yes	2.No
In-door restrooms	1. Yes	2.No
Central heating	1. Yes	2.No
Own heating system	1. Yes	2.No
Wood-based heating/stoves	1. Yes	2.No
Coal-based heating/stoves	1. Yes	2.No

NET1. Does the school have access to the internet? 1. Yes 2. No

NET2. Is the computer lab connected to the internet?

1. Yes 2. No 6. Not applicable/School does not have a computer lab

ATH. Does the school have a sports hall? 1. Yes 2. No

SUPR.\_1. What is the average surface of a classroom? ..... square meters

SUPR.\_2. What is the total surface of the school (including all adjacent building)? ..... square meters

SUPR.\_3. What is the total surface of the school that is allocated to teaching activities (excluding the sports hall)? ..... square meters

SUPF\_4. What is the average number of students in a class? ..... (average number)

### SECTION 2. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF TEACHING STAFF

Q1. A. Total number of teaching staff ..... B. Out of which women: .....

C. Does this school has an educational mediator for Roma? 1. Yes 2. No

D. Does this school has a Romani-language teacher? 1. Yes 2. No

#### Q2. Teaching staff by age groups and

A. Younger than 20 years old		B. 21 to 40 years old		C. 41 to 64 years old		D. 65 years and over	
1.Females	2.Males	1.Females	2.Males	1.Females	2.Males	1.Females	2.Males
No. of teachers							



Classes IIIA IIIB IIIC IIID IIIE IVA IVB IVC IVD IVD

**A. Total tenured teaching staff, out of which...**

1. Graduates of pedagogical high schools
2. Graduates of post-high schools and colleges
3. University graduates with a degree in pedagogy
4. University graduates with a degree in other fields
5. High school graduates
6. Individuals with less than high school/SPECIFY .....

**B. Total substitute/part-time teachers, out of which...**

1. Graduates of pedagogical high schools
2. Graduates of post-high schools and colleges
3. University graduates with a degree in pedagogy
4. University graduates with a degree in other fields
5. High school graduates
6. Individuals with less than high school/SPECIFY .....

Classes VA VB VC VD VE VIA VIB VIC VID VIE

**C. Total tenured teaching staff, out of which...**

1. Graduates of pedagogical high schools
2. Graduates of post-high schools and colleges
3. University graduates with a degree in pedagogy
4. University graduates with a degree in other fields
5. High school graduates
6. Individuals with less than high school/SPECIFY .....

**D. Total substitute/part-time teachers, out of which...**

1. Graduates of pedagogical high schools
2. Graduates of post-high schools and colleges
3. University graduates with a degree in pedagogy
4. University graduates with a degree in other fields
5. High school graduates
6. Individuals with less than high school/SPECIFY .....

Classes	VIA	VIB	VIC	VID	VIE	VIIA	VIIIB	VIIIC	VIIID	VIIID
<b>C. Total tenured teaching staff, out of which...</b>										
1. Graduates of pedagogical high schools										
2. Graduates of post-high schools and colleges										
3. University graduates with a degree in pedagogy										
4. University graduates with a degree in other fields										
5. High school graduates										
6. Individuals with less than high school/SPECIFY .....										
<b>D. Total substitute/part-time teachers, out of which...</b>										
1. Graduates of pedagogical high schools										
2. Graduates of post-high schools and colleges										
3. University graduates with a degree in pedagogy										
4. University graduates with a degree in other fields										
5. High school graduates										
6. Individuals with less than high school/SPECIFY .....										

**SECTION 4. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

**Q7. Number and type of extracurricular activities of teaching staff by month and class**

1. Class	A. In-school activities			B. Outside the school activities		
<b>IA</b>						
	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ ecology/civic – Touristic/ athletic/ recreational	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ ecology/civic – Touristic/ athletic/ recreational
No. Of activities.			1. No..... 2. No.....			1. No..... 2. No.....
<b>2. Class</b>						
<b>IB</b>						
	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ ecology/civic – Touristic/ athletic/ recreational	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ ecology/civic – Touristic/ athletic/ recreational
No. Of activities.			1. No..... 2. No.....			1. No..... 2. No.....
<b>3. Class</b>						
<b>IC</b>						
	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ ecology/civic – Touristic/ athletic/ recreational	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ ecology/civic – Touristic/ athletic/ recreational
No. Of activities.			1. No..... 2. No.....			1. No..... 2. No.....

4. Class ID	A. In-school activities			B. Outside the school activities		
	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational
No. Of activities.			1. No..... 2. No.....			1. No..... 2. No.....
5. Class IE	A. In-school activities			B. Outside the school activities		
	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational
No. Of activities.			1. No..... 2. No.....			1. No..... 2. No.....
6. Class IIA	A. In-school activities			B. Outside the school activities		
	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational
No. Of activities.			1. No..... 2. No.....			1. No..... 2. No.....

