

ROMA EDUCATION FUND

Foundation Resource Center for Roma Communities (RCRC)
“Support for High School Roma students in Romania” project

**Evaluation of the “Support for High School Roma
students in Romania” project**

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List of Abbreviations

BAC – Baccalaureate Exam

GPA – Grade Point Average

NGO – Non-governmental organization

RCRC - Foundation Resource Center for Roma Communities

SAP - School of Arts and Professions

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Executive Summary

The project evaluation of the “Support for High School Roma students in Romania” was based on a research methodology which included: 1) the analysis of documents and data evidence gathered throughout the implementation of the project; 2) in-depth interviews with more than 58 beneficiaries of the programmes, as well as 13 mentors and 9 professors that have taught the students selected in this project; additionally, a focus group was conducted with 8 parents of beneficiaries from Reghin - Mureş and extensive discussions have been carried out with the manager of the project and other members of the implementation team; 3) analysis of quantitative data – the database created during the programme by the implementers has been completed by updating and adding supplementary information (in electronic format) gathered through filling in questionnaires concerning the situation of 156 project beneficiaries.

The main findings of the assessment are the following:

1. The project has proved its benefits, out of the 338 students selected in the programme 266 (78.7%) have graduated or are still enrolled in secondary education at the end of the project, 57 being currently enrolled at university and 4 others pursuing post-secondary studies. In fact, 18% of the students selected in the programme are currently pursuing vocational or tertiary education. Other 57 students (16.9%) have passed the baccalaureate exam, but have not enrolled for tertiary studies. A percentage of these would enrol for a form of tertiary education in the following period – the project evaluation included only the first university enrolment session for this academic year. A different category of beneficiaries is that of those who have completed their high school studies, but did not pass the baccalaureate exam – 82 students (24.3% out of the total number of beneficiaries) faced this situation. They have another chance in the second session of the baccalaureate in 2011 (held after mid-August) to retake the exam and to enrol for university studies. The table below synthesizes the situation of the beneficiaries at the end of the project:

Categories of beneficiaries	No. of cases	Percentage
Beneficiaries that are still enrolled to high school	66	19.5%
Beneficiaries who have completed high school, without BAC	82	24.3%
Students (enrolled to university)	57	16.9%
Scholarships withdrawn (low school achievement, moving out of the eligible area of the project etc.)	23	6.8%
Enrolled to post-secondary studies	4	1.2%
Beneficiaries who have completed high school, with BAC, but not (yet) enrolled to university	57	16.9%
Drop-out	49	14.5%
Total number of beneficiaries selected in the project	338	100.0%

Here, we need to mention that the percentage of beneficiaries who reach university from among those who passed the baccalaureate exam is influenced not only by their school performance (a dimension that the project focused on), but also by their financial and social condition. Throughout our assessment, we met pupils who successfully completed the BAC, but gave up or delayed their enrolment for university due to the impossibility of covering the financial costs involved. The material effort for pursuing university is greater than the one for high school. The support offered by the programme ended once high school studies were completed.

2. Considering that the enrolment to university is not yet completed for those who graduated in 2011 (the second session of BAC is scheduled for mid-August and the students who pass it then can still enrol to university in September), it is important to show the path followed after high school by the beneficiaries of the programme who completed their studies in 2010 and for whom the enrolment to university ended. The cross-sectional analysis at the level of the cohort of beneficiaries completing the programme in 2009-2010 (69 students) shows that 31 of them (44.9%) are enrolled at university, 4 (5.8%) pursue vocational schools, 13 (18.8%) passed the baccalaureate exam, but have not enrolled for tertiary education, and 21 (30.4%) have failed the baccalaureate exam. The percentage of students completing the baccalaureate exam for the mentioned cohort and entering tertiary education is 64.5% (31 out of 48), though lower than national average – for the 2009/2010 academic year, 80.1% of those who completed the baccalaureate exam went on to continue their tertiary studies (cf. Report on State of National System of Education in Romania / Raport asupra Stării Sistemului Național de Învățământ, MECTS, 2010). There are no data at the national level regarding the percentage of Roma students who have passed the BAC and pursue university – but taking into account that the Roma students generally underscore on the access to education indicators and that their financial resources are lower (this is an important variable influencing the extent to which those who passed the BAC go on to university), we believe that their percentage is significantly lower than the national one of 80.1%.

3. Another conclusion of the analysis we conducted is that the girls selected in the programme, who passed the BAC, have a lower rate of continuing university studies compared to the boys included in the programme, a situation that is the opposite of the one registered at the national level. The table below summarizes these differences:

Gender	National level*	At the level of programme beneficiaries
The percentage of girls who passed the BAC and enrolled to university in 2009/2010	86%	58.3% (21 out of 36)
The percentage of boys who passed the BAC and enrolled to university in 2009/2010	74%	83.3% (10 out of 12)

* According to the Report on State of National System of Education in Romania / Raport asupra Stării Sistemului Național de Învățământ, MECTS, 2010, p.8.

The effect of gender on determining the enrolment to university after completing the BAC exam among Roma pupils can be clearly noticed. Thus, while at the national level the percentage of the girls who complete the BAC and pursue university is significantly higher than that of the boys in the same situation (86% vs. 74%), in the case of Roma students from our sample the trend is changed: only 58.3% of the girls with BAC included in the programme went on to university, while for the boys selected in the programme the percentage is of 83.3 – a fundamental difference. The explanations for this situation are complex. We advance one explanation that emerged from our qualitative study. We met, among the beneficiaries of the programme, girls that passed the baccalaureate exam, but who got married during or after high school and already had children. The tradition of getting married at an early age and giving birth soon after is much more widespread in the Roma community. Therefore, it is also a different level of support offered by the family in continuing education for girls, when compared to the situation of boys (this pattern is also mentioned in another research conducted by one of the authors): in the traditional Roma communities, continuing studies for a married woman is unacceptable as a social norm. On the other hand, it is acceptable that boys go on to school even after their marriage (this is not necessarily a reference to a legal, formal marriage, and includes non-formalized partnerships as well). By this token, it is clear that, apart from the effect of the financial situation, there is a distinctive cultural effect that needs to be taken into account in future similar projects.

4. The general cumulative GPA of the programme beneficiaries (for whom data was included in database managed by project implementation team)¹ was 8.41 for the year preceding their selection in the project. The general GPA of the selected students in the last academic year completed before finishing the programme was 8.13. A decrease by 0.28 percent can be noticed between the GPA in the final completed high school year compared to the initial GPA, which was taken as a point of reference. One explanation for this is the sharp natural decrease of the marks obtained by the students in their first year of high school (9th grade) compared to the 8th grade. On the one hand, the decrease is caused by the difficulties faced by the students in adapting to new school circumstances (a different school, new teachers, bigger distance from home, increase in the expectations of the teachers, increase in the difficulty of the topics approached, etc. On the other hand, the situation can be explained by the fact that the gymnasium

¹ We performed this analysis for 295 beneficiaries out of the total number of 338. In the database of the implementer the beneficiaries selected in the fourth round – 2010/2011 academic year (33 beneficiaries) were not included. It was rightly considered that it would have been unrealistic to compare the results of these beneficiaries selected in the programme in the last year with the results of their 8th grade given that they have benefited from the programme 1 year only. Also, there has been the case of beneficiaries that did not attend school after the beginning of the academic year, though they were selected in the programme – for these students, we do not have their final GPA for comparison.

grades are overrated, and the teachers are more lenient. It is eloquent to take a look at the differentiated GPA evolution according to the educational level the student was at when entering the programme:

<i>Round of selection</i>		<i>Grade</i>	<i>GPA in the year preceding the selection in the programme</i>		<i>GPA in the final year of the programme</i>		<i>Difference GPA final/initial</i>
			Mean	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	
<i>Selection in the programme</i>	1 (2007)	9 th	8.42	91	7.86 ↓	91	-0.56
		10 th	8.07	82	8.08	82	0.01
		11 th	8.29	61	8.22	61	-0.07
	2 (2008)	9 th	9.05	39	8.40 ↓	39	-0.65
		10 th	8.79	6	9.16	6	0.37
		11 th	9.00	9	8.90	9	-0.1
	3 (2009)	9 th	8.97	1	7.58 ↓	1	-1.39
		10 th	8.50	3	7.42	3	-1.08
		11 th	8.69	3	8.61	3	-0.08

This shows that the greatest differences between the GPA in the final year and that in the year preceding their inclusion in the project occur in the case of the students that started high school (9th grade) at the moment of being selected as beneficiaries. In the case of students starting the X or XI grades, we can notice stagnation, an insignificant decrease or even an increase by 0.37 (for the X grade students selected in the second round, in 2008). However, there is also an exception: for the X grade students selected in the third round (in 2009) the cumulated GPA decreased by 1.08. There is a direct motivation for that: the longer the group of beneficiaries got support from the programme, the more likely it is that the difference between the final GPA and the initial one has a lower negative value or is positive. In the case of the XI grade students, those selected in the first round register a decreased in the GPA that is slighter than that of students included in the second or third wave. This happens in spite of another aspect that is detailed throughout the assessment report: the school performance of the students entering the programme in the first round was lower than that of the students in the next selection rounds, as the first round included also students of SAP (schools of arts and professions) and that did not happen afterwards.

The conclusions for these data are the following: the project was beneficial for improving the school performance of the selected students, but at the same time the initial objective of increasing the GPA with 0.5 by the end of the project compared to the year prior to entering the programme was, to a certain extent, too ambitious, at least for the beneficiaries that started the 9th grade at the time of being selected in the project.

5. We need to consider, though, that the project had one more complementary objective, that of increasing the rate of high school retention and preventing drop-outs. 78.8% of the 338 beneficiaries selected in the project have completed at least secondary studies (with or without the baccalaureate exam) or are still studying. This value is superior to the national average: data show that in the 2008-2009 academic year the percentage of young people completing high school in Romania was 72.8% (cf. Report on State of National System of Education in Romania / Raportului asupra Stării Sistemului Național de Învățământ, MECTS, 2010). Out of the 338 students selected in the programme, 49 of them (14.5%) abandoned school before completing high school. Comparatively, in 2010 the early drop-out rate in Romania was 18.4%, according to Eurostat data². For 23 beneficiaries (6.8%), the scholarship was withdrawn although they continued their studies (due to low school attainment, moving out of the eligible area of the project, etc. The mean number of absences was significantly lower in the 2nd and 3rd years, which proves influence of the programme in diminishing the absenteeism tendency; for instance in the second implementation year (2008-2009) the cumulated absences' mean among beneficiaries dropped with 4.1 points as compared to 1st year.

6. Out of the students entering the programme in the first three rounds, 48 of them (15.7%) have improved their GPA with at least 0.5, while 70 (23%) had a final GPA greater than the one preceding their inclusion in the programme, but at a difference lower than 0.5. In the case of 177 students (58%), the final GPA dropped compared to the year prior to their selection in the programme. For 10 students (3.3%), this indicator could not be measured – after being selected in the programme, they dropped school before the end of the first academic year.

7. The data support the fact that the students which had a final GPA equal or superior to that of the year preceding their inclusion in the programme had significantly greater chances to pass the baccalaureate exam or to enter university. The fact that the school attainment of the student was at least constant throughout high school reveals his interest and determination in continuing studies, as well as a high degree of school integration. Also, a constant school performance throughout high school is an advantage for passing the baccalaureate exam, which represents a necessary condition for being admitted to university.

8. Despite this evidence, out of the 177 students from the programme whose final GPA dropped compared to the year before their selection in the programme, 26 (14.7%) have passed the baccalaureate exam and 12 (6.8%) have pursued university. We consider it a success to have

² <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=0&language=en&pcode=tsisc060>

Early school leaving is defined as percentage of the population aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education and not in further education or training.

students that have continued their education and have graduated thanks to the support offered by the project, in spite of the fact that their final GPA decreased compared to that of the year before their selection in the programme. We have previously shown that the decrease in the GPA of the students at the end of their high school studies compared to the year prior to entering the programme has predominantly appeared in the case of the beneficiaries that started the 9th grade at the time of being selected in the programme, therefore their final GPA was compared to that of the last year of gymnasium – and there is a natural drop of the GPA in the first high school year compared to that of the 8th grade, due to the multiple causes stated above.

9. The detailed analysis showed that girls improved much more their GPA throughout the project when compared to the school performance of boys, those who commuted performed better than those living in a dormitory, and, high school students have overall significantly improved their GPAs compared to those enrolled in the Schools of Arts and Professions (SAP).

10. It is important to emphasize that the greater the GPA in the year prior to selection in the programme, the higher the chances of the final GPA being lower than the initial one, compared to the students with GPAs closer to the minimum threshold for inclusion in the programme (7.5). The intervention of the programme, as it was designed, motivated primarily students with medium grades to perform better, rather than those performing above the average, as it is further on detailed in the report (see Figure 24 in Annexes for data that support this statement).

11. The mentorship proved to be a much more efficient intervention mechanism than the scholarship itself, the latter rather having an effect on improving / maintaining school performance level among students coming from poor families and with average grades. It is preferable that the mentor is familiar with the educational system, for which reason the mentors that are also teachers are a more appropriate choice.

12. Another very effective intervention mechanism is the help provided through the supplementary school preparation hours. According to the in-depth interview testimonies, the supplementary preparation hours have constituted a real support both for obtaining higher GPAs (difficulties with mathematics were frequently mentioned by the beneficiaries) and for prospective preparation for the baccalaureate exam.

13. The selection stage is of crucial importance to the success of the programme, thus a broader candidate pool being need. This project showed that the involvement of mentors in attracting a higher number of applicants is both a more efficient and a more effective way to proceed, compared to the dissemination of information at events, the distribution of fliers and brochures in schools etc.

14. For the students, assuming and expressing their cultural identity, though encouraged by the programme, rather came extrinsically than out of their personal initiative – some students were ‘revealed’ as Roma before their classmates following their inclusion in the programme. However, the systematic encouragement of Roma identity expression among beneficiaries remains a future desideratum.

15. The cooperation among beneficiaries and the stimulation of networking is an aspect that should be better developed in the future. The beneficiaries did not stay in contact after the end of the programme. Their civism is rather low. One of the main reasons for this is the fact that students did not have many opportunities to socialize together, to do networking. There were some meetings for drinks out, in some cases initiated by the mentors, but these were rather rare and local – they only included the students under the supervision of a mentor in the area where the students went to school. Moreover, the beneficiaries were not offered a space for cooperation and information exchange – for example participating together to events organized by third parts or implementing projects together, being part of an e-group (for information exchange via internet), etc.

Recommendations:

1. Continuing the project is a necessity and there is space for increasing the efficacy of the intervention coordinates. The data that support the need for continuing the project are presented in detail in the assessment report: the activities conducted were very helpful for the beneficiaries – the project ensured a higher retention rate in the educational system, above the national average; the students that benefited from a long-term support as part of the project registered a higher school attainment; the project supported a large part of the students to go on to university once they graduated high school. In what concerns the Romanian educational system, there are no reasons to believe that the less favourable situation of the Roma students underwent major improvements lately. Thus, our recommendation would be that the project extends to other regions of Romania – even to the national level – given that the Roma population is rather uniformly distributed in all regions of the country. The mentorship intervention is crucial and it is important to be included in the future design of the project; granting scholarships is also a strong intervention pillar for supporting Roma students, but this should target primarily the pupils with a difficult socio-economic condition. Stimulating their school performance for those undergoing hardships is compensating for the structural conditions leading to those difficulties. We also recommend that the project supports in the future supplementary preparation hours for the students included in the programme, apart from the regular school time. These supplementary lessons could compensate for the

diminished capacity of the family to provide support for such activities, compared to the rest of the students. More details are provided below in reference to the concrete steps in this desirable direction to be included in the future design of the project.

2. It is preferable that mentors are familiar with the education system and with the Roma culture, and they need to be actively involved in the selection of the students to be included in the programme. The selection of the mentors needs to be completed prior to the process of selecting students. The involvement of the mentors does not only bring added efficacy (better prepared students), but also more efficiency (no additional costs involved). In this report, there are arguments for such a recommendation: the involvement of the mentors in the dissemination of invitations to apply for scholarships was not only more effective (the number and the quality of the applications was significantly higher when the mentors took part in the process – in the selection rounds 2, 3 and 4), but also more efficient (reduced costs). For example, in the first selection round, the number of received applications was insufficient for selecting the projected number of students (only 242 students were selected out of 275 available places in the first round), in spite of considerable dissemination activities (TV programmes, events, posters in schools, etc.). In the next selection rounds, the number of submitted applications was high enough for the number of available scholarships, bringing about a consistent competition for each of the grants. The involvement of the mentors in the selection process ensures both a better promotion and counselling for the students who intend to apply (how to fill in the documents, where to submit the application, the steps of the selection process, etc.). In the interviews we conducted, we met with beneficiaries that only applied following a discussion with the mentor – in one situation, this helped the student to overcome his/her wariness in assuming his ethnicity, a necessary step for being granted a scholarship. The involvement of the mentors in the selection process must be done in a judicious manner, without limiting the dissemination activities conducted through other means – mass-media, events, posters, civic organizations. Each Roma student from the region must have the opportunity to find out about the project and apply if he/she wishes so, and that should not be restricted to the group of people contacted by the mentors. The fact that the student applies following the recommendation of a mentor should not increase his/her chances for entering the project, as the selection criteria remain equally valid to all applicants.
3. We recommend establishing a minimum threshold of students' school performance in order to receive the scholarship. However, such a threshold needs to be personalized, based on the prior school results of the students – annually, a GPA that is at least equal to that of the year prior to entering the programme. The support offered through mentorship and through the supplementary preparation hours should not be conditioned on the GPA, but rather offered all throughout the period in which the students attend school.

4. It is recommended that for the student selection process to be taken into consideration criteria that reflect the social condition of the candidate. It is important to find out also during the selection process what the values and aspirations of the pupils are – how much they want to learn, to pursue university studies, to have a career, their openness towards civic activism etc.
5. A stronger emphasis on stimulating the development of cooperation among beneficiaries, of their civic activism, as well as assuming and expressing their Roma identity as a means towards personal development and towards increasing their self-esteem. Organizing summer camps/ courses is a possible option in this sense.
6. Supplementary preparation hours need to be included in the programme as a third fundamental pillar of intervention in the final year of high school studies – besides the scholarship and the mentorship. In Romania, there is an extensive practice of additional help for lessons and homework apart from the regular classes, by providing supplementary tuition hours for which the family/the parents pay the teachers separately (sometimes the same classroom teachers). This is a means to compensate the inefficacy and insufficiency of the formal public education conducted in schools. However, not all families can afford to support their children like this, but these supplementary hours seem to be effective for increasing the school performance of the student – throughout these classes, the students receive – either individually or in a small group - detailed explanations and clarifications of the lessons, are supervised while preparing extra, etc. As part of the project, these supplementary preparation hours were held for students in their final year of high school, and the utility of this intervention was appreciated by both pupils and mentors.
7. We recommend the analysis of the possibility to offer scholarship only to the students in need of it, those who have regular expenses for being able to attend school (commuting, rent for dormitory, medicines, etc.)
8. It is desirable to have a more detailed organization of the results' evaluation and monitoring system, even before the start of the project – the fragmented evaluation, at different staged throughout the implementation process, should be avoided in the future. We suggest applying continuous evaluation –ex-ante, ongoing and ex-post evaluation – as well as the inclusion of a control group for comparison purposes.
9. The data gathered as part of the project should also include the family and social condition of the selected students, their values, etc. – school-related aspirations of parents/students, the education of the parents, the financial difficulties of the student, medical situation – and these should be collected periodically.
10. Specialized counselling for career/ school-related matters (for both the student and its family) is a different desirable pillar of intervention; such counselling needs to be personalized, starting from the data gathered regularly throughout the project.

11. We recommend, for the future implementation of similar programmes, that the general project goal is redefined by taking into account the medium rate of GPA decrease in moving on with the studies.
12. If we wish to maximize the number of Roma students reaching university, we recommend rather support, from the group of students with GPA higher than 9, only those who have difficulties in the family, financial hardships (no money for commuting, no money for daily expenses), or are not aware of the importance of education as a viable solution for their future and do not aim at it (this aspect can be dealt with through counselling). Such interventions come naturally: money for food, for transportation, for rent (dormitory expenses), specialized counselling.

Among the objectives of the project were not only to increase the school attainment of the beneficiaries that already had a GPA above the average (the minimum of 7.5 GPA was the threshold for entering the programme), but also to create the stimulus for such a GPA to be maintained throughout high school – see the following section for details on this. The data showed that the project grants functioned also as social scholarships. In the case of the Roma students from Romania, the incentives for a better scholar achievement and the efforts to prevent early drop-out are complementary, thus they need to be analysed together. A significant proportion of the Roma students with a good performance during gymnasium and potential to pursue higher education are still at risk of drop-out due to difficult financial conditions at home, due to the fact that they may be forced to work together with their families to make ends meet, due to the lack of support from their families to continue education, or due to the fact that they may feel rather uncomfortable and marginalized because of poor clothing, lack of money, lack of sufficient food, etc. In the case of the Roma students, the link between the level of GPA/ school performance and the socio-economic condition of the pupil. In Romania, there are Roma leaders that have completed high school with medium grades – a situation that resulted also from a more difficult social and family condition – but once they entered university, they managed to become part of the Roma elite (powerful voices in defending the rights of the Roma population, professionals, leaders of NGOs, etc.). To summarize, we insisted in our conclusions and recommendations on the fact that the programme needs to ensure social protection to the students as well, since this is a precondition for the majority of the Roma students in order to continue their education and thus to put at work their intellectual abilities.

Data regarding Support for High School Roma students in Romania project

Support for High School Roma students in Romania is a four year project implemented by Foundation Resource Center for Roma Communities (RCRC) in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Research (MER), Working Apparatus of the State Minister for the coordination

of activities in the fields of culture, education and European integration (WASM), Roma Association Pakiv Romania, Alba (RAP), Ruhama Association, Oradea, Romania (RA), Romanian Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking Association (RWCT). The project was initiated and financed by the Roma Education Fund (REF) Budapest, starting from the experience of a similar pilot project financed in Macedonia. Throughout the project, REF Budapest was actively involved and supported the management team to take the most adequate corrective measures to increase the impact of the project

The project aimed to *contribute* to the emergence of new Roma elite by providing 9250 monthly (925 annual) scholarships and school-based mentorship to a total number of 275 Roma students in secondary schools, for a period of 4 years. The value of each scholarship was set at the value of 50 Euros. The table below presents the original outline of the proposed scholarships:

Table 1. The original outline of the proposed scholarships

Academic year\ Grade	9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th	Total no. of annual scholarships	Total no. of monthly scholarships	No. of mentors
2007-8	150	75	50		275	275 X 10 months	55
2008-9		150	75	50	275	275 X 10 months	55
2009-10			150	75	225	225 X 10 months	45
2010-11				150	150	150 X 10 months	30
Total	150	225	275	275	925	9250	185

The total amount allocated for grants within the programme was 462500 EUR (9250 scholarships of 50 EUR each). Given that the number of beneficiaries in the first round was lower than expected (due to drop-out, withdrawal of the scholarship for low school performance, moving out of the eligible area of the project, etc), a total number of 8463 monthly scholarships were granted. Figure 25 offers an overview of the situation of the scholarships for each year.

The objectives of the project were:

- to increase a total number of 275 Roma students' GPA by at least 0.5 (from a baseline GPA of at least 7.5) by providing them with financial support in upper secondary education in the period 2007-2011. From a GPA not lower than 7.5 points out of 10 when they enter the support programme (one of the selection criteria), we aim to raise each supported students' GPA by at least 0.5 during the period support is provided to them.
- to provide educational support in the form of individualized mentoring to the same 275 students during the same period of time (2007-2011).
- to increase the number of Roma students who further their education in high school and beyond the compulsory education.

Data regarding the project management structure:

The Project Advisory Board consisted of representatives of partner organizations:

- Florin Moisa, the Foundation Resource Center for Roma Communities
- Gheorghe Sarau, the Romanian Ministry of Education and Research
- Maria Kovacs, the Romanian Association for Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking
- Marian Daragiu, Ruhama Association
- Gruia Bumbu, Pakiv Association

The Management Team:

- Claudia Macaria, Project Manager – overall management of the project, reporting, fundraising, directly involved in the relationship with the mentors
- Marta Herki, Roma Project Coordinator – directly involved in the relationship with the Roma students
- Florin Marin, Roma Project Assistant (2009 – 2011) – assistance in coordinating the project, directly involved in collecting and archiving the mentors' and students' reports, updating the database, organize the transfer of the scholarships.
- Parna Ioana, Roma Project Assistant (2007 – 2010) – updating the database.

Monitoring team:

- Herki Norina, Roma Student at Faculty of Letters “Babes Bolyai” University Cluj
- Roberta Kovary, Coordinator of the Roma Youth Club in Mures, director of Divers Association
- Daniela Tutos, Ruhama Association
- Narcisa Marin, Roma student at Faculty of Social Assistance, “Babes Bolyai” University Cluj
- Cristian Nica, Roma student at Faculty of Social Assistance, “Babes Bolyai” University Cluj
- Claudia Bercus, ACIS Association
- Loredana Mihaly, Young Roma Maramures Association

Roma trainers:

- Claudia Bercus and Marcel Dediu

The project provided an answer to the following needs: the lack of financial resources of the Roma families for supporting their children in high school, the necessity of moral support for Roma high school students to adapt to the urban environment, to the new expectations, as well as the need to increase the level of school retention and school graduation for Roma children.

Main components:

Financial support for Roma high school students: The granting of the scholarship was conditioned upon school achievement, school frequency and participation in mentorship activities – with information gathered from the periodical reports of the mentors. The scholarships, each with a value of 500 EUR/academic year were granted in Romanian Lei (RON), in 3 installments/academic year: October, January and April, following the analysis of the beneficiaries’ progress reports that were sent by the mentors. The beneficiaries themselves sent to RCRC an individual report at the end of each semester/academic year.

Moral support/ mentorship for Roma high school students: Each beneficiary was supported by a mentor (1-7 students/mentor) that was teaching in the high school attended by the student. The number of students allocated to the mentors selected in the project is described below:

In the first 2 years of programme implementation (2007 – 2009): 61 mentors

- 17 mentors with 1 - 2 students
- 32 mentors with 3 – 5 students
- 12 mentors with more than 6 students

In the 3rd implementation year (2009 – 2010): 53 mentors

- 14 mentors with 1 - 2 students
- 29 mentors with 3 – 5 students
- 10 mentors with more than 6 students

In the 4th implementation year (2010 – 2011): 51 mentors

- 21 mentors with 1 - 2 students
- 25 mentors with 3 – 5 students
- 5 mentors with more than 6 students.

The role and the responsibilities of the mentor were:

- To support the students in the process of adapting to the new school environment, to present them the opportunities they can take advantage of in school and outside school;
- To support the beneficiaries throughout their school orientation;
- To maintain contact with the family of the beneficiary and to inform them regarding the progress/ the problems of the students in their education;
- To help the beneficiaries plan their study time and accomplish their school tasks;
- To develop a study plan and action plan for each beneficiary, in cooperation with the student and his/her teachers;
- To conduct mentorship activities outside the school time, according to the annual work plan (minimum 10 hours/ month, individual and group meetings);
- To stimulate the interaction between the beneficiaries and other students in the school;
- To facilitate communication between beneficiaries and class teachers;
- To maintain permanent contact with the class masters of the beneficiaries and to involve them in the process of reporting the school attainment of the beneficiaries;
- To help summarize the activities and the results of the beneficiaries when they write their individual activity reports to be sent to RCRC;
- To monitor and motivate beneficiaries in their learning process, offering methods for efficient learning;
- To encourage the participation of the Roma students to socio-cultural events in school and in Roma communities ;
- To encourage beneficiaries to assume and express their ethnic identity;
- To encourage the engagement of beneficiaries in extra-curricular activities (visits to museums, theater, movies, etc.), together with their colleagues.

The mentorship individual and group activities consisted of:

Professional counselling and orientation: elaborating correctly the necessary documents for the personal portfolio; being familiar with the rules of job interview; orientation towards a particular faculty, facilitating the process of being allocated a place in the high school dormitory or being issued a card for access to library;

Personal counselling : meetings with the parents of the beneficiaries for mediating minor conflicts between them and the students, counselling provided for health problems, mediating minor conflicts or tensioned situations between the beneficiaries and their classmates or teachers, discussions with the friends or the husbands of the female beneficiaries to encourage them to continue their studies;

Delivering learning methods for the subjects at which the student faces problems;

Support in elaborating an individual study plan for the subjects for which the beneficiaries wish to improve their performance for;

Cultural activities (for example, the International Day of Roma): a) to organize shows in which the beneficiaries participate in artistic programmes (dancing, singing); b) traditions and habits in the Roma communities – school projects, book exhibitions, traditional costume presentation, participation in the Roma language Olympiads;

Activities that develop social competences.

Other extra-curricular activities in which beneficiaries participated:

- The project ‘The empowerment of the young Roma generation’, implemented by RCRC with the financial support of the SPOLU International Holland - creation of youth Roma clubs in Cluj, Maramureş, Mureş and Sebeş.
- The international project IDEE – civic forums organized in order to identify the problems of the youth and to include them of the agenda of decision-makers at the local and European levels.
- The camp ‘Life’ („Viața”) – discover leadership through adventure, organized by the New Horizons Foundation (Fundatia Noi Orizonturi).
- Exchange camp with Cercetaşii Munţilor.
- Training session on Communication and Leadership, organized by RCRC Cluj as part of the project;
- Camp for the young people belonging to ethnic minorities that wish to pursue a career as part of the police forces, organized by the CDRE Foundation and the Police Academy (7 Roma beneficiaries took part in this, together with 40 Hungarian and 2 German students).

Secondary activities included in the project:

- Developing a database for facilitating the monitoring of the beneficiaries’ school progress
- Professional development and exchange programmes for mentors (one session/year)
- Monitoring and support for mentorship activities – by involving partners and Roma students
- Supplementary support for the beneficiaries in the 12th and 13th grades for BAC subjects (according to their own needs)
- Organizing an international conference to debate the effectiveness of the scholarship programmes for Roma students and to offer a space for knowledge exchange and sharing in the countries where such projects are implemented
- Publishing a book for good practice sharing – case studies and final evaluation.

Evaluation’s goal

The objective of the assignment is to perform an external evaluation to assess the achieved outputs and outcomes of the implemented scholarship programme and to recommend

complementary activities that might have been incorporated within such a project to contribute to enhancing the education and the academic achievements of the Roma students.

Evaluation methodology of the project

1. Research questions of evaluation

The basic question of the assessment process, formulated as "What were the achieved outputs and outcomes of the scholarship programmes implemented?" considered particular nuances. More specifically, this question was customized as follows:

Q1. What were the results of the implementation of the project among students who have had the same or different family background throughout the project implementation? How could these results be explained, by which mechanisms?

Q2. How does the performance of the mentor in the project influence the projects' results? What is the profile of the ideal mentor that would maximize such an intervention? What were the results of the project among high school students who have benefited from mentoring of similar quality?

Q3. Which were the outcomes of the intervention programme among those beneficiaries who have learned in similar or different high school environment? What are the characteristics of the school environment which should be taken into account to maximize the outcomes of such an intervention programme? What is the role of school - family - NGOs partnership in this context? As regards the segregation phenomenon, the research question is: How did this project address the issue of ethnic segregation in schools? Is there such a role envisioned for this project here?

Q4. Were there certain events / specific circumstances that have significantly affected the expected outcomes of the programme? Which ones? It would be extremely valuable if, in the future, such programmes would provide the risk management in case unexpected unfortunate events affect the student (i.e. sickness, relocation, distance to school, etc.)?

Additionally, we raised the following key questions:

Q5. What are the key-elements - among those mentioned and described above i.e. family, school, mentor quality, etc. - which can amplify the effect of a programme such as "Support for High School Roma students in Romania"? and

Q6. What are the activities / areas where the intervention of such a programme could be expanded in the future to maximize desired outcomes (increased school performance of students in high school, their retention in school, increased attainment rate in pursuing higher education)?

In the assessment, we also paid attention to the percentage of beneficiaries that completed their studies or are still enrolled to high school at the end of the project, the percentage of beneficiaries that dropped out, as well as the absenteeism rate among them.

In this way we set the bases for the prerequisites that would enable us to formulate a set of recommendations under the form of some valid complementary activities that might be

incorporated in such a programme in order to further contribute to advancing the education and supporting the academic achievements of the Roma students. In this sense, we expect that the specific elements related to students' family are of paramount importance for the programme outcomes.

2. Research design

The analysis has followed the comparison among the relevant categories of student beneficiaries defined by the type of school attended by them (High School versus Vocational School), gender, year when they were selected in the project, the GPA they had when entering the project, etc. We focused also on comparing the evolution of the following groups of beneficiaries:

1. A group of beneficiaries who entered the programme in the first year and completed it;
2. A group of beneficiaries who entered the programme after its first implementation year ; and
3. A group of beneficiaries who entered the programme, but later dropped out of it– they left school early, they have not met the minimum required criteria, etc.

The evaluation consisted in a research programme that included both qualitative and quantitative analysis methods and techniques, as described below:

- A. Review of relevant documents and sources;
- B. Statistical analysis of beneficiaries' database (that the project implementers have used throughout the project, and which has been updated by us);
- C. Semi-structured in-depth interviews;
- D. A focus group with parents / legal guardians of beneficiaries.

The interview guide with pupils and focus-group guide are presented in annexes.

A. The analysis of documents and relevant sources. The analysis and review of relevant sources and documents included: the description of the implementation mechanisms of the assessed project, the stakeholders involved, the outputs and outcomes of the activities developed, the data collected through regular internal project monitoring and reports developed by Foundation Resource Center for Roma Communities (RCRC), other useful data collected within the project etc., i.e.: project/programme promoting website, grant contract, grant application tender, grant agreement, promotion materials, research and/or analysis reports delivered at different stages in the project, project assessment reports, progress reports, other materials and documents drafted as part of the project.

B. Statistical analysis of the beneficiaries' database.

In this context, the first step was to complete the database of the implementers so as to ensure that the data collected encompasses the family background characteristics (parents'

education, parents' values, the relationship between students and parents, etc., the characteristics of the student community life (rural/urban, housing quality, compact Roma community / mixed with the majority population, etc.) , the characteristics of the mentor assigned to the student (mentor profile: experience, main profession, the number of hours spent with the student, gender, education level, ethnicity, number of visits at home/school etc.), the characteristics of the school environment (the share of titular /substitute teachers, the existence of a school mediator, of a school counsellor, the degree of school segregation, the share of Roma pupils in schools, provision of educational resources in school, appropriate furniture and endowments); and student's personal/specific events during the programme implementation: if the candidate has been sick for a period of time during project implementation, the distance from home to school at the beginning of the project, during it and at present, etc. The completion of the database was done by sending one questionnaire - containing data as the aforementioned ones – to be filled in and returned by the mentors. Unfortunately, we received back only 156 questionnaires - from 97 girls (62.2%) and from 59 boys (37.8%) -, which constituted a limitation in performing an accurate and complete analysis. The questionnaires submitted to us were incorporated in the implementer's database.

C. We conducted in-depth semi structured interviews as follows:

- 58 semi structured in-depth interviews with project beneficiaries (students);
- 13 semi structured in-depth interviews with mentors;
- 9 semi structured in-depth interviews with teachers / class masters of project beneficiaries;

Among the 58 beneficiaries we interviewed, 37 of them (63.8%) are females and 21 (36.2%) are male; 42 of them (72.4%) live in urban areas, while 16 (27.6%) live in rural areas. We present below the distribution of interviewees by gender and residence area.

Table 2. Distribution of interviewees by gender and residence area

			Gender		Total
			Female	Male	
Residence area	Rural	Count	13	3	16
		% within residence area	81.3%	18.8%	100.0%
		% within gender	35.1%	14.3%	27.6%
	Urban	Count	24	18	42
		% within residence area	57.1%	42.9%	100.0%
		% within gender	64.9%	85.7%	72.4%
Total	Count	37	21	58	
	% within residence area	63.8%	36.2%	100.0%	
	% within gender	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

The beneficiaries to interview were chosen by random sampling procedure to reflect students from all relevant categories: those who entered the programme in the first year and remained until its completion, those who entered the programme after the first year and completed it, those who left the programme, High School / Vocational School, urban / rural environment. They were selected from seven counties: Alba, Mures, Sibiu, Covasna, Cluj, Bihor, Satu Mare.

D. We also conducted a focus group with parents / legal guardians of the beneficiaries from Mures County, Reghin city area, Petelea locality.

EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE:

All components of the present evaluation aimed at assessing the project results - both outputs and outcomes. The project evolution and its results were analyzed according to the evaluation indicators. These indicators were measured and compared for the specified categories of beneficiaries in a longitudinal perspective (their variation from baseline to the current level). All these elements were reached following the completion the existent database of the project implementer. The quantitative analysis (descriptive) was complemented by a qualitative investigation (in-depth interviews, focus group) - as mentioned above. This allowed us to identify effects taking into account the opinions of relevant stakeholders (parents, mentors and teachers), along with those of the beneficiaries. Qualitative inquiry approach provided also additional clues / hypotheses / explanations on the variations highlighted by the quantitative approach. A set of recommendations were developed for improving future programmes of this kind; such results are scientifically reliable considering the proposed assessment methodology.

3. Dimensions of analysis

During the evaluation process we took into account and focused on several project-specific aspects such as:

- a. The effect of the scholarship as incentive for each student's education;
- b. Influence/Impact of the project on the student's decision to continue education;
- c. Direct perceived benefits of being involved/being part of the project;
- d. Aspects that could have been improved during the project;
- e. Characterization of the student-mentor cooperation and relationship.

The evaluation process reviewed the operations of the programme from the following perspectives:

- Examination the data evidence provided by RCRC, REF and other institutions if needed;
- Meeting with 58 beneficiaries (active, drop-outs, and graduates, 37 (63.8%) girls and 21 (36.2%) boys) from 7 counties targeted by the project: Alba, Covasna, Mures, Sibiu, Cluj,

Satu Mare, Bihor. A random sampling procedure has been used in order to reflect the specific ratios (High School versus Vocational School, and urban versus rural environment);

- Evaluation of the relationship between set and completed goals after four years of project implementation;
- Real assessment of completed project activities, including the efficiency of implementation;
- Programme indicators, impact and outcomes – procedures and outcome assessment;
- Evaluation of the project mission management;
- Monitoring and evaluation of the grant allocation to individual Roma students (i.e. whether the funds reached the intended recipients);
- Identification of project strengths, including those that might be considered best practice, and aspects of the project that might have been executed more effectively;
- Assessment of the database, baseline data and record keeping, access to information about the programme and the decisions taken, programme promotion.
- Specific strategic issues that should be addressed in the future.

INDICATORS FOR ASSESSING THE PROGRAMME:

- Achieved transition/retention rate of Roma students in high schools (from the 9th to the 12th grade);
- The level of increasing GPA on average from a baseline figure of at least 7.5 during the project duration;
- The percent of beneficiaries that will go on to higher education using both special places reserved for Roma, and commonly accessible places;
- The number of members in Roma High school Students' Association, a legally registered entity;
- The number of extracurricular beneficiaries participated in, under the leadership of the Roma High school Students' Association;
- The level of respect felt by the Roma students among their fellow non-Roma students and teachers (and in the long term the disappearance of negative stereotypes about the Roma);
- Achieved transition rate of Roma students from high schools to higher education;
- The motivation to learn and the self-confidence of the Roma beneficiaries;
- The rate of Roma high school Students using information through a specialized e-group and a common webpage;
- Regular attendance (excused and unexcused absence) of Roma High school Students;
- Achieved transition/retention rate of the students supported with stipends on a yearly base vs. projected transition/retention rate in the project;

- Average GPA and regular attendance (excused and unexcused absence) disaggregated by type of school (High School, Vocational four year, Vocational three year) and gender;
- Other relevant aspects.

In accordance with the research questions and the methodology presented, the evaluation provided data and information on the following key dimensions:

- Operating mechanisms and means of maximizing the results of such projects;
- The family role in shaping the high school students - in terms of aspirations, values, resources;
- The efficiency of the partnership school-family-NGOs to increase the quality of the educational services provided to high school students;
- The role of the school in educating students from vulnerable groups (especially Roma high school students);
- The need for an integrated approach to intervention programmes-and the need to prevent any specific events experienced by students during the project implementation (illness, family divorce, parents' emigration, changing address etc.) from affecting their school attainment.
- The description of programme impact on students' motivation to continue school;
- The relative importance of scholarship amount awarded vs. the mentoring programme-the two key elements in the intervention programme;
- Other elements with added value emerging during the evaluation process;

For the students in their final high school year and for graduates, we also gathered the following data: if they continue their education in the tertiary education system or not (if yes, university, what kind of studies they selected, whether they entered on the quota seats for national minorities' or the state quota, their educational situation). The data were processed and presented in tables and graphs.

Main findings

1. The indicators for the success of the programme: dynamic of GPA and of unmotivated scholar absenteeism among beneficiaries

From the outset we would like to clarify that the objective of increasing the final GPA by 0.5 compared to the year prior to the selection in the programme was too ambitious, and, to a certain extent, unrealistic. What justifies this reasoning is the fact that, during high school years, it becomes increasingly difficult to improve one's school performance, as the demands of the teachers become higher and the transition from gymnasium to high school is accompanied by several adaptation problems for some of the students (entering high school also implies the need to commute daily in order to get to school, several tens of kilometres, the subject matter becomes more complex, etc.). In other words, there are strong reasons to believe that at a similar level of effort and interest toward school preparation, school results during high school are lower than those obtained throughout gymnasium. Unfortunately, there are no available centralized statistics at the national level to record the GPA at the end of the 8th and 9th grades. Still, the statement made above relies, on the one hand, on the testimonials from interviewed students and mentors (stressing the adaptation difficulties in the transition from gymnasium to high school), and on the other hand on the detailed analysis of the data gathered as part of the project. In the table below, we can observe the evolution of the GPAs according to the round of selection in the project and the year in which the beneficiaries entered the programme. Thus, it can easily be noticed that the sharpest decrease in the GPA of final years, compared to those of the year prior to entering the programme are recorded in the case of the students that were beginning their 9th grade at the time of their selection in the project (for them, the reference year was the 8th grade).

Table 3. The evolution of the GPAs according to the round of selection in the project and the year in which the beneficiaries entered the programme

	Round of selection	Grade	GPA in the year preceding the selection in the programme		GPA in the final year of the programme		Difference GPA final/initial
			Mean	Valid N	Mean	Valid N	
Selection in the programme	1 (2007)	9 th	8.42	91	7.86 ↓	91	-0.56
		10 th	8.07	82	8.08	82	0.01
		11 th	8.29	61	8.22	61	-0.07
	2 (2008)	9 th	9.05	39	8.40 ↓	39	-0.65
		10 th	8.79	6	9.16	6	0.37
		11 th	9.00	9	8.90	9	-0.1
	3 (2009)	9 th	8.97	1	7.58 ↓	1	-1.39
		10 th	8.50	3	7.42	3	-1.08
		11 th	8.69	3	8.61	3	-0.08

For the beneficiaries that started their 10th or 11th grade at the time of entering the programme, the GPAs remained constant or increased considerably – for the students that entered the 10th grade at the time when they were selected in the first round of the project, the cumulated GPA when completing the programme was equal to that registered at the end of the 9th grade (+0.01), while for those stating the 10th grade when selected for the 2nd round of the project, the GPA increased with 0.37. For those entering the programme in their 11th grade, the final GPA was approximately equal to that at the end of the 10th grade (the year prior to their selection in the programme). One exception from this pattern is the case of 3 beneficiaries selected in the 3rd round (2009-2010), which started high school (9th grade) at the time of selection. Their GPA dropped with 1.08. One explanation for this is the fact that they benefited from the support of the programme for a rather short period of time, given that they entered in the 3rd selection round. This point to an important fact that is revealed in the table above: the earliest the students were included in the programme, the more positive their school performance. This is also clear in Fig. 16 from the Annexes, pointing to a positive relationship between the year of entering the programme and the category in which the beneficiary can be placed according to the GPA dynamics (final GPA dropped, increased with less than 0.5 or increased with more than 0.5 compared to the year before the inclusion in the project). From the beneficiaries selected in the first round, 57.7% had a final GPA that was lower than the reference one, while 66.7% of all students in the 2nd round of selection and 85.7% of all students in the third selection round were in the same situation.

We present below, as an additional argument for the idea that at a similar level of effort and interest toward school preparation, school results during high school are lower than those obtained throughout gymnasium, a comparison between the average GPAs of selected students for which data exist (85 cases) for their gymnasium studies, and for their GPAs in the 9th grade:

Table 4. Comparison between the average GPAs at the time of entering the programme and after the first year in the programme

Average GPA in the 8th grade for students who started high school at the time of entering the programme	Average GPA of students in the 9 th grade, after their first year after the selection in the programme	Average difference GPA in the 9th grade vs. 8th grade
8.4	7.6	- 0.8

We can thus observe that in the 9th grade, the students selected in the programme had, on average, a GPA lower with 0.8 than that of the 8th grade. The reasons for this are the ones stated above. Additionally, we specify that 78.6% of the students in the 9th grade selected in the

programme had lower GPAs in their first high school year compared to that of their 8th grade. By comparison, when exiting the programme, only 41.8% of all students entering the programme in their 10th grade had a lower GPA than that registered in the 9th grade. Please see below the table that summarizes these data:

Table 5. Distribution of student categories by school results and the educational level of the student at the time of selection in the programme

			Student categories by school results			Total
			Students whose GPAs dropped after entering the programme	Students whose GPAs dropped with less than 0.5 points	Students whose GPAs increased with at least 0.5 points	
The educational level of the student at the time of selection in the programme	9th grade	Count % educational level of the student at the time of selection in the programme	103 78.6%	14 10.7%	14 10.7%	131 100.0%
	10th grade	Count % within educational level of the student at the time of selection in the programme	38 41.8%	31 34.1%	22 24.2%	91 100.0%
	11th grade	Count % within educational level of the student at the time of selection in the programme	36 49.3%	25 34.2%	12 16.4%	73 100.0%
Total	Count % within educational level of the student at the time of selection in the programme	177 60.0%	70 23.7%	48 16.3%	295 100.0%	

In this context, the set objective of GPA increase should have considered the natural decrease of the GPA following the transition to high school, notwithstanding the maintaining of a constant level of school interest and preparation manifested by the student. We recommend, for the future implementation of similar programmes, that the general project goal is redefined by taking into account the medium rate of GPA decrease in moving on with the studies.

Table 1 from the Annex presents the average GPA of all beneficiaries in the year preceding their selection in the programme and in the last school year before their exiting the programme (we have included here not only the students who have completed the programme, but also those who have exit the programme once they finished their pre-university studies, as well as those who have dropped out or those who have been excluded from the programme by not meeting the requirements)³. Comparative data on the evolution of the GPAs for different student categories are also included.

³ The students selected in the last year of project implementation (2010-2011) have not been included in the analysis. They were not included in the project database as they were activating in the programme for 1 year only and thus evaluating the dynamics of their GPA is not grounded. Another 10 students selected in the project prior to 2010 were not included in the analysis due to the unavailability of their final GPA (for instance, they did not attend school after their inclusion in the project).

These data show that the GPA of beneficiaries decreased by 0.28 points from the year prior to their inclusion in the programme to their final year as part of the programme. Such a drop is justifiable also through the natural decrease dynamics of GPAs when moving on to a higher level of education. In the absence of a random control group, we cannot state beyond doubt to what extent the programme has reduced the natural decrease tendency for the group of beneficiaries. What we can state, however, on the basis of the interviews with students and mentors is that the scholarship granted to students and the mentorship programme have been pillars that have strengthened the school attainment of the selected students – as we will further detail below.