7. Class IIB	A. In-school activities			B. Outside the school activities		
	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational
No. Of activities.			1. No..... 2. No.....			1. No..... 2. No.....
8. Class IIC	A. In-school activities			B. Outside the school activities		
	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational
No. Of activities.			1. No..... 2. No.....			1. No..... 2. No.....
9. Class IID	A. In-school activities			B. Outside the school activities		
	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational
No. Of activities.			1. No..... 2. No.....			1. No..... 2. No.....

10. Class IIE	A. In-school activities			B. Outside the school activities		
	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational
No. Of activities.			1. No..... 2. No.....			1. No..... 2. No.....
11. Class IIIA	A. In-school activities			B. Outside the school activities		
	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational
No. Of activities.			1. No..... 2. No.....			1. No..... 2. No.....
12. Class IIIB	A. In-school activities			B. Outside the school activities		
	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational
No. Of activities.			1. No..... 2. No.....			1. No..... 2. No.....

13. Class IIIC	A. In-school activities			B. Outside the school activities		
	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational
No. Of activities.			1. No..... 2. No.....			1. No..... 2. No.....
13. Class IIIC	A. In-school activities			B. Outside the school activities		
	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational
No. Of activities.			1. No..... 2. No.....			1. No..... 2. No.....
14. Class IIID	A. In-school activities			B. Outside the school activities		
	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational
No. Of activities.			1. No..... 2. No.....			1. No..... 2. No.....

15. Class IIIE	A. In-school activities			B. Outside the school activities		
	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational
No. Of activities.			1. No..... 2. No.....			1. No..... 2. No.....
16. Class IVA	A. In-school activities			B. Outside the school activities		
	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational
No. Of activities.			1. No..... 2. No.....			1. No..... 2. No.....
17. Class IVB	A. In-school activities			B. Outside the school activities		
	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational
No. Of activities.			1. No..... 2. No.....			1. No..... 2. No.....

18. Class IVC	A. In-school activities			B. Outside the school activities		
	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational
No. Of activities.			1. No..... 2. No.....			1. No..... 2. No.....
19. Class IVD	A. In-school activities			B. Outside the school activities		
	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational
No. Of activities.			1. No..... 2. No.....			1. No..... 2. No.....
20. Class IVE	A. In-school activities			B. Outside the school activities		
	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational	1. Scientific activities	2. Cultural and artistic activities	3. Other – Humanitarian/ecology/civic – Touristic/athletic/recreational
No. Of activities.			1. No..... 2. No.....			1. No..... 2. No.....



**8.5. The Evaluation of Romani Language Teachers Grades I through IV for the Academic Year 2009/2010 (if applicable)**

Class	IA	IB	IC	ID	IE	IIA	IIB	IIC	IID	IIE
Insufficient	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Sufficient	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Good	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Very Good	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

Class	IIIA	IIIB	IIIC	IIID	IIIE	IVA	IVB	IVC	IVD	IVE
Insufficient	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Sufficient	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Good	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Very Good	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

**Q8.6. The Evaluation of Other Staff Teaching Grades I through IV for the Academic Year 2009/2010**

Class	IA	IB	IC	ID	IE	IIA	IIB	IIC	IID	IIE
Insufficient	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Sufficient	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Good	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Very Good	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

Class	IIIA	IIIB	IIIC	IIID	IIIE	IVA	IVB	IVC	IVD	IVE
Insufficient	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Sufficient	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Good	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Very Good	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

**SECTION 6. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENTS GRADES ONE THROUGH FOUR**

**Q9. Number of students by ethnic background and gender [INTERVIEWER: This table will be completed with the help of people teaching grades I through IV]**

Class	A. Romanians		B. Hungarians		C. Roma		D. Germans		E. Other		F. Total	
	Fem.	Males	Fem.	Males	Fem.	Males	Fem.	Males	Fem.	Males	Fem.	Males
1. IA												
2. IB												
3. IC												
4. ID												
5. IE												
6. IIA												
7. IIB												
8. IIC												
9. IID												
10. IIE												
11. IIIA												
12. IIIB												
13. IIIC												
14. IIID												
15. IIIE												
16. IVA												
17. IVB												
18. IVC												
19. IVD												
20. IVE												

**Q10. Overall, how often do teachers of grades I – IV are absent during a semester?**

1. Very often                      3. Rarely                      9. DK/NA  
2. Often                              4. Very rarely

**Q11. Overall, how often do teachers of grades V – VIII are absent during a semester?**

1. Very often                      3. Rarely                      9. DK/NA  
2. Often                              4. Very rarely

**Q12. What is the most frequent reason for teachers' absenteeism in your school?**

- |                            |                         |          |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|----------|
| 1. Medical problems        | 3. Professional matters | 9. DK/NA |
| 2. Personal/family matters | 4. Other/Specify .....  |          |

**Q13. What actions are taken against teachers who are unjustifiably absent? (MULTIPLE CHOICE)**

- |                    |                        |          |
|--------------------|------------------------|----------|
| 1. Pay cuts        | 3. Written warnings    |          |
| 2. Verbal warnings | 4. Other/Specify ..... | 9. DK/NA |

**Q14. Could you please describe to us how is a teacher's presence verified and by whom?**

.....