The evidence points to a sharper GPA decrease in the case of students selected in the second and third rounds of the programme, compared to those included in the first round, one of the reasons for this being that, on the one hand, they have stayed a shorter period in programme as compared to those selected in the first round and, on the other hand, for those selected after the first round, the GPA was higher. In the same table there is another interesting aspect: the students who started with a GPA below 8 had the tendency to maintain their GPA constant all throughout the project duration (being strongly incentivized to remain part of the programme, to receive the scholarship). The students with GPAs above 8 have decreased their GPA throughout the duration of the programme, as they were not facing the risk of losing the scholarship by ending up below the threshold of 7.5. It can be noticed that the students who had an initial GPA greater than 9 represented the group where the sharpest GPA decrease occurred. Here, a pattern can be observed and, based on its functioning, lessons can be drawn for the future: *the higher the prior GPA of the students selected in the programme, the lower the motivation to improve the school attainment* (naturally, the initial GPA being higher, the effort for improving it should be much greater as well). In fact, for the beneficiaries with rather high GPAs when entering the programme (taking, for instance, the example of those with a GPA above 9), a reduced effort and lower grades does not automatically lead to being excluded from the project, whereas for a student with a lower GPA (around 7.5) at the time of inclusion in the programme, the effort needs to be at least constant or improved in order to continue the programme. We can find here one of the reasons why students did not significantly improve their GPA during the programme. The granting of the scholarship and the continuation of the programme was not conditioned on the increase of GPA with 0.5, as the original goal stated. Without a strong incentive for obtaining better grades, the students do not work extra towards achieving this, and the expectations for higher GPAs as an outcome of the project remain unrealistic.

It would have been much more realistic either to expect that students keep their initial GPA all throughout their high school year, or, in order for the student to continue being part of

the project, to impose a minimum threshold for the GPA that would increase their chances to enter university studies. As the aim of the project was to increase the percentage of students who go to university, maybe it would have been more appropriate to also select beneficiaries with lower GPAs for this project (below the 7.5 threshold), while conditioning the granting of the scholarship on maintaining at least the same GPA. For the students with higher GPAs (above 9, for example), entering university is rather easy. In their case, the reasons which may interfere with continuing education are not linked to scholar attainment, but rather connected to the family environment, the aspirations of the student, financial resources and it is these factors that need to be individually tackled preventively.

It can be observed from the table that, in the group of students from mono-parental families, the GPA tended to drop more sharply compared to the case of students from bi-parental families, although the start was relatively similar. Consequently, if we wish to maximize the number of Roma students reaching university, we should rather support, from the group of students with GPA higher than 9, only those who have difficulties in the family, financial hardships (no money for commuting, no money for daily expenses), or are not aware of the importance of education as a viable solution for their future and do not aim at it (this aspect can be dealt with through counselling). Such interventions come naturally: money for food, for transportation, for rent (dormitory expenses), specialized counselling.

It is noteworthy to mention yet another aspect. The GPA of girls, compared to that of the boys in the programme, has decreased to a lesser extent throughout the implementation of the project. This trend is similar to that displayed at the overall level of student population – girls perform better than boys in school – see Figure 15 in Annexes. Thus, 68.2% of the male beneficiaries had, at the end of the programme, a lower GPA than the initial one, while only 55.1% of the girls followed the same trend. 10% of the boys selected in the programme improved their results with more than 0.5 at the end of the project, and this was double in the case of the female beneficiaries.

However, we need to point out the fact that the analysis at the level of the cohort of beneficiaries graduating with BAC in 2009-2010 shows that the percentage of female beneficiaries who go to university is lower than that of male beneficiaries: 58.3% of female students, compared to 83.3% of male students pursuing university studies. The opposite trend is registered in the official statistics at the national level for the same academic year: 86% of the girls and only 76% of the boys completing high school with BAC enrolled for higher education. The table below introduces these differences:

Table 6. Comparison between the percentage of students who passed the BAC and enrolled to university in 2009/2010 at national level and among beneficiaries

Gender	National level*	At the level of programme beneficiaries
The percentage of girls who passed the BAC and enrolled to university in 2009/2010	86%	58.3% (21 out of 36)
The percentage of boys who passed the BAC and enrolled to university in 2009/2010	74%	83.3% (10 out of 12)

*according to the Report on State of National System of Education in Romania / Raport asupra Stării Sistemului Național de Învățământ, MECTS, 2010, p.8.

We can thus single out, among Roma beneficiaries, the effect of gender on determining the continuation of education once the baccalaureate exam is completed, which leads to a situation in which an important percentage of female Roma students, with potential for advancing their education, gets ‘lost on the way’ in the attempt to become part of the Roma elite. The explanations for this situation are complex. We advance one explanation that emerged from our qualitative study. We met, among the beneficiaries of the programme, girls that passed the baccalaureate exam, but who got married during or after high school and already had children, a fact that made them give up the idea of going to university. Another female student who completed BAC and went on to post-secondary studies told us that her family and partner constantly discouraged her from continuing her education, although she was not directly restricted from attending these courses. The tradition of getting married at an early age and giving birth soon after is much more widespread in the Roma community. Therefore, it is also a different level of support offered by the family in continuing education for girls, when compared to boys (this pattern is also mentioned in another research conducted by one of the authors): in the traditional Roma communities, continuing studies for a married woman is unacceptable as a social norm. On the other hand, it is acceptable that boys go on to school even after their marriage (this is not necessarily a reference to a legal, formal marriage, and includes non-formalized partnerships as well). By this token, it is clear that, apart from the effect of the financial situation, there is a distinctive cultural effect that needs to be taken into account in future similar projects.

The data from Table 1 also comprise the comparative evolution of the GPAs based on the type of school attended by the beneficiaries: the students from SAPs underwent a more acute drop of the GPAs, compared to those from high school – the average decrease was 0.57 for SAPs, and only 0.16 for high schools. The difference is all the more significant when we take into account the percentage of those who abandoned the project (for different reasons, such as: school drop-out, school performance below expectations, moving permanently out of the eligible area of the project); the beneficiaries selected from SAPs have dropped out at a higher rate than those from high school. While it is understandable why students from SAPs were included in the programme (insufficient number of eligible applications), it would have been desirable that only

high school students would be included among beneficiaries – they had a notably higher retention rate in the programme and school and higher chances to enter university.

Table 7. Association between school type and status of beneficiaries selected in the first round of the programme (2007 – 2008)

Association between school type and status of beneficiaries selected in the first round (2007-2008)

			Student status		Total
			Active	Inactive	
School type	High school	Number of students	129	28	157
		Percentage	82.2%	17.8%	100.0%
	SAP	Number of students	52	33	85
		Percentage	61.2%	38.8%	100.0%
Total		Number of students	181	61	242
		Percentage	74.8%	25.2%	100.0%

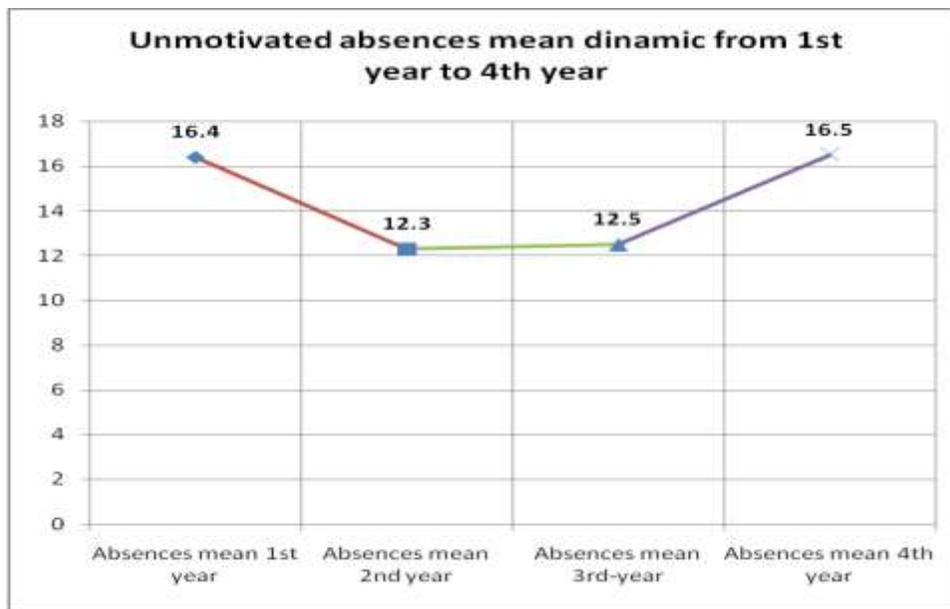
Another important indicator for assessing the success of the programme is the evolution of absenteeism rates among beneficiaries. Defining this indicator presents, in itself, a methodological conundrum. One option to present the absenteeism dynamics is by analyzing the cumulated number of absences. However, this seems to be inadequate as the number of beneficiaries varied from year to year. Instead, we opted for the analysis of the beneficiaries' cumulated mean number of absences. Like that, even though the number of beneficiaries was not constant on a yearly basis, the mean represents a measurement that synthesizes the absenteeism-inclined behaviour, independent of the variation in the total number of beneficiaries.

What is also worth mentioning at this point is the reference point for calculating the dynamics of the mean number of absences. In the database of the implementer, we had no indicator recording the number of absences the beneficiary had in the academic year preceding his/her selection in the programme, but only a dichotomous variable: students with less than 15 absences and students with more than 15 absences in the year preceding their inclusion in the programme. Taking into consideration the differences that were revealed through the analysis of the evolution of GPAs in the transition from gymnasium to high school, we opted for the analysis of the dynamics of mean number of absences throughout the 4 years of effective programme implementation. Moreover, we chose to present the dynamics of the unmotivated absences, these being, in our view, the ones that reflect the best the risk of early drop out. On the other hand, the motivated absences are rather an indication of unexpected event in the beneficiary's school life (sickness, etc.)

The graph below depicts the evolution of the mean number of absences starting with the first implementation year and ending with the final one – from 2007-2008 to 2010-2011,

pointing to a non-uniform variation. While in the second implementation year (2008-2009) the cumulated absences' mean among beneficiaries dropped with 4.2 points, in the 4th implementation year (2010-2011) it went back to a level similar to the one of the first year. The mean number of absences was significantly lower in the 2nd and 3rd years, which suggests the influence of the programme in diminishing the absenteeism tendency.

Figure 1. Unmotivated absences mean dynamic from 1st year to 4th year



The sudden increase in the absences mean in the final year seems to indicate the existence of an independent pattern – per se, outside the influence of the programme – depending on the high school year the student is at. What might have counted as well could be the fact that at the end of high school, the interest of the students in abiding by the standards of the programme might have diminished. Yet, we cannot provide a precise answer, as we do not have access to similar data on absenteeism rates at the national level. Therefore, we analysed the dynamics of the absences mean in a differentiated manner, according to the round of selection in the programme and the high school year the student was enrolled for at that time (with the mentioning that the analysis regarding absenteeism was conducted based on the data for the students included in the first three selection rounds, by excluding the 33 students entering the programme in the 4th round – academic year 2010-2011, for which there were no statistics provided in the database of the implementer). Please find these data in the next table:

Table 8. Dynamics of the absences mean according to the round of selection in the programme and the high school year the student was enrolled for at that time

				1 st year		2 nd year		3 rd year		4 th year	
				Mean	Valid N						
Round of selection	1 (2007)	Grade	9 th	24.38	87	16.06	80	13.61	72	18.07	60
			10 th	11.85	79	10.43	69	13.40	57	18.50	12
			11 th	10.58	57	13.64	47	15.50	8	.	0
	2 (2008)	Grade	9 th	.	0	8.85	39	10.41	34	15.67	30
			10 th	.	0	3.60	5	2.00	5	4.50	4
			11 th	.	0	6.67	9	15.75	8	.	0
	3 (2009)	Grade	9 th	.	0	.	0	.00	1	.00	1
			10 th	.	0	.	0	7.67	3	6.50	2
			11 th	.	0	.	0	2.00	3	.	0

These statistics confirm the hypothesis stated before. The beneficiaries tend to miss more classes in their final year (12th grade for high school and 13th grade for SAPs) – considering that value of the annual absences mean for these grades in each selection rounds and for each generation of students defined by their educational level at the time of entering the programme. A distinctive notable tendency is that the highest number of absences was registered for the students in their final year in the programme, when they could no longer be motivated by the desire to receive the scholarship in the following year.

The data from the previous table show more exactly the evolution of the absences mean from the first to the last year of the project. The highest rate of absenteeism was registered in the first year of programme implementation for the students beginning the 9th grade at the time of inclusion in the programme. The absences mean dropped quite sharply on a yearly basis afterwards until this cohort reached the 12th grade, when there was again an increase in the number of absences.

The next table summarizes the evolution of the absences mean in the same categories, divided by a dichotomous indicator: the beneficiaries that had less than 15 absences, and more than 15 absences, respectively, in the year prior to their inclusion in the programme.

Table 9. The evolution of the absences mean divided by the number of absences in the year prior to their inclusion in the programme, selection round and the high school year the student was enrolled for at that time

					1 st year		2 nd year		3 rd year		4 th year	
					Mean	Valid N						
Unmotivated absences prior to selection in the programme	<15	Selection round	1 (2007)	Grade 9th	16.04	54	13.76	54	13.18	50	17.27	44
				10 th	8.13	53	8.93	46	12.56	39	16.29	7
				11 th	9.14	36	15.23	31	17.33	3	.	0
	>15	Selection round	2 (2008)	Grade 9th	.	0	8.33	33	9.32	28	9.08	24
				10 th	.	0	3.75	4	2.50	4	4.50	4
				11 th	.	0	5.71	7	10.00	6	.	0
			3 (2009)	Grade 9th	.	0	.	0	.00	1	.00	1
				10 th	.	0	.	0	7.67	3	6.50	2
				11 th	.	0	.	0	3.00	2	.	0
>15	Selection round	1 (2007)	Grade 9th	39.12	32	21.56	25	14.95	21	20.25	16	
			10 th	19.42	26	13.43	23	15.22	18	21.60	5	
			11 th	13.05	21	10.56	16	14.40	5	.	0	
		2 (2008)	Grade 9th	.	0	15.50	4	19.25	4	56.75	4	
			11 th	.	0	10.00	2	33.00	2	.	0	

The students with a higher number of absences in the year before their selection in the programme also registered a more significant decrease in the number of absences, compared to the students that had below 15 missed classes previously. Naturally, the mentorship activities and the scholarship incentivized the students to abide by the legal number of unmotivated absences allowed (20 in Romania, though in practice, a higher number does not necessarily lead to exmatriculation). By this logic, the project helped to a greater extent the students that previously tended to miss more classes. In the light of these data, apart from increasing school performance, the programme also had an important effect on preventing school drop-out by notably reducing absenteeism among those with many (above 15) unmotivated absences.

The general conclusion is that the programme exerted a constant positive influence towards reducing school absenteeism among beneficiaries, with a more intense effect among those who tended to miss more classes.

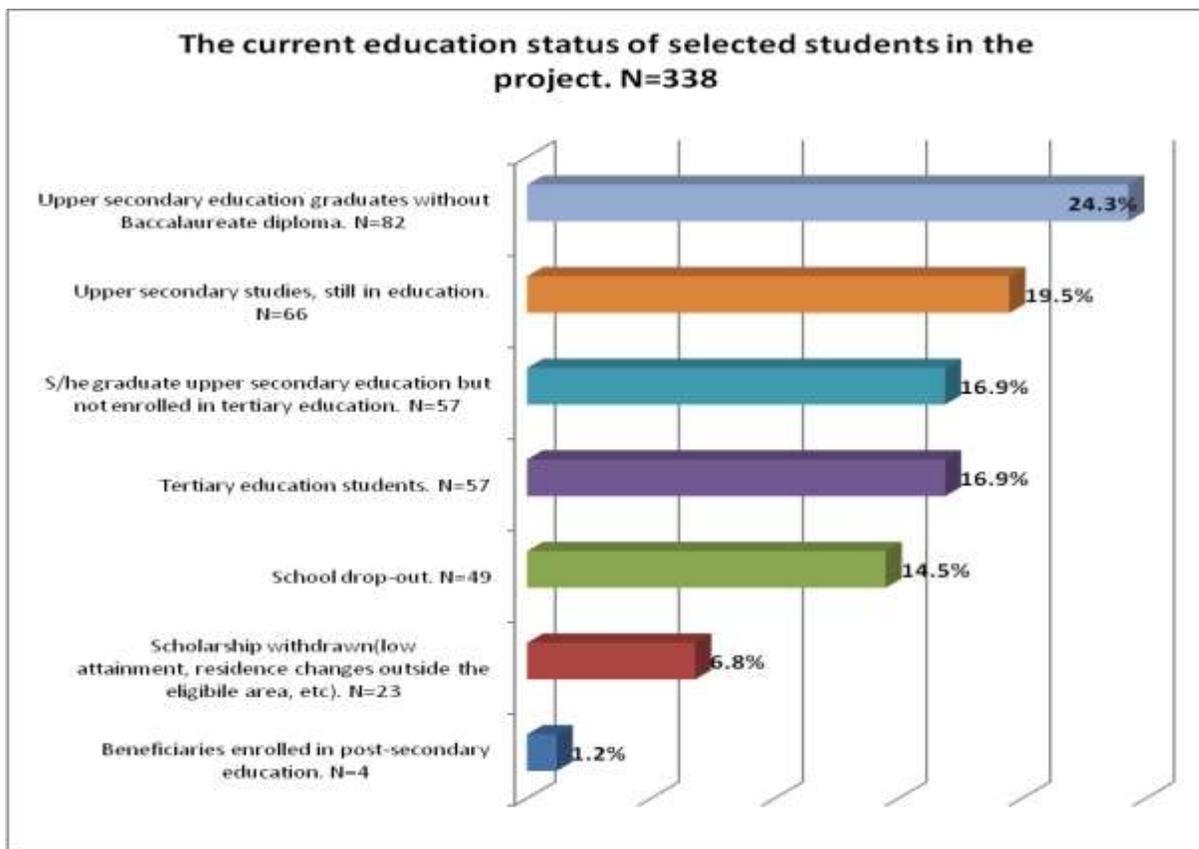
What is the percentage of beneficiaries that continued high school studies?

The analysis of GPA evolution according to the educational status at present shows that the group of beneficiaries currently pursuing university or post-high school studies improved its grades while being included in the project – the GPA in the final pre-university year was higher by approximately 0.35 than that of the gymnasium (see Table 1 from Annex). Considering that the tendency is rather for GPAs to go down as the education advances, we can conclude that for

these students the project represented a real support, with positive effects on their admission to university. Another category for which the programme proved extremely useful was that of students who passed the baccalaureate exam, but have not yet entered university. The GPA of this group for the year prior to their inclusion in the programme is similar to that of their final year as part of the project. A part of these will, most probably, go on to university.

In the figure below we can observe the percentage of beneficiaries that pursue university or post-high school studies – 16.9% of all beneficiaries. Their number will probably augment, given that there are 57 more (16.9%) that have completed their baccalaureate exam and could, at least in theory, be admitted to university, another 66 students (19.5%) are still studying and other 82 students (24,3%) graduated without Baccalaureate diploma.

Figure 2. The current educational status of beneficiaries



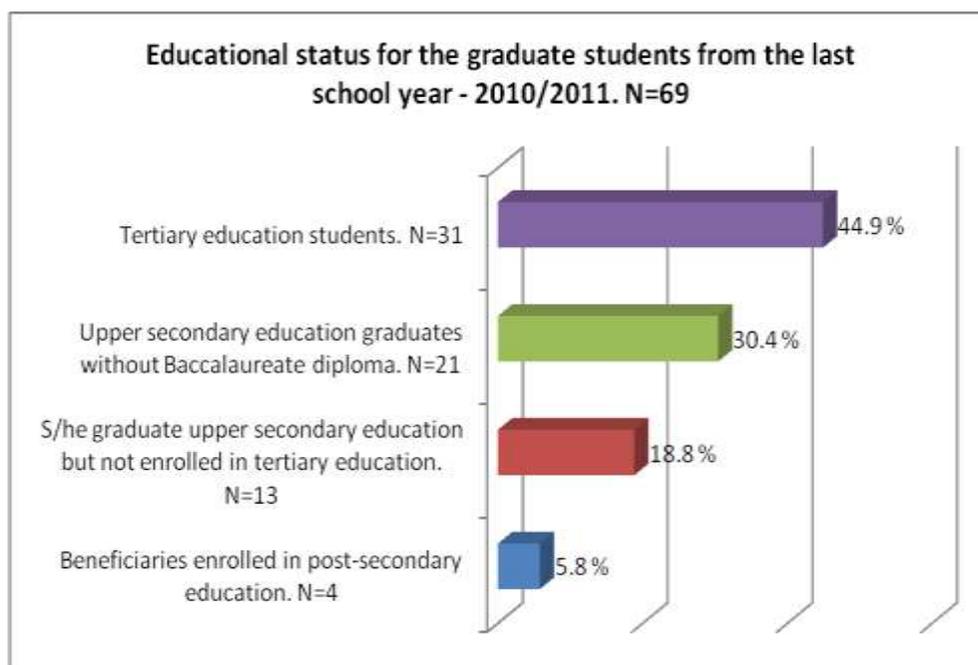
In the Annexes, figures 26-31 present the current educational status of the beneficiaries according to the socio-demographic factors such as gender, residence area, and occupational status for parents. Based on these, the girls selected in the programme seem to have a higher drop-out rate compared to boys, while those living in the rural areas have a significantly higher tendency not to pursue university, in spite of the fact that they completed high school with BAC. The gender effect on the rather high drop-out rate is most probably linked to cultural factors, and

the lower rate of graduates from rural areas not continuing their education has roots in the more difficult socio-economic conditions (when compared to urban areas).

Cross-sectional analysis: what happened to the programme beneficiaries that graduated in 2009/2010?

In the 2009/2010 academic year, 69 students that were direct beneficiaries of the programme graduated. Out of these, 31 (44.9%) are currently studying in universities, and 13 (18.8%) have passed the baccalaureate exam. Five of them (5.8%) are now pursuing post-high school studies, and 21 (30.4%), though completing the programme, have not passed the baccalaureate exam.

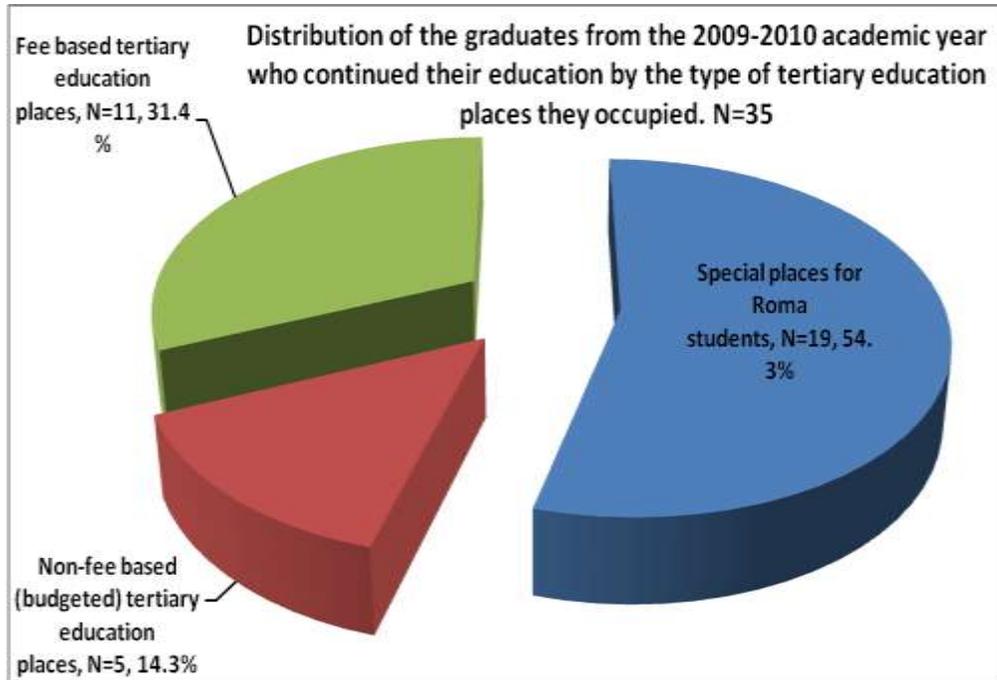
Figure 3. The educational status of the beneficiaries completing the programme in 2010-2011 academic year



The figures 32 to 38 present the education status of the graduates from 2010-2011 according to the relevant socio-demographic variables. It can be noticed that the students whose parents were employed were more likely to enrol for university studies.

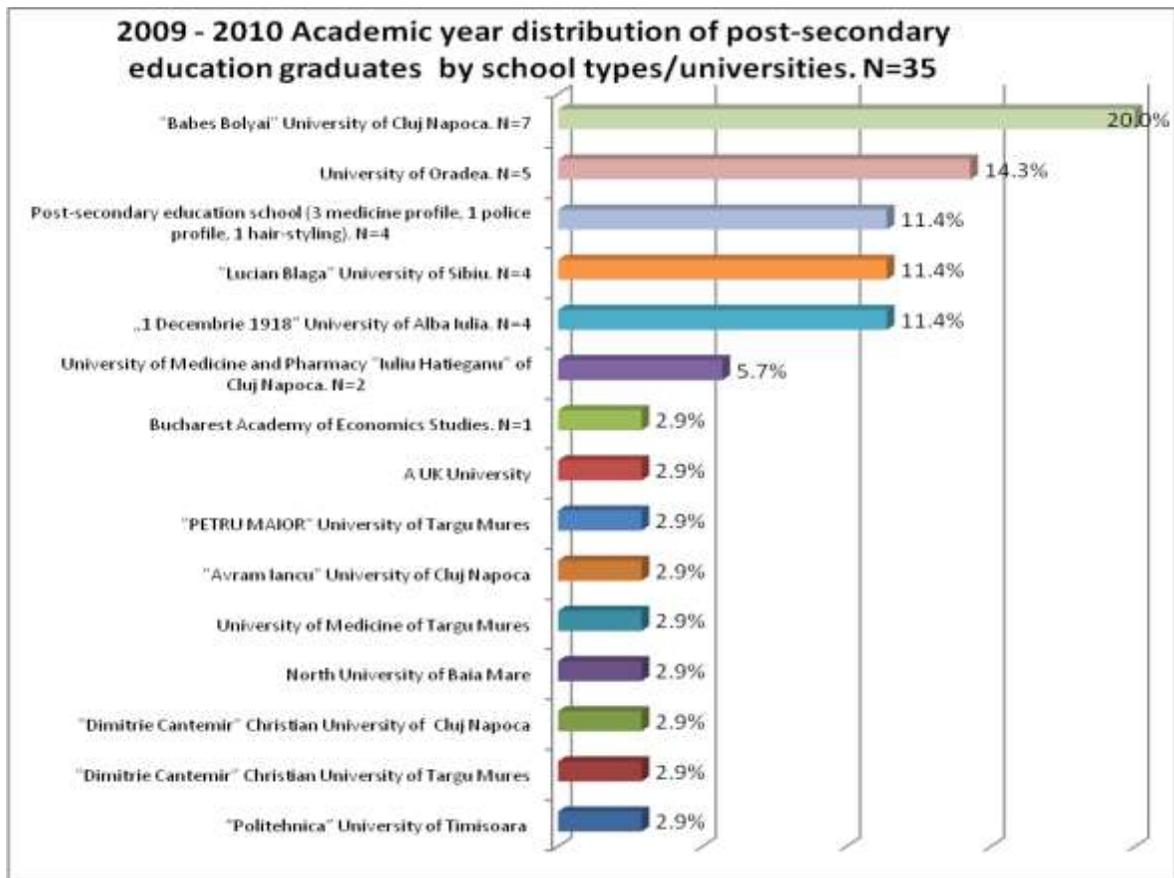
Out of the graduates of 2009/2010 academic year who continued their studies (total number = 35, 31 being now enrolled for university and 4 for post-high school studies), the majority of them (19 students, 54.3%) was admitted on the special places reserved for Roma. Five of them (14.3%) entered higher education on regular university places, without tuition (subsidized), while 11 of them (31.4%) were accepted on the regular places with tuition.

Figure 4. The distribution of the graduates from the 2009-2010 academic year who continued their education by the type of tertiary education places they occupied



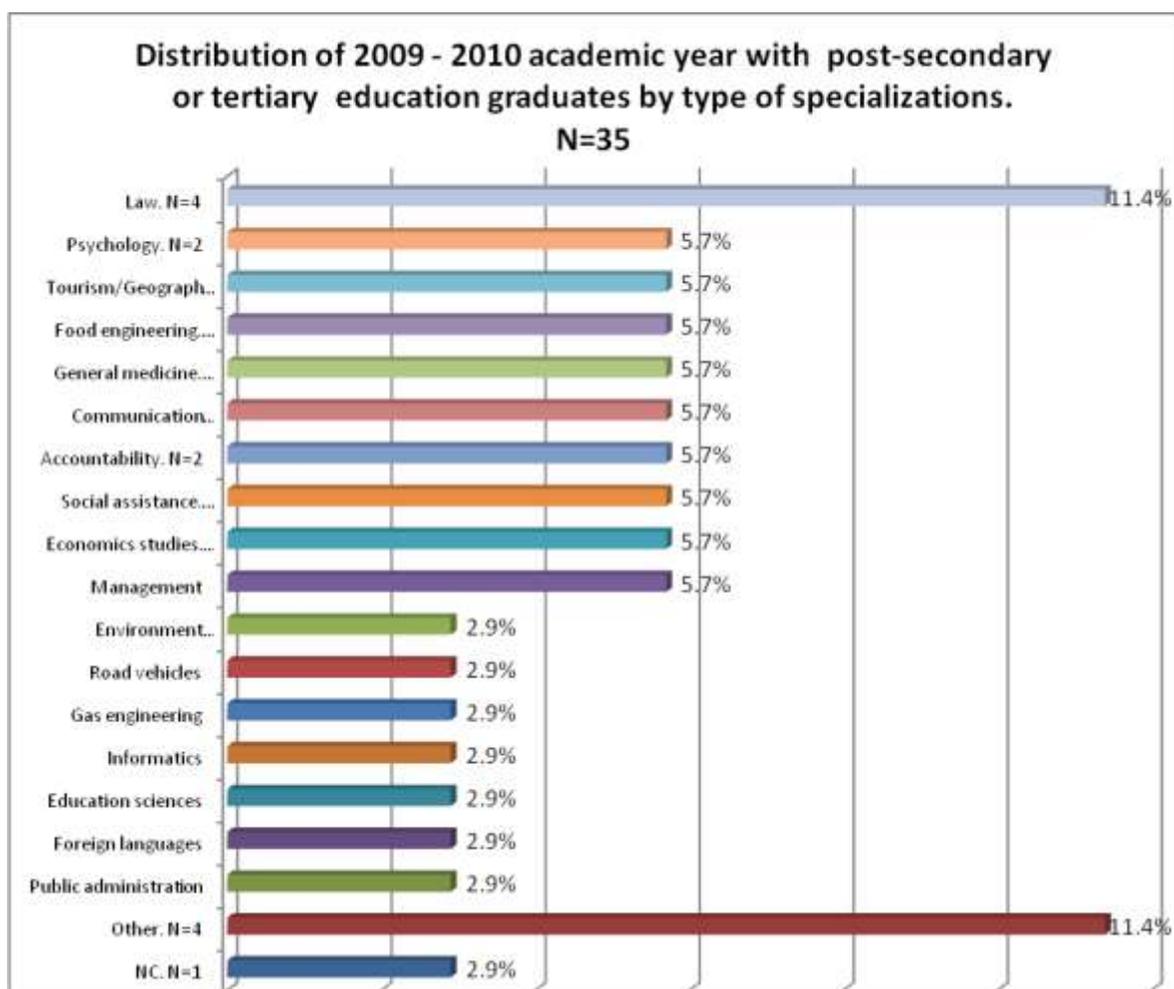
The higher education institution where most of the beneficiaries went on to continue their studies after graduating from high school was the Babeş Bolyai University in Cluj (7 of the beneficiaries there), while 5 of the beneficiaries went on to the University of Oradea, 5 are following the courses of the post-high school institution, 4 attend the Lucian Blaga University in Sibiu, 4 of the beneficiaries go to the ‘1 Decembrie 1918’ University in Alba Iulia and 2 attend University of Medicine and Pharmacy "Iuliu Hatieganu" of Cluj Napoca. The rest of them are distributed one by one at other universities, one of them continuing his studies at a university in the United Kingdom (see the figure below).

Figure 5. The distribution of the post-secondary education graduates of 2009-2010 academic year by school type/university



In what concerns the specializations pursued by the beneficiaries, most of them chose law (4 beneficiaries), while the following domains have each been chosen by 2 beneficiaries: psychology, tourism and geography, food processing, medicine, communication and public relations, accounting, social care and economic studies. The figure below indicates the specializations chosen by the beneficiaries graduating in 2010 and presently continuing their education.

Figure 6. The distribution of post-secondary or tertiary education graduates from 2009-2010 academic year by type of specializations chosen

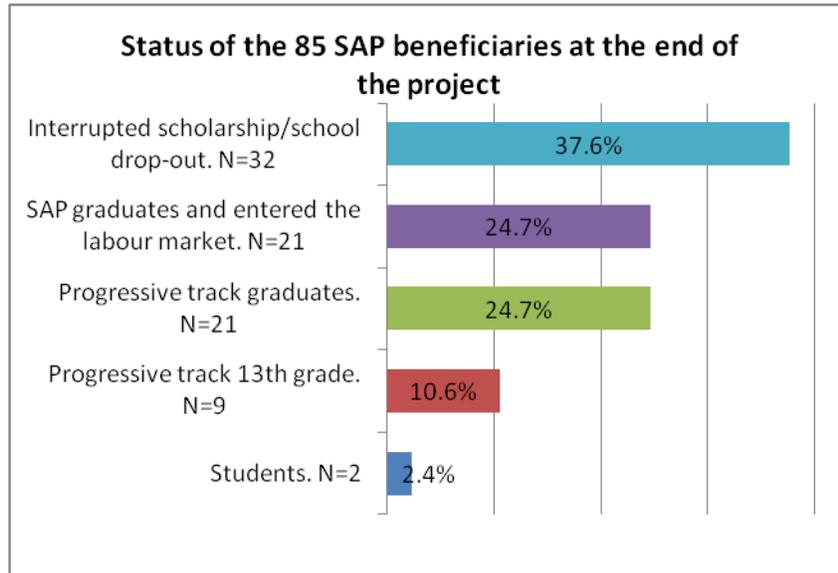


Other important aspects of the assessment

Out of the 242 beneficiaries selected in the first round (2007-2008), 85 of them (35%) were attending SAPs. The situation of these beneficiaries at the end of the project is as follows:

- 21 of them completed 11 grades in SAP and have entered the labour market;
- 23 of them pursued the progressive track, 2 of them currently being enrolled for university studies, 16 having graduated high school, but without passing the baccalaureate exam (4 of them in 2010 and 7 in 2011), 4 of them decided not to take the baccalaureate exam (2011), and 1 student passed the exam in 2011;
- 9 of them are still studying, now in the 13th grade (progressive track) in the 2011-2012 academic year (outside the project timeframe)
- 32 of them had their scholarship withdrawn or have dropped-out.

Figure 7. The status of the 85 SAP graduates at the end of the project



Out of beneficiaries selected in the programme attending SAPs 38.8% (33) were males and 61.2% (52) were females - see below.

Figure 8. Distribution of SAP beneficiaries by gender.

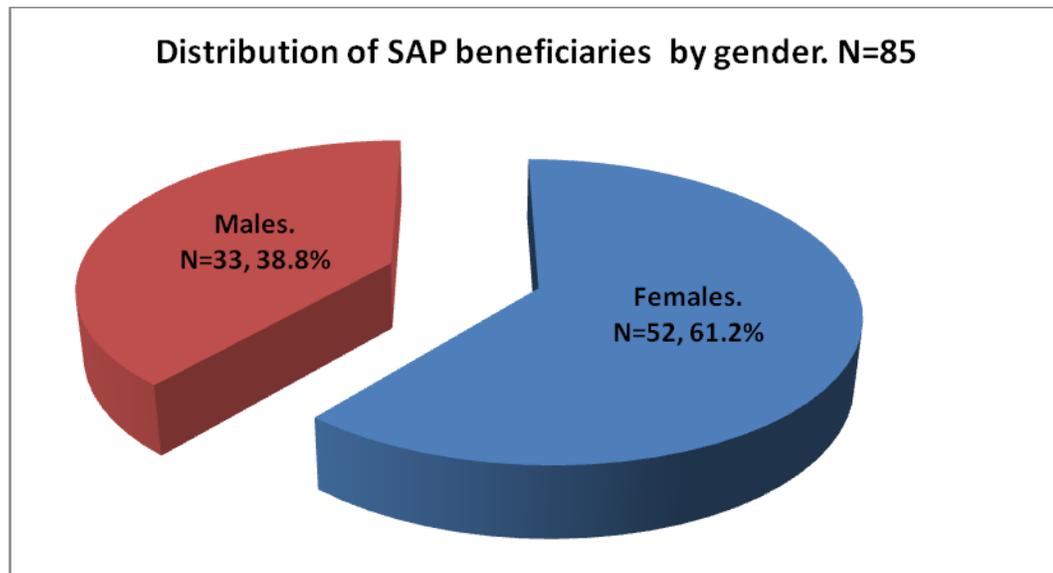


Figure 8 comprises the distribution of SAP beneficiaries according to their gender, at the time of entering the programme. As previously stated, girls were more likely to abandon school than boys were.

2. The selection process of the beneficiaries

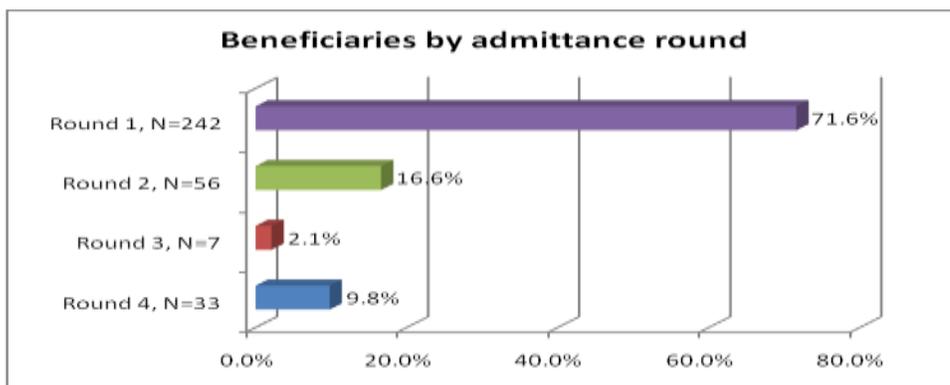
The selection stage for beneficiaries was fundamental to the success of the programme. The general criterion of selection consisted of the GPA obtained by the student (of at least 7.5) in the year preceding the submission of the application for this programme. Additionally, the social conditions of the students were taken into account individually (those coming from mono-parental families, with more children, who were living at a considerable distance from school received a better score), as well as the number of absences of the students and the type of school they went to.

In the first round of selection, due to the insufficient number of applicants with a GPA higher than the imposed threshold, which made it impossible to allocate the total number of scholarships that could have been awarded; what came to be used in the end as the main selection criterion was the GPA only. A problem that was not anticipated before the implementation of the programme, but appeared during the selection process was linked to the acceptance in the programme of students that were at the time enrolled for the so-called Schools of Arts and Professions (SAPs). Due to the insufficient number of qualified applicants from high school (with their GPA above 7.5), the project coordination board decided to also grant scholarships to students of SAPs. The flexibility of the project team to adapt to this unexpected situation is considered an advantage, and we considered justified the decision they took, given that the SAP students had the possibility to reach university as well (following the progressive track). As a matter of fact, 2 beneficiaries that pursued SAPs finally made it to university.

According to available data, 338 students were included in the programme, out of which:

- 242 beneficiaries in the first round (first year of programme implementation, 2007-2008) – out of 325 applications
- 56 beneficiaries in the 2nd round (2008-2009) – out of 140 applications
- 7 beneficiaries in the 3rd round (2009-2010) – from among the applicants of 2008-2009 academic year
- 33 beneficiaries in the 4th round (2010-2011) – out of 54 applications

Figure 9. Beneficiaries by admittance round



Although it was aimed to select 275 students in the first round, only 242 have met the selection criteria. Because there were still available resources, other selection sessions have been organized in the following years to bring new beneficiaries in the programme.

The project had at least two legitimate central objectives: stimulating the accession to university of Roma students (a step towards constituting Roma elite in Romania), as well as stimulating the completion of high school studies by Roma students and preventing high school drop-out. Each of these objectives, taken separately, requires, theoretically, two complementary strategies of approaching the selection process:

- a) Selecting in the programme the Roma students that are performing the best, with high school attainment, and consequently, with better chances of entering third education, but for whom the opportunities would be lower due to the different social condition (financial difficulties of the family, the lack of family support, segregation and stigmatization in school etc.). The adequate selection criterion in this case, for reaching this objective, is a mix of the quality of school attainment and the risk of drop-out (stemming from the social condition, etc.); selecting in the programme the students with high school performance, but with a social situation that may block their access to university means that the goal of stimulating the continuation of education for Roma students is gradually reached.
- b) Selecting in the programme students with average school performance, but with a higher risk of drop-out represents the second strategy. It becomes very important in this case to consider in the selection process the social condition of the students, and the extent to which the financial situation of the family/ legal guardians and the everyday hardships could affect the school results of students or could increase the risk of school drop-out. The primary criterion in this case would be the risk of drop-out – which supports the objective of preventing early high school leaving.

These strategies were part of the selection plan organized by the project; the implementation team also conceived a ranking scheme for the students, according to their school achievement (the GPA of the applicant), social situation (considering whether the student came from a mono or bi-parental family, the employment status of the parents, the number of siblings in the family, the type of accommodation available for the student – dormitory, host family etc.), the risk of drop-out (number of absences), and the type of school attended (high school or SAP).

We appreciate that these criteria have been well chosen, and we recognize as a positive feature the fact that the income was not included among the indicators characterizing the social condition of the students, as in many cases the income is not fiscalized (not registered) and thus this factor would have been unrealistic. Nonetheless, what could have been added to the criteria was data on the level of career aspirations, its perceived importance and the degree of support for continuing education manifested by the parents/legal guardians – we can assume that this

variable is a very important factor in assessing the chances of the students to pursue higher education.

Despite of the thorough organization, the selection process was, to a certain extent, affected by the fact that there were not enough eligible applicants to meet the minimum GPA criteria (7.5). Because of that, a unique selection criterion was applied for choosing the beneficiaries – the GPA. The small number of applications led also to the selection of 85 SAP students in the first round, but their percentage being limited according to the decision of the project board (they represented 35% of the beneficiaries in the first round and 25% of all beneficiaries). At the same time, this situation led to including in the programme students that had, apart from a high GPA, a very good social condition. The question of whether these ones would not have made it to university in the absence of the programme support remains open; the answer to it would be rather positive. The interviews with such beneficiaries (high school achievement at the time of being included in the programme complemented by a good social condition) showed that, although they would have entered university even without being included in the programme, the status of being its beneficiary brought them a series of advantages that would not have existed otherwise, and which are in line with the programme aims:

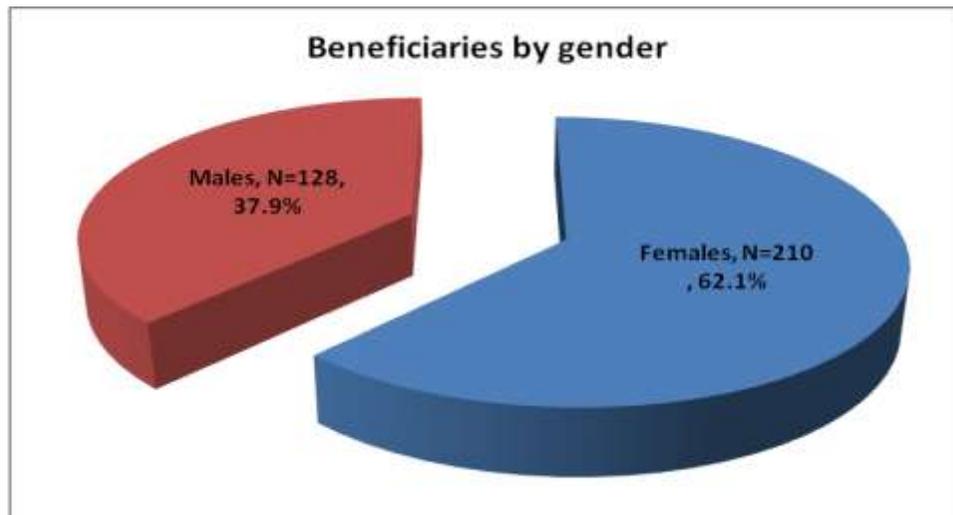
- the beneficiary status helped them assume their Roma identity and regard this as an advantage though the lenses of the cultural richness attached to it; some of the students selected in the programme told us that before entering the programme, their classmates were not aware of their Roma identity, but, once included in the programme, this fact has become known and they succeeded in expressing it. The Roma ethnic identity evolved from being a complex to being an advantage, as it should be.

- another advantage of the programme for this type of beneficiaries (revealed through the interviews conducted during the evaluation) was that they met similar young people, they were able to discuss and share experiences on being Roma, to create a network of acquaintances and Roma friends. The programme also opened the way for participating in projects for promoting the Roma culture, and created the opportunity for them to become activists against ethnic stigmatization.

Profile of beneficiaries

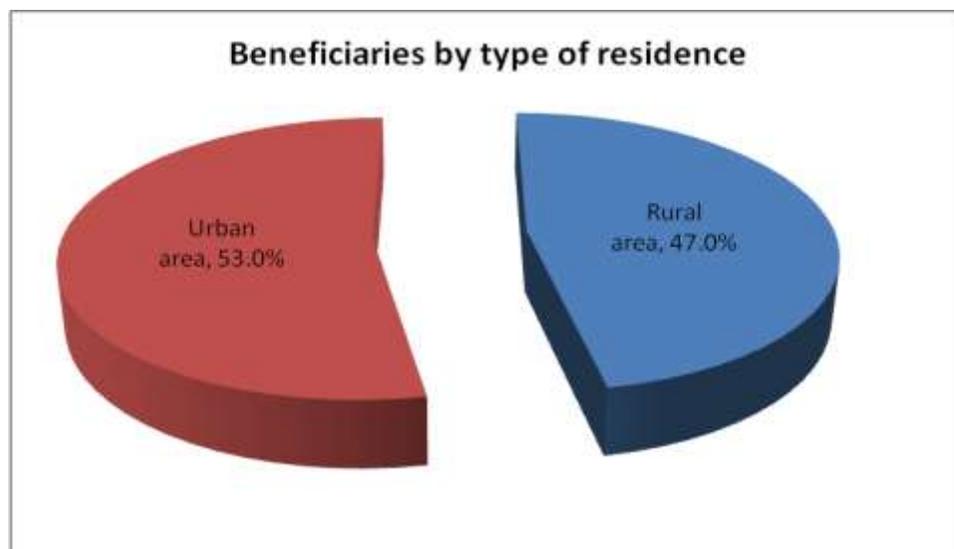
In this section we analyze data that allow us to outline the profile of the beneficiaries of the project. The distribution of the beneficiaries by gender is presented below. Females represented the majority of students selected in the programme – a total of 210 (62.1% of all beneficiaries). If we take into account the most recent data showing that girls perform better than boys in school, this appears as a natural trend.