.....

.....

**SECTION 7. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA ABOUT THE PRINCIPAL**

GEN. Gender 1. Male 2. Female

AGE. |\_|\_| YEARS

EDU. Education (WRITE): .....

SPEC. What is your main field of specialization (WRITE): .....

PROF. What is your profession? (WRITE): .....

QUAL. Teaching qualification (e.g., grade 2, grade 1, etc.): .....

EXP1. How many years of teaching experience do you have? |\_|\_| YEARS

EXP2. How many years of teaching experience in this school do you have? |\_|\_| YEARS

EXP3. When have you been appointed as Principal of this school? |\_|\_|\_|\_|

NAT. What is your ethnic background? (WRITE): .....

RESID. Do you live...?

1. In the same locality where I work/teach
2. In a different locality/where? .....

QUESTIONNAIRE NO: .....

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS**

Good day! My name is ..... and I'm an interviewer working for the Center for Urban and Regional Sociology (CURS) and Romani CRISS. CURS and Romani CRISS are currently conducting a nationwide study on the topic of general conditions in primary schools. The study was commissioned by Roma Education Fund, a non-governmental organization. As you might know, your school has been selected to participate in this study. In each school, we interview approximately four people who teach primary grades. You have been randomly selected, like in a lottery, to participate in this study from among teachers in your school. Your answers are fully confidential and anonymous. We would greatly appreciate if you would give us 10 minutes of your time to answer several questions. You will receive a diploma from us, acknowledging your participation in this large-scale national study. I reiterate that this study has nothing to do with the Ministry of Education and it has been commissioned by an international non-governmental organization. We will employ your anonymized answers to perform statistical analyses at the level of the entire sample of 880 teachers, nationwide.

**SECTION 1. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT SCHOOL**

SCHID. SCHOOL NAME AND NUMBER: .....

LOC. LOCALITY: .....

CTY. COUNTY: .....

SCHOOL TYPE: 1. Classes 1-4 2. Classes 1-8 3. Other (Specify) .....

## SECTION 2. ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE

The following set of claims refers to your school.

## How often do they occur in your school?

	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	DK	NA
1 The teachers accomplish their work with vim, vigor, and pleasure	4	3	2	1	8	9
2 Teachers' closest friends are other faculty members at this school	4	3	2	1	8	9
3 Faculty meetings are useless	4	3	2	1	8	9
4 The principal goes out of his/her way to help teachers	4	3	2	1	8	9
5 The principal rules with an iron fist	4	3	2	1	8	9
6 Teachers leave school immediately after school is over	4	3	2	1	8	9
7 Teachers invite faculty members to visit them at home	4	3	2	1	8	9
8 There is a minority group of teachers who always oppose the majority	4	3	2	1	8	9
9 The principal uses constructive criticism	4	3	2	1	8	9
10 The principal checks the sign-in sheet every morning	4	3	2	1	8	9
11 Routine duties interfere with the job of teaching	4	3	2	1	8	9
12 Most of the teachers here accept the faults of their colleagues	4	3	2	1	8	9
13 Teachers know the family background of other faculty members	4	3	2	1	8	9
14 Teachers exert group pressure on non-conforming teaching staff members	4	3	2	1	8	9
15 The principal explains his/her reasons for criticism to teachers	4	3	2	1	8	9
16 The principal listens to and accepts teachers' suggestions	4	3	2	1	8	9

## How often do the following things occur in your school?

	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	DK	NA
17 The principal schedules the work for the teachers	4	3	2	1	8	9
18 Teachers have too many committee requirements	4	3	2	1	8	9
19 Teachers help and support each other	4	3	2	1	8	9
20 Teachers have fun socializing together during school time	4	3	2	1	8	9
21 Teachers ramble when they talk at faculty meetings	4	3	2	1	8	9
22 The principal looks out for the personal welfare of teachers	4	3	2	1	8	9
23 The principal treats teachers as equals	4	3	2	1	8	9
24 The principal corrects teachers' mistakes	4	3	2	1	8	9
25 Administrative paperwork is burdensome at this school	4	3	2	1	8	9
26 Teachers are proud of their school	4	3	2	1	8	9
27 Teachers have parties for each other	4	3	2	1	8	9
28 The principal compliments teachers	4	3	2	1	8	9
29 The principal is easy to understand	4	3	2	1	8	9
30 The principal closely checks classroom (teacher) activities	4	3	2	1	8	9
31 Clerical support reduces teachers' paperwork	4	3	2	1	8	9
32 New teachers are readily accepted by colleagues	4	3	2	1	8	9
33 Teachers socialize with each other on a regular basis	4	3	2	1	8	9
34 The principal supervises teachers closely	4	3	2	1	8	9
35 The principal checks lesson plans	4	3	2	1	8	9
36 Teachers are burdened with busy work	4	3	2	1	8	9