Figure 10. Beneficiaries by gender



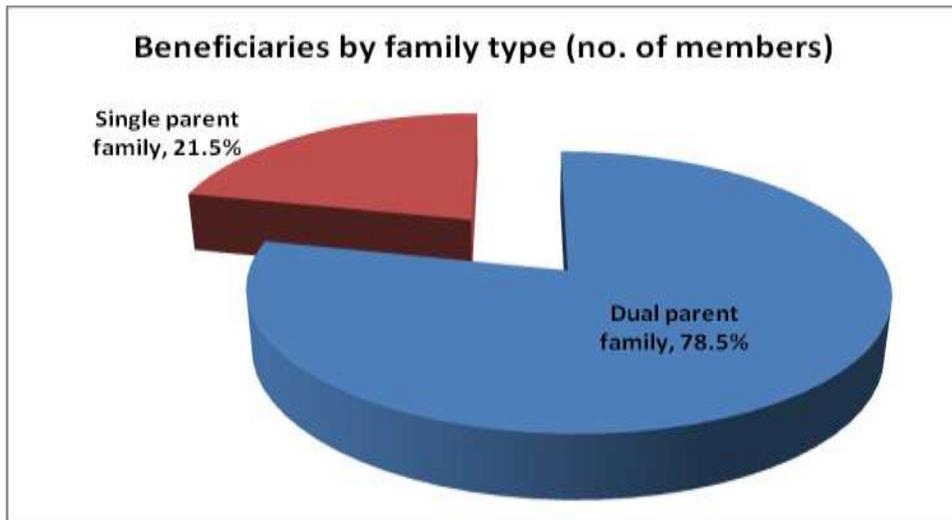
The distribution of selected students by type of residence area indicates that 179 (53%) of the 338 beneficiaries of the programme live in the urban areas.

Figure 11. Beneficiaries by type of residence



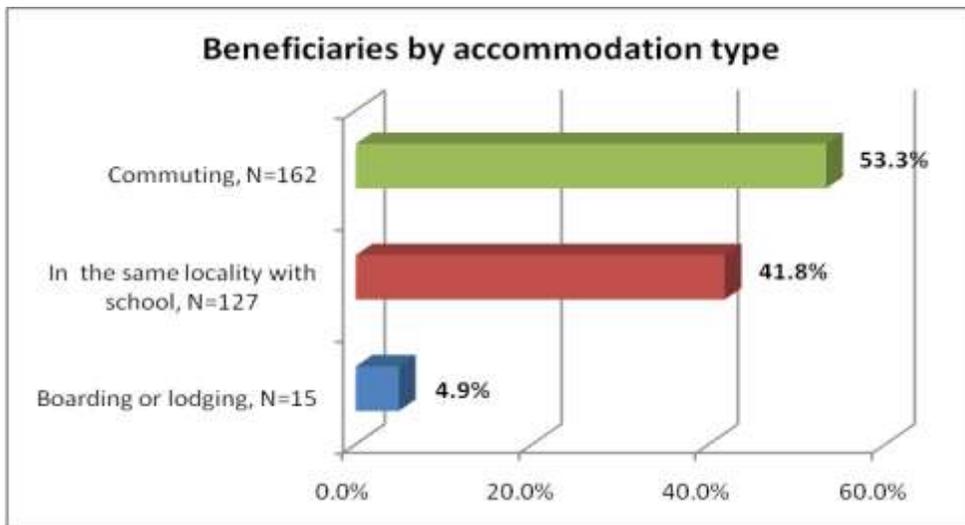
It is also interesting to mention the type of families beneficiaries belong to. Thus, 21.5% of them come from mono-parental families, while 78.5% come from bi-parental families – see the figure below. These statistics are only for the beneficiaries included in the first three rounds of selection, as there were no available data for the last 33 students that became part of the project in the last selection round.

Figure 12. Beneficiaries by family type



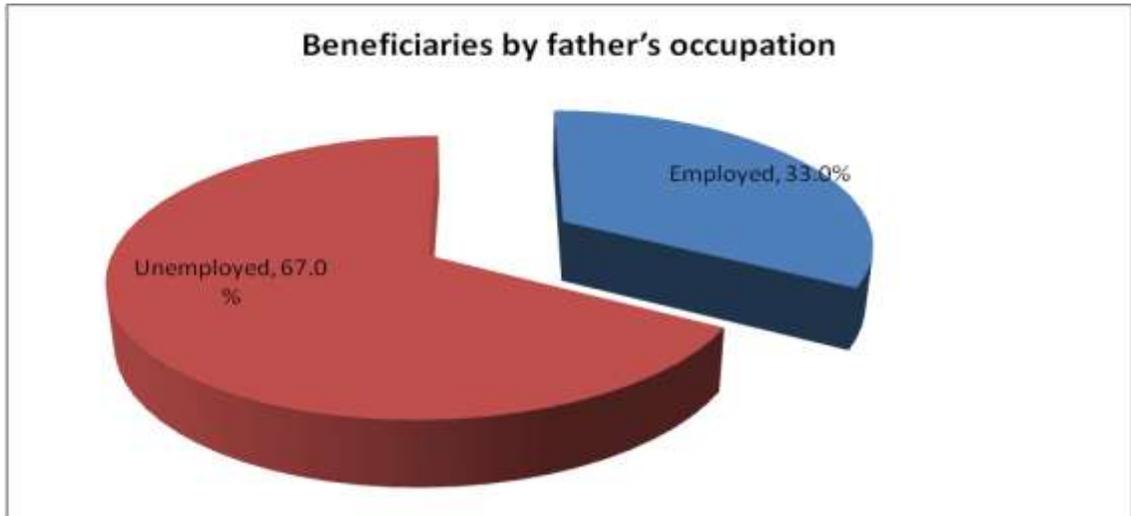
Most of the beneficiaries were forced to commute to school, 53.3% of them being in this situation. Four out of 10 beneficiaries live in the same locality where their school is, and 4.9% were boarding or lodging throughout the academic year.

Figure 13. Beneficiaries by accommodation type



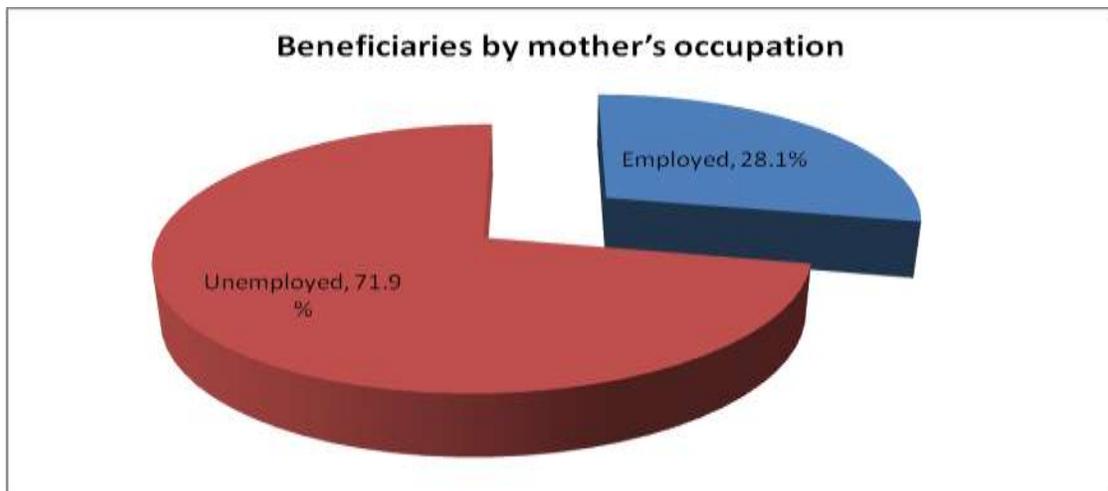
In what concerns the occupational status of the parents, 67% (199) of them had their father unemployed and only 98 of them belonged to a family where the father was employed. Basically, 2 in 3 students selected in the programme were in this situation. This percentage was calculated for the beneficiaries entering the programme in the first three selection rounds, for those who had their fathers living with them.

Figure 14. Beneficiaries by father's occupation



As to the mother's occupational status, 7 out of 10 beneficiaries had their mothers unemployed - 71.9% (217) of the students in the programme. Only 85 beneficiaries had their mothers working at the time of their inclusion in the programme – see the graph below.

Figure 15. Beneficiaries by mother's occupation



The fact that every 5th beneficiary came from a single-parent family and at least 6 out of 10 students had one of the parents unemployed is a powerful indicator of the fact that the beneficiaries of the programme were, to a large extent, also in social need. Although the grant was thought of exclusively as a merit scholarship, in the light of these statistics we can conclude that for many of the selected students, the scholarship helped towards compensating for a difficult social condition.

Project promotion among potential beneficiaries

We noticed in the previous section that it would have been desirable for the success of the project to have more eligible applicants. A legitimate question of the assessment is the following: could the improvement of the communication campaign and the fostering of the application submission prevent the small number of received applications? We can say that the organization of the communication process and application inviting for this programme has been broad, far-reaching and well-done. We presented in Annexes main activities carried out within the project in support of this idea.

However, there are a couple of measures that could increase the number of eligible applications. A recommendation in this sense would be changing the timing of the selection process for mentors so that it is finalized prior to the stage for selecting the students, so the mentors are chosen before the deadline for submitting student applications – in the programme, 1 October 2007 was the deadline for submitting the applications for both Roma high school students and mentors (the initial deadline was 20 September 2007 for the mentors but since by that date only 36 applications were received, the deadline was extended). The interviews we conducted and the experience shared by the project team indicated that students had a rather low degree of initiative for elaborating the scholarship application by themselves; involving in the process the stakeholders that are more accustomed to completing application packages – mentors, professors, etc. - represents a more realistic alternative for increasing the number of applications. It is eloquent for this the number of applications submitted for the 2nd round of selection, when the network of mentors was already in place, higher than that in the first selection round. In the first round, the ratio between the number of received applications and the total number of available scholarships was 1.18% (325 applications, 275 scholarships), while in the second year this ratio increased to 2.5% (140 applications, 56 scholarships). For the latter, the quality of the applications was much higher, as in the first round the lowest GPAs of the students admitted in the programme were around the minimum threshold of 7.5, including those students from SAPs, whereas in the second round the lowest GPA for the students selected was 8.43 (no SAP student included). The broad involvement of the mentors in the selection process and school personnel, as well as the example of the students previously selected in the programme, all led to choosing from a larger pool of applicants in the second round. We can notice that the second round selection process was also more efficient (a better cost/benefit ratio) and the costs of disseminating information materials was lower by primarily making use of spreading information through the mentors that were already part of the programme (at no additional cost).

In this context, a more effective and efficient alternative would be to select the mentors prior to selecting students and maybe to include as a criterion for those mentors submitting their applications to identify a minimum number of eligible students who could receive the scholarship.

In any case, once the selection of the mentors is finalized, they can be actively involved in selecting potential beneficiaries. The application procedure, as it was conceived and implemented (sending press releases, fliers in schools, presenting the programme at different events) could be complemented by a more pro-active approach, consisting of identifying students that would potentially meet the scholarship requirements and contacting them in advance - via mentors, professors or others involved in the project - to invite their applications. Thus, it is highly desirable that the student selection stage also includes the creation of a database with potential candidates for the scholarship. This database of Roma students could be used not only as a selection pool, but also as a control group for a more effective programme evaluation procedure.

3. The efficiency and the effectiveness of the scholarship

Granting the scholarship was one of the main pillars of programme intervention. The research we conducted led to identifying two categories of students, based on what the scholarship meant for them. On the one hand, there are students who come from families with a good or very good social condition, for whom the monthly stipend represented ‘pocket money’ or ‘a bonus’ for expenses that would not have been absolutely necessary for attending school (new clothes, going out with friends, etc.). On the other hand, there was another category of students for whom the scholarship was the primary means for covering expenses mandatory for attending school: the costs of commuting for those who live far away from school, food, school materials, and even private tuition hours. We did not have sufficient data to be able to estimate the proportion of each of these categories (for example, it is difficult to assess realistically the income of the family as it is not always registered and due to the beneficiaries’ tendency to overestimate the acuteness of their financial condition with a view to potentially receiving additional benefits etc.). However, according to the frequency of the two categories among the students we interviewed, we can say that the scholarship granted as part of the programme was used by the majority of students for covering expenses necessary to their school participation.

In most of the cases revealed in the interviews, the stipend was spent according to the beneficiary’s will, being only very few cases in which the family provided advice on this as well. We encountered no case in which the parents used the scholarship without the approval of the student. The main types of expenses covered by the scholarship were, in the order mentioned by the students we interviewed:

- Clothes, in most cases for wearing them in school;
- School materials (especially in the 12th grade of professional high schools - vocational track – where handbooks are not provided for free), books, reference books, atlases;
- Daily expenses (money given voluntarily for the costs of household utilities, paying rent in the dormitory, etc.)

- Transportation (from their house to school, especially for the students coming from rural areas);
- Food – in most case, students bought food for eating it during school hours, with the exception of those coming from wealthy families;
- Private tuition hours – there were students in the final high school year paying them out of their scholarship;
- Other expenses: medicines, girls sometimes bought ‘personal things’ – including cosmetics etc., others created savings accounts to use the money for university, a student told us that the money was spent, to a large extent, for construction works for his house annex, another one bought a computer.

The scholarship itself represented only partially an incentive to go to school – we identified a very small number of students who declared that they would have dropped school in the absence of the stipend; in fact, those who had the tendency to leave school early did so in spite of the fact that they were receiving the scholarship. There was a significant number of beneficiaries who dropped high school even if they were included in the programme: 48 students left school (14.2% of the total number of students in the programme), and for 24 students the scholarship was withdrawn for various reasons (low school performance, absenteeism, moving out of the eligible area of the project). One of the explanations for this is the relatively low amount of the stipend, compared to the real needs of some of the beneficiaries’ families – school drop-out was most frequently associated with the fact that students were looking for financial independence in order to be able to provide themselves what their families could not provide for them.

But granting the scholarship had positive effects in other regards. One of them was the reduction of absenteeism and, strongly linked to this, the increase in school attainment. The first one was possible, in some cases, because the family reduced the amount of household work to be done by the student (such as taking care of smaller siblings, subsistence work, etc.). In these circumstances, a part of the scholarship was used not only for the needs of the student, but also for those of the family. For a high number of beneficiaries, it is a habit to work in their free time to help their family for daily subsistence work. Moreover, by conditioning the granting of the stipend on obtaining a minimum GPA of 7.5 enhanced the motivation of the students to get better grades (some of them would have been otherwise satisfied with obtaining passing grades).

Another constructive aspect of granting the scholarship was the fact that some Roma students started to understand their belongingness to the Roma community as an advantage. Most of them were used to believing that being of Roma ethnicity is a disadvantage in the social competition context, due to the embedded stereotypes. By receiving the scholarship, some of the students were able to grasp the positive side of being Roma. Furthermore, as mentioned before,

the receipt of the stipend made some students assume and express publicly their Roma identity, incentivizing them to develop the consciousness of belonging to the Roma culture. Besides, through this programme scholarship, some students became aware of the fact that somewhere there is somebody who cares about the Roma, about their condition and about the fact that, under many circumstances, they are in a more disadvantaged position than the others.

The conclusion that comes out of our research is that the scholarship itself was crucial in reaching the set goals of the programme not by its financial value, but rather by stimulating the students to work extra for their education, by developing the Roma cultural identity/ the consciousness of belonging to a group and by encouraging the expression of this identity – such elements would have otherwise remained latent.

4. The efficiency and the effectiveness of the mentorship

The mentorship was the second main dimension through which the programme intervened for the improvement of the school attainment of the beneficiaries. In the first year, 61 mentors were selected in the programme, and in the following years their total number was reduced to 50. The job description of the mentors shows that they had planned at least 10 hours of interaction with the beneficiaries per month. The research we conducted for the evaluation of the project sustains the idea that the mentorship was the most important pillar for reaching the set objectives of the project. What counter primarily was the fact that the mentors facilitated and improved the relationship of the student with school in general and with the teachers in particular. The mentor monitored and constantly discussed with the student about his or her school performance, and talked to teachers so that the student could obtain additional information or clarifications for lessons when that was needed. Moreover, in some cases, the mentors also facilitate the supplementary preparation of the students outside school hours – sometimes the mentors themselves provided supplementary preparation for their specialization. We encountered a few cases in which the mentor intervened and solved situations in which some teachers displayed discriminatory attitudes or prejudices based on the Roma ethnicity of the students. The students themselves positively appreciated – almost unanimously – the relationship with the mentors; in the hypothetical situation of choosing between the support of the mentor and the scholarship itself, most of them opted for the support of the mentor. The students with a better social and financial condition considered more beneficial for their school achievement the relationship with the mentor rather than the scholarship, while those with financial hardships placed more value on the scholarship, for obvious reasons.

The mentorship was positive also because it facilitated the broader involvement of parents in the education of the student. The constructive aspects included informing the family when the school results of the student became unsatisfactory, and attempting to stimulate parental engagement for advancing the school performance of their children. For future

implementation of similar projects, it would be preferable that the mentor gets more involved in the relationship with the family, home visits being necessary at least several times throughout the academic year, especially if there are any school problems. We were faced with situations in which the mentors did not pay a home visit to the beneficiary all throughout the duration of the programme; in these cases, the communication with the parents were done via phone or when they came to school.

The mentors also had the role of enhancing the development of the relationship among beneficiaries, of establishing a network of collaboration and information exchange for them. For these purpose, the extra-curricular activities organized by the mentor and involving the beneficiaries were more than welcome. However, from our discussions with the students selected in the programme, such meetings outside school were quite rare. In fact, this was one of the regrets explicitly stated by the beneficiaries – the fact that they did not have the opportunity to meet and spend more of their free time among other beneficiaries from their counties or from other one. It would have been useful, in this context, to organize a summer school in which all or most of the beneficiaries to take part. From our research it became clear that the beneficiaries have generally met only the students who had the same mentor – except for when they personally knew the other beneficiaries as their neighbours, school mates etc. Seldom have we identified beneficiaries that would maintain contact with their fellow students from the programme once this was completed (to exchange information and to communicate constantly with them).

A different dimension where the activity of the mentor could have had a broader reach is stimulating the students to enrol in Roma organizations in partnership with Roma NGOs. Very few beneficiaries are members of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with a Roma focus or get involved in such activities. We only discovered very few beneficiaries that keep in contact via internet/email with the members of some virtual groups (e-groups) with a Roma focus. Fostering the consciousness of Roma belongingness and Roma identity of the students was another aspect to which the mentorship activities seems to have contributed less – though it did encourage it.

The quality of the mentorship, the profile of the ideal mentor

The mentorship constituted the fundamental activity the project intervened through, being more important than the scholarship itself in the overall management of the project. The job description, as conceived by the project team, answered the need to meet the set objectives. However, this could be complemented, in the future, by adding the attribute to support and provide counselling for the beneficiary in choosing a faculty and helping with the application process for it. There were cases when the beneficiaries were confronted with difficulties because they did not know how to handle the bureaucratic process of admission to university – for example, one female student did not manage to enrol for the special Roma places in university

because she did not submit her completed application on time, and another one occupied one of the special Roma places, although she had a GPA that would have allowed her to access the regular subsidized places, etc.

In conclusion, we can say that the mentorship proved its full benefits for the improvement of the beneficiaries' school attainment, but has a less visible role in stimulating the civic activism of the students (participating in the activities of Roma organizations and not only) and in enhancing the Roma cultural identity among beneficiaries.

The assessment indicated that it is crucial for the mentor to be familiar to the educational system and to be capable to foster the relationships between the students and the class master/teachers. In this sense, being a teacher represented an advantage for the mentor, especially when the mentor was teaching in the school attended by the beneficiary. For a stronger development of the Roma identity among beneficiaries, more activities focusing on this should be envisioned in the programme in the future. Also, a broader engagement of Roma NGO representatives with the help of the mentors would be desirable, thus cultivating the activism spirit among beneficiaries.

Taking into account these considerations, we can outline the ideal profile of the mentor: teacher, with extensive pedagogical experience, working in the school attended by the beneficiary or one in its proximity, familiar with the Roma culture and willingness to do home visits and to have good negotiation skills to advocate for its scholars best interest.

5. The efficiency and the efficacy of the supplementary preparation hours offered to beneficiaries

A different means of intervention considered efficient by our evaluation was the supplementary preparation hours offered to the students. The project team decided, following the feedback coming from mentors and beneficiaries, to include among its support activities the supplementary preparation hours for the students in their final high school year. This was highly appreciated by the students, thus underlying a better practice for future similar programmes. Many beneficiaries considered that they would have needed such preparation sessions also before the 12th grade.

The practice of private tuition is widespread in Romania, but not all families can afford to offer such type of supplementary preparation to their children. For ensuring an equal competition for students coming from vulnerable families - as most of those included in the programme - it is well grounded that future similar programmes include among basic activities (beside scholarship and mentorship) the provision of supplementary preparation hours to beneficiaries in their final year before their baccalaureate exam. The selection of the subjects for which students receive extra preparation could be done together with the mentors, for the topics for which the beneficiaries have lower grades. In the final high school year, it would be ideal that the students

selected in the programme receive supplementary preparation hours for the baccalaureate mandatory subjects.

6. The impact of the programme on the relationship of the student with his/her school, teachers and classmates

From the testimonies of the beneficiaries it can be clearly stated that their inclusion in the programme led, in general, to a better relationship with their teachers. The support and the intervention of the mentor increased the level of attention given by the teachers to the beneficiaries and their availability to provide extra help for them when they needed that. The inadequacy of some attitudes expressed by some teachers – like making discriminatory comments regarding Roma in class or deliberately giving lower grades to Roma students in an unfair way – was eliminated once the mentor intervened to solve the situation. One of the beneficiaries described the situation of a teacher who would frequently make negative comments about the Roma in the context of the Mailat scandal in Italy. One Roma student from the programme legitimately told her that he himself or all of the Roma cannot be blamed for what a particular individual did, only because he happened to be of Roma ethnicity. Under these circumstances, the student explained that he also received a lower grade, as a punishment for the so-called ‘impertinence’ of replying to the teacher. The conflict vanished when the mentor intervened to discuss with the teacher, and the stigmatization was not displayed anymore. Maybe this only treated a symptom (the visible stigmatizing behaviour) rather than the cause (the discriminatory attitude of the teacher); whether the teacher would behave the same in the future with a different Roma student that has no mentor around remains an open question. We cannot deduce that such cases are frequent in the Romanian education system, but the identification of this case strengthens our pledge to completely eliminate stigmatization or racist attitudes in school.

At any rate, the interviews showed that generally, the teachers did not discriminate between the Roma beneficiaries and the other students, but there were few isolated cases in which some teachers gave unjustifiably lower grades to those included in the programme. Following the involvement of the mentor, such situations were restored. By and large, the attitude of the teachers towards the Roma students did not change once they were included in the programme – though this fact was difficult to test because, in many cases, the students entered the programme in their 9th grade, thus leaving no comparison terms; in some other cases, the teachers were not aware of the fact that these students were beneficiaries of the programme. It became obvious, however, that it would be desirable to explain to the teachers working with beneficiaries why it is justified that these Roma students receive scholarship and mentorship – this is not an outcome of the desire to protect the students belonging to this ethnicity, but represents the upshot of the need to compensate for an educational path that has been conducted

under more vulnerable social conditions (poverty, low educational support from the family, stigmatization, etc.) – starting with pre-school years – than those of the majoritarian population. When the mentors were also acting as the teachers/ class master of the beneficiaries, it was beneficial to the teacher – mentor – student relationship.

In most cases, the relationship with the classmates did not alter following the inclusion in the programme. Yet, there were several cases brought to our attention of other students being envious of the Roma beneficiaries – some of them expressed the wish to be Roma in order to receive the scholarship. In many other cases, being part of the programme meant that the Roma ethnic identity was revealed (the other classmates not knowing about it until then), which faced them with the need to assume their identity. It remains an open query whether exposing the Roma identity after entering the programme should come at the initiative of the beneficiaries or whether the public expression of identity should happen at the time of inclusion in the project. Some students showed their dissatisfaction with the fact that a mentor told the teachers about their Roma ethnicity – and in turn, the teachers told his classmates about it. It is indeed worrisome that the feeling of ‘being ashamed of being Roma’ is still commonly displayed among the Roma youth. But the majority of the beneficiaries that was faced with revealing their ethnicity at the time of entering the programme - especially those with better grades which went on to university – assumed their identity, and redefined their public positioning towards their ethnicity as ‘it is an advantage to be Roma’. We consider it helpful to engage in discussions about Roma identity, group equality and the immorality and injustice of stigmatization in classes where programme beneficiaries are present. The actions of an individual and their consequences are solely his/her responsibility, no matter his ethnicity, gender, etc., and independently of the reference groups he is part of. We believe it would be valuable to also include in the class discussion with programme beneficiaries explanations regarding equal opportunities in education and the foundations of implementing this programme – why the support for the Roma students is needed by granting scholarships, providing mentorship etc. In spite of the multitude of arguments, for the beneficiaries it is not crystal clear why they themselves, as Roma high school students, were selected to receive the scholarship and why this is legitimate.

7. The impact of the family relationship with school and teachers

On the whole, the mentors considered that they had a good relationship with the parents of the beneficiaries but only at the level of communication, and not at that of establishing a partnership. Indeed, once the student was included in the programme, his/her parents were much better informed (quantitatively, qualitatively and constantly) about their child’s school performance. However, in most of the cases, it is not sufficient to deliver the information on school attainment to the parents; what is also needed is to counsel the parent so that he/she can take adequate and effective decisions for the education of the child. In very few cases have the

mentors managed, due to different reasons invoked by the parents (lack of time, distance, etc.) to pay a home visit to students. Communication was done primarily via phone: the parents could call the mentor to find out how the child performs, and the mentor could call the parents when there were critical situations (e.g. the student not coming to school, sharp decrease of grades, etc.).

There was the case of a mentor who became connected to the parents and engaged them in school activities (one of the parents was included in 'The Second Chance' programme with the help of the mentor). In some cases, the mentors regarded themselves as mediators and moderators in the relationship between students and teachers. In the focus group we conducted as part of the evaluation, the majority of parents appreciated the relationship with the mentor, considering that it was helpful to be kept informed. In the aforementioned case, the fact that the mentor went regularly to visit their houses and directly interacted with the families of the beneficiaries brought added value. On the other hand, there was one parent who was dissatisfied, making the mentor the 'scapegoat' for the school failure of his child (one failed class). Here, some of the parent's accusations are telling: the mentor was insisting too much with delivering information about the school performance of the student, which made the latter rather unhappy, or the fact that the mentor told in the school environment that the student receives the scholarship because he is Roma (he would have preferred that this was not known publicly).

In very limited cases has the mentor – parents relation evolved to the degree of a strong partnership for the child's education (the Reghin case revealed in the focus group was probably an exception), both sides sharing the responsibility for this: some parents are not interested enough, some mentors have not insisted enough, rather choosing to intervene by discussing with teachers and students. Still, it is obvious that the family/ legal guardians of the beneficiary were much better informed about his/her school attainment throughout the project implementation, because the mentors were aware of the fundamental role of the family.

8. The impact of the project on assuming and expressing the Roma cultural identity

Besides its other aims, the project also intended to help the beneficiaries in assuming their Roma identity; this is a way to reach the broader goal of creating a Roma elite. It is a strength that mentors had, in their job description, also the task of encouraging their student to assume their identity. From our research, it is clear that in some cases the mentors initiated discussions on this topic with the beneficiaries, but this has not been systematically done in all cases. In fact, in the majority of situations where the beneficiaries have not uncovered their Roma identity in front of their classmates prior to entering the programme, their belongingness became known afterwards (the mentors, the teachers unveiled it). Being thus 'pressured' to publicly define their position towards this issue, most of the students recognized that there are advantages associated with being Roma, that there are not reasons to feel uncomfortable about

their identity; what matters is the individual quality. We encountered one student (a beneficiary who had his scholarship withdrawn due to low school achievement) who was discontent with his ethnicity being known publicly. We also discovered a noteworthy pattern: the students who entered university or those who have better grades find it easier to assume the Roma identity compared to those with low grades, who manifest a higher reticence towards its.

Our conclusion for this section is that, although promoting the dimension of assuming the Roma identity was part of the original project plan and some beneficiaries did express it in the public sphere following their inclusion in the project, in our view this aspect should be emphasized more in the future. We believe that the students should receive specialized counselling on this issue provided by specialists; it would be desirable to organize regularly classroom discussions on Roma topics, with the colleagues of the beneficiaries.

Membership in Roma High school Students’ Association, a legally registered entity

The data we collected about beneficiaries’ membership in Roma NGOs are only partial, as the answers come from 156 students only, who have sent us the filled-in questionnaires requested in the evaluation process. Out of these, 12.8% declared that they are part of an organization/ association of Roma high school or university students. According to the discussion that we had with the representatives of the project team, support was given to establishing a Roma youth organization – namely Young Roma Maramures - during programme implementation. Only 2 of the beneficiaries who submitted the filled-in questionnaires mentioned their membership in this organization. For the future we recommend a more extensive stimulation of beneficiaries’ engagement in similar Roma organizations, and possibly the setting up of local branches similar to that of the Young Roma Maramures in all counties covered by the programme.

Figure 16. The membership of programme beneficiaries in Roma student NGOs

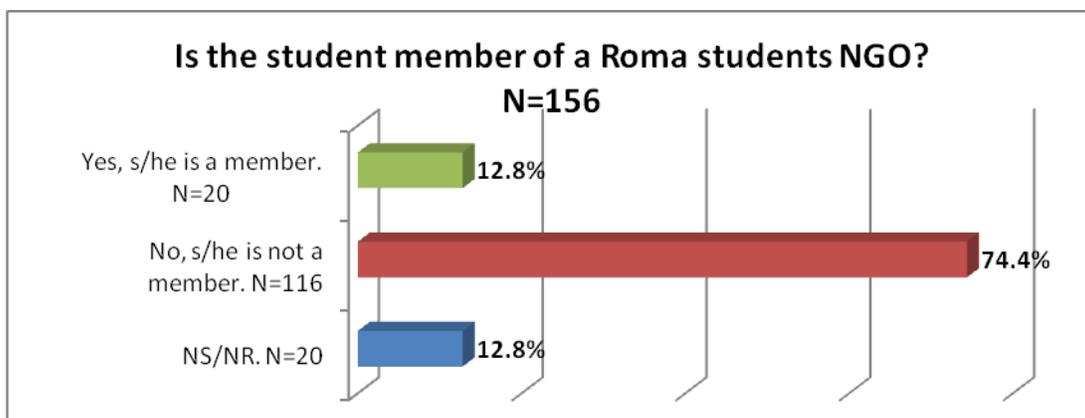


Table 10. The organizations where the programme beneficiaries are members

	No. of cases	Percentage
Young Roma Maramures	2	10.0%
Vocea Tinerilor	1	5.0%
Asociatia Studentilor Romi, Romano Suno	3	15.0%
Asociatia DIVERS	3	15.0%
Forumul Tinerilor Romi Fundatia Ruhama	3	15.0%
Partida Romilor ProEuropa	1	5.0%
Asociatia PAKIV Romania	1	5.0%
Fundatia Centrul de Resurse pentru Comunitatile de Romi	1	5.0%
No answer	5	25.0%
Total	20	100.0%

9. The organization of the databases used in monitoring and evaluating the project

We decided to tackle the issue of databases used in monitoring and evaluating the project as a separate subsection, given its vital importance in coordinating activities and drawing useful lessons following their implementation. The project implementation team organized a database for monitoring and evaluation which included data for identifying the beneficiaries of the project, data on their social condition (type of family – mono/bi-parental, parents’ occupational status, type of accommodation for the student – dormitory, commuting home, living in the proximity of the school), as well as data on the school performance of the student (GPA prior to being selected in the programme and final GPA). These data proved useful for the implementation of the programme, as it offered the possibility to monitor whether the beneficiaries met the minimum GPA threshold (7.5) to continue receiving the scholarship.

Our suggestion for the implementation of a similar programme would be to include in this database additional information such as the students’ and parents’ expected educational level, the quality of student housing, the family living standard, the educational level of the parents, access to books and the capacity to acquire school materials, the way in which the students feels in school, the quality of the relationship with his/her teachers, the level of assuming the Roma identity, the knowledge of Romani language, the school learning conditions, etc. These data could be monitored constantly (e.g.: for each semester) and completed directly by the mentors. The working procedure of the project consisted of data being sent by post (envelope) the printed files and the project team to introduce them electronically. We consider it would be much more efficient that the mentors are trained to introduce data in the programme database, and these data are handled through an online questionnaire, to be filled-in via internet. Like this, the data regarding a beneficiary would be available immediately and then updated at different time intervals, while the support intervention for each student could be personalized

and better adapted to his/her needs. Moreover, these indicators, measured at the beginning of the project, during it and at its completion could very clearly show the changes in the perception of the student across time, throughout the implementation. It would have been very interesting, for example, to be able to compare the percentage of the students wishing to complete high school and access university when the project started, during it and at its end. Also, it would have been useful to follow the variations (at different points in time) in the answers to questions such as: 'Do you feel embarrassed/uncomfortable to state - in front of a group of unknown people - that you are Roma?' or 'Do your classmates know that you are Roma?' The conclusions of the assessment process would have been much more accurate and this would have allowed for adjusting the project activities in accordance to the set objectives.

We could also add the fact that it would have been useful to have a control group for the duration of the project; a control group consists of students that were not included in the programme, with a similar profile as that of the beneficiaries, but who have not been part of the support activities and for whom the same data as for beneficiaries needed to be collected. Comparing this group with the group of intervention, we could have outlined more exactly the real effect of the support activities carried out as part of the project for the different categories of students – according to their school performance, family status, school status, etc.

10. Project mission management

The interaction we had with the representatives of the project implementation team left on us the impression of a high professionalism. The team organized an effective set of instruments to monitor the progress of the students – database, narrative reports on project implementation, and reporting format on the evolution of the beneficiaries to be filled in by the mentors. For the main stages of the project, support documents were created: press releases, posters and fliers for promoting the project, application form for scholarship candidates and for the mentors, assessment and evaluation forms for the application process, job description for the mentors, support documents for the mentors' training sessions (agenda, learning techniques, group activity report, individual study plan for students, working forms for mentorship tasks), tables summarizing the payments to students and mentors, and report on the evolution of the beneficiaries. According to the project documents, the team completed evaluation field visits for monitoring the implementation stage. From our discussions with mentors and students, we noticed no communication problems or shortcomings in interacting with the project implementation team.

What we propose for the future is emphasizing more the feedback stage in what concerns the activity of the mentor, as seen by the beneficiaries and their families, as well as by the fellow teachers. In this way, the condition of the student can be described more accurately and different

adequate directions of interventions - in particular personalized ones - can be suggested to the mentor.

Furthermore, we consider it desirable for future projects to have a distinct strategy for risk management in the case of major unexpected events occurring in the life of the beneficiaries, and which can affect their school performance – sickness, family break-up, the death of one parent, the emigration of the parents, etc. Such events can be approached individually and the project can include from the beginning a budget designed for risk management. For example, for a beneficiary that is left with some relatives when his parents emigrate, the programme could offer support with accommodation in the dormitory and daily meals; a beneficiary that needs to stay home due to illness could be helped by providing educational support at home, or by receiving a school mediator at home, etc.

Finally, another suggestion for the future concerns a better synchronization of the student selection process, mentor's training sessions and the academic calendar/ start of the mentorship. According to the data on the website of the project (the section dedicated to mentorship) and according to the narrative reports, the first training session for the mentors took place on 4-6 January 2008, while the contract with the students selected in the programme was signed in November (16 November being the deadline for receiving the contracts countersigned by the beneficiaries). If we take into account the fact that the academic year started in September, there was, in practice, a time span of several months after the start of courses when the students did not benefit from the support of the mentors, as the latter ones had not yet received the specialized training on what their activities should consist of. For the students who started their 9th grade then, the support of the mentor would have been crucial, given the inherent difficulties of adaptation when moving from gymnasium to high school. Later on, there were 3 other training sessions for the mentors (31 October – 2 November 2008, 9-11 October 2009, and 8-9 October 2010). Of all the sessions, the first 3 were focused on ensuring a proper mentorship quality (organizing mentorship activities, activities for students, information and knowledge about Roma culture etc.), and the latter one rather concentrated on collecting feedback and bringing adjustments to the programme. In this context, we consider that the best way to proceed would be to organize training sessions for mentors (like the first 3 organized in the programme) before the start of the project or in its first 6 months, and the feedback session at the end of the first implementation year. Still, we need to take into account that the training calendar was determined, to a certain extent, by the delay in receiving sufficient candidatures for this job following the first call for applications, several other calls being needed in order to complete the team of mentors (this process ended in December 2008).

Conclusions and Recommendations to improve the programme in the future

1st Conclusion: The assessment data show that the implemented project has generally been helpful to most of the beneficiaries, as a real support to offset the family- and school-related structural disadvantages - 78.7% of the students selected in the programme have graduated or are still enrolled in secondary education at the end of the project; if we exclude the beneficiaries who are still studying, we reach a percentage of 73.5% of beneficiaries who have completed upper secondary education, namely high schools (i.e. students in university, students in post-secondary education, high school graduates who passed the baccalaureate exam); by comparison, in the 2008-2009 academic year, the total share of young people who completed high school was 72.8%; the programme also proved its utility for reduction of scholar absenteeism rate among beneficiaries – in the 2st and 3nd year of project implementation mean number of absences dropped with approximatively 4 points as compared to 1st year (from 16 to 12).

2nd Conclusion: The evidence of programme effectiveness is also supported by the analysis of the indicator ‘ratio of pursuing university education among baccalaureate graduates’ for the project beneficiaries who passed the baccalaureate exam in 2009-2010 academic year. Among these, a share of 64.5% made the transition to university, while 10.6% pursued post-secondary education. One can estimate - although we have no official information -, that the same rate for this indicator is the same at national level for students from vulnerable groups or much lower for Roma children (significantly under the 64.5% threshold). According to official data further, the rate of pursuing university education for the baccalaureate graduates was 80.1% in 2009 - 2010 (according to the *Report on the status of national education*, MECTS, 2010);

3rd Conclusion: The GPA of students enrolled in the programme⁴ was of 8.41 in the year prior to programme selection. The overall cumulative grade averages of students in the final completed year before exiting the programme was 8.13. Although there is a decrease of 0.28 points of the average at the time of exiting the programme (compared to the initial GPA), this is explained by the fact that the grades become lower when increasing the education level (the number of completed classes), namely the difference between upper secondary and lower secondary education is sharper. Therefore one can assess that the original target of the project to have the GPA higher with 0.5 points for the pool of project beneficiaries when compared to that

⁴ In the database of the implementer the beneficiaries selected in the fourth round – the 2010 -2011 academic year (33 beneficiaries) were not included. It was rightly considered that it would have been unrealistic to compare the results of these beneficiaries selected in the programme in the last year with the results of their 8th grade. Moreover there were the cases of some beneficiaries who, after being selected in the programme, did not attend school at the beginning of the academic year – for these students we do not have the final graduation average for comparison purposes.

of their final year before their selection in the programme was, to a certain extent, too ambitious. Moreover, it is arguable whether the overall GPA is the best predictor of students' attainment and progress in education, once they completed their secondary education: we tend to consider the grades received for the mandatory subjects at the baccalaureate exam a better predictor in this sense. Using the GPA as monitoring benchmark of student's attainment, the student effort tends to dissipate, as in the GPA the grades of other easier subjects (i.e. sports, music, etc.) are included as well, thus bringing no added value to the student's development after graduation. We rather prefer a student with an overall average of 5 in sports, but with a GPA of 8 in mathematics and Romanian language as baccalaureate exam subjects. Therefore we consider that the entrance threshold for the programme should be the GPA for the subjects that are compulsory for the baccalaureate exam, in addition to the GPA.

4th Conclusion: From the students selected in the first three rounds of the project a total number of 118 (38.7%) had at least a similar or higher GPA with the one obtained in the previous academic year before their inclusion in the programme. The analyses carried out have shown that these students already tend to continue their education and attend university. An indicator of project success is the fact that students who have stayed longer in the project (namely those selected in the 1st and 2nd round) have decreased their final year GPAs to a lesser extent than those entering the programme at a later point, when their GPA is compared to the one they obtained prior to entering the programme. Thus, in the case of those selected in the first year, the decrease of GPA during the last academic year was of only 0.23 points, for the ones enrolled in the project in the 2nd round of 0.45 points and finally, for the ones enrolled in the 3rd round the GPA average decrease was of 0.7 points.

1st Recommendation: Based on these results, it is desirable to continue the project in the future, while including the lessons learnt and the best practices drawn from the first experience of implementation in order to increase its effectiveness.

2nd Recommendation: At this point, we consider the following as a more realistic and effective project objective aimed at ensuring the transition to university: all students included in the programme should meet a minimum GPA threshold of 7.50 (regardless of their GPA obtained in the academic year prior to entering the programme) plus a minimum threshold for the annual grade average obtained throughout project at the compulsory subjects of the baccalaureate exam - thus the intervention is focused on high school graduation with baccalaureate diploma, as a prerequisite for further studies in university;

5th Conclusion: The selection process was paramount in influencing the school attainment of the students selected in the programme – a larger number of applications would have been desirable in the first round. The methods of promoting the project and stimulating submission of applications consisting by posters/ fliers distributed in schools, presentation of the programme at different events or on the internet seem to have had a rather weak impact. A more

effective (and efficient) selection proved to be the one employing the network of mentors (in rounds 2, 3 and 4 of the project).

3rd Recommendation: We recommend for the future an active inclusion of mentors in the process of attracting potential beneficiaries and ante posing the selection process of mentors so as to complete it before the selection of students.

6th Conclusion: The assessment undertaken has shown that mentoring was more effective for increasing student performance than the scholarship itself; the stipend had a positive impact especially among students with average grades when entering the programme, who have been more interested in completing high-school and attending university but have had a difficult social condition, and those who are constantly forced to spend money in order to attend school (for transportation, rent, boarding, etc.). The additional preparation hours provided due to the project have had high efficiency among all students.

4th Recommendation: It is desirable that the school overtime preparation in the year preceding the baccalaureate exam become a fundamental intervention pillar of the project.

5th Recommendation: We consider useful the opportunity to review the scholarship granting criteria including also social factors together with educational attainment and performance criteria. More specifically, our suggestion is to analyze whether it is appropriate or not for the project objectives that the scholarship is awarded only to students who are in a dire social need (families at risk of poverty, students spending money constantly on transportation to/from school, for rent, boarding, etc.), students who aspire to continue their studies in faculty and meet a minimum threshold of education attainment (defined according to GPA the academic year prior to entering the programme). This does not mean the exclusion of Roma students with good or very good financial situation and high educational attainment from the programme, but for the later it would be more appropriate to benefit from other types of support such as mentoring, participation in training events and promotion of Roma identity, purchase of books with specific themes related to Roma issues, etc. Another solution would be to provide scholarship for those students with high educational attainment and good social condition in a competitive manner, for instance, only for the first 10% with the highest grade averages for subjects such as Romanian language and mathematics, as competition is an incentive for high performance in education. Awarding scholarships for all students with high GPAs who, at the same time, enjoy a good social condition does not work as an incentive for increasing school attainment or preventing the negative effects of the social condition on educational achievement.

7th Conclusion: The issue of promoting the assuming and expression of Roma identity was included in the project implementation plan and some beneficiaries even recognized and expressed their Roma identity publicly once they were included in the project. However this issue should be emphasized more in the future.

6th Recommendation: It would be welcome to additionally advise students on their Roma identity by specialized trainers; it would also be desirable to systematically organize discussions on this subject in class with the classmates, teachers and mentors. In this context, it is preferable that the mentors are familiar with the educational system and with the Roma culture.

8th Conclusion: Based on the research we conducted, we pointed out that the interaction / collaboration between beneficiaries on the one hand, and the civic activism, on the other hand, were not stimulated enough in the project. There are very few cases where project beneficiaries knew each other as part of the project and subsequently kept in contact after its completion. Moreover, only few beneficiaries became active in Roma civic organizations – out of the 156 beneficiaries questioned, only 20 (12.8%) are members of a Roma students association.

7th Recommendation: In similar projects it would be useful to systematically organize events (i.e. summer schools, training sessions, etc.), involving the participation of as many beneficiaries as possible, and with the participation of representatives of active Roma NGOs. Thus, beneficiaries are offered the direct opportunity to become active members of Roma civic organizations.

8th Recommendation: It would be welcome to analyse the civic activism solution as a additional criterion for the beneficiaries to continue the project; civic values can also represent an additional selection criterion for students to be included in the programme.

9th Conclusion: The mentor - parents relationship has rarely evolved to a close partnership for the education of the children, both parts sharing the responsibility for it: some parents are not interested enough, some mentors did not insist enough, preferring only to inform the parents and to rather intervene through discussing with teachers and students. It is clear, however, that the student's family / legal guardians were better informed on the student's educational status in school during the project, as the mentors were aware of the fundamental role played by the family in the student's education.

10th Conclusion: The student – school – teacher relationship has significantly improved following the project's implementation; students were provided with the possibility to receive extra information on classes and subjects and to ask for clarification when in doubt. The inappropriate behaviour of some teachers, when manifested, was corrected by the intervention of mentors. The inclusion in the programme has not altered - only with rare exceptions - the degree of integration of the student in the class team. There have been frequent cases of students who have assumed their ethnicity in front of classmates after becoming part of the programme.

9th Recommendation: It would be appropriate for the future that teachers and classmates are explained, in some systematic discussions, why the Roma statute entitles the Roma students to be supported through scholarships, tutoring and mentoring. The educational path of a Roma student faces more social obstacles, which are beyond his/her control, as compared to the other

students from the ethnic or social majority. These issues should be detailed further on in class and classmates and the teachers in general should be made aware of it.

11th Conclusion: An aspect requiring improvement in future similar projects is the project assessment and monitoring.

10th Recommendation: It would be desirable to organize the system of result monitoring and evaluation in a more detailed and sound manner, and to set it up prior to starting the project; one should avoid the fragmented evaluation at different stages of project implementation for the future. We recommend continuous assessment – ex-ante, ongoing and ex-post assessment - and the use of a control group for comparison purposes; the ongoing assessment should be a mandatory component of the project. The centralized data of the project must include the student family and social condition, values, etc., school- and education-related aspirations of parents and students, material and financial difficulties faced by the student, health condition, etc., and these data should be collected regularly.

12th Conclusion: Career counselling (professional path after graduation, opportunities for higher education, etc.) was an issue tackled rather marginally (non-systematically) in the mentor – student relation, as this was not part of the mentor’s job description; emphasis was placed on the student's academic performance in upper secondary education. However, some mentors provided career counselling to students at their own initiative. We encountered several cases of graduates who failed to complete the enrolment for higher education because they were missing all papers, they were not able to submit their application for the special Roma places on time or they succeeded in entering higher education on the special positions for Roma although they would have fulfilled the conditions to enrol on regular places (thus, they have occupied a place which could have been used by another Roma high school graduate in need of it).

11th Recommendation: An important issue to stress more in future similar projects is related to specialized career counselling (both for the student and for his/her family). It must be customized to the individual student situation, starting from the data collected constantly in the project. The contract concluded with the mentor and his job description should include the responsibility to advise and assist the student in detail, even after graduation, in identifying the appropriate/ desired specialization and faculty and throughout the process of enrolment in higher education.