	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	DK	NA
37 Teachers socialize together in small, select groups	4	3	2	1	8	9
38 Teachers provide strong social support for colleagues	4	3	2	1	8	9
39 The principal is autocratic	4	3	2	1	8	9
40 Teachers respect the professional competence of their colleagues	4	3	2	1	8	9
41 The principal monitors everything teachers do	4	3	2	1	8	9
42 The principal goes out of his/her way to show appreciation to teachers	4	3	2	1	8	9

**SECTION 3. TEACHER ABSENTEEISM AND TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS ABSENTEEISM AND LATENESS**

**1. In the past three months, how often did you miss classes?**

1. Rarely      2. Sometimes      3. Often      4. Very often      5. DK      6. NA

**2. What were the main reasons for missing classes?**

1. Family problems      2. Health problems      3. Personal problems  
 Other reasons (please specify) ..... 5. DK      6. NA

**3. When you missed classes, did you need to bring justification documents?**

1. Yes      2. No      3. DN      4. NR

**4. How did you manage the absence?**

1. Another colleague replaced me      2. Pupils stood in class under surveillance  
 3. The class was missed and it will be recovered      4. Pupils remained in class unattended  
 5. Other (please specify) .....      6. DK      7. NA

**5. To your knowledge, how often do other teachers in the school miss classes?**

1. Rarely      2. Sometimes      3. Often      4. Very often      5. DK      6. NA

**6. Do you think that teacher absenteeism represents a problem in your school?**

1. Yes      2. No      3. DN      4. NR

**7. Generally speaking, what is the main reason for teachers missing classes in your school?**

1. Family problems      2. Health problems      3. Personal problems  
 4. Lack of interest toward pupils      5. Lack of interest towards teaching  
 6. Other reasons (please specify) .....

**8. In your opinion, what are the consequences of teacher absenteeism?**

.....  
 .....  
 .....

**9. How does the school management address the problem of teacher absenteeism?**

.....  
 .....  
 .....

**10. In the past three months, how often did you come late to classes?**

1. Rarely      2. Sometimes      3. Often      4. Very often      5. DK      6. NA

**11. What were the reasons for coming late?**

.....  
 .....  
 .....

**12. In your opinion, teacher lateness represents a problem in your school?**

1. Yes      2. No      3. DK      7. NA

## SECTION 4. WORK SATISFACTION

The following items refer to your work. Please tell me to what extent you agree with the claims; the responses are on a scale ranging from 1 to 5, with 1 meaning complete disagreement, and 5 complete agreement.

**1. Total disagreement    2. Disagreement    3. Neutral    4. Agreement    5. Total agreement**

1	Teaching allows me to develop professionally.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Teachers' income suffices to provide a decent living.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Teaching allows me to express some aptitudes.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Insufficient income prevents me from living the life I want.	1	2	3	4	5
5	The school principal does not encourage teacher cooperation.	1	2	3	4	5
6	Teaching is a routine work.	1	2	3	4	5
7	Most of my students are easy to work with.	1	2	3	4	5
8	Work conditions in the school can be improved.	1	2	3	4	5
9	Teaching inhibits originality.	1	2	3	4	5
10	Teaching is an interesting job.	1	2	3	4	5
11	Teaching provides for a safe future.	1	2	3	4	5
12	I have a good understanding with my colleagues.	1	2	3	4	5
13	Teaching offers me the opportunity to help children learn.	1	2	3	4	5
14	My pupils respect me as teacher.	1	2	3	4	5
15	I get along well with my colleagues.	1	2	3	4	5
16	Teaching provides me limited opportunities for advancement.	1	2	3	4	5
17	My work involves an unbearable amount of stress.	1	2	3	4	5
18	Most students come to school ready to learn.	1	2	3	4	5
19	The administration blames teachers for classroom problems.	1	2	3	4	5
20	If I had to do it all over again, I would still become a schoolteacher.	1	2	3	4	5
21	I am well paid in proportion to my ability and effort.	1	2	3	4	5

**The next questions are related to diversity. On a scale ranging from 1 to 5, with 1 meaning total disagreement and 5 – total agreement, please score the following affirmations:**

22	People are born equals and therefore should have equal access to education.	1	2	3	4	5
23	At school, students are encouraged to understand that humans are different and to respect these differences.	1	2	3	4	5
24	I am familiar to Roma culture.	1	2	3	4	5
25	Romani students are less prone to intellectual activities.	1	2	3	4	5
26	Enough efforts have been directed towards Roma.	1	2	3	4	5
27	Romani students have special needs as compared to non-Roma.	1	2	3	4	5
28	I consider myself prepared to work with students of different ethnicities.	1	2	3	4	5
29	It would be better to have special classes for Roma children.	1	2	3	4	5

## SECTION 6. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

**GEN. Gender** 1. Male 2. Female

**AGE.** |\_\_|\_\_| YEARS

**EDU. Education (WRITE):** .....

**SPEC. What is your main field of specialization (WRITE):** .....

**PROF. What is your profession? (WRITE):** .....

**QUAL. Teaching qualification (e.g., grade 2, grade 1, etc.):** .....

**EXP1. How many years of working experience do you have? |\_\_|\_\_| YEARS**

**EXP2. How many years of teaching experience do you have?: |\_\_|\_\_| YEARS**

**EXP3. How many years of teaching experience in this school do you have?: |\_\_|\_\_| YEARS**

**NAT. What is your ethnic background? (WRITE):** .....

**RESID. Do you live...?**

1. In the same locality where I work/teach

2. In a different locality/where? .....

**INC. What was your personal NET monthly income last month? .....**RON

QUESTIONNAIRE NO: .....

**END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR QUESTIONNAIRE**

The questionnaire will be employed in interviews with the school principals, teachers, and clerks at the end of the school year (second semester) during the interviewers' final visit in schools.

**SECTION 1. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

SCHID. SCHOOL'S NAME OR NUMBER: .....

LOC. LOCALITY: .....

CTY. COUNTY: .....

DATE OF THE VISIT: .....

**SECTION 2. CHANGES AMONG TEACHING STAFF DURING THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2010–2011****Q1. Changes among teaching staff**

Number of teaching staff by experience

E. Reasons for leaving/hiring

F. What classes have/do these people taught/teach?

A. Less than 5 years  
 B. B/w 5 and 20 years  
 C. B/W 21 and 45 years  
 D. Over 45 years

1. Number of teachers who left during the second semester

2. Number of teachers hired during the current academic year

**Q2\_1. Educational qualifications of newly-hired teachers (i.e., individuals hired during the current academic year)**

A.	B.	C.	D.	E.	F.
Graduates of pedagogical high schools	Graduates of pedagogical post-high schools and colleges	University graduates with a pedagogical degree	University graduates with other degrees	High school graduates	Individuals with less than high school

1. No. of teachers

2. What classes do they teach

**Q2\_2. Professional qualifications of newly-hired teachers (i.e., individuals hired during the current academic year)**

E. Beginner

F. Tenured

G. Second degree (Gradul 2)

H. First degree (Gradul 1)

1. No. of teachers

2. What classes do they teach

**SECTION 3. STUDENT ABSENTEEISM**

**Q3. Student absenteeism during the 2010-2011 academic year**

Class IA	A. Total students	B. No. of absences	C. Out of which, justified absences	D. How many students have been warned due to the no. of absences?	E. How many students have been expelled due to absences?	F. How many students have been expelled due to other reasons?	G. How many students dropped out of school?
1. Romanians							
2. Hungarians							
3. Roma							
4. Germans							
4. Other							

Class IB	A. Total students	B. No. of absences	C. Out of which, justified absences	D. How many students have been warned due to the no. of absences?	E. How many students have been expelled due to absences?	F. How many students have been expelled due to other reasons?	G. How many students dropped out of school?
1. Romanians							
2. Hungarians							
3. Roma							
4. Germans							
4. Other							

Class IC	A. Total students	B. No. of absences	C. Out of which, justified absences	D. How many students have been warned due to the no. of absences?	E. How many students have been expelled due to absences?	F. How many students have been expelled due to other reasons?	G. How many students dropped out of school?
1. Romanians							
2. Hungarians							
3. Roma							
4. Germans							
4. Other							

Class ID	A. Total students	B. No. of absences	C. Out of which, justified absences	D. How many students have been warned due to the no. of absences?	E. How many students have been expelled due to absences?	F. How many students have been expelled due to other reasons?	G. How many students dropped out of school?
1. Romanians							
2. Hungarians							
3. Roma							
4. Germans							
4. Other							

Class IE	A. Total students	B. No. of absences	C. Out of which, justified absences	D. How many students have been warned due to the no. of absences?	E. How many students have been expelled due to absences?	F. How many students have been expelled due to other reasons?	G. How many students dropped out of school?
1. Romanians							
2. Hungarians							
3. Roma							
4. Germans							
4. Other							

Class IIA	A.	B.	C.	D.	E.	F.	G.
	Total	No. of	Out of	How many	How many	How many	How many
	students	absences	which,	students	students	students	students
			justified	have been	have been	have been	dropped
			absences	warned due	expelled	expelled	out of
				to the no. of	due to	due to other	school?
				absences?	absences?	reasons?	