13th Conclusion: Project management can be appreciated, without any doubt, in a positive note. The team designed a set of effective tools (database, narrative reports on project implementation, etc.) to monitor the achieved progress , and adequate supporting documents have been elaborated (i.e. press releases, posters and billboards to promote the project, scholarship registration forms for students / mentors, job description for mentors, etc.) for the relevant stages of the project. According to project documents, the project team paid evaluation visits in the field to assess the project implementation status. From our discussions with mentors

and students, we noticed no communication problems or deficiencies of any kind in the relationship with the project team.

12th Recommendation: With regard to the implementation of similar projects in the future, we would recommend a wider emphasis on collecting feedback on the work of the mentor from beneficiaries and their families, as well as from the teachers of the students. Thus, the student educational condition can be described more accurately and adequate, personalized guidelines for intervention (based on the needs of the student) can be identified.

13th Recommendation: We consider desirable in future similar projects to include a separate strategy for the management of major risks, consisting of major unforeseen events that can occur in the life of the student and that could have a negative impact on their educational attainment – i.e. illness, family break-up, death of a parent, emigration of parents, etc.. These events can be addressed individually; the project may foresee from the very beginning the creation of a budget for such situations. For example, a beneficiary left with his/her relatives after both parents emigrated could be assisted by providing accommodation and daily meals at a boarding school, a project beneficiary staying at home due to illness can be assisted through educational support delivered at home by means of a school mediator paying professional visits to the student's house, etc..

14th Recommendation: Another suggestion for the future concerns the need for a better synchronization between the selection of beneficiaries, the training sessions for the mentors and the school calendar (the start of the mentorship). It would be ideal that the training sessions for mentors take place before the start of the academic year in the first year of project implementation or within 6 months after that, so that the effective mentoring activities coincide with the school calendar; the mentors' training and the collection of information on the beneficiaries should both reflect adequately the support granted to the students.

Annexes

Data regarding project promotion among potential beneficiaries

May 2007:

- 20 May 2007: Project presentation at OTV National TV Station, made by Prof. Gheorghe Sarau (Ministry of Research and Education).
- 23 May 2007: launching the project on rom_link and sarau_rromi electronic groups;
- 23 May: cooperation with Romani CRISS for support in disseminating the project through the education councilors, school mediators and health mediators;
- 24 May 2007: sending the launching package to 12 County School Inspectorates (in attention of the Roma School Inspectors): Cluj, Salaj, Bihor, Satu-Mare, Maramures, Covasna, Harghita, Alba, Brasov, Sibiu, Mures, Bistrita-Nasaud.
- 25 – 26 May: Project presentation made by Prof. Gheorghe Sarau in front of the Romani Language teachers at the Summer School Olanesti;
- 28 – 29 May: Direct communication (phone) and e-mail with the Roma Experts in the County Halls from the 12 targeted counties (following the press releases sent by the Roma Experts in County Halls, announcements of the scholarships programme appeared in the local newspapers in Satu-Mare, Sibiu, Bihor and Alba). They also disseminated the information within the periodical meetings of the local mixed groups consisted of representatives of Public institutions, Roma leaders, Roma school mediators, Roma health mediators.
- 28 May 2007: Project presentation made by the Project Manager within the Amare programme, displayed at the local TV stations in Transylvania region in June 2007.

June 2007:

- Sending out by mail launching package at Secondary Schools and High Schools in the 12 targeted counties. (*see annexes 1 and 2*)
- Working meeting for elaborating the complex data base for registering and tracking the direct beneficiaries' progress.
- Project announcement made by the implementing team (Project Coordinators) during the "Community Development" training sessions delivered for Roma community leaders and public authorities from urban and rural communities in Cluj, Salaj, Bihor,

Covasna, Harghita, Alba, Mures, within the Phare Scheme “*Strengthening Capacity and Partnership Building to Improve Roma Condition and Perception*”.

- Dissemination of the scholarships project made by: Roma School Inspectors, Roma school mediators, Romani language teachers, Roma experts in the County Halls, school staff from the targeted counties.

July 2007:

- Project announcement made by the implementing team (Project Coordinators) during the “Community Development” training sessions delivered for Roma community leaders and public authorities from urban and rural communities in Satu-Mare, Maramures, Brasov, Sibiu, Bistrita-Nasaud, within the Phare Scheme “*Strengthening Capacity and Partnership Building to Improve Roma Condition and Perception*”
- Dissemination of the scholarships project made by: Roma School Inspectors, Roma school mediators, Romani language teachers, Roma experts in the County Halls, school staff from the targeted counties.

August 2007:

- Elaborating and printing of 500 posters for re announcing the scholarships project in High Schools;

September 2007:

- Re-announcement of the project – posters had been sent to:
 - Over 360 schools in the 12 selected counties;
 - County School Inspectorates in the 12 counties;
 - Roma experts in Prefectures;
 - To partners: Ruhama Foundation double posted the posters in Bihor county;
 - Romani language teachers;
- Communication with High Schools to check if they received and posted the posters;

Analysis tables – correlation between relevant variables featuring beneficiaries results

Table 11. GPAs dynamics - comparison between the students' GPAs in the academic year prior entering the programme vs. GPAs in the academic year before exiting the programme

		GPAs for all students categories in the academic year prior entering the programme	No. beneficiaries	GPAs for all students categories in the last academic year before exiting the programme	No. beneficiaries	Difference between the initial and final GPA value
Amongst the beneficiaries of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd round of the project*		8.41	295	8.13	295	0.28
Gender	females	8.41	193	8.21	193	0.2
	males	8.4	112	7.99	112	0.41
Year and round of students enrolment in the programme	1 (2007)	8.26	242	8.03	242	0.23
	2 (2008)	9.02	56	8.57	56	0.45
	3 (2009)	8.65	7	7.95	7	0.7
Status in programme	Beneficiaries having completed the programme	8.48	233	8.32	233	0.16
	Beneficiaries having not completed the programme	8.14	72	7.44	72	0.7
Beneficiary's family type	Dual parent	8.42	238	8.17	238	0.25
	Single parent	8.38	65	7.99	65	0.39
Accommodation type	Boarding, lodging	8.7	15	8.39	15	0.31
	Local	8.29	127	7.94	127	0.35
	Transportation (plying)	8.47	162	8.25	162	0.22
School type	High school	8.49	218	8.33	218	0.16
	SAP	8.2	86	7.63	86	0.57
Current education status	Secondary studies, and still in education	8.83	44	8.18	44	0.65
	Upper secondary graduates without Baccaureate	8.27	76	7.97	76	0.30
	Student in tertiary education	8.39	48	8.71	48	-0.32
	(school drop out, law education attainment, etc.)	8.15	72	7.42	72	0.73
	Post-secondary education	7.99	5	8.36	5	-0.37
	S/he graduated upper secondary education with Baccaureate diploma but not enrolled in tertiary education	8.59	60	8.57	60	0.02
Category the student is enrolled in by his/her GPA in the previous academic year prior to his/her enrollment into	< 8	7.55	84	7.51	84	0.04
	Between 8 and 8.50	8.28	78	7.96	78	0.32
	Between 8.50 and 9	8.75	74	8.39	74	0.36
	> 9	9.37	59	8.91	59	0.46

REMARK: The Beneficiaries selected in the last round (the 2010-20101 academic year) have not been included in our analysis, as their dynamics being considered as irrelevant due to the fact that they were contained in the project for only 1 (one) year. Moreover, for 10 beneficiaries previously selected, there have been no available data on their GPAs (i.e. they did not attend school in the first academic year following their selection into the programme, etc.).

Table 12. Distribution of students by attainment of project's target (without pupils selected in the last year of project implementation, 2010-2011)

Distribution of students by attainment of project's target

	Frequency	Share in total	Cumulative Percent
Previous or final GPA unknown	10	3.3	3.3
Students whose GPA dropped after entering the programme	177	58	61.3
Students whose GPA dropped with less than 0.5 points	70	23	84.3
Students whose GPA raised with 0.5 - target reached	48	15.7	100
Total	305	100	

Table 13. The current education status of selected students in the project. N=338

	Frequency	Share in total	Cumulative Percent
Post-secondary education, N=5	5	1.5%	14.4
Students in tertiary education, N=48	48	14.2%	23.6
S/he graduated with Baccalaureate but not enrolled in tertiary education, n=64	64	18.9%	15.7
Secondary studies, but still in education, N=66	66	19.5%	22.3
Withdrawn scholarship (school drop-out, low attainment, etc.) N=72	72	21.3%	1.6
S/he graduated secondary education but without Baccalaureate diploma, N=83	83	24.6%	19.7
Total	338	100.0%	

Table 14. Association between students' categories by project's objective attainment and current GPAs

results categories * studies status Crosstabulation

			statusstudii							Total
			Upper secondary studies, still in education	Upper secondary education graduates without Baccalaureate diploma	Student in tertiary education	Scholarship withdrawn (low attainment, residence changes outside the eligible area, etc)	Post-secondary education	S/he graduate upper secondary education but not enrolled in tertiary education	School drop out	
Results categories	Students whose GPA drop after entering the programme	Count	37	54	12	20	1	26	27	177
		% within results categories	20.9%	30.5%	6.8%	11.3%	.6%	14.7%	15.3%	100.0%
	Students whose GPA drop but under 0.5 points	Count	6	9	21	2	1	18	13	70
		% within results categories	8.6%	12.9%	30.0%	2.9%	1.4%	25.7%	18.6%	100.0%
	Students whose GPA raised > 0.5 points	Count	1	11	15	0	3	16	2	48
		% within results categories	2.1%	22.9%	31.3%	.0%	6.3%	33.3%	4.2%	100.0%
Total	Count		44	74	48	22	5	60	42	295
	% within results categories		14.9%	25.1%	16.3%	7.5%	1.7%	20.3%	14.2%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	70.845 ^a	12	.000
Likelihood Ratio	76.902	12	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.512	1	.061
N of Valid Cases	295		

a. 4 cells (19.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .81.

Table 15. Association between gender and project's outcome category

		Students categories outcomes			Total
		Students' whose GPAs drop after entering the programme	Student whose GPAs drop but bellow 0.5 points	Students' whose GPAs raise with at least 0.5 points	
Students gender (no.) Males	Count	75	24	11	110
	% within students gender (no.)	68.2%	21.8%	10.0%	100.0%
Females	Count	102	46	37	185
	% within students gender (no.)	55.1%	24.9%	20.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	177	70	48	295
	% within students gender (no.)	60.0%	23.7%	16.3%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.466 ^a	2	.039
Likelihood Ratio	6.757	2	.034
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.390	1	.011
N of Valid Cases	295		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 17.90.

Table 16. Association between admittance round in the project and project's outcomes category

		Students categories outcomes			Total	
		Students' whose GPAs drop after entering the programme	Student whose GPAs drop but by less than 0.5 points	Students' whose GPAs raise with at least 0.5 points		
Admittance round	Round 1	Count	135	53	46	234
		% within admittance round	57.7%	22.6%	19.7%	100.0%
	Round 2	Count	36	16	2	54
		% within admittance round	66.7%	29.6%	3.7%	100.0%
	Round 3	Count	6	1	0	7
		% within admittance round	85.7%	14.3%	.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	177	70	48	295	
	% within admittance round	60.0%	23.7%	16.3%	100.0%	

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10.580 ^a	4	.032
Likelihood Ratio	13.911	4	.008
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.955	1	.008
N of Valid Cases	295		

a. 3 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.14.

Table 17. Association between students' family type and project's outcome category

			Students categories outcomes			Total
			Students' whose GPAs drop after entering the programme	Student whose GPAs drop but by less than 0.5 points	Students' whose GPAs raise with at least 0.5 points	
Family type (no. of members)	Dual parent family	Count	137	54	42	233
		% within Family type (no. of members)	58.8%	23.2%	18.0%	100.0%
	Single parent family	Count	38	16	6	60
		% within Family type (no. of members)	63.3%	26.7%	10.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	175	70	48	293
		% within Family type (no. of members)	59.7%	23.9%	16.4%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.284 ^a	2	.319
Likelihood Ratio	2.506	2	.286
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.309	1	.253
N of Valid Cases	293		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 9.83.

Table 18. Association between the beneficiaries' status in the programme and project's outcome category

			Students categories outcomes			Total
			Students' whose GPAs drop after entering the programme	Student whose GPAs drop but by less than 0.5 points	Students' whose GPAs raise with at least 0.5 points	
Actives and inactive students	Active students	Count % within Active and inactive students	131 56.7%	55 23.8%	45 19.5%	231 100.0%
	Inactive students	Count % within Active and inactive students	46 71.9%	15 23.4%	3 4.7%	64 100.0%
Total		Count % within Active and inactive students	177 60.0%	70 23.7%	48 16.3%	295 100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.664 ^a	2	.013
Likelihood Ratio	10.576	2	.005
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.844	1	.005
N of Valid Cases	295		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 10.41.

Table 19. Association between accommodation types for beneficiaries and outcomes categories

			Students categories outcomes			Total
			Students' whose GPAs drop after entering the programme	Student whose GPAs drop but by less than 0.5 points	Students' whose GPAs raise with at least 0.5 points	
Accommodation type (no.)	Boarding or lodging	Count	11	3	1	15
		% within accommodation type (no.)	73.3%	20.0%	6.7%	100.0%
	In the same locality with school	Count	78	21	23	122
		% within accommodation type (no.)	63.9%	17.2%	18.9%	100.0%
	Plying	Count	88	45	24	157
		% within accommodation type (no.)	56.1%	28.7%	15.3%	100.0%
Total		Count	177	69	48	294
		% within accommodation type (no.)	60.2%	23.5%	16.3%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.515 ^a	4	.164
Likelihood Ratio	6.814	4	.146
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.161	1	.281
N of Valid Cases	294		

a. 2 cells (22.2%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.45.

Table 20. Association between the father's occupational status and project's outcome category

			Outcomes categories			Total
			Students' whose GPAs drop after entering the programme	Student whose GPAs drop but by less than 0.5 points	Students' whose GPAs raise with at least 0.5 points	
Father's occupation	Employed	Count	55	22	20	97
		% within father's occupation	56.7%	22.7%	20.6%	100.0%
	Unemployed	Count	115	47	28	190
		% within father's occupation	60.5%	24.7%	14.7%	100.0%
Total		Count	170	69	48	287
		% within father's occupation	59.2%	24.0%	16.7%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.600 ^a	2	.449
Likelihood Ratio	1.560	2	.458
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.042	1	.307
N of Valid Cases	287		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 16.22.

Table 21. Association between the mother's occupational status and project's outcome category

			Students categories outcomes			Total
			Students' whose GPAs drop after entering the programme	Student whose GPAs drop but by less than 0.5 points	Students' whose GPAs raise with at least 0.5 points	
Mother's occupation	Employed	Count	45	21	19	85
		% within mother's occupation	52.9%	24.7%	22.4%	100.0%
	Unemployed	Count	129	49	29	207
		% within mother's occupation	62.3%	23.7%	14.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	174	70	48	292
		% within mother's occupation	59.6%	24.0%	16.4%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.468 ^a	2	.177
Likelihood Ratio	3.343	2	.188
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.285	1	.070
N of Valid Cases	292		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 13.97.

Table 22. Association between family size and outcomes category

			Students categories outcomes			Total
			Students' whose GPAs drop after entering the programme	Student whose GPAs drop but by less than 0.5 points	Students' whose GPAs raise with at least 0.5 points	
No. of children in family	Under 3 children	Count	131	56	35	222
		% within No. of children in family	59.0%	25.2%	15.8%	100.0%
	Over 3 children	Count	43	14	13	70
		% within No. of children in family	61.4%	20.0%	18.6%	100.0%
Total		Count	174	70	48	292
		% within No. of children in family	59.6%	24.0%	16.4%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.913 ^a	2	.633
Likelihood Ratio	.931	2	.628
Linear-by-Linear Association	.001	1	.970
N of Valid Cases	292		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 11.51.

Table 23. Association between school types and outcomes categories

			Students categories outcomes			Total
			Students' whose GPAs drop after entering the programme	Student whose GPAs drop but by less than 0.5 points	Students' whose GPAs raise with at least 0.5 points	
School type (no.)	High school	Count	114	54	42	210
		% within school type (no.)	54.3%	25.7%	20.0%	100.0%
	SAP	Count	62	16	6	84
		% within school type (no.)	73.8%	19.0%	7.1%	100.0%
Total		Count	176	70	48	294
		% within school type (no.)	59.9%	23.8%	16.3%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.015 ^a	2	.004
Likelihood Ratio	11.964	2	.003
Linear-by-Linear Association	10.954	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	294		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 13.71.

Table 24. Association between the GPA in the academic year prior entering the programme and project's outcome category

			Students categories outcomes			Total
			Students' whose GPAs drop after entering the programme	Student whose GPAs drop but by less than 0.5 points	Students' whose GPAs raise with at least 0.5 points	
Initial GPA < 8	Count	44	21	19	84	
	% within Initial GPA / categories	52.4%	25.0%	22.6%	100.0%	
Between 8 and 8.50	Count	46	14	18	78	
	% within Initial GPA / categories	59.0%	17.9%	23.1%	100.0%	
Between 8.50 and 9	Count	47	18	9	74	
	% within Initial GPA / categories	63.5%	24.3%	12.2%	100.0%	
> 9	Count	40	17	2	59	
	% within Initial GPA / categories	67.8%	28.8%	3.4%	100.0%	
Total	Count	177	70	48	295	
	% within Initial GPA / categories	60.0%	23.7%	16.3%	100.0%	

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	14.471 ^a	6	.025
Likelihood Ratio	17.038	6	.009
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.585	1	.003
N of Valid Cases	295		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 9.60.

Table 25. Monthly scholarships situation

School year	1 st Cohort			2 nd Cohort			3 rd Cohort			4 th Cohort		
	1st install	2 nd install	3 rd install	1st install	2 nd install	3 rd install	1st install	2 nd install	3 rd install	1st install	2 nd install	3 rd install
2007 - 2008	237 sch x4months = 948 sch	234 sch x3month =702sch	232 sch x3month =696sch									
Total	2346 monthly scholarships											
2008 - 2009	215 sch x4month = 860 sch	195 sch x3month= 585 sch	189 sch x3month = 567 sch		55 sch x5 month = 275 sch	54 sch x5 month = 270 sch						
Total	2557 monthly scholarships											
2009 - 2010	148 sch x4month = 592sch	139 sch x3month= 417 sch	139 sch x3month = 417 sch	52 sch x4month = 208 sch	49 sch x3 month = 147 sch	49 sch x3 month = 147 sch		7 sch x5 month = 35 sch	7 sch x5 month = 35 sch			
Total	1998 monthly scholarships											
2010 - 2011	80 sch x4month = 320 sch	79 sch x3month= 237 sch	79 sch x3month = 237 sch	39 sch x4month = 156 sch	38 sch x3 month = 114 sch	38 sch x3 month = 114 sch	6 sch x4month = 24 sch	5 sch x3 month = 15 sch	5 sch x3 month = 15 sch	33 sch x4month = 132 sch	33 sch x3 month = 99 sch	33 sch x3 month = 99 sch
Total	1562 monthly scholarships											
Overall total	8463 monthly scholarships											

Table 26. Association between gender and the current education status

			The current education status						Total	
			Upper secondary studies, still in education. N=66	Upper secondary education graduates without Baccalaureate diploma. N=82	Tertiary education students. N=57	Scholarship withdrawn (low attainment, residence changes outside the eligible area, etc). N=23	Beneficiaries enrolled in post-secondary education. N=4	S/he graduate upper secondary education but not enrolled in tertiary education. N=57		School drop-out. N=49
Gender	Female	Count	36	42	37	12	3	37	43	210
		% within Gender	17.1%	20.0%	17.6%	5.7%	1.4%	17.6%	20.5%	100.0%
	Male	Count	30	40	20	11	1	20	6	128
		% within Gender	23.4%	31.3%	15.6%	8.6%	.8%	15.6%	4.7%	100.0%
Total		Count	66	82	57	23	4	57	49	338
		% within Gender	19.5%	24.3%	16.9%	6.8%	1.2%	16.9%	14.5%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	21.063 ^a	6	.002
Likelihood Ratio	23.382	6	.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	15.689	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	338		

a. 2 cells (14.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.51.

Table 27. Association between type of residence and the current education status

			The current education status						Total	
			Upper secondary studies, still in education. N=66	Upper secondary education graduates without Baccalaureate diploma. N=82	Tertiary education students. N=57	Scholarship withdrawn (low attainment, residence changes outside the eligible area, etc). N=23	Beneficiaries enrolled in post-secondary education. N=4	S/he graduate upper secondary education but not enrolled in tertiary education. N=57		School drop-out. N=49
Type of residence	Rural	Count	26	34	28	14	3	35	19	159
		% within Type of residence	16.4%	21.4%	17.6%	8.8%	1.9%	22.0%	11.9%	100.0%
	Urban	Count	40	48	29	9	1	22	30	179
		% within Type of residence	22.3%	26.8%	16.2%	5.0%	.6%	12.3%	16.8%	100.0%
Total		Count	66	82	57	23	4	57	49	338
		% within Type of residence	19.5%	24.3%	16.9%	6.8%	1.2%	16.9%	14.5%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.756 ^a	6	.068
Likelihood Ratio	11.852	6	.065
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.214	1	.271
N of Valid Cases	338		

a. 2 cells (14.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.88.

Table 28. Association between admittance round and the current education status

			The current education status							Total
			Upper secondary studies, still in education	Upper secondary education graduates without Baccalaureate diploma	Tertiary education students	Scholarship withdrawn(low attainment, residence changes outside the eligible area, etc)	Beneficiaries enrolled in post-secondary education	S/he graduate upper secondary education but not enrolled in tertiary education	School drop out	
Admittance round	Round 1	Count	11	72	44	16	3	51	45	242
		% within Admittance round	4.5%	29.8%	18.2%	6.6%	1.2%	21.1%	18.6%	100.0%
	Round 2	Count	30	4	7	6	1	4	4	56
		% within Admittance round	53.6%	7.1%	12.5%	10.7%	1.8%	7.1%	7.1%	100.0%
	Round 3	Count	3	0	3	1	0	0	0	7
		% within Admittance round	42.9%	.0%	42.9%	14.3%	.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	Round 4	Count	22	6	3	0	0	2	0	33
		% within Admittance round	66.7%	18.2%	9.1%	.0%	.0%	6.1%	.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	66	82	57	23	4	57	49	338
		% within Admittance round	19.5%	24.3%	16.9%	6.8%	1.2%	16.9%	14.5%	100.0%

Table 29. Association between family type and the current education status

			The current education status							Total
			Upper secondary studies, still in education	Upper secondary education graduates without Baccalaureate diploma	Tertiary education students	Scholarship withdrawn(low attainment, residence changes outside the eligible area, etc)	Beneficiaries enrolled in post-secondary education	S/he graduate upper secondary education but not enrolled in tertiary education	School drop out	
Family type (no. of members)	Dual parent family	Count % within Family type (no. of members)	32 13.4%	66 27.7%	43 18.1%	17 7.1%	4 1.7%	46 19.3%	30 12.6%	238 100.0%
	Single parent family	Count % within Family type (no. of members)	11 16.9%	10 15.4%	10 15.4%	6 9.2%	0 .0%	9 13.8%	19 29.2%	65 100.0%
Total		Count % within Family type (no. of members)	43 14.2%	76 25.1%	53 17.5%	23 7.6%	4 1.3%	55 18.2%	49 16.2%	303 100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	14.706 ^a	6	.023
Likelihood Ratio	14.765	6	.022
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.416	1	.036
N of Valid Cases	303		

a. 3 cells (21.4%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .86.