1. Romanians

2. Hungarians

3. Roma

4. Germans

4. Other

Class IIB	A.	B.	C.	D.	E.	F.	G.
	Total	No. of	Out of	How many	How many	How many	How many
	students	absences	which,	students	students	students	students
			justified	have been	have been	have been	dropped
			absences	warned due	expelled	expelled	out of
				to the no. of	due to	due to other	school?
				absences?	absences?	reasons?	

1. Romanians

2. Hungarians

3. Roma

4. Germans

4. Other

Class IIC	A.	B.	C.	D.	E.	F.	G.
	Total	No. of	Out of	How many	How many	How many	How many
	students	absences	which,	students	students	students	students
			justified	have been	have been	have been	dropped
			absences	warned due	expelled	expelled	out of
				to the no. of	due to	due to other	school?
				absences?	absences?	reasons?	

1. Romanians

2. Hungarians

3. Roma

4. Germans

4. Other

Class IID	A.	B.	C.	D.	E.	F.	G.
	Total	No. of	Out of	How many	How many	How many	How many
	students	absences	which,	students	students	students	students
			justified	have been	have been	have been	dropped
			absences	warned due	expelled	expelled	out of
				to the no. of	due to	due to other	school?
				absences?	absences?	reasons?	

1. Romanians

2. Hungarians

3. Roma

4. Germans

4. Other

Class IIE	A.	B.	C.	D.	E.	F.	G.
	Total	No. of	Out of	How many	How many	How many	How many
	students	absences	which,	students	students	students	students
			justified	have been	have been	have been	dropped
			absences	warned due	expelled	expelled	out of
				to the no. of	due to	due to other	school?
				absences?	absences?	reasons?	

1. Romanians

2. Hungarians

3. Roma

4. Germans

4. Other

Class IIIA	A.	B.	C.	D.	E.	F.	G.
	Total	No. of	Out of	How many	How many	How many	How many
	students	absences	which,	students	students	students	students
			justified	have been	have been	have been	dropped
			absences	warned due	expelled	expelled	out of
				to the no. of	due to	due to other	school?
				absences?	absences?	reasons?	

1. Romanians

2. Hungarians

3. Roma

4. Germans

4. Other

Class IIIB	A.	B.	C.	D.	E.	F.	G.
	Total students	No. of absences	Out of which, justified absences	How many students have been warned due to the no. of absences?	How many students have been expelled due to absences?	How many students have been expelled due to other reasons?	How many students dropped out of school?

- 1. Romanians
- 2. Hungarians
- 3. Roma
- 4. Germans
- 4. Other

Class IIIC	A.	B.	C.	D.	E.	F.	G.
	Total students	No. of absences	Out of which, justified absences	How many students have been warned due to the no. of absences?	How many students have been expelled due to absences?	How many students have been expelled due to other reasons?	How many students dropped out of school?

- 1. Romanians
- 2. Hungarians
- 3. Roma
- 4. Germans
- 4. Other

Class IIID	A.	B.	C.	D.	E.	F.	G.
	Total students	No. of absences	Out of which, justified absences	How many students have been warned due to the no. of absences?	How many students have been expelled due to absences?	How many students have been expelled due to other reasons?	How many students dropped out of school?

- 1. Romanians
- 2. Hungarians
- 3. Roma
- 4. Germans
- 4. Other

Class IIIE	A.	B.	C.	D.	E.	F.	G.
	Total students	No. of absences	Out of which, justified absences	How many students have been warned due to the no. of absences?	How many students have been expelled due to absences?	How many students have been expelled due to other reasons?	How many students dropped out of school?

- 1. Romanians
- 2. Hungarians
- 3. Roma
- 4. Germans
- 4. Other

Class IVA	A.	B.	C.	D.	E.	F.	G.
	Total students	No. of absences	Out of which, justified absences	How many students have been warned due to the no. of absences?	How many students have been expelled due to absences?	How many students have been expelled due to other reasons?	How many students dropped out of school?

- 1. Romanians
- 2. Hungarians
- 3. Roma
- 4. Germans
- 4. Other

Class IVB	A.	B.	C.	D.	E.	F.	G.
	Total students	No. of absences	Out of which, justified absences	How many students have been warned due to the no. of absences?	How many students have been expelled due to absences?	How many students have been expelled due to other reasons?	How many students dropped out of school?

- 1. Romanians
- 2. Hungarians
- 3. Roma
- 4. Germans
- 4. Other

Class IVC	A. Total students	B. No. of absences	C. Out of which, justified absences	D. How many students have been warned due to the no. of absences?	E. How many students have been expelled due to absences?	F. How many students have been expelled due to other reasons?	G. How many students dropped out of school?
-----------	-------------------------	--------------------------	---	---	--	---	--

1. Romanians

2. Hungarians

3. Roma

4. Germans

4. Other

Class IVD	A. Total students	B. No. of absences	C. Out of which, justified absences	D. How many students have been warned due to the no. of absences?	E. How many students have been expelled due to absences?	F. How many students have been expelled due to other reasons?	G. How many students dropped out of school?
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1. Romanians

2. Hungarians

3. Roma

4. Germans

4. Other

Class IVE	A. Total students	B. No. of absences	C. Out of which, justified absences	D. How many students have been warned due to the no. of absences?	E. How many students have been expelled due to absences?	F. How many students have been expelled due to other reasons?	G. How many students dropped out of school?
-----------	-------------------------	--------------------------	---	---	--	---	--

1. Romanians

2. Hungarians

3. Roma

4. Germans

4. Other

## SECTION 3. STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE

## Q4. Student performance during the current academic year.

What grades/qualifications has the majority of students obtained in the academic year 2010-2011?

(Note: VG= Very Good; G=Good; S=Satisfactory; NS=Not satisfactory)

Class	A. Romanians				B. Hungarians				C. Roma				D. Others			
	VG	G	S	NS	VG	G	S	NS	VG	G	S	NS	VG	G	S	NS
1. IA	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
2. IB	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
3. IC	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
4. ID	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
5. IE	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
6. IIA	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
7. IIB	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
8. IIC	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
9. IID	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
10. IIE	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
11. IIIA	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
12. IIIB	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
13. IIIC	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
14. IIID	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
15. IIIE	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
16. IVA	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
17. IVB	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
18. IVC	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
19. IVD	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
20. IVE	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

**SECTION 4. TEACHER ABSENTEEISM**

**Teacher absenteeism during the second semester (to be completed, if possible, from attendance registers)**

Class	A. Total days of absent- eeism /absences	B. Out of which, for medical reasons	C. If medical reasons, was there a medical certificate in most cases?	D. Absences for personal reasons	E. Number of absences due to one of the follo- wing professional reasons:*	F. Unjustified absences	G. What measures have been taken?***
1. IA			1.Yes, 2.No,		1. No. _____ 2. No. _____ 3. No _____ 4. No. _____		
2. IB			1.Yes, 2.No,		1. No. _____ 2. No. _____ 3. No _____ 4. No. _____		
3. IC			1.Yes, 2.No,		1. No. _____ 2. No. _____ 3. No _____ 4. No. _____		
4. ID			1.Yes, 2.No,		1. No. _____ 2. No. _____ 3. No _____ 4. No. _____		
5. IE			1.Yes, 2.No,		1. No. _____ 2. No. _____ 3. No _____ 4. No. _____		
6. IIA			1.Yes, 2.No,		1. No. _____ 2. No. _____ 3. No _____ 4. No. _____		

Class	A. Total days of absent- eeism /absences	B. Out of which, for medical reasons	C. If medical reasons, was there a medical certificate in most cases?	D. Absences for personal reasons	E. Number of absences due to one of the follo- wing professional reasons:*	F. Unjustified absences	G. What measures have been taken?***
7. IIB			1.Yes, 2.No,		1. No. _____ 2. No. _____ 3. No _____ 4. No. _____		
8. IIC			1.Yes, 2.No,		1. No. _____ 2. No. _____ 3. No _____ 4. No. _____		
9. IID			1.Yes, 2.No,		1. No. _____ 2. No. _____ 3. No _____ 4. No. _____		
10. IIE			1.Yes, 2.No,		1. No. _____ 2. No. _____ 3. No _____ 4. No. _____		
11. IIIA			1.Yes, 2.No,		1. No. _____ 2. No. _____ 3. No _____ 4. No. _____		
12. IIIB			1.Yes, 2.No,		1. No. _____ 2. No. _____ 3. No _____ 4. No. _____		
13. IIIC			1.Yes, 2.No,		1. No. _____ 2. No. _____ 3. No _____ 4. No. _____		

Class	A. Total days of absent- eeism /absences	B. Out of which, for medical reasons	C. If medical reasons, was there a medical certificate in most cases?	D. Absences for personal reasons	E. Number of absences due to one of the follo- wing professional reasons:*	F. Unjustified absences	G. What measures have been taken?***
14. IIID			1.Yes, 2.No,		1. No. _____ 2. No. _____ 3. No _____ 4. No. _____		
15. IIIE			1.Yes, 2.No,		1. No. _____ 2. No. _____ 3. No _____ 4. No. _____		
16. IVA			1.Yes, 2.No,		1. No. _____ 2. No. _____ 3. No _____ 4. No. _____		
17. IVB			1.Yes, 2.No,		1. No. _____ 2. No. _____ 3. No _____ 4. No. _____		
18. IVC			1.Yes, 2.No,		1. No. _____ 2. No. _____ 3. No _____ 4. No. _____		
19. IVD			1.Yes, 2.No,		1. No. _____ 2. No. _____ 3. No _____ 4. No. _____		
20. IVE			1.Yes, 2.No,		1. No. _____ 2. No. _____ 3. No _____ 4. No. _____		