Table 30. Association between accommodation type and the current education status

			The current education status							Total
			Upper secondary studies, still in education	Upper secondary education graduates without Baccalaureate diploma	Tertiary education students	Scholarship withdrawn(low attainment, residence changes outside the eligible area, etc)	Beneficiaries enrolled in post-secondary education	S/he graduate upper secondary education but not enrolled in tertiary education	School drop out	
Accommodation type (no.)	Boarding or lodging	Count % within Accommodation type (no.)	1 6.7%	4 26.7%	2 13.3%	1 6.7%	0 .0%	5 33.3%	2 13.3%	15 100%
	In the same locality with school	Count % within Accommodation type (no.)	21 16.5%	36 28.3%	25 19.7%	6 4.7%	1 .8%	14 11.0%	24 18.9%	127 100%
	Plying	Count % within Accommodation type (no.)	21 13.0%	36 22.2%	27 16.7%	16 9.9%	3 1.9%	36 22.2%	23 14.2%	162 100%
Total		Count % within Accommodation type (no.)	43 14.1%	76 25.0%	54 17.8%	23 7.6%	4 1.3%	55 18.1%	49 16.1%	304 100%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	14.239 ^a	12	.286
Likelihood Ratio	14.751	12	.255
Linear-by-Linear Association	.239	1	.625
N of Valid Cases	304		

a. 9 cells (42.9%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .20.

Table 31. Association between father's occupation and the current education status

			The current education status						Total	
			Upper secondary studies, still in education	Upper secondary education graduates without Baccalaureate diploma	Tertiary education students	Scholarship withdrawn (low attainment, residence changes outside the eligible area, etc)	Beneficiaries enrolled in post-secondary education	S/he graduate upper secondary education but not enrolled in tertiary education		School drop out
Father's occupation	Employed	Count	16	22	21	8	0	19	12	98
		% within Father's occupation	16.3%	22.4%	21.4%	8.2%	.0%	19.4%	12.2%	100.0%
	Unemployed	Count	23	54	32	15	4	35	36	199
		% within Father's occupation	11.6%	27.1%	16.1%	7.5%	2.0%	17.6%	18.1%	100.0%
Total		Count	39	76	53	23	4	54	48	297
		% within Father's occupation	13.1%	25.6%	17.8%	7.7%	1.3%	18.2%	16.2%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.262 ^a	6	.395
Likelihood Ratio	7.505	6	.277
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.180	1	.277
N of Valid Cases	297		

a. 2 cells (14.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.32.

Table 32. Association between admittance round and the current education status for the graduate students from 2010/2011 school year

Cross tab

		The current education status				Total	
		Upper secondary education graduates without Baccalaureate diploma	Tertiary education students	Beneficiaries enrolled in post-secondary education	S/he graduated upper secondary education but has not yet enrolled in tertiary education		
Selection round	Round 1	Count	20	26	3	11	60
		% within Selection round	33.3%	43.3%	5.0%	18.3%	100.0%
	Round 2	Count	1	5	1	2	9
		% within Selection round	11.1%	55.6%	11.1%	22.2%	100.0%
Total		Count	21	31	4	13	69
		% within Selection round	30.4%	44.9%	5.8%	18.8%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.097 ^a	3	.553
Likelihood Ratio	2.342	3	.505
Linear-by-Linear Association	.785	1	.376
N of Valid Cases	69		

a. 5 cells (62.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .52.

Table 33. Association between family type (no. of members) and the current education status for the graduate students from 2010/2011 school year

Cross tabulation

			The current education status				Total
			Upper secondary education graduates without Baccalaureate diploma	Tertiary education students	Beneficiaries enrolled in post-secondary education	S/he graduate upper secondary education but not enrolled in tertiary education	
Family type (no. of members)	Dual parent family	Count % within Family type (no. of members)	19 32.2%	28 47.5%	4 6.8%	8 13.6%	59 100.0%
	Single parent family	Count % within Family type (no. of members)	2 20.0%	3 30.0%	0 .0%	5 50.0%	10 100.0%
Total		Count % within Family type (no. of members)	21 30.4%	31 44.9%	4 5.8%	13 18.8%	69 100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.703 ^a	3	.053
Likelihood Ratio	6.862	3	.076
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.700	1	.030
N of Valid Cases	69		

a. 5 cells (62.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .58.

Table 34. Association between students' gender and the current education status for the graduate students from 2010/2011 school year

Cross tabulation

			The current education status				Total
			Upper secondary education graduates without Baccalaureate diploma	Tertiary education students	Beneficiaries enrolled in post-secondary education	S/he graduate upper secondary education but not enrolled in tertiary education	
Students gender	Females	Count % within Students gender (no.)	8 18.2%	21 47.7%	3 6.8%	12 27.3%	44 100.0%
	Males	Count % within Students gender (no.)	13 52.0%	10 40.0%	1 4.0%	1 4.0%	25 100.0%
Total		Count % within Students gender (no.)	21 30.4%	31 44.9%	4 5.8%	13 18.8%	69 100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.004 ^a	3	.012
Likelihood Ratio	11.909	3	.008
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.976	1	.003
N of Valid Cases	69		

a. 3 cells (37.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.45.

Table 35. Association between accommodation type and the current education status for the graduate students from 2010/2011 school year

			The current education status				Total
			Upper secondary education graduates without Baccalaureate diploma	Tertiary education students	Beneficiaries enrolled in post-secondary education	S/he graduate upper secondary education but not enrolled in tertiary education	
Accommodation type (no.)	Boarding or lodging	Count % within Accommodation type (no.)	1 25.0%	1 25.0%	0 .0%	2 50.0%	4 100.0%
	In the same locality with school	Count % within Accommodation type (no.)	8 25.0%	16 50.0%	1 3.1%	7 21.9%	32 100.0%
	Plying	Count % within Accommodation type (no.)	12 36.4%	14 42.4%	3 9.1%	4 12.1%	33 100.0%
Total		Count % within Accommodation type (no.)	21 30.4%	31 44.9%	4 5.8%	13 18.8%	69 100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.565 ^a	6	.474
Likelihood Ratio	5.306	6	.505
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.873	1	.171
N of Valid Cases	69		

a. 6 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .23.

Table 36. Association between Father's occupation and the current education status for the graduate students from 2010/2011 school year

Cross tabulation

			The current education status				Total
			Upper secondary education graduates without Baccalaureate diploma	Tertiary education students	Beneficiaries enrolled in post-secondary education	S/he graduate upper secondary education but not enrolled in tertiary education	
Father's occupation	Employed	Count % within Father's occupation	4 20.0%	13 65.0%	0 .0%	3 15.0%	20 100.0%
	Unemployed	Count % within Father's occupation	17 35.4%	18 37.5%	4 8.3%	9 18.8%	48 100.0%
Total		Count % within Father's occupation	21 30.9%	31 45.6%	4 5.9%	12 17.6%	68 100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.208 ^a	3	.157
Likelihood Ratio	6.277	3	.099
Linear-by-Linear Association	.108	1	.743
N of Valid Cases	68		

a. 3 cells (37.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.18.

Table 37. Association between mother's occupation and the current education status for the graduate students from 2010/2011 school year

Cross tabulation

			The current education status				Total
			Upper secondary education graduates without Baccalaureate diploma	Tertiary education students	Beneficiaries enrolled in post-secondary education	S/he graduate upper secondary education but not enrolled in tertiary education	
Mother's occupation	Employed	Count	2	13	0	2	17
		% within Mother's occupation	11.8%	76.5%	.0%	11.8%	100.0%
	Unemployed	Count	19	18	4	10	51
		% within Mother's occupation	37.3%	35.3%	7.8%	19.6%	100.0%
Total		Count	21	31	4	12	68
		% within Mother's occupation	30.9%	45.6%	5.9%	17.6%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	9.202 ^a	3	.027
Likelihood Ratio	10.290	3	.016
Linear-by-Linear Association	.117	1	.732
N of Valid Cases	68		

a. 3 cells (37.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.00.

Table 38. Association between type of residence and the current education status for the graduate students from 2010/2011 school year

Cross tabulation

			The current education status				Total
			Upper secondary education graduates without Baccalaureate diploma	Tertiary education students	Beneficiaries enrolled in post-secondary education	S/he graduate upper secondary education but not enrolled in tertiary education	
Type of residence	Rural area	Count	5	16	3	5	29
		% within Type of residence	17.2%	55.2%	10.3%	17.2%	100.0%
	Urban area	Count	16	15	1	8	40
		% within Type of residence	40.0%	37.5%	2.5%	20.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	21	31	4	13	69
		% within Type of residence	30.4%	44.9%	5.8%	18.8%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.882 ^a	3	.117
Likelihood Ratio	6.076	3	.108
Linear-by-Linear Association	.722	1	.396
N of Valid Cases	69		

a. 2 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.68.

Table 39. Association between students' gender and the current education status for the SAP beneficiaries

Students gender (no.) * The current education status Cross tabulation

			The current education status					Total	
			Upper secondary studies, still in education	Upper secondary education graduates without Baccalaureate diploma	Tertiary education students	Scholarship withdrawn (low attainment, residence changes outside the eligible area, etc)	S/he graduate upper secondary education but not enrolled in tertiary education		School drop out
Students gender (no.)	Females	Count % within Students gender (no.)	5 9.6%	17 32.7%	1 1.9%	4 7.7%	3 5.8%	22 42.3%	52 100.0%
	Males	Count % within Students gender (no.)	4 12.1%	21 63.6%	1 3.0%	3 9.1%	1 3.0%	3 9.1%	33 100.0%
Total		Count % within Students gender (no.)	9 10.6%	38 44.7%	2 2.4%	7 8.2%	4 4.7%	25 29.4%	85 100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.492 ^a	5	.029
Likelihood Ratio	13.751	5	.017
Linear-by-Linear Association	11.365	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	85		

a. 7 cells (58.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .78.

Interview guide used during the evaluation process (in Romanian)

TARGET GROUP: students included in the programme "Support for High-School Roma students in Romania".

AREA: rural and urban localities from the following counties: Alba, Cluj, Sibiu, Covasna, Mureş, Bihor and Satu-Mare

PERIOD: May – June 2011

Prezentare intervievator, tema de discuție generală, specificarea detaliilor tehnice - 10 min.

Bună ziua. Numele meu este ..., sunt sociolog și aș dori să aflu câteva aspecte despre experiența ta ca bursier în cadrul programmeului de burse și mentorat implementat de Centrul de Resurse pentru Comunitățile de Romi. Îți adresez, înainte de toate, rugămintea să îmi exprimi părerile cât mai direct și lipsit de prejudecăți. Își precizez că nu există păreri corecte sau greșite, răspunsuri bune sau rele, ne interesează doar părerea ta sinceră vizavi de aspectele pe care le vom discuta; răspunsurile tale sunt foarte importante pentru noi pentru a ne face o imagine reală despre programmeul din care ai făcut parte și cum am putea să îl îmbunătățim în viitor.

Discuția va dura aproximativ jumătate de oră, maxim o oră. Îți solicit acordul, de asemenea, de a înregistra discuția noastră, pentru a ne fi mai ușor să ne amintim ulterior toate detaliile și pentru a putea realiza raportul final. Te asigur în același timp că tot ce vom discuta aici rămâne strict confidențial și va fi folosit exclusiv în cadrul cercetării noastre, păstrând anonimatul respondenților.

(După obținerea acceptului de înregistrare) Acum vă propun să facem cunostință. Prezentare respondent, nume sau prenume/vârsta, nivel de studiu, anul în care a intrat în programme.

ÎNTREBĂRI generale/introductive

1. Își place să mergi la școală? Te simți bine mergând la școală? Ce materie îți place cel mai mult?
2. Ai prieteni la școală, printre colegii de școală? Cum te înțelegi cu colegii de clasă?
3. Cât de importantă crezi că este școala în ziua de azi, mai e bună la ceva? Câtă școală crezi că ar trebui să aibă un om să se descurce în viață, câte clase, ce nivel de educație?
4. Tu cum îți petreci de obicei timpul liber? Ce faci când nu ești la școală?

Bursa acordată în programme – importanță, rolul acesteia în suport educațional

5. Câte luni ai beneficiat de bursă în programmeul CRCR până acum? În ce an ai fost selectat în programme (valul I, II, III)?
6. Cine hotărăște din familia ta cum sunt cheltuiți banii de bursă primiți de tine în programme? Tu personal? Părinții? Unul din frați? Alte rude, cine? Ai dori să se întâmple altfel acest lucru?
7. La ce folosești de obicei banii de bursă pe care îi primești? De exemplu, banii ultimei burse cum i-ai folosit, pe ce i-ai cheltuit?
8. Ai cumpărat vreodată rechizite (caiete, pix, penar, ghiozdan, etc) din banii de bursă?
9. Dar haine pe care să le porți la școală, ai cumpărat din banii de bursă?
10. Dacă ar trebui să se renunțe fie la bursa pe care o primești, fie la sprijinul acordat de mentor, tu ce sfat ai da? Ce ți-a fost mai de folos, bursa primită sau sprijinul acordat de mentor? De ce, te rog explică.
11. Ai vrut vreodată să părăsești școala, să abandonezi? Dacă da, de ce nu ai părăsit școala? A contat bursa primită în acest programme? Dar poți spune că participarea la acest programme te-a ajutat să înveți mai bine? Cum anume, de ce?

12. Tu îți dorești să urmezi o facultate? De ce? Crezi că vei reuși să intri la facultate? Faptul că participi la acest program crezi că te va ajuta să urmezi o facultate?
13. Tu ești membru în vreo asociație a elevilor/studentilor/tinerilor romi? Dacă da, cum ai ajuns să intri în această asociație? Dacă nu, ai primit vreodată propunerea de a fi membru într-o astfel de asociație? Ai auzit de o astfel de asociație? Ți-ai dori să faci parte dintr-o astfel de asociație? De ce da, de ce nu?
14. Tu ai o adresă de email? Știi să folosești calculatorul, ai acces la internet? Dacă da, ești membru al vreunui grup virtual, pe internet? Care anume? Primești mailuri cu informații / oportunități pentru tinerii romi? Îți folosesc aceste informații? Ce alte informații ai mai dori să obții?

Relația cu mentorul

15. Cât de des te vezi cu mentorul, de câte ori pe săptămână/lună? Și se pare suficient, ai vrea să te vezi mai des cu acesta?
16. Și ce discutați de obicei când vă întâlniți? Te simți în largul tău discutând cu acesta? Unde au loc discuțiile dintre voi cel mai des?
17. Mentorul te-a vizitat vreodată acasă, a venit să vorbească cu părinții tăi, cu cei din familia ta, să vadă unde locuiești? A fost un lucru bun asta? De ce?
18. Mentorul te ajută la lecții, să își faci temele? Dacă da, cât de des de ajută mentorul să își faci temele? Unde te ajută la teme - la școală, vine acasă la tine?
19. Mentorul a venit la tine la școală, a discutat cu profesorii tăi (din câte știi tu)? În caz că da, ai simțit că ți-a făcut bine discuția avută de mentor cu profesorii? În ce sens?
20. S-a întâmplat ca în timpul tău liber să participi cu mentorul la activități extracuriculare (precum vizita la un Muzeu, excursie, la teatru, etc.)? Cât de des? Cum ți s-au părut aceste activități?

Situația familială

21. Părinții tăi fac vreodată lecțiile cu tine? Te ajută acasă cu temele? Dar alte rude din familie, mătușă, frați, te ajută să faci lecțiile acasă? Cine te ajută cel mai des?
22. Părinții tăi/sau cineva din familia ta discută cu tine permanent despre ce ți se întâmplă la școală, despre cum te simți la școală, ce faci la școală, ce note obții la școală? Ai simți nevoia să fie altfel?
23. Părinții tăi/ cineva din familie vin la școală să se intereseze de tine, de situația ta școlară? Cât de des? Veneau la fel de des și înainte de a începe tu să iei bursă în acest program?
24. Ambii părinți locuiesc cu tine? Ce alte rude/persoane mai locuiesc cu tine, acasă? Ai persoane din familie plecate în străinătate?
25. Familia ta te îndeamnă să urmezi școala, să continui să mergi la școală? Și ți-au zis vreodată să mergi la școală pentru a continua să primești bursa?
26. Ce educație crezi că ar dori părinții tăi/tutorele/rudele care au grijă de tine să ai? Câte clase? Ce ar spune/spun părinții tăi dacă le spui că ai dori să dai la facultate, să faci o facultate? De ce crezi că ar zice asta?
27. Părinților tăi/familiei tale le este greu să te întrețină la școală, le ajung banii? Tu muncești câteodată să îți ajuți familia să câștige bani?
28. * Ce distanță este de acasă la tine până la școală? Își este greu să ajungi la școală în timpul iernii, în zilele ploioase?
29. Locuiești la casă sau la bloc? Te ocupi, în timpul liber, și de anumite treburi gospodărești – curățenie, pregătire mâncare, grija pentru frați mai mici, etc?
30. Tu mai ai frați, surori? Și ei merg la școală? De ce da, de ce nu?

Condițiile școlii / relația cu profesorii

Aș vrea acum să vorbim puțin despre școală în care înveți.....

31. De cand ai început liceul ai avut vreodata situații de conflict/ certuri majore cu vreun coleg sau vreun profesor? Te-ai simțit nedreptățit în vreun fel? Dacă da, despre ce a fost vorba mai exact?
32. Ești mulțumit de modul în care profesorii se poartă cu tine? Ai simțit că atitudinea profesorilor față de tine s-a schimbat ca urmare a includerii tale în programul de burse/ după ce ai început să primești bursă lunar?
33. *Te simți uneori rușinat la școală? De ce? Te simți bine în hainele cu care te îmbraci de obicei la școală?
34. Ți se întâmplă uneori să îți fie foame la școală și să nu ai ce să mănânci? Bursa care ai primit-o te-a ajutat să eviți astfel de situații?
35. *Dacă uneori ai nevoie să întrebi pe cineva ceva despre lecții, la o temă sau ceva ce nu ai înțeles când profesorul ți-a predat, ai la cine să apelezi? Apelezi vreodată la mentor?
36. Din câte știi tu, profesorii au chemat vreodată la școală părinții / pe cineva din familia ta să discute de situația ta școlară? Cât de des? Au fost mai des chemați părinții după ce tu ai devenit bursier în program?

Încheiere 5 min

Ne apropiem de finalul întâlnirii noastre ... (**brief discuție**). Dacă mai aveți ceva de adăugat în legătură cu cele discutate etc.

Timpul alocat INTERVIULUI: maxim **1h 30 min.**

Focus group guide used during the evaluation process (in Romanian)

TARGET GROUP: parents of some of the beneficiaries of the programme "Support for High-School Roma students in Romania".

AREA: one locality from Alba or Mureş county

PERIOD: June 2011

Prezentare intervievator, tema de discuție generală, specificarea detaliilor tehnice - 10 min.

Bună ziua. Numele meu este ..., sunt sociolog/cercetător și aș dori să aflu câteva aspecte despre modul în care a funcționat programmeul „Burse de studiu pentru elevii romi” implementat de Centrul de Resurse pentru Comunitățile de Romi. Va adresez, înainte de toate, rugămintea de a vă exprima părerile cât mai direct și lipsit de prejudecăți. Vă precizez că nu există păreri corecte sau greșite, răspunsuri bune sau rele, ne interesează doar părerea dvs. sinceră vizavi de aspectele pe care le vom discuta; răspunsurile dvs. sunt foarte importante pentru noi pentru a ne face o imagine reală despre programmeul din care au făcut parte câțiva elevi din una din clasele unde predați și cum am putea să îl îmbunătățim în viitor.

Discuția va dura aproximativ o oră și jumătate, maxim două ore. Vă solicit acordul, de asemenea, de a înregistra discuția noastră, pentru a ne fi mai ușor să ne amintim ulterior toate detaliile și pentru a putea realiza raportul final. Vă asigur în același timp că tot ce vom discuta aici rămâne strict confidențial și va fi folosit exclusiv în cadrul cercetării noastre, păstrând anonimatul respondenților.

(După obținerea acceptului de înregistrare) Acum vă propun să facem cunostință. Prezentare subiecți, nume sau prenume/vârsta, ocupație, nivel de educație.

ÎNTREBĂRI generale/introductive

1. Cât de importantă credeți dvs. că este școala în ziua de azi, mai credeți că e bună la ceva? Câtă școală credeți că ar trebui să aibă un om să se descruce în viață, câte clase, ce nivel de educație?
2. Fiecare dintre dvs. aveți un copil care merge la școală. Câte clase a absolvit/încheiat copilul dvs.? Ce aveți, băiat/fată? Ce vârstă are?

PROGRAMMEUL „Burse de studiu pentru elevii romi”

3. Ce părere aveți, programmeul „Burse de studiu pentru elevii romi” implementat de Centrul de Resurse pentru Comunitățile de Romi a fost util pentru copilul dvs.? Cum anume, în ce sens? Care credeți că a fost principalul sprijin oferit de acest programme? Credeți că i-a ajutat/îi va ajuta să intre și la facultate?
4. Elevii au primit o bursă lunară și au avut un mentor care i-a îndrumat pe parcursul acestui programme. Ce credeți că i-a ajutat mai mult pe elevi, bursa oferită sau faptul că au fost sprijiniți de un mentor? De ce?
5. Cum a fost folosită bursa acordată elevului, în principal? Pentru mâncare, pentru haine, pt rechizite școlare, cărți? Elevul sau dvs. ați decis asupra modului în care a fost folosită bursa?
6. Mentorul v-a abordat, ați discutat cu el despre situația școlară a elevului? A ajutat, credeți, această implicare a mentorului în sprijinirea elevului? Din câte știți, mentorul l-a sprijinit/ajutat pe elev la teme?
7. Ați sesizat o modificare a atitudinii profesorilor după ce acesta a fost selectat în programme? În ce sens, de ce credeți asta? Ați vizitat mai des școala elevului, după ce acesta a intrat în programme?
8. Ceilalți copii din clasă și-au schimbat atitudinea față de elev după ce a început să primească bursa? Cum anume?
9. Ce recomandări ați avea pentru viitor, cum credeți că am putea interveni suplimentar pentru a ajuta elevi romi/elevii din grupuri vulnerabile să aibă o performanță școlară mai ridicată, pentru a preîntâmpina părăsirea școlii, pentru a-i determina să urmeze facultatea?

Situația familială

10. Ați avut dificultăți să întrețineți copilul în școală, vă ajungeau banii? Este distanță mare de la casa dvs. la școală?
11. Copilul vă ajută la treburi gospodărești? Locuiți la casă sau la bloc?
12. Discutați cu copilul despre situația lui școlară, despre ce face el la școală? De ce?
13. Mergeați des la școală, să vă interesați de situația copilului? De ce da, de ce nu?
14. Cum învață copilul la școală, ce note avea? A rămas vreodată corigent, repetent?
15. Vă doriți să urmeze facultatea copilul dvs.? Dar copilul își dorește să urmeze o facultate? Credeți că va reuși?

Condițiile școlii / relația cu profesorii

Aș vrea acum să vorbim puțin despre ultima școală unde a învățat copilul dvs.....

16. Ce ați spune de condițiile din școala unde a învățat copilul dvs., vă mulțumesc?
17. Sunt/erau mulți copii din familii nevoiașe, sărace, în școală, din câte știti dvs.? Dar copii romi, erau în școală? Câți astfel de colegi a avut copilul dvs.?
18. S-a întâmplat vreodată, din ce vă amintiți, să se plângă copilul de condițiile de școală, să vă spună că nu se simțea bine la școală? – rușine de haine pe care le purta, de încălțăminte pe care o avea, etc.
19. Profesorii v-au chemat vreodată la școală să vă spună de situația copilului? Cât de des? Și ați mers? De ce?
20. Cum vă înțelegeți cu profesorii, cum vă tratează profesorii? Vă simțiți în largul dvs. la școală?
21. Cum se înțelege copilul dvs. cu alți elevi din școală, din câte știți dvs.?

Încheiere 5 min

Ne apropiem de finalul întâlnirii noastre ... (**brief discuție**). Dacă mai aveți ceva de adăugat în legătură cu cele discutate etc.

Timpul alocat sesiunii de focus-group **1h 30 min.**