- \*  
1. Extra-curricular activities  
2. Professional training course  
3. Participation at professional meetings (e.g., students' olympics, meetings, etc.)  
4. Other, specify.
- \*\*  
1. Missed classes will be/have been taught in the coming days, outside the usual hours/school days  
2. Classes were taught by a substitute teacher  
3. Missed classes will be/have been taught in the coming days during the usual hours/school days



# LETTER SENT TO COUNTY INSPECTORATES FOR EDUCATION

DIRECȚIA GENERALĂ ÎNVĂȚĂMÂNT ÎN LIMBILE MINORITĂȚILOR,  
RELAȚIA CU PARLAMENTUL ȘI PARTENERII SOCIALI



17 ianuarie 2011

## Inspectoratele scolare

În atenția:

1. doamnei/domnului inspector școlar general
2. doamnei/domnului inspector pentru problemele educationale ale rromilor

**Ref.:** derulare proiect de cercetare educațională, din sem. II al anului școlar 2010-2011

Partenerul MECTS, Romani **CRISS - Centrul Romilor pentru Intervenție Socială și Studii**, împreună cu **Centrul de Sociologie Urbană și Regională – CURS** derulează un proiect de cercetare inițiat și finanțat de *Roma Education Fund Europe (REF)*, ce vizează *performanța și necesarul de personal didactic din școlile primare și generale cu elevi aparținând minorității rrome în România*.

În cadrul acestui proiect, CURS și Romani CRISS vor realiza o cercetare sociologică pe un esantion de 300 de școli din România, din care 150 de școli cu 90% elevi rromi în clasele I-IV și alte 150 de școli cu 10% elevi rromi în clasele I-IV, urmând a se realiza o serie de interviuri profesionale pe bază de chestionar (directorul și câte 4 cadre didactice din fiecare școală, inclusiv rrome, dacă există în acele unități școlare).

În acest context, în vederea stabilirii listelor preliminare, vă rugăm să nominalizați:

- 4 unități școlare la nivelul cl. I-IV, cu 90% elevi romi;
- 4 unități școlare la nivelul cl. I-IV, cu 10% elevi romi (restul nerromi, români sau maghiari ori mixt);

Scolile nominalizate trebuie să fie atât din mediul rural, cât și din cel urban (două pentru urban și două pentru rural, din fiecare din cele două categorii de investigat). Din lista rezultată, CURS și Romani CRISS vor extrage un eșantion total de 220 de școli (plus un număr de școli - rezervă).

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Persoanele de contact ale partenerilor de proiect sunt: dr. *Augustin Stoica*, Director general CURS (tel: 0752 265 600; [astoica@curs.ro](mailto:astoica@curs.ro)) și dl. *Marius Wamsiedel*, sociolog în cadrul Romani CRISS (tel: 0761 634 052; [marius@romanicriss.org](mailto:marius@romanicriss.org)).

Rezultatele studiului vor fi publicate într-un volum, în engleză și în limba română, care va fi la dispoziția ISJ-urilor, a școlilor intervievate și, de asemenea, va fi transmis electronic în întreg sistemul educațional.

Vă rugăm să ne transmiteți, **până la data de 24 ianuarie 2011**, cele două liste la e-mail: **[astoica@curs.ro](mailto:astoica@curs.ro)** și, deopotrivă, la MECTS-DGILMRP (prin fax sau la e-mail: **[sarau\\_2006@yahoo.com](mailto:sarau_2006@yahoo.com)**).

Director general,  
**Szócs Domokos**

Director,  
**Alexandru Szepesi**

Consilier pentru limba rromani,  
**Gheorghe Sarău**

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Graphic design by Anikó Bieder and Balázs Gelsei – cadmium grafiklab.

Examining the habits of teachers in 220 primary schools across the breadth of Romania's school system while simultaneously cataloguing each school's work environment, this study sought to examine the degree to which teacher absenteeism was a contributing factor to Romani pupils' poor school attendance and performance. However, few links were found between teacher absenteeism and that of their students. Nonetheless, this report subtly points to the learning environment in each school, in particular those poorer schools with insufficient infrastructure, resources and funds, and the distinct correlation that can be made to their often substantial Romani student bodies. This suggests that equality and equity in the classroom, and by default the attendance and performance of Romani pupils has yet to be guaranteed in an inequitable and unequal national school system. Until Romania's national and county-level educational authorities make sure all schools have a fair share of resources, Romani pupils will continue to struggle to compete for their future social and economic success in classrooms emptied of play, games, teachers, and even learning itself.

## CONTACT INFORMATION



Roma Education Fund

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